

**BISMARCK: A CHRONOLOGY AND CASE STUDY OF THE 'UNRECOGNISED
SIMPLICITIES OF HIGH PERFORMANCE (Version 1, 2023)**

It is a most fascinating pastime to follow a great man's thoughts. Pushkin

*Vergebens, dass ihr ringsum wissenschaftlich schweift
Ein jeder lernt nur, was er lernen kann,
Doch der den Augenblick ergreift,
Das ist der rechte Mann*

*In vain that through the realms of science you may drift
Each one learns only — just what learn he can
Yet he who grasps the Moment's gift,
He is the proper man
Faust, Goethe*

Genius is knowing when to stop. Goethe

*We cannot for one moment doubt
that he was a born revolutionary.
For revolutionaries are born
just as legitimists are born,
with a particular cast of mind,
whereas chance alone determines
whether the circumstances of his life
make of the same person
a White or a Red.*

Monsieur de Bismarck, Ludwig Bamberger, 1868

He goeth furthest who knows not whither he is going. Cromwell.

Unda fert nec regitur

A favourite Bismarck phrase meaning: you can ride a wave but not make one

Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo. Virgil

A favourite Bismarck phrase meaning: If I can't bend the will of Heaven, I'll raise Hell

*No one would ever have heard of me in my rural retreat, if I had not become a member of the united diet
by chance. 1881*

*In dealing with the Bismarcks, especially on personal matters, it is necessary to be extremely careful. To get
rid of a rival, they will do things of which it would be absurd to suspect any other statesman in Europe...*

One misses the extraordinary penetration of the old man... Lord Salisbury on Bismarck.

*While Bismarck spoke, his soft gentle voice struck me and those unforgettable eyes ... teary but
remarkably beautiful from which sudden bolts of lightning would flash... On the way home I asked my
father about that remarkable, gentle voice. He said to me with a laugh, "In those gentle tones he read the
death sentence for many careers and twisted the neck of many a diplomat who had provoked his hate."*

1895 Prince Hohenlohe took his son to visit.

*I would not be in your shoes. You seem to me at times to be like a rider who juggles on horseback with five
balls, never letting one fall. Wilhelm I to Bismarck.*

'I have the unfortunate nature that everywhere I could be seems desirable to me, and dreary and boring as soon as I am there.'

'The best words in the Bible are: Oh Lord, Thou hast broken the teeth of the wicked.'

'There is no such thing as an evil race.'

'[Of Berlin] I'm like the Indian whose hunting ground has been appropriated by the white man... I just don't like the stink of civilisation in the big cities.'

'I've given up listening to music, the melodies stay with me, they bring tears to my eyes, they exhaust me.'

'Man can neither create nor direct the stream of time. He can only travel upon it and steer with more or less skill and experience. He can suffer shipwreck and go aground and also arrive at safe harbours.' (Cf. Pflanze (OP) p3 for references to similar remarks)

'The sessions of every kind are the more exhausting because the first word tells you what the whole speech will contain, like certain bad novels, but you cannot leave because of the possibility of votes.' 1849.

'The bureaucracy is cancerous from head to foot; only its belly is sound and the laws it excretes are the most straightforward shit in the world... With this bureaucracy including the judges on the bench we can have press laws written by angels and they cannot lift us from the swamp. With bad laws and good civil servants one can still govern, with bad civil servants the best laws cannot help.' Letter, 30 June 1850.

'Nobody, not the most malignant doubter of a democrat, can believe the amount of charlatanism and self-importance there is in this diplomatic game... Those from the small states are caricatures of pig-tailed diplomacy, who immediately put on their 'official report' face when I ask them for a light for my cigar.' Of life in Frankfurt.

'It is easy for a statesman ... to use the people's wind to give a blast on the war trumpet while warming his feet at his fireside or delivering rousing speeches from this platform, and to leave it up to the musketeer bleeding in the snow whether or not his system wins the day and reaps the glory. There is nothing easier, but woe betide the statesman who in this age fails to seek a reason for war that remains valid after the war is over.' 1850.

'In the middle of Europe it is impossible to wait passively upon the march of events or to try to stay removed from them... If we do not prepare for ourselves the role of the hammer, there will be nothing left but that of the anvil.' ?1851

'The stream of time flows inexorably along. By plunging my hand into it I am merely doing my duty. I do not expect thereby to change its course.' 1851 (OP), 5/2/52 (Clark)

'I did not marry you in order to have a society wife for others, but in order to love you in God and according to the requirements of my own heart, to have a place in this alien world no barren wind can cool, a place warmed by my own fireplace, to which I can draw near while it storms and freezes outside. And I want to tend my own fire and lay on wood, blow the flames, and protect it and shelter it against all that is evil and foreign.' To his wife, shortly after arriving in Frankfurt 14

May 1851. On another occasion, he similarly described his idea of home: 'I was truly filled with gratitude to God, and there arose before my soul the quiet happiness of a family life filled with love, a peaceful haven [safe harbour] where, though a gust of wind perchance forces its way from the storms of the world-ocean and ruffles the surface, the warm depths remain clear and still.'

'I should be alarmed if we sought protection from the approaching storm by tying our neat seaworthy frigate to Austria's worm-eaten old battleship. **Great crises constitute the weather that favours Prussia's growth**, provided that it is fearlessly, perhaps even ruthlessly, exploited by us.' February 1854.

'Exalt his self-esteem toward foreigners and the Prussian forgets whatever bothers him about conditions at home.' 1858

'As God will, it is all merely a matter of time; nations and individuals, folly and wisdom, war and peace, they come and go like waves, and the sea remains. What are our states and their power and honour in God's eyes but ant-hills or beehives that the hoof of the bullock tramples flat or fate overtakes in the person of the bee-keeper come to collect the honey.' July 1859

'I should overestimate the value of this life strangely if I did not constantly bear in mind that after thirty years, and possibly from a great deal earlier, it will be irrelevant to me what political successes I or my country have achieved in Europe. I can even think out the idea that some day "unbelieving Jesuits" will rule together with a Bonapartist absolutism... From my twenty-third to my thirty-second year I lived in the country and I shall never get the longing to return there out of my veins. I am in politics only half-heartedly.' To Gerlach, May 1860.

'We lack a mere trifle at this stage and that is the *brains* of the ministry.' Roon, 18 May 1862.

'The Eastern question is an area in which we can help our friends and harm our enemies without being inhibited to any great extent by direct interests of our own.' November 1862

'Austria and Prussia are states which are too great to be bound by the text of a treaty. They can be guided only by their interests and their convenience. If any treaty should be in the way of these interests and convenience that treaty must be broken.' To Thun, 1863.

'Looked at individually these people [parliamentary representatives] are in part very shrewd, mostly educated, regular German university culture ... as soon as they assemble *in corpore*, they are dumb in the mass, though individually intelligent.' April 1863, to Motley.

'I am prepared for war and revolution combined. Nor am I the slightest bit afraid of war; on the contrary, I am also indifferent to revolutionary or conservative, as I am to all mere words.'

'The individual actions were trifles in themselves; to see that they connected was the difficulty.' Re the immense complexities and his tangled web over Schleswig-Holstein.

'**This trade teaches that one can be as shrewd as the shrewdest in this world and still at any moment go like a child into the dark**' (to his wife, 1864, Pflanze translation). 'In this business you get to learn that you can grow as wise as the wisest, yet the next minute grope about in the dark like a child.' (Ritter).

'Anyone who calls me an unscrupulous politician is doing me an injustice and should start by trying his own conscience in this particular arena... When I stake my life on a thing, I do so in the faith that I have fortified for myself, in long and bitter struggle but also in sincere and humble prayer to

God, and that no word of man, not even that of a friend in the Lord and a servant of his Church, is going to overthrow for me... As a statesman I am not ruthless *enough* but rather cowardly in my feelings, and this is so because in the questions that confront me it is not always easy to gain the clarity that engenders faith in God.' 26 December 1865.

'Austria was no more in the wrong in opposing our claims than we were in making them.' Post-Sadowa to Wilhelm.

'Beating the Austrians was no art. I knew that they were not militarily prepared and I could count on the Prussian army. The difficulty was getting my king to take the plunge [... across the trench]'

'I also hold it probable that violent events would further German unity. To assume the mission of bringing about a violent catastrophe and take responsibility for the timing of it, however, is quite another matter. Arbitrary interference in the course of history, motivated on purely subjective grounds, has never achieved any other result than to shake down unripe fruit. That German unity is not now a ripe fruit is in my opinion obvious... **We can put the clocks forward, but time does not thereby move any faster, and the ability to wait while the situation develops is a prerequisite of practical politics...** We can look forward to the future with repose and leave to our successors what remains to be done.' February 1869.

'In Europe's present situation, in the present state of civilisation, it is impossible to undertake great political and perhaps warlike actions for secret reasons of cabinet diplomacy that may be unravelling later by historians. Now one can only conduct war out of national motives, from motives that are national to the degree that their compelling nature is recognised by the great majority of the population.' 22 April 1869, to Reichstag.

'At least I am not so arrogant as to assume that the likes of us are able to *make* history. My task is to keep an eye on the currents and steer my ship in them as best I can. The currents themselves I cannot direct, even less am I able to create them.' July 1869.

'This self denial, this self-sacrifice on behalf of duty to State and King is, among us, a vestige of the faith of our fathers and grandfathers, a faith that has been transformed, so that it is obscure and nevertheless effective, no longer a faith and yet a faith after all... **If I were no longer a Christian I would not serve the King another hour... Sever my connection with God and I would pack up tomorrow and be off... If there is no Divine commandment, why should I subordinate myself to these Hohenzollerns?** They are a Swabian family, no better than my own, and in that case no concern of mine.' September 1870.

'Sitting in the saddle the King hardly realises that I am a good horse that he has ridden to pieces; the lazy ones hold up better.' December 1872 to Roon.

'To be a minister too long and to be successful with God's help is to feel distinctly the cold tide of disfavour and hate rising higher and higher right up to the heart. One gains no new friends, the old ones die, or back off in disaffection. Furthermore, the cold descends from above — that is the natural history of all rulers, even the best. Yet every favourable inclination requires reciprocity if it is to last. In short, I am freezing emotionally, and I long for your company and to be with you in the solitude of the country.' 12/1870.

Autumn 1870 while starving Paris into surrender: 'Where there are so many people close together, individual qualities can easily cease to exist, they intermix. All sorts of opinions arise out of the air, out of hearsay and repetition, opinions which have little or no foundation in fact. But they are

spread through newspapers, public meetings, conversations over a glass of beer, and then they become fixed, indestructible... That is the case in all big cities.'

'Historians never saw anything except through their own spectacles. Why I prize Carlyle so highly is that he understands how to get inside another's soul... For me it is especially burdensome that my personal opponents increase with every passing year. My calling demands of me that I tread on the toes of a lot of people and no one ever forgets that. I am too old to win new friends. I also have no time for them. And the old friends disappear from view as soon as they believe I will no longer do anything for them. So eventually I will be surrounded only by personal enemies.' 1875

'I have always found the word Europe on the lips of those statesmen who want something which they dare not ask for in their own names.' 1878

'Politics is long-lived and requires plans whose fulfilment will take generations.' May 1878, re the transition in taxation and finding a new financial foundation for the Reich.

'In an emergency one cannot be hypersensitive about methods — *à corsaire, corsaire et demi.*' 1878

'*A gentilhomme, gentilhomme — à corsaire, corsaire et demi.*'

'The trouble about politics is that you can never be certain when your policy has been correct. Perhaps our policy after 1866 was in fact mistaken. The Federal Diet had greater means of checking revolutionary movements and tendencies to disaffection in individual states than the modern Reich with its Federal Council and its Reichstag.' 1881

'I have always found that the hardest tasks of diplomacy lie in relations with one's own court.' 1888.

'State socialism is on the move and there is no stopping it. Whoever embraces this idea will come to power.'

'If I have to eat with members of parliament, I must drink myself the courage.'

'I have never judged international disputes by the standards which prevail at a student duel.'

'One's enemies one can deal with but one's friends! They all wear blinkers and only see a patch of the world.'

'We shall need the national swindle later as protection against French demands.' WHEN?

'*In verbis simus faciles*' re reconciliation with the Liberals and to Roon and Memoirs 2.79.

'*In verbis simus faciles*, it does not matter whether our navy is called Prussian, German or North German.'

'Alliances between large states are of value only when they express the actual interests of both parties.'

'Attendance fees mean paying the educated proletariat for the professional practice of demagogy.'

'The statesman is like a wayfarer in the forest who knows in which direction he is walking but not at what point he will emerge from the trees. Just like him the statesman must take the negotiable paths if he is not to lose his way.' To Friedjung, June 1890.

'One clings to principles only for so long as they are not put to the test. When that happens one throws them away as the peasant does his slippers and walks after the fashion that nature intended.' 1847

'Going through life with principles is like walking through a thick forest with a long pole held between one's teeth.'

In retirement, April 1895, he was asked about 'principles' and scoffed that the question was like old Rothschild saying to his accountant, 'Mr Meier, if you please, what are my principles today with regard to American hides.'

'Politics is a job that can really only be compared with navigation in uncharted waters. One has no idea how the weather or the currents will be or what storms one is in for. In politics, there is the added fact that one is largely dependent on the decisions of others, decisions on which one was counting and which then do not materialise; one's actions are never completely one's own. And if the friends on whose support one is relying change their minds, which is something that one cannot vouch for, the whole plan miscarries... One's enemies one can count on – but one's friends!... Politics is not in itself an exact and logical science but it is the capacity to choose in each fleeting moment of the situation that which is least harmful or most opportune.' Bismarck, 1895.

'For me history existed primarily to be learned from. Even if the events do not repeat themselves, at least circumstances and characters do. By observing and studying them one can stimulate and educate one's mind. I have learned from the mistakes of my predecessors in the art of statesmanship and have built up my "theory", although one ought not to speak of such in the narrow sense of the word.' (Napoleon I taught him 'wise moderation after the greatest successes', Napoleon III not to confuse 'slyness with falsehood'.)

'More than anything else politics demands the capacity to recognise intuitively in each new situation where the correct path lies. The statesman must see things coming ahead of time and be prepared for them... He must be able to wait until the right moment has come and precipitate nothing, no matter how great the temptation... From childhood I have been a hunter and fisher. In both cases waiting for the right moment has been the rule that I have applied to politics. I have often had to stand for long periods in the hunting blind and let myself be covered and stung by insects before the moment came to shoot... Correct evaluation of the opponent is also indispensable to success. This means the exercise of caution. In chess one should never base a move on the positive assumption that the other player will in turn make a certain move. For it may be that this won't happen and then the game is easily lost. One must always reckon with the possibility that the opponent will at the last moment make a move other than that expected and act accordingly. In other words, one must always have two irons in the fire... Many paths led to my goal. I had to try all of them one after the other, the most dangerous at the end. It was not my way to be single-handed in political action...'

'You cannot play chess when sixteen of the sixty-four squares are forbidden to you by your own side.'

'Short-sighted and long-sighted eyes both give incorrect vision but for a practical statesman I regard the latter failing as the more dangerous because it makes him miss the things that are right in front of him.' 21 July, 1869 (letter to Lucius).

'I never advance a foot until certain that the ground to be trod is firm and safe.' To Wagener.

'When I lie awake at night I am often visited by memories of injustices yet unatoned for that befell me thirty years ago. I grow literally hot at the thought and in my drowsy state I dream of the necessary countermeasures.' To Lucius, 1876

'Goethe has been almost always loved, seldom hated. Yet hate is as great a spur to life as love. Two things preserve and embellish my life — my wife and Windthorst. The one is there for love, the other for hate.' P241, OP vol2.

'But as soon as a man can protect himself before his own conscience and his group, by the plea that he is acting in the interest of his party, the meanest action is considered permissible and even excusable.'

'It was impossible during the animated and sometimes stormy development of our politics always to foresee *with certainty* whether the road which I took was the right one, and yet I was obliged to act as though I could predict with absolute clearness both coming events and the effect which my decisions would have upon them... **It is just as impossible to foresee with any certainty the political results at the time when a measure has to be carried, as it would be in our climate to predict the weather of the next few days.** Yet we have to make decisions as though we can do so, often enough fighting against all the influences to which we are accustomed to attach weight... The consideration of the question whether a decision is right, and whether it is right to hold fast and carry through what, though upon a weak premise, has been recognised as right, has an agitating effect on every conscientious and honourable man. This is strengthened by the circumstance that often many years must elapse before we are able in political matters to convince ourselves whether our wishes and actions were right or wrong. It is not the work which is wearing, but rather the doubts and anxieties; the feeling of honour and responsibility, without being able to support the latter by anything except our own convictions and our own will, and this is more especially the case in the most important crises.'

'Politics is always like visiting a country one does not know with people whom one does not know and whose reactions one cannot predict. When one person puts a hand in his pocket, the other person is already drawing his gun, and when he pulls the trigger the first one fires and it is too late then to ask whether the requirements of common law with regard to self-defence apply, and since common law is not effective in politics people are very, very quick to adopt an aggressive defence.' July 1879 to Reichstag.

'My entire life was spent gambling for high stakes with other people's money. I could never foresee exactly whether my plan would succeed... Politics is a thankless job because everything depends on chance and conjecture. One has to reckon with a series of probabilities and improbabilities and base one's plans upon this reckoning... As long as he lives the statesman is always unprepared. In the attainment of that for which he strives he is too dependent on the participation of others, a fluctuating and incalculable factor... [One] has to expect random disturbances like the farmer does with weather conditions. Even after the greatest success he cannot say with certainty, 'Now it is achieved; I am done with it,' and look back at what has been accomplished with complacency... One can bring individual matters to a conclusion, but even then there is no way of knowing what the consequences will be... In politics there is no such thing as complete certainty and definitive results... Everything goes continually uphill, downhill.' (GW, IX, 397ff)

'There is no exact science of politics just as there is none for political economy. Only professors are able to package the sum of the changing needs of cultural man into scientific laws... The professors and their imitators in the newspapers constantly decry the fact that I have not revealed a set of principles by which I directed my policies. **Because they have as yet scarcely outgrown the political nursery, the Germans cannot accustom themselves to regard political affairs as a study of the possible...** Politics is neither arithmetic nor mathematics. To be sure, one has to reckon with given and unknown factors, but there are no rules and formulas with which to sum up the results in advance.'

'History with its great events does not roll on like a railway train at an even speed. No, it advances by fits and starts but with an irresistible force when it does. One must just be permanently on the look-out and, when one sees God striding through history, leap in and catch hold of his coat-tail and be dragged along as far as may be. It is dishonest fully and outmoded political wisdom to pretend that it is a question of weaving opportunities and stirring up troubled waters in order then to go fishing in them.' ('In conversation as an old man', Gall)

'I do not borrow the standard of my conduct towards foreign governments from stagnating antipathies, but only from the harm or good that I judge them capable of doing to Prussia.' Vol. I, p. 173.

'[I]n politics I do not believe it possible to follow principle in such a way that its most extreme implications always take precedence over every other consideration.' To Gerlach

'I recognize no kind of principled commitment for the policy of a Prussian. I regard policy solely by the measure of its usefulness for Prussian goals. In my view, the duty of a Prussian monarchy is limited to the borders of the Prussian empire drawn by God.' GW3

'I take great care in all my official tasks to see them with the greatest possible objectivity and correctness.' GW3

'[The statesman] must always be directed by the prevailing circumstances at the time; he cannot command the facts before him and the currents of the time, but rather cleverly use them for his purposes. He must observe or seek out every favorable opportunity to implement what seems to him correct and appropriate... A governing program that applies to all times cannot exist because the times change.' GW9

'They want to urge me into war and I want peace. It would be frivolous to start a new war; we are not a pirate state which makes war because it suits a few.' 1887

To Sir Charles Dilke post-retirement: 'Were it all to come over again, I would be republican and democrat; the rule of kings is the rule of women; the bad women are bad and the good are worse... Cavour, Crispi, even Kruger, were greater than myself. I had the State and the army behind me; these men had nothing.'

'Foreign policy and economic affairs must never be combined with one another. Each is balanced within itself. If one of them is burdened by the other, the equilibrium is lost.'

Re Gorchakov: 'He's so vain he cannot cross a gutter without looking at his reflection in it.' And he recounts that his staff would say of him '*il se mire dans son encrier*' ('he's reflected in his inkwell')

'My two greatest difficulties were first to get King William into Bohemia and then to get him out again.'

Re Wilhelm II: 'If you do not hold fast to the string, you never know where he will be off to.'

'I am the thick shadow that stands between him and the sunshine of fame.'

'Flagrant ingratitude is not only unlovely but unwise in politics as in private life.'

'It is a principle of creation and of the whole of nature that life consists of strife... Without struggle there can be no life and, if we wish to continue living, we must also be reconciled to further struggles.'

'If I can't lie I can't accomplish anything.'

'I am all nerves so much so that self-control has always been the greatest task of my life and still is.'

'I have the unfortunate nature that everywhere I could be seems desirable to me, and dreary and boring as soon as I am there.'

'The unification of Germany was a conservative achievement.' 14 April 1891.

'With France we shall never have peace, with Russia never the necessity for war unless liberal stupidities or dynastic blunders falsify the situation.' *Memoirs*, p247.

'Under an absolute monarchy ... no-one except the sovereign can be proved to have any definite share of responsibility for its policy. If the King comes to any unfortunate decisions, no one can judge whether they are due to his own moral will, or to the influence which the most various personalities may have had upon the monarch. In the last resort the royal signature covers everything; how it has been obtained no one ever knows.' *Memoirs*

'A real responsibility in high politics can only be undertaken by one single directing minister, never by a numerous board with majority voting. The decision as to paths and bypaths often depends on slight but decisive changes, sometimes even on the tone or choice of expressions in an international document. Even the slightest departure from the right line often causes the distance from it to increase so rapidly that the abandoned clue cannot be recovered and the return to the bifurcation, where it was left behind, becomes impossible. The customary official secrecy conceals for whole generations the circumstances under which the track was left, and the result of the uncertainty in which the operative connection of things remains, produces in leading ministers ... an indifference to the material side of business as soon as the formal side has been settled by a royal signature or parliamentary votes.' *Memoirs*, p308. [*Get alternative translation*]

'In order that German patriotism should be active and effective it needs as a rule to hang on the peg of dependence upon a dynasty... The German needs either attachment to a dynasty or the goad of anger hurrying him into action, the latter phenomenon however by its own nature is not permanent. It is as a Prussian, a Hanoverian, a Württemberger, a Bavarian or a Hessian, rather than as a German, that he is disposed to give unequivocal proof of patriotism and in the lower orders and the Parliamentary groups it will be long before it is otherwise... The German's love of Fatherland has need of a prince on whom it can concentrate its attachment. Suppose that all the German dynasties were suddenly deposed: there would then be no likelihood that the German national sentiment would suffice to hold all Germans together from the point of view of

international law amid the friction of European politics... The Germans would fall prey to more closely welded nations if they once lost the tie which resides in the princes' sense of community of rank... The other nations of Europe have need of no such go-between for their patriotism and national sentiment... The preponderance of dynastic attachment, and the use of a dynasty as the indispensable cement to hold together a definite portion of the nation calling itself by the name of the dynasty, is a specific peculiarity of the German Empire. The particular nationalities ... include in most cases heterogeneous elements, whose cohesion rests neither on identity of stock nor on similarity of historical development, but exclusively on the fact of some acquisition by the dynasty whether by the right of the strong, or hereditary succession by affinity or compact of inheritance, or by some reversionary grant obtained from the imperial Court as the price of vote.

'Whatever may be the origin of this factitious union of particularist elements, the result is that the individual German readily obeys the command of a dynasty to harry with fire and sword, and with his own hands to slaughter his German neighbours and kinsfolk as a result of quarrels unintelligible to himself. To examine whether this characteristic be capable of rational justification is not a problem of the German statesman, so long as it is strongly enough pronounced for him to reckon upon it. The difficulty of either abolishing or ignoring it, or making any advance in theory towards unity without regard to this practical limitation, has often proved fatal to the champions of unity, conspicuously so in the advantage taken of the favourable circumstances in the national movements of 1848-50... In the German national sentiment I see the preponderant force always elicited by the struggle with particularism, for particularism came into being only by resistance to the collective German community, to Emperor and Empire, in revolt from both, leaning first on papal, then French, in all cases on foreign support, all alike damaging and dangerous to the German community...

'The German people and its national life cannot be portioned out as private possessions of princely houses... That the dynasties have at all times been stronger than press and Parliament is established by the fact that in 1866 countries belonging to the Bund, whose dynasties lay within the sphere of Austrian influence, disregarded national policy and sided with Austria, those alone which lay under the Prussian guns throwing in their lot with Prussia.' Memoirs, p322.

'The expression, considered apocryphal, which Plutarch puts into Caesar's mouth, namely, that he would rather be the first man in a wretched mountain village than the second at Rome, has always struck me as a genuinely German idea. Too many among us think thus in public life and look about for the village, and when they cannot find it on the map, look for the group, subgroup, or coterie, as may be, in which they can be first. This state of mind which you may call egotism or independence – whichever you please – has found its realisation throughout German history... At the moment it finds more vigorous expression in the party system, splitting up the nation... **Parties diverge less in respect of programmes and principles than of the persons who stand as *condottieri* at the head of each, and seek to gain for themselves as large a following as possible of deputies and pushing publicists, who hope to arrive at power along with their leader.** Differences of principle and programme whereby the groups might be forced into conflict and hostility with one another are not forthcoming in sufficient strength to supply a motive for the passionate encounters which the groups think it necessary to wage between themselves... To fix precisely and express convincingly in a programme the line where principles divide would be a difficult task even for the leaders and their henchmen – just as denominational fanatics, when you ask them to give the distinguishing characteristics of the various confessions and directions of belief, ... as a rule leave you still thirsting for information. **So far as parties are not grouped simply according to economic interests, they fight in the interests of the rival leaders of their groups, and not according to their personal wishes and ambitions: the whole question is one of Cephass or Paul, not a difference of principle.**' Memoirs, 2p24.

'I had to take these peculiarities of my master into account if I wished to retain his confidence, and without him and his confidence my way in German politics would have been impassable.' Memoirs

'[Support for social democracy] rests on the fact that the judgement of the masses is sufficiently stultified and undeveloped to allow them, with the assistance of their own greed, to be continually caught by the rhetoric of clever and ambitious leaders.' If the masses acquire too much power, the state is ruined then 'the wheel of history will revolve again to dictatorship, to despotism, to absolutism, because in the end the masses yield to the need of order... And in order to purchase order from dictatorship and Caesarism they cheerfully sacrifice that justifiable amount of freedom which ought to be maintained, and which the political society of Europe can endure without ill-health.' Memoirs

'Absolutism would be the ideal form of government for a European political structure were not the King and his officials ever as other men are to whom it is not given to reign with superhuman wisdom, insight and justice. **The most experienced and well-meaning absolute rulers are subject to human imperfections, such as overestimation of their own wisdom, the influence and eloquence of favourites, not to mention petticoat influences, legitimate and illegitimate.** Monarchy and the most ideal monarch, if in his idealism he is not to be a common danger, stand in need of criticism. The thorns of criticism set him right when he runs the risk of losing his way. Criticism can only be exercised through the medium of the free press and parliaments in the modern sense of the term. Both correctives may easily weaken and finally lose their efficacy if they abuse their powers. To avert this is one of the tasks of the conservative policy which cannot be accomplished without a struggle with parliament and press. The measuring of the limits within which such a struggle must be confined ... is a question of political tact in judgement. It is a piece of good fortune to his country if a monarch possess the judgement requisite for this — a good fortune that is temporary like all human fortune.' This also needs ministers who are qualified and can operate 'in the face of occasional votes of an adverse majority and of the influence of courts and camarillas.' Memoirs, 2,68.

'**All contracts between great states cease to be unconditionally binding as soon as they are tested by 'the struggle for existence'. No great nation will ever be induced to sacrifice its existence on the altar of fidelity to contract when it is compelled to choose between the two.** The maxim *ultra posse nemo obligatur* [no-one is obligated beyond what he is able to do] holds good in spite of all treaty formulas whatsoever, nor can any treaty guarantee the degree of zeal and the amount of force that will be devoted to the discharge of obligations when the private interests of those who lie under them no longer reinforces the text and its earliest interpretation.' Memoirs, 2p273.

'International policy is a fluid element which under certain conditions will solidify but on a change of atmosphere reverts to its original diffuse condition. The clause *rebus sic stantibus* [things thus standing] is tacitly understood in all treaties that involve performance ... but eternal duration is assured to no treaty between Great Powers.'

Memoirs: **The departmental minister 'does not always comprehend the matter which the secretaries lay before them in the form of a draft bill... Much less do the other ministers spend time and trouble in making themselves acquainted with the contents of a new law in every detail unless it will affect their own department... The departmental minister will not be in a position to judge the effect of an intended law on practical life if he himself be a one-sided product of the bureaucracy, much less will his colleagues. Not five percent of those whom I have had the opportunity of observing are conscious of being not merely departmental ministers but also ministers of state who share in the common responsibility**

for their joint policy. The others confine themselves to attempting to administer their own departments free from blame, to getting the necessary supplies from the Minister of Finance and having them passed by the Diet, and to defending themselves successfully against parliamentary attacks on their department by their eloquence and, if necessary, by throwing over their subordinates.' The royal signature and parliamentary grants 'prevent the question whether the law is in itself desirable from coming before the bureaucratic ministerial conscience. The interference of a colleague whose department is not directly concerned arouses the sensitiveness of the departmental minister...' The discussions in the old Council of State before 1848 had 'more pointed exertion of the individual judgment and stronger stirrings of the conscience than the ministerial consultations which I have been in a position to observe for more than forty years.' Badly drafted bills and 'ministerial nonsense' can easily get through parliament 'especially if the author of the scheme succeeds in winning for his product some influential or eloquent friend.' One might expect that most deputies would actually *read legislation* but despite the large number of deputies from universities and law, **'few have the love of work and the feeling of duty,** and these are divided among groups and parties which are in constant conflict with one another... Most members read without criticising and ask the party leaders, who work and speak for their own ends, how to vote. **This is all to be explained by human nature and nobody is to be blamed that he cannot change his skin. Only we must not deceive ourselves and it is a serious error to suppose that our laws nowadays have that investigation and preparatory work which they require.'** The Reichstag set up 'a monument of this superficiality' when it amended the constitution itself in such a way as to leave in meaningless phrases and wrong numbering of clauses.

'I can only regret that in preparing laws the co-operation of wider circles of the kind which was given in the Council of State and in the Board for Economics has not been made sufficiently powerful against ministerial or monarchical impatience. When I found leisure to occupy myself with these problems, I occasionally expressed to my colleagues the wish that they would begin their legislative activity by publishing the draft of laws, exposing them to the criticism of publicists, listening to the greatest number of circles who understood the matter and were interested in the question — that is the Council of State, the Economic Board, and under certain circumstances the provincial Diets — before they brought them up for discussion in the ministry. **I attribute the repression of the Council of State and similar consultative bodies chiefly to the jealousy with which these unprofessional advisors in public affairs are regarded by the professional secretaries and the parliaments, at the same time also to the discomfort with which ministerial omnipotence within its own department looks on the interference of others...** The mere testing of drafts in the ministry is not the right way of avoiding the danger that unpractical, harmful, and dangerous proposals, drawn up in very incorrect language, should make their way from the compositions of the dilettante legislative activity of a single reporting secretary unchecked ... into the collection of laws and then, until some remedy is found, form a portion of the burden which creeps among us and drags on like a disease.'

'The persuasion that an opponent, in everything he undertakes, is at best of limited intelligence, but more probably malicious and unscrupulous as well, and the aversion to dissent and break away from the members of one's own group, still dominates the life of groups today.'

'A great state is not governed in accordance with party opinions; the sum total of the parties existing in the country has to be carefully weighed and out of that a line drawn that a government as such can pursue.'

*

'I have no fear that Germany will not become united; our good roads and future railroads will do their part.' Goethe, 1828.

'Build railways, not forts.' Moltke.

Moltke: *getrennt marschieren, gemeinsam schlagen* (march separately, strike together)

'The war of 1866 did not arise from self defence against a threat to our own existence, nor was it called for by public opinion and the voice of the people. It was a struggle recognised in council as necessary, aimed at for a very long time, and prepared with calmness. It was a struggle not for the acquisition of land, the expansion of territory, or material gain, but for an ideal good, for a position of power.' Moltke, ~1880.

'The German nation is sick of principles and doctrines, of literary greatness and a theoretical existence. What it wants is power, power, power! And whoever gives it power, to him it will give honour, more honour than he can imagine.' Julius Fröbel, revolutionary.

'He wishes *à tout prix* to remain possible, now and in the future. But — the means to that end! Will they be justified by it?' Roon, 1870.

'He considered vanity as a kind of mortgage on its bearer and reduced the person's value by the exact amount of the burden. His folio in the great mortgage ledger of human failings was in this respect absolutely blank. There can be very few human beings who cared so little for outer appearances, was so indifferent to, and placed so little value on, rank, station, precedence or etiquette. He yearned neither for recognition from above nor applause from below.' Tiedemann, Bismarck's private secretary from 1875.

In 1895 Prince Hohenlohe took his son to visit. 'While Bismarck spoke, his soft gentle voice struck me and those unforgettable eyes... On the way home I asked my father about that remarkable, gentle voice. He said to me with a laugh, "In those gentle tones he read the death sentence for many careers and twisted the neck of many a diplomat who had provoked his hate."'

'It's hard to be Kaiser under Bismarck.' Wilhelm I. (This is widely quoted in history books but according to Fischer, recent biographer of Wilhelm, there is no source to support it and it probably emerged from Berlin gossip.)

'What he wanted belonged wholly to the past. Yet for a time, at the height of his career, the means he employed had the effect of enormously accelerating the historical process and ushering in at a rapid rate ... the modern world. Largely against his will he came to play a decisive part in helping to create that world — therein lie both his historical greatness and his great limitation... In the end, perhaps like every major actor on the stage of history, he was really no more than a sorcerer's apprentice.' Gall

'If there was a decline in international morality, the origins of this are to be found in Napoleon and his associates, not Bismarck. He only applied the maxim *a corsaire, corsaire et demi*.' AJP Taylor.

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Preliminary notes

At the start there is a section on some of Tolstoy's 'historical forces' — institutions, ideas, technologies, material forces and so on. I think it's useful to consider this at the start of the story.

There's some notes from Pflanze's first volume on some ideas in Germany at the time.

There's a brief sketch of his childhood and character.

You can skip all preliminaries and go straight to 1815. Or skip the whole backstory and go straight to summer 1862 as Bismarck holidayed in the south of France with the beautiful Catherine Orlov as he awaited Roon's fateful message from Berlin.

Here and there I pause and consider the situation: e.g. at the start of 1848 on the revolutions; at the end of 1863, a stocktake on the European chessboard and what Bismarck was really thinking about the infamous Schleswig-Holstein crisis, which he regarded as probably his finest diplomatic achievement because he was relatively weak at this early point in his career and the crisis was incredibly intricate; at the end of 1866, on the new constitution for the North German Confederation. Here and there I add my perspective on contemporaries' or historians' views on what was going on.

Some of the things I've put in here are just interesting, not particularly important, but convey a sense of how people thought and felt at the time. I've put in publication of some books, art etc just because it's interesting to keep overall context in mind.

I've put some dates, quotes, events in **bold**. There's not great logic to this. Sometimes it's just what seems particularly interesting. It's so complex I think it's useful to have some signposts for critical events, thoughts and so on.

I've put in some things that will seem irrelevant but my thinking is: for someone trying to track other stories in this period, what seems irrelevant may be a useful detail or a clue that something they are reading may have an error.

I've put in quite a lot of British politics that isn't necessary to follow just the Bismarck story. Partly it's because in the background a question I keep in mind is: *how do British elites track what's important, track dangers, how (and how much) do they think about these things, how much are they focused on other domestic or imperial concerns, how much is the focus on Parliament and media?*

This is partly because I've a longer range interest in how British elites watched and dealt with Germany from its mostly-irrelevance pre-1848 through the Bismarck transformation to World War II. It's interesting to note at some points how history was turning in central Europe but in Westminster the focus was on the internal party game, personal rivalries, or a now-forgotten crisis on the other side of the world. It's also interesting how much the Westminster game was influenced by perceptions of 'public opinion' in an age pre-polling. It's important to keep all these things in mind to keep a good sense of the time. Bismarck himself noted when he visited here in 1862, just before taking power in Prussia, how our elites were much more interested and expert in Asian affairs than Prussian/German. Part of my interest in Bismarck is: *how should a state today organise its thinking about the most profound dangers, so what can we learn from how Bismarck operated and how Britain sensed and considered and adapted to him?*

I end this document in August 1867. It feels a natural break. The war with Austria is over, the new constitution is established, it's been discussed in and forced through the new Reichstag, and the

diplomatic crisis over Luxembourg, prompted by Napoleon realising Bismarck had scammed him in 1866, has fizzled out. When the players return in September 1867, it feels like a distinct phase since he took power in September 1862 is over and a new phase, ending in 1871, has begun.

The point of this chronology is as a tool to a) help people understand the past, present and future better and b) help limit the spread of errors in history books. **So PLEASE note errors you spot and leave them in comments on my blog, from typos to wrong dates to duff quotes — anything.** Hopefully someone with good technical skills has an idea about the best format for it on the internet so people can play with versions and it becomes more useful.

Some abbreviations

OP = Pflanze's 3 volume biography, by far the best and deepest.

JS = Steinberg's biography. Kissinger calls it the best but he's wrong, it has many errors but also lots of interesting material unavailable in other English accounts.

LG = Lothar Gall biography.

KL = Katharine Lerman biography.

EF = Edgar Feuchtwanger biography.

Hawkins = *The Forgotten Prime Minister: The 14th Earl of Derby: Volume II*

Brown = *Palmerston: A Biography*

Mosse = *The European Powers and the German Question*. Mosse's book is very useful and has a lot of stuff I have not seen in any other English-language book. It can be a bit patchy — it has lots of welcome detail then it suddenly skips a few weeks or even months for no obvious reason. E.g it goes into a lot of detail, rightly, over Schleswig Holstein, then skips over autumn 1864 to the end of 1865 very quickly.

Evans = *The Pursuit of Power: Europe, 1815-1914*, Richard Evans. Evans strongly opposes me/Brexit politically and I strongly disagree with him about much of current affairs but I try to be objective and separate disagreements and this book is very good! Bismarck doesn't feature much but it's a great overall consideration of the 1815-1914 period.

GC = *The Prussian Army*, Gordon Craig. Someone should do an update of this valuable book given the extra sources we've discovered since.

WAF = *The Mission of Vincent Benedetti to Berlin 1864-1870*, Willard Allen Fletcher. A specialist detailed look at the French Ambassador in Berlin. Benedetti was involved in some famous stories. E.g after a discussion he allowed Bismarck to keep a draft of a deal which Bismarck kept then leaked at a crucial moment to the British media to nudge Britain towards neutrality in 1870.

Stern = *Gold and Iron: Bismarck, Bleichroder, and the Building of the German Empire*, Fitz Stern

I've used 'Clark' foolishly and as I finish I realise it sometimes refers to Christopher Clark's recent book on 1848, sometimes to his book on Prussia, and sometimes to an old book on *Franz Joseph and Bismarck* (by a different Clark) which is essential reading for the serious sleuth. Most books focus on Prussia but this focuses on Austria and provides all sorts of fascinating material you need

to understand to make sense of the story. 'Clark' from 1862-6 probably refers to the book on Franz Joseph. Needs fixing but I can't face it now.

Some of these notes were done 20 years ago and were pasted from other documents then forgotten about as I had a job for a year or two. Sometimes as I've proof read I've spotted that things from that long ago have been mangled and quotation marks have vanished. It's possible that things that seem like they're from me are pasted from elsewhere, either contemporaries or historians. There will be other errors. Often five or six different books give five or six different versions of key dates or quotes and I've chosen the one that seems to fit best. I cannot document all such decisions. In 2024 I will look at fine-tuning a LLM on some version of this document and a large corpus of original material (like diaries and original documents) and try running it through one of the new AI-plagiarism-tools.

The introduction to this chronology is on my blog.

14 December 2023

Some historical forces: ideas, material forces, social forces, institutions, technologies

'Whoever last saw the Prussian Rhineland, Westphalia, the kingdom of Saxony, upper Silesia, Berlin and the seaports in 1849 found them unrecognisable in 1864. Everywhere machines and steam power had appeared. Steamships gradually replaced sailships... the railways multiplied in length many times. In the dockyards, collieries and iron works there prevailed an activity of the kind that the ponderous German had previously thought himself utterly incapable.' Engels.

Between 1815-70, some powerful forces drove change in Germany.

1. **Prussia's / Germany's population grew rapidly.** OP (p9): The population of the future Reich grew from ~25 million in 1817 to ~35 million by 1848; (p103) from 23.5m (1816) to 38m (1864). Prussia's population grew from 10.3m in 1816 to 16m in 1846 (>50% in 30 years) then about 20m by 1866 (so roughly doubled 1815-66). Rate of growth 1815-66 ~60% in the future Germany versus ~70% in Britain, ~50% in the Austrian Empire, 34% in France. Growth was faster before 1847-48 than 1848-66 (Hamerow). JS gives slightly conflicting figures but on p73: ~22m 1816 to 35m by 1850, a 60% increase (41m 1870). In 1850 the future Reich and France were roughly the same on ~35m but by 1910 Germany grew to 65m while France only to 39m. This growth in Germany was despite large emigration especially 1846-55 — 1.5m 1841-60 and 800k 1861-70, ~90% from west of the Elbe — driven by the decay of artisan trades, competition from overseas grain growers, the end of US Civil War, more conscription in Prussia (Hamerow). OP: 2 big factors were declining legal restrictions on employment and marriage, and the declining power of the guilds. (Before industrial manufacture guilds were crucial institutions. They controlled training of apprentices, their transition to journeymen then masters. They maintained standards. They provided welfare. But they also suppressed innovation. They'd declined in England in the 18th C, in the French Revolution they were abolished. They never recovered. They declined 1815-48. They retained most influence in luxury goods. The number of 'masters' in Prussia grew rapidly and their incomes declined.)

Table 8.1 Snapshot population statistics for 1820, 1841 and 1866

	1820 ¹	1841	1866
Habsburg Empire ²	25.5	30.7 ³	34.8
German Austria ⁴	9.5		12.0 ⁵
Prussia ⁶	11.7	15.1	19.5
Germany ⁷	13.9	16.4	18.3

Notes: 1 The figures for Austria and the Habsburg Empire were reckoned for 1821; for Prussia and the remaining German lands for 1822.

2 This does not include the Italian provinces of Lombardy and Venetia.

3 The figure is for 1850.

4 By German Austria is meant that part of the Empire which belonged to the German Confederation. This excludes the whole of the eastern/Hungarian half, Galicia, Lombardy and Venetia.

5 This figure is for 1869.

NB. In this, footnote 7: 'Germany' refers to the Bund *minus* Prussia and Austria.

2. **More land under cultivation, population urbanised.** OP (p103): the area of land under cultivation rose from 56% to 69% 1800-1864 (JS misquotes some of these figures). JS: 1850 23% of England lived in cities >100k; France 5%; Prussia 3%; Austria 3%; Russia 2%. Evans: in 1850, the proportion living in towns and cities was: 50% Britain, 20% Italy, 15% France, 11% Germans, 8% of Austrians and Bohemians. OP: 1852-71 the number of cities in Germany with a population over 100,000 grew from 26 to 48 and there was an internal migration 'without parallel in German history until 1945'. (Berlin was <200k in 1815, 330k in 1840, 408k in 1846, 763k in 1870, 1.1m in 1880 and more than 2m in 1914, so roughly 2X in 30 years then 5X from mid-century to 1914, so ~10X from 1815-1914.) By the 1860s the number of people working on agriculture had fallen to ~50%, 28% in mining and manufacture. Hamerow: while German population overall 1815-71 grew 63%, it was 43% in countryside, 26% in municipalities; 1815 >90% German population lived in countryside, 1856 ~70%, 1871 64%. About 1.4m employed in Zollverein factories in 1861, ~4% of population. Urbanisation dissolved agrarian tradition, encouraged the spread of new ideas including democracy and socialism, and favoured manufacture, commerce and finance. Bismarck said in autumn 1870 while starving Paris into surrender, 'Where there are so many people close together, individual qualities can easily cease to exist, they intermix. All sorts of opinions arise out of the air, out of hearsay and repetition, opinions which have little or no foundation in fact. But they are spread through newspapers, public meetings, conversations over a glass of beer, and then they become fixed, indestructible... That is the case in all big cities' (Busch, p213: Mass belief, mass superstition, stupidities, absurdities.) The proportion of workers in agriculture fell from 55% to 38% and in industry rose from 24% to 34% from 1850-1900 (?Pflanze vol3?).
3. **Growing agricultural productivity.** Abandonment of legal restrictions on sale of noble estates (1807) and a growing export trade (particularly to UK after end of the Corn Laws in 1846) accelerated the shift from subsistence to capitalist agriculture. Agrarian depression 1817-30 forced many gentry to sell estates. Growing use of fertilisers after 1850. Machinery and crop rotation spread and encouraged consolidation in larger estates. Many landowners (including Bismarck) diversified into things like timber, breweries, paper mills and the income from such things gave landowners (including Bismarck) capital to invest in railways and other shares. Grain production nearly doubled 1822-64. OP: agricultural productivity rose 1815-65 by ~135% while population rose by ~60%. Clark (1848): more land cultivated and productivity growth meant Europe's food supply roughly doubled 1815-48, i.e. grew faster than population.
4. Some historians write **food prices rose** from 1830s to 1860s, pushed by growing population and urban development. Clark (1848, p37): food prices *fell* 1815-50 but there were some important surges. Higher production and higher land prices for four decades until the 1860s seemed like a normal feature of life. The Junkers became pro-free trade as it meant cheaper imported manufactures and they did not fear foreign competition (things changed from the 1870s). Hamerow (i, p57): 1830-70 'the relative value of agrarian production declined steadily while that of manufacture was close to doubling'. Prussia was second most industrialised German state after Saxony. Even after big changes, in Prussia aristocrats made up 68% of the biggest proprietors with > 1,000 hectares. In 1861 65% of officers were noble, 86% of generals and colonels. Similar for the top officials and diplomats. (Evans: 1806, under 10% of officers were non-noble; by 1913 it was 70% including nearly half generals and colonels. In Silesia the 11 biggest landowners owned 20% of land.)
5. **Better transport, railway boom.** In 1810 it took Tsar Alexander 42 hours to get from St Petersburg to Moscow by horse; in 1833 Tsar Nicholas lowered the record to 38 hours. Across Europe 1815-1848 transport improved. Roads were built and improved. Canals were improved and connected rivers (e.g a new canal network around Berlin in the 1830s-40s enabling cheap coal from Britain to be transported to the city). After the inventions of Trevithick and Stephenson the self-propelled steam-powered locomotive was viable. In 1830 the Liverpool-Manchester line opened in a ceremony attended by the Duke of Wellington. Within 20 years there were 7,000 miles of railway in Britain. In 1847 a quarter of a million

people were engaged in British railway construction and this drove brick and iron production. Britain provided much of the capital, technology and skills for Europe to build railways. Railway construction began in Prussia from 1835. Joint stock companies were first allowed in 1838. The boom of 1842-6 was driven by subsidies and guarantees. In 1840 there were 185km of railways in Prussia, 1,100 by 1845, 1,400 by 1847. 30,000 km were built 1835-75. Network in Germany doubled from ~6,000 km to 11,000 km 1850-60 then to 18,600km 1870. After 1850 railway building was 'the chief engine of industrial growth' (OP). It drove growth of coal, iron ore, pig iron, machinery and connected industries. Railways made Berlin a centre of communication between east and west and it became a centre for banking, bourse and machine manufacture. Prussia bought 51 British locomotives in 1841; it bought 124 1842-5 but 40% were German made and by 1850s almost all new Prussian bought locomotives were built in Germany. Krupp grew rapidly supplying axles and crankshafts. Clark: French rail network grew from ~3,200 km in 1851 to 16,500 km in 1869.

Table 3. Spread of railways in selected countries (Length of line open in kilometers (1km = 5/8 mile))

	1840	1860	1880	1900
Austria-Hungary	144	4,543	18,507	36,330
France	496	9,167	23,089	38,109
Germany	469	11,089	33,838	51,678
Italy	20	2,404	9,290	16,429
Russia	27	1,626	22,865	53,234

Table 8.5 Railways (kilometres in operation)

	Austria-Hungary	Prussia	Germany
1841	351	375	683
1847	1,048	2,325	4,306
1850	1,357 + 122	2,967	5,856
1860	2,927 + 1,616	5,762	11,089
1865	3,698 + 2,160	6,895	13,900
1870	6,112 + 3,477	11,460 ¹	18,876

Note: 1 The figure for Prussia in 1870 includes new territories annexed in 1867.

Source: The figures for Prussia are compiled from Fischer 1982: 80 and Wehler 1995: 69-70; and those for Germany from Mitchell 1973: 792-3 and Mitchell 1978: 315-17. The Habsburg figures are compiled and combined from Mitchell 1978: 315-17, Gross 1983: 16, 33, and Katus 1983: 192. Mitchell's figures are given for Austria-Hungary but actually appear to be only for Austria. I have therefore added the figures for Hungary from Katus 1983 and this yields figures for 1850, 1860 and 1870 which roughly match those given by Gross 1983 for the Empire as a whole. Lutz 1985: 328 gives much higher figures for the Empire in 1851 (2,345) and 1860 (5,393) and the only explanation I can think of for this discrepancy is that he includes Lombardy-Venetia.

6. **The Zollverein increased trade and Prussian power.** German mercantile tonnage grew threefold 1835-70. In the 1860s Prussia accounted for nine-tenths of all coal and pig iron, two-thirds of iron ore, and almost all steel and zinc produced in the Zollverein. Two-thirds of all steam engines in the Zollverein were in Prussia. Businessmen started thinking about potential gains from further political integration — uniform weights and measures, common currency, common codes for commercial law and banking etc. Hamerow: Imports to the Zollverein grew by a factor of four or five 1850-69, far ahead of population growth. 1850-70 the number of savings accounts in Prussia grew from 278,000 to ~1 million. The value of foreign trade grew 50% 1850-60.
7. **Industrialisation accelerated** especially in the Rhineland. Output of pig iron rose over 13x (to 2.2m tons) and coal 11x (to 36m tons) 1840-73. (Barclay: coal output up 180% 1850-60). The construction industry boomed in expanding cities.

Table 8.2 Industrial production (measured in £ millions)

	Germany (1871 territory)	Austria (excluding Hungary)
1800	60	50
1820	85	80
1840	150	142
1860	310	200

Source: Lutz 1985: 89.

Table 8.3 Per capita production c. 1840 (measured in Gulden)

Economic sector	Zollverein	All Austria-Hungary	German and Italian Austria	Hungary and Galicia
Agriculture	46.3	27.6	29.3	25.6
Handicrafts (<i>Kleinbewerbe</i>)	15.2	3.6	5.6	1.7
Industry	8.1	4.0	6.2	1.9
Total	70.0	35.0	41.0	30.0

Source: Lutz 1985: 89.

Table 8.6 Key industrial outputs in 1870 (millions of tons)

	Austria	Germany ¹
Coal	6.3	23.3
Steel	0.02	0.13

Note: 1 Almost all coal and steel production in Germany was in fact on Prussian territory.

Source: Mitchell 1978: 188–9, 223 and Fischer 1982: 64.

8. **The telegraph spread.** 1837 Samuel Morse patented the electromagnetic telegraph. By 1850 there were 620 miles of telegraph wires in France. News spread faster, so riots did too.
9. **Prussia's army improved.** The size gap between Prussia's and Austria's armies shrank while the quality gap grew as Prussia spent more per soldier, more on training etc.

Table 8.8 Army sizes

	Austria	Prussia
1850	434,000	131,000
1860	306,000	201,000
1866	275,000	214,000 ¹

Note: 1 Prussia's ally, Italy, had in 1866 an army with a paper strength of 233,000.

Source: Flora 1983: 251.

10. Ideas about *laissez-faire* economics, the benefits of free trade, and English liberalism spread.
11. Corporatism and status lost ground to capitalism, class and pressure groups. Clark: wherever traditional rights over land, wood and water shifted to more modern forms of commercial ownership, communities responded with protests, illegal use, attacks on officials.
12. Kantian rationalism lost ground to Romantic ideas of the Volk that would merge later in the century with social Darwinism.
13. Literacy and media. Literacy (reading and writing) rates in Prussia in 1850 averaged about 85%, in France reading was 60%, and in England reading and writing ~50% (Gawthrop, 'Literacy Drives in Pre-Industrial Germany', in Robert F. Arnove and Harvey J. Graff.). By 1900, fewer than 5 in 1,000 Germans were illiterate (Abrams) but few continued in secondary schooling: just 8% of under 14s had completed secondary schooling in 1910. The wealthy continued to grammar school and university. In 1890, fewer than one in a thousand university students were the sons of workers. The number of Prussian newspapers grew 1824-69 from 845 to 2,127. Berlin accounted for about a third of the total German press run of ~300,000 daily in early 1860s. Most dailies were liberal. Censorship relaxed in Prussia after 1841.

Table 8.4 Education (Figures in 1,000s)

	Primary school pupils	Secondary school pupils	University students
Austria ¹ 1840	1,365	20.5	8.6
Austria 1860	1,656	36.7	8.0
Prussia 1840	2,224	123.0	11.6
Prussia 1860	2,778	172.9	12.4

Notes: 1 Excluding the Hungarian half of the Empire.

NB. It is difficult to believe that in 1860, when the populations of Prussia and cisleithian Austria were approximately the same (about 18 million each), Prussia had about five times as many secondary school pupils, and yet only about 50 per cent more university students. Two possible explanations are that the secondary school statistics for Prussia included *Gymnasium* (grammar schools) which are sometimes included in the figure for 'higher education', and that Austrian statistics badly undercounted secondary school

14. Prussian state finances were much healthier than Austria's.

Table 8.7 Public expenditure

Millions of Thalers ¹	Austria	Prussia
1857	262.8	122.8
1867	668.0	171.0
1870	299.0	212.9

Note: 1 The exchange rate was about 6.8 Prussian Thalers to 9.6 Austrian Gulden.

Source: Ferguson 2000: 123.

15. Growing nationalism.

16. Hegel's idealism spread the idea of the state as a moral force. Whereas in the rest of Western Europe morality continued to rest on Christianity and natural law, for German idealism it was identified with the state and the ruling power.

17. Romanticism spread and revived medieval ideas and aesthetics.

18. Romantic conservatives pre-1848 saw Austria, Prussia and Russia as united against France and 'Revolution'. After 1848 Austria and Prussia were struggling for mastery in Germany. The experience of 1848 made many liberals fearful of the socialist mob. The Crimean War shattered the Holy Alliance and state interests increasingly dominated the principle of conservative solidarity. The Franco-Austrian war of 1859, the unification of Italy, and Napoleon's alienation of Britain and Russia 1862-3 created dynamics that allowed Bismarck to disrupt hostile

coalitions. Austria-Russia, Austria-France, France-Russia, Britain-France, Britain-Russia — all these potentially dangerous alliances for Bismarck were hard to make happen and Bismarck did his best to keep these relations strained/broken.

19. How would Prussia's economic growth affect its international position and the dominance of the old aristocratic political institutions (crown, cabinet, bureaucracy, army, church, gentry)?

Net German domestic product shifted from agriculture to industry:

1850-4: 45% from agriculture, forestry, fisheries; 20% from industry and handicraft production.

1870-4: 38% and 30%.

1900-4: 29% and 34%.

In Britain 1815-50, there was a huge expansion of the cotton trade. Britain imported cheap raw cotton grown in India then exported finished products globally. Production was overwhelmingly in the north of England where mountain streams powered water-wheels driving looms. In 1860 Britain produced about twice as much coal as all Europe combined and Britain produced about 60% of all pig iron in Europe. **Before and after the Napoleonic wars Britain tried to ban export of technology but it didn't work.** Entrepreneurs used spies and bribes. From the 1840s there was a shift to licensing. British workers and entrepreneurs visited the Rhineland and realised the potential of coal there.

Friedburg (*The Weary Titan*):

- Early 1870s UK exported more than US & Germany combined.
- 1870-1914 US & Germany growing more rapidly than UK.
- In steel and pig iron output US overtook UK in 1880s and Germany by ~1905.
- 1870 UK produced three times more coal than Germany (#2), by 1914 they were roughly equal.
- After 1870 US & Germany outcompeted UK in new fields: electrical, chemicals, machine tools.
- 1870-1914 UK share of world manufacturing production fell from 32% to 14%; Germany rose from 13% to 16%; US grew from 23% to 36%.
- By 1895-1900 there was a lot of UK public debate about competition from Germany & US.

Evans:

- Mid-century a quarter of international trade passed through British ports.
- More than half British trade was carried in British ships which generated invisible earnings.
- 1910 40% of tonnage of ships engaged in world trade was British.
- Screw propeller invented by Ressel, patented 1827. 1845 Isambard Brunel built screw-propelled ship for Atlantic, *SS Great Britain*.
- Textiles were 60% of British exports 1850, a third in 1913; metals and engineering up from 18% to 27%.
- Coal output in Ruhr: 2m tons in 1850, 12m 1870, 60m 1890, 114m 1913 (nearly 3x France).
- 1862 Krupp installed the first Bessemer furnace (named after English inventor), improved 1869. Krupp bought other firms and acquired iron ore mines. Employed 12k in Essen 1874, 3x bigger than a decade earlier.
- 1870 Germany and France produced about the same pig iron. In 20 years Germany produced double France.
- 1870s-80s French economy hit by phylloxera which devastated vineyards.
- In France half the workforce were in agriculture and forestry in 1850 and 40% in 1900. In Germany it fell from 60% to a third. In Britain it fell from 22% to 9%.
- Industrial production doubled in Russia 1860-80 then again by 1891 and again by 1900. But in 1914 manufactured goods were just 8% of exports. Russia produced a tenth the coal and half the steel of Britain.

- UK industrial production grew 3% since 1820s but slowed to 2% after 1880. Productivity in coal mining fell to just half that of America by 1914. American typewriters and sewing machines, European dairy equipment, Hungarian roller mills invaded UK markets. Growing cartels in Britain to deal with international competition. Mergers led to big brands: Vim cleaning products, Cadbury chocolate.
- Britain fell behind Germany in chemicals and electrical engineering. Edison figured out how to use Faraday's discoveries. 1882 Edison opened the first steam-powered electricity generating station on Holborn viaduct in London. Soon electricity was used to power trams and underground railways and home appliances. Siemens and BASF grew. German universities produced more technical talent. Germany overtook Britain in productivity in the steel industry 1870-1914.
- The total of people in the public service and professional sector in England and Wales was ~200k in 1850, up to 560k 1890. Number of lawyers up from 16k in 1850 to 22k in 1890. Number of engineers rose from 900(!) in 1850 to 15k 1890. 130k clerks in 1870, 460k 1900: average salary ~£150-80 1870. 1867 Britain: of the 10m with an independent income, 50k earned over £1,000 p/a, 150k £300-1000, 2m up to £300, 7.8m <£100.
- Throughout the century, progress against diseases like smallpox and cholera; falling death rates; falling birth rates. From 1800 to 1913 in England it fell from 38 live births per 1k population to 24; France 33 to 19; Germany 40 to 28. Russia was 51 in 1850, 43 in 1913. Population of France from 30m in 1800 to 40m in 1910; Britain from 20m to 45m. German Empire was 65m by 1910.

Table 8.9 Between Austria and Prussia

	Austria	Prussia
Population (millions)	37.5	19.3
Percentage labour force in agriculture	70	45
Grain production (million tons)	0.7	0.8
Fixed steam engines/millions horsepower	3,400/0.1	15,000/0.8
Coal production (millions tons)	5.7	12
Pig iron production (tons)	460,000	850,000
State revenue (millions of Thalers)	292	240
State debt (millions of Thalers)	1,670	290
Military spending (millions of Thalers)	51	45

Source: Lutz 1985: 330.

Table 8.10 Between a number of states in 1850

	<i>Rlys (km)</i>	<i>Raw iron (1,000 tons)</i>	<i>Cotton spindles</i>	<i>Steam power (1,000 PS)</i>
Habsburg Empire	1,579	130	1,400	100
Great Britain	10,660	1,975	18,000	1,290
Germany (1871 territory)	5,839	215	900	260
France	3,009	525	4,500	270
Belgium	855	214	400	70
Russia	618	232	350 (1843)	70

Source: Matis and Boehinger 1973: 117.

Some notes from Pflanze, Volume I Chapter I

Prussian bureaucracy, idealism

'The great cultural synthesis of the Enlightenment was in dissolution. Under the influence of economic change and *laissez-faire* doctrine, corporatism lost ground to capitalistic individualism, status society to class society, rationalism to romanticism, subjective to objective idealism. New centres of political orientation appeared in liberalism, conservatism, nationalism and socialism.' OP

Before 1815 Prussia was poor in land, resources and population. Its frontiers were not easily defended. During the half-century that saw the triumph of absolutism in France (Louis XIV 1661-1715) and its defeat in England, Elector Frederick Wilhelm I (1640-88) suppressed the feudal estates. 'Whatever possibility there might have been for their development into modern representative institutions vanished... During the century after 1640 the power and influence of the bureaucracy penetrated every aspect of Prussian society.'

The system discouraged initiative and rewarded conformity, obedience, and honesty. Advancement came through service not patronage. From the 18th Century, university training and exams were required.

The army's officers were largely drawn from the Prussian aristocracy, footsoldiers from the peasantry. The army heavily influenced the bureaucracy. Many officials were retired soldiers with a harsh tone and authoritarian manner.

The Lutheran Church supported the monarchy and bureaucracy. Luther regarded the prince as ordained by God to defend the Christian few and maintain order. He denied the right of popular resistance and 'made the church a vital prop of princely authority'. Before the 19th century the influence of commerce and business was low.

Frederick the Great (1740-86) spoke of himself as 'the first servant of the state'. He refused to intervene in private law and strengthened the independence of the judiciary. He strengthened the

principle that Prussian government was absolute but not arbitrary. Officials were subject to the laws and natural justice. 'This was the beginning of the German concept of the *Rechtsstaat*, the state governed by the rule of law.'

The Junkers were allowed great local power, could enserf the peasants on their estates, were largely exempt from taxation, and commoners were forbidden to purchase Junker Estates. They controlled the army and bureaucracy. Frederick the Great wrote in his *Political Testament* (1752) how the Junkers had sacrificed their 'lives and goods for the service of the state' and the monarchy must repay them with protection. (The von Kleist family lost 30 in one of his wars.) While some of them were rich, generally they were not nearly as grand and rich as the British or Austrian aristocracy and many Junkers would actually deal with their farms themselves, going with their animals to market (AJPT).

Frederick the Great's surprise attack on Austria to conquer Silesia in 1740 forced him to fight three wars to retain his gains, the last of which was nearly a disaster. While he concluded that a cautious foreign policy was best, the striking success captured popular imagination and 'gave to his one great Machiavellian deed an enduring aura of respectability' (OP).

German idealism developed during an era of exceptional intellectual and cultural creativity 1770-1830 — the era of Kant, Hegel, Goethe, Schiller, Mozart, Beethoven. German idealists, dissatisfied with rationalism, 'sought a deeper understanding of man, society and history. Characteristic of the movement was an intense humanism, a vital absorption in problems of individual growth and self development.' They were mostly non-political valuing freedom of the human spirit, not political freedom. The Romantic movement, epitomised by Goethe's extremely influential *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, also emphasised emotions and the medieval against rationalism and the classical world. (In Britain, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley, Byron.)

The word *Libertat* in German was originally used in the sense of the corporate rights of princes against the Emperor, not in the sense of the natural rights of man. The princes struggled for autonomy within the Holy Roman Empire and absolutism internally. The German idea of freedom 'became associated with political authority, an association that long endured' (OP). Kant is seen as the father of German liberalism, with his insistence on the progress of reason, the rule of law, man as an end (not a means), and the ideal of popular sovereignty. But he also reinforced respect for the state, the ethics of duty and acceptance of the absolute state as a practical, though temporary, necessity. Kant's *transcendental idealism* was challenged by Hegel's *absolute idealism* which 'ultimately had the greater impact on German thought' (OP).

Herder prepared the ground for Hegel. Herder rejected Enlightenment rationalism. He stressed the organic individuality of national cultures. Each nation has a unique *Volksgeist* (*folk spirit*). The state is an organism endowed with individuality and moral worth. Hegel said the state is 'the vessel of the *Weltgeist*' (world spirit), 'the divine idea as it exists on earth', and 'the actually existing, realised moral life'. For Hegel, history proceeded according to God's 'idea' so there could be no distinction between the state as it was and as it ought to be. He accepted no conflict between the pursuit of power and the demands of universal law and morality. War was a logical necessity, not an evil. For German idealists, 'the state replaced the church as the repository of moral values' (OP).

Whereas in the rest of Western Europe morality continued to rest on Christianity and natural law, for German idealism it was identified with the state and the ruling power. What the Hohenzollern rulers had created in their own interests 'was apotheosised by German philosophers' (OP) who influenced 19th Century students.

Napoleon's invasion, the post-1806 reforms, and the Congress of Vienna swept away the Holy Roman Empire and hundreds of states became 39 formed into a new German Confederation. Metternich updated Richelieu's systematic attempt to keep 'Germany' politically disintegrated and therefore weak.

As the forces summarised above changed society, Germans sought new ideas to reverse (romantic conservatism), contain (realistic conservatism and moderate liberalism), or promote (radical liberalism and socialism) social change.

Liberalism

Prussia's defeat by Napoleon sparked internal changes that echoed long after his exile. Stein and Hardenberg introduced some reforms in 1807 in order to inculcate what they saw as a necessary feeling of national citizenship. They tried to convert subjects into citizens by more social and economic freedom. Serfdom was abolished, local government was opened up, the legal prohibition on the sale of noble estates was lifted (1807) and there was an increasingly market system for agriculture. They were not seeking a transformation of society or government. Government remained absolute in theory and practice. The power of the gentry in rural government continued.

In 1818 Prussia abolished all internal duties and introduced a low uniform tariff. Von Motz and Bernsdorff used the extension of the Prussian Union as foreign policy tool. Metternich tried to counter with a Central Customs Union headed by Saxony and Hanover but this failed (Austrian commercial interests did not push for lower tariffs and joining with Prussia). The *Zollverein* proper was formed in 1834.

Liberals saw the bureaucratic state evolving. In the southwest, proximity to France pushed liberals closer to the natural law concepts of the Enlightenment. In the north, liberals rejected natural law and, following Hegel, deified the state. The concept of the *Rechtsstaat*, the state governed by the rule of law, became 'the most popular word in the lexicon of German liberalism' (OP). Moderate liberals had more in common with bureaucratic liberals than with radical liberals. The *Mittelstand* came to believe not only in themselves as the embodiment of civic virtue but in a form of moderate liberalism. They rejected bureaucratic absolutism and popular democracy in favour of the *Rechtsstaat* which was thought to embody a middle way between authority and freedom.

The French Revolution created a German radical liberal movement but it was small and impotent. There was a flurry of revolutionary activity in some German states around the French revolution of 1830. Some key figures were, like Marx, in exile.

Conservatism

Romantic conservatives regarded traditional social relations as imbued with moral and religious value that must be defended. As Burke had described it, civilisation rested on 'the great primeval contract of eternal society', an indissoluble social contract across generations that came from God, not rationalism. They romanticised the feudal system. Rationalists, starting with Machiavelli, had divorced religion and political theory. Ultraconservatives wanted to bring them back together. The state came from God to improve morality.

But they had a problem — how to reconcile 'the feudal system they admired with the absolute state that was its natural foe' (OP). They idealised the monarchy as the apex of the social pyramid but did not idealise the absolutist bureaucracy that the monarchy had nurtured and which had diminished aristocratic power.

Von Haller developed a theory: the natural condition of man is inequality and dependence with only the prince independent, subject only to God, and the state is the highest in the pyramid of contractual relationships and lies outside public law. His ideas were taken up by the Gerlach brothers who were influential with Friedrich Wilhelm IV after 1840. Leopold Gerlach became his personal adjutant and Ludwig the president of the superior court of appeals, though their influence was ironically limited given that FWIV's belief in divine right extended to the idea that he possessed insights inaccessible to other mortals, including aristocratic intimates. For them, the nobility followed God's will, not natural law, and they found in Haller a defence of aristocracy against absolutism and bureaucratic liberalism. It was in accord with the Gerlachs' romantic ideas that FWIV called the United Diet in 1847.

More *realistic conservatives* thought von Haller's rejection of the modern state unrealistic and looked for a doctrine they could more easily apply. They seized on the ideas of Stahl, a converted Bavarian Jew. Stahl opposed the Enlightenment, natural law, and Hegel. Like Luther he thought the state came from God to keep order and power is properly concentrated in the hands of a prince, not decentralised in a feudal order. He believed in *estates (Stände)* based upon existing occupational groups not the medieval corporations loved by romantics. In 1848 he was prepared to include the urban proletariat. For Stahl any assembly was purely consultative and had no control of the executive. In the 1850s he argued for representation only for landowners and industrialists with the former dominant. After 1848 Stahl's thinking provided conservatives with a system to reconcile themselves to the constitution 'but it also paved the way for their eventual acceptance of the Bismarckian Reich' (OP). He was elected to the Upper House in 1848 and soon became the leader of the ultra-conservatives (JS). Gerlach would later write of him: 'he [Stahl] fell for the most part into a vulgar constitutionalism and sought only to temper it in a conservative manner through Christian moral feelings.'

Stahl supported above all the rights of the landed aristocracy. He wrote:

'The party of legitimacy wants estates of the realm... But ... at all events, there are to be occupational classes with special rights and a special participation in the representative body of the country. At all events, landed property is to be the basis of the most important political rights... True aristocracy is not restricted to counts and barons. It runs through all human society: the farmer before the cottager, the master before the journeyman, the freeman of the city before the resident, the clergyman before the parishioner. The foundation and essence of such a true aristocracy is that people ought to be considered not only as individuals, so that they are all equal, but as representatives of a cause, a property, an occupation, and that is the extent to which they have rights and powers.'

Bismarck's view was closer to Stahl's than to von Haller or the Gerlachs though it's hard to tell how influenced he was. He worked with him in the period of the Erfurt Parliament and Radowitz's initiative. He later told Bucher that 'at least [Stahl and his circle] had a tangible goal and I could go a way with them, yet I knew exactly where our ways separated.'

Nationalism

In western Europe nationalism was moulded by the state. In central and eastern Europe awareness of nationality preceded the nation-state and helped it emerge and east of the Rhine nationality was forged by factors such as language and ethnic origin.

Meinecke showed that the idea of 'German nationalism was born within the cosmopolitan sentiment of the 18th century from which it gradually separated' (OP). Herder's (1744-1803) concept of the *Volkgeist* emphasised the individuality of national cultures, encouraged national

consciousness in Germany and throughout central and eastern Europe, and encouraged Germans to abandon their imitation of French literary and intellectual models. Soon intellectuals asserted German superiority: 'Every people has had its day in history but the day of the German is the harvest of all time,' said Schiller. The cosmopolitan universalism of the Enlightenment gave way to nationalistic universalism.

Initially, this feeling that German civilisation had a world role was more cultural than political. However, defeat by Napoleon saw the first stirrings of a German nationalist political sentiment similar to France's after 1789, though it was the Prussian bureaucracy that galvanised the response rather than a popular movement. Also, ideas of German unity threatened conservative interests.

The incorporation of the Rhineland into Prussia post-1815 brought disruptive new influences – a larger urban class, more businessmen, more Catholics, more liberals, more peasant freeholders, fewer nobles, some Napoleonic law and so on. At the Congress of Vienna Metternich gave Prussia agricultural territory in the Rhineland, nobody knew then that beneath these farms lay one of the great European coal seams. Initially the Rhineland resisted integration but after 1840 a new generation sought a constitutional government in Berlin and favoured German unity under Prussian leadership. *Increasingly, Prussian militarism and state nationalism merged with the romantic view of the state as an organism requiring growth for self-actualisation — a disruptive combination.*

Bavaria, Baden and Württemberg were creations of Napoleon and the Congress of Vienna. All three built a sense of national identity after 1815. Bavaria successfully bolstered loyalty to its dynasty, the oldest in Germany. In Baden and Württemberg, constitutions were granted. Liberalism and nationalism came together.

Liberals and nationalists could unite against particularism and reaction. Liberalism was a divided movement and nationalism helped liberals paper over their ideological cracks. German liberalism 'was a child of the war of liberation and the crucial issue of its earliest years was national independence more than freedom.' The Zollverein encouraged ideas of national unity. Many German liberals started to think of Prussia as the leader of the 'national mission'. While they longed for her liberalisation, the reality was reaction therefore liberals 'took refuge in the Hegelian myth of her liberality' and the assignment of a national mission to Prussia 'reinforced the traditional synthesis of freedom and authority in German thought' (OP).

Before 1848 German liberals relied on the force of idealism and thought the tide of liberalism would overwhelm the Metternich system. After the failures of 1848-9, 'their trust in the power of principle suffered a terrible blow from which it never fully recovered' (OP). Many radicals emigrated. Some like Liebknecht and Lassalle gravitated to socialism. Some like Lothar Bucher converted to conservatism (Bucher would be hired by Bismarck). 'Most capitulated to the spirit of compromise' (OP) and after 1859 most relinquished the goal of parliamentary government and radical change. Cf. June 1850 below.

Around mid-19th Century in the universities, students 'deserted the lecture halls of the philosophers for those of historians. The romantic style was superseded in art by impressionism and in literature by realism' (OP). Leopold Ranke rejected Hegel's metaphysics but also 'viewed the state as a spiritual force whose vitality and individuality were determined by its "idea" which took shape in conflict with the ideas of other states. He saw war as 'a test of the moral and spiritual fibre of the state' (OP). He also argued that 'The position of a state in the world depends on the degree of independence it has attained. It is obliged, therefore, to organise all its internal resources for the purpose of self preservation. This is the supreme law of the state.' This principle became known as *Primat der Aussenpolitik* (primacy of foreign policy).

After 1848, many liberals prioritised national unity over the morality of the methods used. 'In many minds the romantic cult of genius and general discouragement of the efficacy of popular movements combined to produce a vague longing for a new Siegfried who could brave the flames to awaken the German nation from its sleep of centuries' (OP p31).

Government from mid-Century

By the mid-century the social composition of the government was shifting from bureaucratic absolutism towards constitutional monarchy. The nobility were still favoured but did not monopolise state service. Most officials were now bourgeois or humbler. Some commoners had climbed the ladder to leading positions and were sometimes awarded with ennoblement (without feudal roots). Increasingly there was a bureaucratic caste proud of its status and the notion that they served a state above the competing forces of civil society. Between 1847-62, there was a shift in the proportion who were either bourgeois or recently ennobled: 31% to 27% of diplomats, 36% to 40% of the highest officials, 21% to 31% of generals in the Prussian army were. There was a generation gap with junior officials better educated but relatively poorly paid and the ranks were crowded with longer waits for promotion. Some officials participated in the 1848 unrest. (OP p107ff)

Officials in the early 19th century, including those trained in the new Berlin Technical Institute from 1821, were still paternalist in many ways and regulated important industries. In 1851 the Ministry of Commerce owned and operated a fifth of Prussian coal in state mines. The Prussian Overseas Trading Company (founded 1772) acted as a development bank raising funds to float private enterprises, seeking new markets for Prussian companies, constructing roads, operating factories.

But the message of Adam Smith was spreading. Stein and Hardenberg had removed many rules including on the sale of estates and freedom of occupation. By mid-century a new breed of entrepreneurs had emerged who wanted less government intervention, less competition from state-owned entities, fewer limits on joint stock firms. They wanted government to focus on things like transport infrastructure, banking facilities, railways.

During the 1830s the Prussian government had refused to subsidise railways and was reluctant to authorise private railway building. There were many arguments. Railways were seen as a threat to the old order. Joint stock companies would draw capital away from trade and agriculture and depress the price of government bonds. Landowners would lose property. Bureaucrats would lose control. The postal service would lose its monopoly. More government debt would mean more taxes and constitutional concessions.

In the 1840s they changed direction. *Officials worried that Prussia's international position would be weakened without technical progress.* The military wanted railways. Joint stock companies were allowed though in the 1850s they still needed a charter (which could take a year) and had to claim they had a 'worthy' purpose. Various industries saw some deregulation. In the 1850s the government gradually removed control of private mining companies and taxes were reduced (culminating in the June 1861 statute). Ministers still opposed allowing joint stock companies for banking as they feared the financial power that would accumulate in corporate banks, and they were supported by many private bankers, though there were loopholes that allowed, for example, the founding of the *Berliner Handelgesellschaft* in 1856. (High aristocrats sometimes worked with bankers to try to create new banks but still did not persuade the government — ie. the elite was divided over the right course.) Also financiers were innovative in creating financial instruments to evade regulations.

While wages of industrial labour rose maybe ~16% in the 1850s, prices rose 78% 1850-5 and were still 40% above their 1850 level in 1859. In the 1860s labour saw a 25% rise in wages while prices rose 12%. Strikes (and unions) were prohibited under the 1845 industrial code but still occurred especially in the 1857-9 depression. (1816-48 there were 186 examples of machine breaking and attacks on power looms in the Bund.) Anti-combination laws were repealed in 1869.

In the 1850s the growing commercial middle class resented the Junkers' influence across government and the police state interfering in their liberties. Financiers wanted the abolition of usury laws which limited interest rates to 6%. Employers wanted regulations on employment lifted. Merchants and landowners supported free trade, heavy industry lobbied for protection. The Zollverein, railways and a common commercial code in 1861 helped a single market develop in Lesser Germany but business wanted progress on currencies, weights and measures, business laws and so on (OP p122). Most businessmen still kept out of politics in the 1850s and left it to the liberal intelligentsia, officials and landowners: between 1848-62 the proportion of businessmen in the Landtag remained flat at 7%. The percentage of votes cast for liberal candidates in 1863 was roughly the same across all three voting classes.

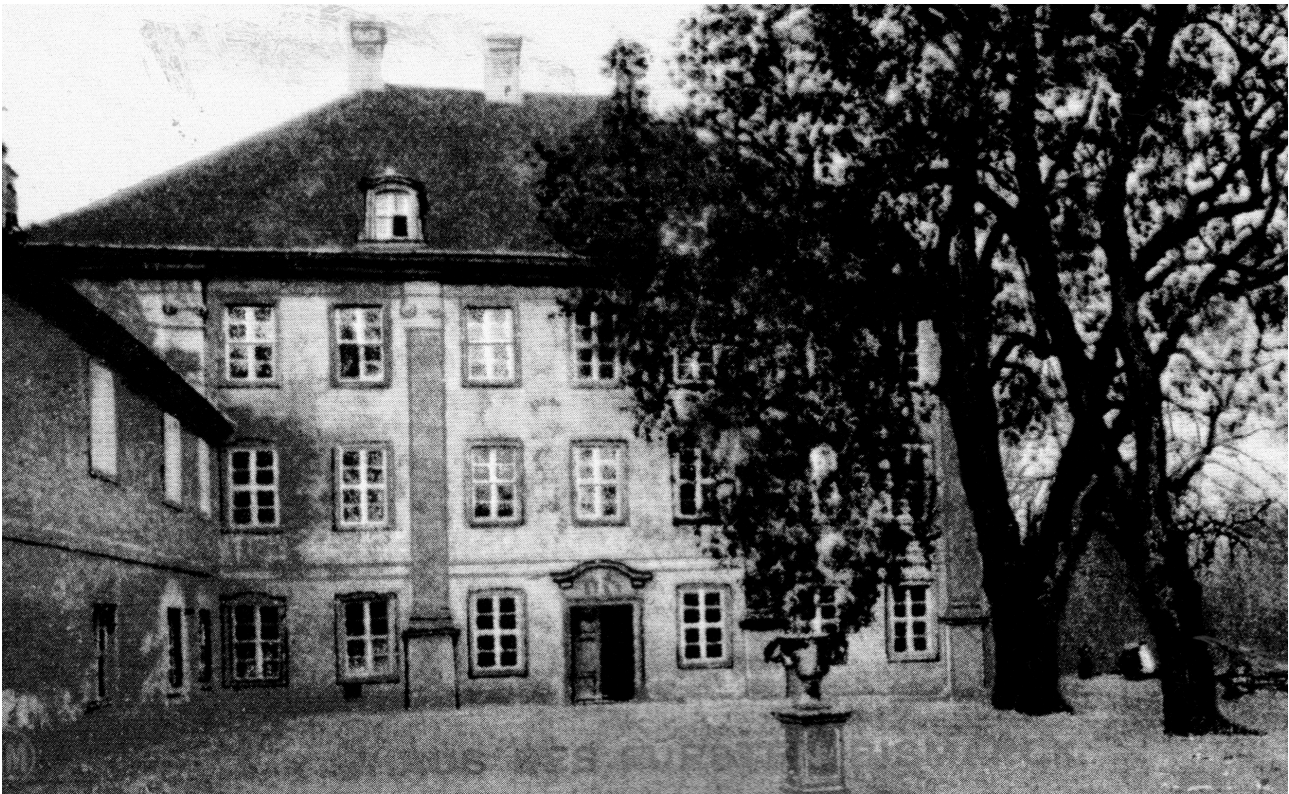
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Family and schooling

On 1 April 1815 Otto von Bismarck was born on his father's estate at Schönhausen, a few miles east of the Elbe, as Europe's statesmen grappled with Napoleon's Hundred Days. Bismarck's father was from an old Junker family who had lived on their estates for 500 years, though, while distinguished, they were not one of the grandest families of the old aristocracy. His forefathers were born, lived and died in the same rooms for centuries. His mother, Wilhelmine Mencken, was descended from a long line of academics and officials. Her father had served Prussian kings as a senior adviser, including cabinet secretary to Frederick the Great at the age of 30, and senior adviser to Friedrich Wilhelm III. She grew up playing with the future Friedrich Wilhelm IV and Wilhelm I as children though her father's early death suddenly changed her circumstances. Beautiful and highly intelligent, aged 17 she married the older Junker. His mother's influence and connections meant he grew up knowing the royal family well. He clearly inherited his mother's brains.

Photo of Schönhausen, 1921, mostly demolished after WWII





Biographies portray his childhood love for an unintellectual Junker father and his love of the countryside in contrast to bitterness and resentment felt towards a cold, intellectual, cosmopolitan mother who took him to hated schools in the city. His father exercised feudal powers on his estates including acting as a judge and appointing pastors and teachers. He loved hunting but mismanagement of his estates brought financial trouble.

His first five years were spent at his father's estates at Shönhausen and Kniephof. In 1822 the family leased their estates and moved to Berlin. He hated the first school she sent him to aged six, the Plamann Anstalt in Berlin, for children of civil servants, where he was beaten as if he were in a 'prison'. In 1827 at the age of 12, he went to the Friedrich Wilhelm Gymnasium in Berlin and from 1830 to 1832 (aged 17) he moved to the Grey Cloister Gymnasium also in Berlin (the latter he enjoyed more than the first two). During winter he and his brother lived in the family's townhouse with their parents, in the summer on their own with a housekeeper and a schoolmaster.

His family life was largely unhappy because of his mother. 'I became a stranger in my parents' house in earliest childhood and never again felt fully at home there'. He told his fiancée (23 February 1847), 'My mother was a beautiful woman, who loved external elegance, who possessed a bright, lively intelligence, but little of what the Berliner calls *Gemüth* ['warm heart', JS]. She wished that I should learn much and become much, and it often appeared to me that she was hard, cold toward me. As a small child I hated her, later I successfully deceived her with falsehoods. One only learns the value of the mother for the child when it is too late, when she is dead. The most modest maternal love, even when mixed with much selfishness, is still enormous compared with the love of the child. Nowhere perhaps have I sinned more grievously than against my parents, above all against my mother... I really loved my father. When not with him I felt remorse concerning my conduct toward him and made resolutions that I was unable to keep for the most part. How often did I repay his truly boundless, unselfish, good-natured tenderness for me with coldness and bad grace? Even more frequently I made a pretence of loving him, not wanting to violate my own code of propriety, when inwardly I felt hard and unloving because of his apparent weakness. I was not in a position to pass judgement on those weaknesses, which annoyed me only when coupled with

gaucherie. And yet I cannot deny that I really loved him in my heart. I wanted to show you how much it oppresses me when I think about it.'

According to Pflanze, the words above about his mother were 'a sop' to his fiancée. For the rest of his life he spoke of her only with resentment and complained about her taking him away from the beloved countryside. Her coldness comes through in a letter to Bismarck's older brother in which she expressed her previous hopes for his intellectual growth and ended, 'The time for these hopes to be fulfilled has arrived but they have disappeared and unfortunately, I must confess, for ever.' (Not a lovely letter to get from one's mother.) The younger brother, Otto, advised the older that their parents were 'more susceptible to lies and diplomacy than to soldierly coarseness'. He later complained that his mother felled a beloved stand of oak trees at Kniephof.

'Up to the age of six I was always in the fresh air or in the stables. An old cowherd warned me once not to creep around under the cows so trustingly. The cow, he said, can tread on your eye. The cow notices nothing and goes on chewing but the eye is then gone. I have often thought about that later when people, without noticing it, do harm to others... At the age of six I entered a school whose teachers were demagogic Turner who hated the nobility and educated with blows and cuffs instead of words and reproofs. In the morning the children were awakened with rapier blows that left bruises, because it was too burdensome for the teachers to do it any other way. Gymnastics was supposed to be recreation, but during this too the teachers struck us with iron rapiers. For my cultivated mother, child rearing was too inconvenient and she freed herself of it very early, at least in her feelings' (to Keudell while en route to Leipzig, 18 June 1864).

He later wrote that 'My childhood was ruined for me at the Plamann Institute which to me seemed like a prison. Whenever I looked out of the [school] window and saw oxen ploughing I had to weep with homesickness.' The school had bad food and harsh punishments. The boys were driven out of bed at 6am and forced into 'a kind of hothouse development of the intellect rather than the education of the heart and the preservation of youthful vigour'.

He described the views he 'imbibed with his mother's milk' as 'liberal rather than reactionary'. He wrote in his Memoirs: 'I left school at Easter 1832 a normal product of our state system of education, a Pantheist, and, if not a Republican, at least with the persuasion that the Republic was the most rational form of government; reflecting too upon the causes which could decide millions of men permanently to obey *one man*, when all the while I was hearing from grown up people much bitter or contemptuous criticism of their rulers.'

He took with him some 'German national impressions' which, though, were 'not strong enough to extirpate my innate Prussian monarchical sentiments. My historical sympathies remained on the side of authority. To my childish ideas of justice Harmodius and Aristogeiton were criminals.' Pflanze writes that some of his adult attitudes may have been formed by these early years: his contempt for men pushed around by their wives, his dislike of intellectuals, hostility to the bureaucracy, his late rising from bed and his strong preference for the country over the city.

The German universities were the best in Europe and Albert rightly took them as a model when he unsuccessfully tried to reform Oxford and Cambridge (AJPT). They had little influence on Bismarck. He began at Gottingen in May 1832. At university the republican and liberal students repelled him with their bad manners and refusal to duel: 'their want of breeding in externals and of acquaintance with the forms and manners of good society', and 'the extravagance of their political views, based upon a lack of either culture or knowledge of the conditions of life which historical causes had brought into existence... Their ideas gave me the impression of an association between Utopian theories and defective breeding... I returned to Berlin with less liberal opinions than when I quitted it.'

He spent his time mainly with the boozy aristocrats and made the only two great friendships of his life, with Alexander Keyserling (who encouraged his love of Beethoven) and the American John Motley (who encouraged his love of Shakespeare), for whom he would drop the affairs of the world decades later and talk as old student friends.¹ He drank enormously, according to Keyserling he whored a fair amount, and fought perhaps 25 duels in three semesters (after the only one he lost he claimed his opponent cheated). In 1852, he was involved in a duel with a political antagonist, von Vincke.

He spent little time in lectures and studying though he read widely. According to Gall, he did courses in law, philosophy, the history of political science and mathematics. He was not interested in the classics, philosophy or German idealism. He enjoyed Goethe and Schiller but they did not change his life (Pflanze). He learned French and English fluently. He loved Byron and Shakespeare and preferred Beethoven to Mozart. AJP Taylor wrote that he loathed the company of intellectuals and writers 'yet only Luther and Goethe rank with him as masters of German prose' and his speeches 'are among the greatest literary compositions in the German language.' Pflanze says that maths and natural sciences did not influence him.

Gall (p9) says that the only university course and lectures that really got Bismarck's interest was that of Professor Heeren, a non-idealist professor of trade and international relations, influenced by Adam Smith and Montesquieu, who focused on the specific details of trade and their connection to politics and foreign policy. Goethe said his *Thoughts on Politics, Communications, and Trade among the Principal Peoples of the Ancient World* was one of the most important books of the age. His lectures stressed the economic and commercial foundations of foreign policy.

He crammed for his law exams and left university in 1835. His parents wanted him to pursue a military career. He did not. Aged twenty in June 1835, he wrote that, 'My life, looked at closely, is really rather pitiful. By day I pursue studies that do not interest me. My evenings I spend in the company of courtiers and civil servants, affecting a delight I am not Schulerburg enough to feel or to seek. I find it hard to believe that the most complete achievement of my chosen goal, the longest title and the largest medal in Germany, or the most stupendous distinction will indemnify me for the physically and spiritually shrunken beat that will be the product of this life. I am still frequently visited by the desire to swap the pen for the plough and the briefcase for the game bag. But that is something I can always still do.'

In his three decades of command, he avoided the country estates of his own class and the city life of the intellectual classes he mostly despised. He worked with extreme intensity interspersed with long periods of solitary reflection deep in the countryside with his family and few guests. Great shifts in policy came after solitary brooding, often in the countryside. Almost the only people he seems to have genuinely cared for were his own family yet he ruined his elder son's happiness by forbidding his marriage into a family of political enemies.

He was a monarchist but not an absolutist. While he often spoke in feudal terms about his attitude to Wilhelm, he also spoke in the most cynical terms about the 'unhistorical, Godless unjust sovereignty swindle' of German princes claiming 'legitimacy'. He saw himself as a man of the king and state who stood above parties seeking without fear or favour the best interests of Prussia. In

¹ Motley was an upper class American who knew Oliver Wendell Holmes, Emerson, and Thoreau. He later wrote a monumental history of the Dutch republic and a novel, *Morton's Hope*, that included a fictional portrait of Bismarck at university ('Otto von Rabenmark'). Motley said that Bismarck was 'in every respect ... immeasurably beyond any person I have ever known'. Hans von Kleist-Retzow was the only really close friend that Bismarck made after university (JS p39-40).

1874 he told the Prussian Parliament, 'I am a disciplined statesman who subordinates himself to the total needs and requirements of the state in the interest of peace and the welfare of my country.'

He also *hated* the bureaucracy. He thought some sort of parliament should counterbalance the monarchy *and* the bureaucracy. Initially he thought it should be chosen by estates — a representative body based on occupational and interest groups, with landowners dominant — and able only to talk, not pass laws. Though he sometimes praised the British Parliamentary system, the thing he probably liked most about it was its organic, rather than rationalist, nature. He always opposed what was the heart of the British system – ultimate Parliamentary control of finance and taxes.

I will write some blogs on his general character and 'lessons' that can be abstracted from the intricate story below. See the Introduction on my blog for a few thoughts on this.

CHRONOLOGY

1806 Dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire.

1807 Abolition of legal prohibition against the sale of noble estates. 1817-30 (OP) Agrarian depression forced many gentry to sell estates. '[I]n 1806 75.6% of noble estates in the rural hinterland of Königsberg were still in noble hands. By 1829 this figure had fallen to 48.3%' (*Iron Kingdom*, p408). By 1856, only 60% of the 12,339 noble estates were still in the hands of aristocratic families including recently ennobled: average size 1,200 acres.

1808 Goethe's *Faust Part I* (Part II in 1832).

1810 University of Berlin founded under the inspiration of von Humboldt. He believed universities should focus on research and teach subjects for their intrinsic value, not preparing students for careers.

1811-16 Hardenberg's land settlements.

1814-15 Congress of Vienna.

March 1815 Napoleon escaped Elba, returned to Paris.

April The Tambora volcano (Indonesia) erupted: massive, changed climate: harvests worst for a century (Evans) hit Europe which was recovering from huge destruction of the wars, putting pressure on food prices, which in turn increased food riots over the next few years.

1 April 1815 Otto von Bismarck was born on his father's estate at Shönhausen, a few miles east of the Elbe, as Europe's statesmen grappled with Napoleon's Hundred Days. His father's estate had been occupied by Napoleon's troops.

18 June 1815 Battle of Waterloo then the Congress of Vienna was finalised.

- A legend of Napoleon influenced France thereafter: the military coup (18 Brumaire), the Napoleonic code, patriotism, universal suffrage and referendums, new bureaucracies strengthening the central state, meritocracy, and military glory.
- Dealing with Napoleon generated reform projects across Europe, e.g Prussian army and bureaucracy reform, Speransky in Russia.
- Britain dominated the sea and pushed free trade, grabbed crucial points like Malta, Ceylon, Cape of Good Hope.
- The hereditary principle was challenged by America then France then across the globe: monarchy, aristocracy, slavery and serfdom all under pressure.
- Slave trade formally outlawed but in general it excluded consideration of extra-European affairs.
- The Holy Alliance, signed in Paris 26/9/15, between Russia, Austria, Prussia: agreed to mutual assistance against threats to peace and order. It was described by Castlereagh as 'a piece of sublime mysticism and nonsense' but Britain still cooperated with other Powers in suppressing revolutionary activity. Metternich referred to it as a 'loud-sounding nothing', a 'moral demonstration', the 'overflow of the pietistic feeling of Emperor Alexander'. (Alexander had been persuaded by the prophetess Juliane von Krüdener that he was the instrument of the downfall of the Antichrist, Napoleon. He once had dinner with Metternich with an extra place laid for Christ. She influenced the idea of the Holy Alliance.)
- A major redrawing of frontiers — 'I spent the day carving up Europe like a piece of cheese' wrote Metternich to his mistress.
- The German Confederation (Bund) replaced the Holy Roman Empire (with similar borders) which Metternich did not seek to restore. 39 states instead of the thousand of the 18th Century (34 by 1866). Only part of the Habsburg monarchy belonged to the Confederation. The Federal Act of June 1815 declared the territory it covered to be 'Germany'. It referred to the old Holy Roman Empire by defining parts of Austria and Prussia that belonged to the Confederation as 'their possessions formerly belonging to the German empire'. Three foreign heads of state were members with full rights: the king of England (because he was also king of Hanover); the king of Denmark (Holstein and Lauenburg); the king of the Netherlands (Luxembourg). It had no head of state but was a legal subject under international law. Many

non-Germans lived there (Poles, Czechs, Slovenians etc). Siemann: Metternich and the other leaders refused to accept the unity of nation, language, and territory.

- The Powers committed to periodic meetings to settle differences, maintain the balance of power, and cooperate against a return of chaos — ‘the concert of Europe’. When trouble flared in Spain and Italy over the next few years, the Powers coordinated to suppress liberals and revolutionaries.
 - The mercenary armies of the 18th Century selling themselves to the highest bidder were finished for good.
 - International treaties had been thought to die with a monarch and require re-signing, after 1815 they were seen as between states rather than between sovereigns.
 - There were a lot of young officers who had fought in the wars and absorbed a mix of the Napoleonic legend (18 Brumaire) and liberal ideas.
 - The death rate from battle between 1815-1914 was seven times less than the 18th Century.
- 15 November and 2 December 1816 The ‘Spa Fields riots’ (Islington). Thomas Spence, a radical, had planned an attack on the Tower of London and Bank of England. He and Arthur Thistlewood were arrested for high treason. Situation escalated on 28/1/17 when the Prince Regent’s carriage was attacked on his way to Parliament. Secret Parliamentary committees of both Houses discussed repression of revolutionary elements. 24/2/17 Canning gave a speech to the Commons based on a special report of the ‘secret committee’. There were ‘secret cabals’ and ‘midnight plotting’. The laws were not fit to cope. He invoked the French Revolution: ‘Can it be forgotten how frequently, in the course of the French Revolution, the world has seen sanguinary minorities riding in blood over the necks of their prostrate countrymen?’ He reminded MPs they had all recently seen ‘crimes followed by crimes, in a long train of horrors’ ending in despotism. ‘If then, the government demands extraordinary powers, I ask, on the other hand, are these or are they not, extraordinary times? Have we, has England, ever seen the like before?’ These measures will defend the constitution, ‘that system of law and liberty, under which England has so long flourished in happiness and glory’. He won the vote 190-14. Metternich requested the speech and annotated the text approvingly (Siemann p562ff). Metternich agreed with Canning that the problems in England were part of a wider European problem with revolutionary conspiracies. Habeus Corpus was suspended. The Seditious Meetings Act.

1817 The Wartburg festival, celebration of Martin Luther’s Reformation, gathering of German students. They burned papers labelled with the names of books. Karl Sand threw in Kotzebue’s *History of the German Empires*, two years later he killed him. Heinrich Heine wrote about it in 1821, a character says, ‘This was only the prologue. Where books are burned / humans will in the end be burned as well.’

1817 Castlereagh: Britain should ‘keep up a navy equal to the navies of any two Powers that can be brought against us’ but this was never formalised. 1848 PM Russell said that instead of a two-power aim ‘laid down in the Committee of 1817’ it would be sufficient to be ‘stronger at sea than any other foreign Power’. 1815-1880s UK unofficially kept to about a third stronger than France without much public debate about the logic or reasoning. 1889 First Lord of the Admiralty George Hamilton made recommendations: serious new naval building, Naval Defense Act, and a formal two-power standard. The essential metric was seen as modern battleships but it was also assumed that Britain would have to have *more* cruisers than the next two Powers. Later developments such as torpedo boats and submarines were not included in the official balance. (*The Weary Titan*, Friedburg)

1818 Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*.

1818 Prussia abolished all internal duties and introduced a low uniform tariff.

1818 Hegel appointed to the Chair of Philosophy, Berlin.

10-11 Feb 1818 Attempted assassination of the Duke of Wellington as he returned to his hotel at Lam. Metternich learned of it when Paris newspapers arrived in Vienna on 22/2. (Napoleon left the would-be assassin money in his will.)

Sep 1818 Congress of Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle) opened. Concern among the Powers about revolutionary conspiracies, movements, nationalism in Germany.

1819 (UK) The Cotton Mills and Factories Act banned employment of children under 9 and restricted hours for those under 16 to 16 hours per day. 1833 the Factory Act tightened restrictions and required children have 2 hours of education per day.

23 March 1819 Carl Sand, a German university student and member of a *Burschenschaft* (liberal student association), assassinated August von Kotzebue who had written mocking the pretensions of German nationalists. (Kotzebue's four year old witnessed the stabbing, started screaming, and Sand stabbed himself in the chaos but survived, handing a manifesto to a servant as he left.) Sand became a martyr to the cause of a united German national state. The crime was investigated and all sorts of details came out. On his journey to the deed he wrote in a book, 'What are the old sleepyheads likely to achieve? Trust in yourself and build an altar for God and fatherland in your own heart.' He wrote various on the themes of blood sacrifices for the fatherland. He also claimed to be acting in the name of the Greek struggle for national independence. He was not crazy or even wild. Everyone described him as calm. He was a terrorist. He said he wanted to spread terror (*Schrecken*) to motivate the 'strong youth' against their governments and to motivate governments to become more nationalist: 'In order to save our common fatherland, Germany, this still-torn and ignoble confederation of states, from the great danger that is near, I want to bring terror to those who are evil and craven, and courage to those who are good. Shouting and talking have no effect — only acting can unite — I want at least to hurl a fire into the present slackness...' (Sand's executioner was sympathetic and secretly dismantled the bloodstained scaffold and rebuilt it as a summer house for the secret use of members of the *Burschenschaft*.)

Siemann (p574ff). Metternich heard the news in Rome on 9 April (NB. News of an assassination took ~17 days to get a few hundred miles to the most influential politician in the world). He immediately wrote, 'I don't like madmen or mad deeds of any kind, and even less those who murder good people who are sitting quietly in their rooms... **The world is sick, my friend; there is nothing worse than an ill-advised thirst for freedom. It kills everything and in the end itself.**' The next day he wrote to his wife, 'I assure you that the world was in perfect health in 1789 in comparison with what it is now.' He always abhorred political violence such as Sand's assassination and saw it as easily pushing Europe back to the horrors of the French terror. (On hearing, in England in 1848, the news of Count Latour being lynched in Vienna, he said, 'Murder is a very bad weapon, bloodshed calls for bloodshed, and it is in its nature to soil what it touches, and not to purify it.')

He suspected it was part of a conspiracy, not an isolated act. He wrote (9/4), 'I, for one, do not doubt that the murderer acted, not on his own impulses, but within the context of a secret society. **In this case, true evil will also produce some good because poor Kotzebue serves as an *argumentum ad hominem* which not even the liberal Duke of Weimar is able to defend. My concern is to give the matter the best possible direction in which to develop, to gain the maximum advantage from it, and I shall not waver in my efforts to pursue this concern...** [To wife, 10/4] **I do not allow myself to be distracted, I go my own way, and if all the ministers did the same, things would not be as they are**'.

He was soon writing sarcastically that he was inundated by requests to help 'finish the nonsense that every German prince has provoked and fuelled in his country and now does not know how to appease'. He proposed meeting in Carlsbad to discuss the response — but very secretly to avoid press coverage and high emotions. The first issue was freedom of the press, much of which had glorified Sand's actions. Different states had their own laws. The Bund had responsibility for uniform rules in Bund territory but so far had not formulated them and it was a complex legal and political problem. There were inevitable loopholes and a constant process of discussion and amendment until 1848.

Metternich arrived in Carlsbad 21 July. The Prussian minister of police, Wittgenstein, organised a secret meeting between Metternich and Friedrich Wilhelm III (FW3) in Teplitz (27 July - 2 August) to discuss the response to Sand. They agreed measures to push with the other German states at Carlsbad. Metternich was convinced there were revolutionary dangers across Europe, justifying

themselves with the same arguments as Sand about nationalism, Greek independence, the desire for constitutions etc. More and more evidence came in of the role of universities and clubs in breeding violent revolutionaries. Civil servants and academics were all part of the problem. FW3 asked for Metternich's help. Metternich gave it on condition: *no representative assembly for Prussia*. Discussions at Carlsbad 6-31 August. Metternich pushed the Bund to agree the 'Carlsbad decrees', agreement between German states to: 1) prohibit student associations and regulate universities, 2) control the press (pre-censorship for smaller texts), 3) create the Central Investigation Commission (located in Mainz) to investigate revolutionaries, 4) the Bund to have authority to enforce compliance on states. These were agreed at the end of August then passed by the Bund on 20 September.

Siemann: the conventional story is that reactionary Metternich used Sand to impose his view but in reality he was besieged on all sides to act. Castlereagh was content with Metternich's actions and thought that interventions to squash revolution were acceptable. He thought the meeting of kings and ministers in Vienna after Carlsbad 'a new discovery in the European Government' that brought 'the efficiency and almost the simplicity of a single state'.

16 August 1819 'The Peterloo Massacre'. Further meetings and riots across England. The government responded with the Six Acts to control the press, subversive meetings, paramilitary organisations, tougher sentences for sedition etc.

13 Feb 1820 The Duc de Berry, son of Charles X and potential successor to the French throne, was assassinated in Paris.

23 Feb 'The Cato Street Conspiracy', a plot to murder the British Cabinet was foiled by an informer. Some conspirators were arrested, some fled. Arthur Thistlewood was the ring leader, had spoken at Spa Fields. Some were hung and beheaded, others transported to Australia.

Oct-Dec 1820 Congress of Troppau (what was then Austrian Silesia): Emperor Franz, Tsar Alexander, FW3. Britain's representative was her envoy to Vienna (Castlereagh's brother). Main topic was trouble in Naples. Russia's Foreign Minister was the Greek, Capo d'Istria who Metternich described as 'not a bad man but, honestly speaking, he is a complete and thorough fool... He lives in a world to which our minds are sometimes transported by a bad nightmare.' Metternich blamed him for foolish proclamations made at Troppau.

1821 Peter Beuth, head of the Prussia Department of Trade and Industry, set up a Technical Institute in Berlin. Visited Britain in 1823 and 1836 to gather information about new technologies.

1822 The Bismarck family leased their estates and moved to Berlin.

12 Aug 1822 Castlereagh committed suicide, succeeded by Canning. Siemann: Metternich and Castlereagh spoke of a European general interest, a 'public law of Europe', of international law. Canning emphasised 'national interest'.

1822-7 Bismarck attended the Plamann Anstalt in Berlin.

December 1823 President Monroe announced 'the Monroe doctrine': Europe must not intervene in the affairs of the Americas.

1823 (KL) FW3 created 8 provincial, corporately organised assemblies. Clark: These did move things in the direction of a representative assembly: deputies voted by head, and the 'noble estate' was defined by privileged property not privileged birth.

1823-4 Massacres of each other by Christian Greeks and Muslims. Byron died in 1824. Paintings and pamphlets.

21 June 1824 Metternich-Gentz: '*Si vis pacem para bellum* [if you want peace, prepare for war] everyone understands... This saying, and nothing else, have I applied throughout the whole history of the Greek affair, but only in the way of negotiation. This men do not understand. I have filled my diplomatic arsenal, completed and trained my troops, not in order to come to war, but to prevent it.'

28 Nov 1824 Metternich: 'War can only be the result of enormous mistakes, and Mr Canning [the British foreign minister], who does not want one either, may lead us there. War would mean the loss of the social body of Russia, of Austria, of the whole world. The war — the only one conceivably happening — would not be one in which the people simply see Russian and Turkish

rivalries, and expect that it will mutually produce wounded soldiers and foster or fight against prejudices... No, my friend, this war would be one of those great natural catastrophes [*des grandes catastrophes de nature*] that turn everything upside down. All elements would clash and upon meeting crush everything between them, that is, Europe as a whole. But it will not come about, unless Mr Canning would play the *deus ex machina* which sets this great work of destruction and death in motion. He is capable of it.'

19 November 1825 Tsar Alexander died without an heir. His brother renounced the throne. The youngest of the brothers, **Nicholas, became Tsar**. He was a reactionary with a bust of Peter the Great on his desk. This provoked the 'Decembrists' (liberal aristocrats and officers) into an attempted coup which was crushed. This strengthened the view of Metternich and others that Europe was plagued by secret societies, *carbonari*, masons etc. Nicholas strengthened censorship and was determined to use Russian power to suppress revolutionary conspiracies across Europe. 1826 Canning: 'I resolved that if France had Spain, it should not be Spain with the Indies. I called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old.' The Spanish empire in the Americas had been wrecked by the Napoleonic Wars. Britain turned a blind eye to independence movements in South America pushed by Bolivar.

1827 British Navy sank Ottoman fleet at Navarino to force them into concessions re Greece. Wellington, Commander-in-Chief of British Army, publicly attacked the action as weakening the Ottomans thereby helping Russia expand. Kicked off another war between Russia and Ottomans, (the one-eyed fighting the blind, as Frederick the Great had called it). Metternich thought that the states should respect the Ottoman Empire, not prioritise Greece, but after the crisis kicked off he preferred to accept an independent Greece than continue with ructions between the five Powers. He saw 1824-25 as a 'transitional period' because of the self-serving policies of Canning and Navarino as a turning point for the European system. (He asked Britain, do you think that the next time Ireland kicks off then you'll be OK with other Powers getting involved? And what about the Finnish rebels vis Russia? Didn't work.)

1827 Ressel patented his screw propeller invention. 1845 Isambard Brunel built a screw-propelled ship to cross the Atlantic, *SS Great Britain*

1827-30 Bismarck attended Friedrich-Wilhelm Gymnasium.

1828 Prussia and Hesse-Darmstadt customs agreement. This virtually completed the land bridge between two halves of Prussia and put pressure on others like Hesse-Cassel to join. Cf. Metternich 1831.

1828 Thomas Arnold took over Rugby School. His changes had wide affects on public schools.

1828-29 Restrictions on Catholics in public life removed by Acts of Parliament (partly to defuse tension in Ireland). In Britain also an Evangelical revival from early 19th Century. Wilberforce campaigned against immoral art and literature. Methodism, Baptists, Unitarians grew — stressed simplicity, reliance on Bible, shorn of ritual, open air sermons, stressed a sober and orderly lifestyle.

1829 Mendelssohn staged a performance of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* (1727) with the King of Prussia in the audience. It had not been performed since Bach's death and was a triumph. 'It is as if I heard the roaring of the sea from afar' (Goethe, on hearing of its success). From 1851 the Bach Society began to publish all Bach's work in their original form, without modern editing, completed in 1900.

1829 Treaty of Adrianople. 1) Guaranteed the independence of Greece. 2) The entire estuary region of the Danube, parts of Armenia, and the duchies at the Danube Moldavia and Walachia (the later Romania) was to come under Russian influence. Russia became a power in the Balkans in competition with the Habsburgs.

1829 Prussian Finance Minister von Motz: '[I]mport, export and transit duties are only the consequence of the political division between various states ... then the contrary is also true that the unification of these states in a customs or commercial union will lead to one and the same political system.'

June 1829: Palmerston to Commons: 'There is in nature no power but mind, all else is passive and inert; in human affairs this power is opinion; in political affairs it is public opinion; and he who can

grasp this power, with it will subdue the fleshly arm of physical strength, and compel it to work out his purpose... those statesman who know how to avail themselves of the passions, and the interests, and the opinions of mankind, are able to give an ascendancy, and to exercise a sway over human affairs, far out of all proportion greater than belong to the power and resources of the state over which they preside’.

1830

1830 Victor Hugo: ‘Romanticism, taken as a whole, is only liberalism in literature... Freedom in art and liberty in society are the twin goals to which all consistent and logical thinkers should march in step.’ Eugene Delacroix painted *Liberty Leading the People* commemorating the overthrow of Charles X. There were revolutionary disturbances across Europe in 1830 but almost everywhere *the peasants, so vital in 1789, were quiescent.*

1830 Greece declared an independent state and accepted by the Powers after years of chaos.

1830 The Liverpool-Manchester line opened in a ceremony attended by the Duke of Wellington. Within 20 years there were 7,000 miles of railway in Britain. In 1847 a quarter of a million people were engaged in British railway construction and drove brick and iron production. (Carlyle, riding one of the earliest trains, described it as the ‘likeliest thing to a Faust’s flight on the Devil’s mantle’.)

1830-2 Bismarck attended *Gymnasium zum Grauen Kloster* (the Grey Cloister Gymnasium).

20 April Charles X declared war on the Dey of Algiers (the governor of the Sultan) for trivial reasons. It allowed him to limit votes in the Chamber of Deputies, curtail the press etc.

5 June Metternich very worried, wrote to his envoy in Paris: ‘Everything in France is at stake — everything is in a state of acute crisis. I have long had a presentiment of the existence of danger and seen it gradually increasing; for a long time, too, I have thought it my duty to call the serious attention of the principal Courts to this subject.’

22 July Metternich left Vienna on his usual summer holiday, via Prague to Teplitz where he talked to the Prussian king. He arrived at his summer residence on 29/7, three days after chaos broke out in Paris.

26 July Parisians woke to the news that Charles X had muzzled the press, dissolved the new parliament before it met, altered electoral law. Sparked riots in Paris, barricades up, loyal troops fragmented: the July Days. **Charles X overthrown, Louis Philippe took over.** (He survived many assassination attempts in coming years.) About 800 civilians and 200 soldiers dead, thousands of barricades across Paris. Clark: the liberal press credited mobilised workers for success. News spread rapidly across Europe, a foreshadow of 1848. Weeks later revolution created a new independent Belgian state. In the new constitution the franchise only rose from 0.3% to 0.5% entitled to vote, from 140k to 240k of 26m. Privileged position of Catholic Church was downgraded mildly.

Palmerston was happy and saw it as a wonderful effect of the free press, the cause of liberty etc — and hoped to see similar uprisings elsewhere.

Metternich was alarmed at ‘the collapse of the dam in Europe’.

5 August Metternich left his holiday early for Vienna via Carlsbad. By chance Nesselrode, Russian Foreign Minister, was taking the waters at Carlsbad. They talked. Metternich wanted to bring the Powers together. This meant improving relations with Russia after the disputes over Greece. Deal with Nesselrode: no interference in France’s internal disputes but permit no violation of the peace of Europe or attacks on other states. (Field Marshal Wrede wanted to march straight to Paris. Metternich advised against.)

Unknown at the time (Siemann claims to reveal it in his biography): Metternich had blackmail material on Louis Philippe. LP had written a letter in 1805 in which he volunteered to General Mack (as in ‘we’ve been Macked’, Bilibin’s joke in *War and Peace*) to join his army and the Third Coalition. Metternich had kept the letter and filed it as ‘Acta Secreta’ in a special file in the Austrian archives outside the usual diplomatic archive. He gave a copy of it to Count Apponyi, the Austrian ambassador to Paris, with a coded letter beginning, ‘You will find enclosed an extremely interesting

piece of writing, simply reading it will prove to you that it contains an enormous means for compromising Louis Philippe [*un moyen de compromission immense*]; use it to blackmail LP if he shows any intention of planning to attack us militarily, tell him we'll publish it and other items. Metternich had similar material on others including the King of Bavaria (material on the famous courtesan Lola Montez).

At the end of August, LP sent an envoy to Vienna who assured Metternich and the Emperor he would not disrupt peace in Europe. Europe accepted the change. In the 17 years of the July Monarchy there were 17 ministries. It sparked a revolt in Belgium (September). The Powers discussed intervention but agreed a new deal without war (London, November). Metternich worried that if Austria sent forces to Belgium it would leave her exposed in Italy and Germany where he feared further trouble. There was trouble across Germany in Aachen, Leipzig, Dresden, Brunswick, Kassel, Hanover.

1 Sep Metternich-Nesselrode: 'The thought I secretly cherish is that ancient Europe is at the beginning of the end. My determination being to perish with it, I shall know how to do my duty, nor is this my motto only — it is that of the Emperor too. New Europe, on the other hand, has not as yet even begun its existence, and between the end and the beginning there will be a chaos.' (Evans dates this 1829 but I'm assuming Metternich's biographer is more likely to be right with this date.) November An uprising in Warsaw. Continued until put down by Russia in late 1831.

November Lord Grey formed a government. In 1830 there were numerous demonstrations some with radical politicians speaking, people wearing tricolour ribbons, farm labourers smashing machinery, artisans campaigning against wage reductions, people shouting slogans against the creation of the new Metropolitan Police. 'The country was in a state of insanity about Reform' said Wellington. Palmerston was made Foreign Secretary. Staff in FO: ~30! Palmerston said he would try to fight the culture of promotion by seniority: 'it may sometimes be much for the public interest that an able man should be promoted over his seniors'.

1831

1831 First use by the Treasury of the distinction between permanent and parliamentary under-secretary. After this Under Secretaries had a choice of permanent official or political appointee. By 1850 it was established that the Permanent Under Secretary (PUS), not the chief clerk, was the official head of the Foreign Office. In 1852 Lord Stanley, then Parliamentary Under Secretary, noted that the PUS was effectively superior to everyone in the FO except the Secretary of State. (Neilson & Otte)

1831-6 Darwin's voyages on the *Beagle*.

3 June 1831 Metternich-Apponyi: 'Nothing could be more desirable than the most perfect harmony among the *four ancient allies*. Let it be our endeavour to establish it, and to give it as much weight as possible... [But] we must never forget that the position of the British Cabinet differs, in very many respects, from that of the *three* allies, and that the latter cannot subordinate all the requirements of their policy to objections which may appear insurmountable to the *fourth* member of the alliance'.

11 June 1831 Metternich wrote: 'States which are bound together by material interests and have as a result common tariff, trade and manufacturing laws, have powerful motives not to be separated from one another on political grounds. The influence of the state which provides the model and centre for such a common interest must steadily increase along with the number of smaller states which ... attach themselves to this common interest. **Thus starts to develop a Bund within the Bund and if [this policy] continues there can be no other result than the separation of Austria from German trade interests. Austria, with its separate customs system, will stand against the other German governments in trading matters and will appear as a foreign police to them.**'

November 1831 Weavers in Lyon marched demanding a minimum wage, fired on. They unfurled banners, *Vivre en travaillant, mourir en combattant* (*Live working or die fighting*).

1832

1832-3 Attended Göttingen university.

Jan 1832 Palmerston: British reforms have given the monarchy greater solidity by 'incorporating with the governing portion of the community a vast body of the middle classes who have hitherto been excluded'.

1832 Reform Act. After the Bill was voted down in the Lords, there were riots in many parts of the country. Amid great tension the king agreed to create new peers to push the Bill through, Wellington and supporters caved in. British electorate 440,000 before, the Act added 216,000 to make it about 5% of the population (Evans).

1832 Hambach festival, a protest for civil rights and national unity against the Metternich system, established black-red-gold as the symbol of democratic Germany. 'Liberalism has given way to radicalism' Metternich wrote to his Ambassador in Berlin. It was reported to Palmerston (6 June) that Metternich was 'in a state of much agitation... Prince Metternich begged me to remark to Your Lordship that the events which are passing in Germany cannot be safely judged by an English standard — that if ever you should see such a meeting in Vienna or a *charivari* [parade] given under my windows, be assured that the Austrian Empire is at an end... He thinks that the Mass of the People and the higher ranks of the Bourgeoisie are still attached to Monarchical Government and [are] Enemies to this agitation, but that the Press, the Professors, the Students and Employés who are exorbitantly numerous are its active promoters.'

1832-4 Metternich persuaded the Bund to introduce the 'Six Articles' sharpening censorship, banning parties and demonstrations, and more. Across Germany liberal moves were suppressed and reversed. Some liberal writers were imprisoned, others (e.g Heinrich Heine) were exiled.

1833

1830-33 Publication of *Principles of Geology* (Lyell) which contradicted many religious claims, e.g the age of the world.

1833 *Ma loi d'avenir*, by Claire Demar, a radical essay calling for equality for women.

April An attack on the main police station and the Bund in Frankfurt, and a plan to take the members hostage. Metternich treated it as terrorism. A Central Investigative Office was set up in Frankfurt to monitor radicals and Metternich set up the Mainz Central Police (sometimes called the Mainz Intelligence Agency) to coordinate espionage and policing — 'the first institutionally independent, centralised secret service, organised as a state authority, on German soil' and made Metternich 'the best informed politician on the Continent' regarding political developments and the politically committed literary world (Siemann p668). Its operations extended across all Bund members and to nodes such as Paris and Zurich. Dissolved in February 1848. Metternich also had a special office in the Chancellery (called the *Ziffernkabinett*) to provide espionage expertise including intercepting, opening, copying letters, encryption etc. NB. Metternich did not control all this apparatus, the police and censorship in Austria were controlled by the Ministry of the Interior.

24 June Metternich-Emperor: the growth of the Zollverein is worrying, it will harm our economic interests but our political interests more. Prussia's growing economic power will imbalance the Bund as 10/17 members are in the *Zollverein*. Prussia wants the German states to 'direct their view in fear as in hope only toward Berlin, and to see Austria at long last for what it actually in commercial terms already is to all these states, and as what the fashionable Prussian writers are again and again eager to present it, namely as a foreign country'; eventually this trend will open a rift with Prussia. **Metternich was looking for a way to deal the *Zollverein* 'a most devastating blow'**. The Bund should become the centre of trade and he reminded the Emperor of Article 19 of the Federal Act — i.e the Bund's role in trade and commerce. He suggested free trade between the Bund member and equal treatment for products originating inside the Bund. This involved changes in Austria to trade policy and some concessions 'to prevent a larger evil which might

eventually affect the well-being and influence of the monarchy at the roots'. Siemann: he was in a Catch 22 — if he'd tried to push through membership of the *Zollverein*, he'd have fallen foul of powerful interests at court and failed; if he'd favoured a customs union internal to the monarchy, as his enemy Kolowrat advised, Austria would have lost its ties with Germany. The only one who could have pushed through an attempt to join the *Zollverein* was the Emperor and he didn't want to. An example of the problem: it would have been necessary to lower the tariff on sugar for imports to Bohemia, but the Bohemian owners of large sugar producing estates strongly opposed exposing themselves to more competition, and Kolowrat was a lobbyist for them. The memo was ignored as the Emperor did when he disagreed with Metternich (not given the usual signature).
August 1833 The Slavery Abolition Act passed in Britain.

1834

1834-5 Attended Berlin university. Gall: he went there autumn 1833.

1834 The New Poor Law in Britain. Designed to incentivise the poor to seek practically any employment rather than the workhouse.

1834 Tolpuddle Martyrs. A group of agricultural labourers founded the Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers to protest wages. They were prosecuted under an obscure law, sentenced to transportation to Australia, but after an outcry they were pardoned and returned. The Combination Acts of 1799 and 1800 had been passed but repealed in 1824.

1 Jan 1834 The *Zollverein* agreement came into force abolishing internal tariffs and creating common external tariffs, with revenue distributed on basis of population rather than the per capita imports/exports for different states: Prussia, the two Hesses, Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Saxony and some smaller states. [Why did Austria allow? Carr: Metternich realised the dangers but was not influential in domestic policy. Trade with Hungary was much more important to Austria than trade with Germany and Austrian businesses did not want to face competition from Germany.]

7 April 1834 Bismarck-Scharlach: 'I shall amuse myself for a few years waving a sword at raw recruits, then take a wife, beget children, till the soil and undermine the morals of my peasantry by the inordinate distillation of spirits. So, if in 10 years' time you should happen to find yourself in the neighbourhood, I invite you to commit adultery with an easy and curvaceous young woman selected from the estate, to drink as much potato brandy as you fancy and to break your neck out hunting as often as you see fit. You will find here a fleshy home-guard officer with a moustache that curses and swears till the earth trembles, cultivates a proper repugnance to Jews and Frenchmen, and thrashes his dogs and domestics with egregious brutality when bullied by his wife. I shall wear leather trousers, make a fool of myself at the Stettin wool market and when people address me as baron I shall stroke my moustache benignly and knock a bit off the price; I shall get pissed on the king's birthday and cheer him vociferously and the rest of the time I shall sound off regularly and my every other word will be: 'Gad what a splendid horse! In short I shall be happy in my family's rural circle, *car tel est mon plaisir*.'

5 May Bismarck-Scharlach: I intend to become a civil servant, 'that is, *Referendar* at the Berlin Municipal Court. My plan is to stay here for a year, then go to the Provincial Government in Aachen; after the second year to sit the diplomatic examination and then to leave to the grace of destiny which will render me utterly indifferent whether one sends me to Petersburg or Rio Janeiro... You will, alas, find in this letter my old habit of talking a lot about myself. Do me the pleasure of imitating this and fear not for that reason the slightest shadow of vanity.'

Summer 1834 Roon was working in the topological section of the General Staff and happened to be surveying around Pomerania. He met Bismarck via Moritz von Blanckenburg. Their friendship proved fateful for Prussia, Germany and the world.

Dec Peel published the Tamworth Manifesto.

1835

1835 Adolphe Quetelet (astronomer, statistician, sociologist) published *Sur l'homme et le développement de ses facultés, ou Essai de physique sociale* (*On Man and the Development of his Faculties, or Essay on Social Physics*).

1835 Prussian railway construction kicks off.

2 March Ferdinand I succeeded as Emperor of Austria until his abdication December 1848, after the death of his father Franz (who had said, 'My Empire resembles a ramshackle house. If one wishes to demolish a bit of it one does not know how much will collapse.') He had serious mental problems and suffered fits (his parents were double first cousins). He's sometimes referred to as 'retarded' but he kept a lucid diary, spoke five languages, played the piano. Franz had defended Metternich from his family, Tsar, and other powerful people. Ferdinand was very different. Siemann: a triumvirate took on the role of regent for Ferdinand — Archduke Ludwig (Franz's brother), Archduke Franz Karl (Ferdinand's brother), and Metternich.

May 1835 Bismarck 'scraped through' (AJPT) the civil service exams and entered the Prussian service in as a law clerk in Berlin.

June 1835 He wrote to a former student friend: 'My life, looked at closely, is really rather pitiful. By day I pursue studies that do not interest me. My evenings I spend in the company of courtiers and civil servants, affecting a delight I am not Schulenburg enough to feel or to seek. I find it hard to believe that the most complete achievement of my chosen goal, the longest title and the largest medal in Germany, or the most stupendous distinction will indemnify me for the physically and spiritually shrunken beat that will be the product of this life. I am still frequently visited by the desire to swap the pen for the plough and the briefcase for the game bag. But that is something I can always still do.'

In July he wrote to a friend complaining that his job was taking minutes in a court, 'my beautiful fingers begin to curve under the burden of the constantly moving pen, and I wish most ardently to serve in some other capacity'. He applied for a transfer to the provincial administration at Aachen.

1836, age 21



In spring 1836 he was in Schönhausen preparing for further exams. He wrote to a friend about his father's castle, ancient damask tapestries almost worn out, masses of rats, the wind howling in the fireplaces, where he was almost alone. 'I prepare my exams, listen to the nightingales, target shoot and read Voltaire and Spinoza's ethics, which I found bound in beautiful pigskin in the library here.' June 1836 (Gall) He passed further exams in philosophy, political science, an oral exam including on law.

Summer Metternich to an American visitor: democracy is 'a dissolving, decomposing principle; it tends to separate men, it loosens society... Monarchy alone tends to bring men together, to unite them into compact and effective masses; to render them capable, by their combined efforts, of the highest degrees of culture and civilisation... [America] will go on much further in democracy, you will become much more democratic. I do not know where it will end, nor how it will end; but it cannot end in a quiet old age.' France is 'like a man who has just passed thoroughly through a severe disease', it is highly unstable, after 25 years in post I've dealt with 28 Ministers of Foreign Affairs. At the age of 25 he had foreseen nothing but change and trouble and had considered going to America. He laboured 'chiefly, almost entirely, to prevent troubles, to prevent evil... I care nothing about the past except as a warning for the future. The present day has no value for me except as the eve of tomorrow. I labour for tomorrow. I do not venture even to think much of the day following but tomorrow, it is with tomorrow that my spirit wrestles [*mon esprit lutte*]'.

In summer 1836 Bismarck became an apprentice official at Aachen. Aachen was a spa with an international clientele. Bismarck was bored by his job. It was a bad combination. He did not stick at his job. He drank and chased girls. One of them was the niece of the Duke of Cleveland, Laura Russell, who he was later told (wrongly, accordingly to Pflanze) was actually an illegitimate daughter. He wracked up debts following her party around Europe then he got into more debt by gambling. According to JS, in a letter omitted from his official Collected Letters he told his brother that he

was as good as engaged (though unofficially), contemplated suicide at his debts and had bought 'a cord of yellow silk'.

Gall suggests that over summer/autumn 1836 he gathered information about requirements for the diplomatic service. He also spoke at some point to the Prussian Foreign Minister, Ancillon, who nudged him towards work in the Zollverein service by way of Prussian provincial administration. Sep-Oct Metternich tried to reform the Habsburg government. He would be 'chief of the State Conference', a civil service body with no royal family. It sidelined Kolowrat. Ferdinand approved the changes. Kolowrat, who had gone to the country for 6 months because of illness, returned to Vienna and fought to undermine the changes spreading stories about Metternich among the Archdukes. The plan was undone and Metternich was damaged with the royal family. Worse, Kolowrat managed to get agreed that all matters relating to finance, domestic politics and the secret state police [*Hohe Polizei*] would be shown only to Kolowrat who would decide if they should be shown to the newly designed State Conference in which the imperial family now sat. By the end of the year, Metternich had lost power and was confined to foreign affairs. Siemann: Kolowrat now was crucial to domestic affairs and if he went away, business was paralysed. This all contributed to the general paralysis of the Empire over the next decade. (I can't judge Riemann's views on this but he seems rather naive in his protestations that Metternich was purely focused on improving the administration — it seems more likely that this master politician used Kolowrat's absence to strike, strengthening his own position and weakening an annoying rival, but he underestimated Kolowrat's weasel-courtier skills.) This power struggle was observed by the courts of Europe. Metternich pointed out to Archduke Ludwig and others that Kolowrat was using his powers of patronage to benefit the network of Bohemian aristocracy and that this network 'are speaking through him who think their power can only be maintained cloaked in fog; and they are right about that'. Behind all this lay a simple fact — much of the Austrian aristocracy did not want reforms that might diminish their power and/or increase taxes on their large estates. In 1838 Metternich engaged in a secret conspiracy to push out Eichhof, an ally of Kolowrat who controlled budgets in the court. In exile after 1848, Metternich wrote how after this 'our empire was without a government... The coach of the state moved on, as vehicles do in consequence of the impulses they have received, and they stop when a force confronts them... The old edifice therefore did not collapse out of inner feebleness but out of a lack of caution in the use of power which had the duty to preserve it.' Cf. Siemann, p699 ff and p734ff.

1837

June 1837 Victoria became Queen in Britain.

In summer 1837 he fell in love with a seventeen year-old blonde beauty, Isabella Loraine-Smith. When they left Aachen he followed her. In Wiesbaden he lost a small fortune gambling. In September he was hoping they would be married. (Gall: he was 'well and truly betrothed to her, whether or not their engagement was official.' He wrote to one friend the wedding would 'probably take place in Leicestershire in late March'.) The English party returned home. His pursuit had made his debts worse, again he tried to salvage things in the casino. He had exceeded his leave by many weeks.

At the end of September 1837 he returned to Kniephof 'poor in purse and sick at heart'. His debts took years to repay. In 1845 when asked what had happened, he replied that he had lost her to 'a colonel of 50 with one arm, 4 horses and 15,000 in revenues'. In 1840 she married a Harrovian banker and moved to Brixworth Hall. In 1844, Laura married the Earl of Musgrave.

1838

In 1838 at Potsdam he briefly tried again to resume his duties but again turned to drink, gambling and worsened his debts and resigned after five months.

'I quitted Aachen [Aix-la-Chapelle, where he was working] with a very poor opinion of our bureaucracy in detail and collectively.' Memoirs: There was then a feeling in the upper echelons against Prussians for senior jobs. 'As minister, I have always had a fellow-provincial's kindness for native-born Prussian diplomats but my official sense of duty has rarely allowed me to gratify this preference.' Foreign language skill 'after the fashion in which it is possessed even by head-waiters', and particularly French, was taken too seriously. (Bismarck would end the tradition of official documents being written in French. In his Memoirs he complained that officials would waste a day on literary style arguing about the exact French equivalent between 'obscure, indistinct, doubtful' and so on.) Our most successful commanders, such as Blucher and Moltke, 'were not original Prussian products' any more than Stein and Hardenberg in the civil service. Our officials are too inclined to interfere with local decisions. (I p 11) Now too many jobs are a stepping stone to higher jobs and officials are incentivised to interfere more and more. There is a vicious circle of more officials and more interference. Officials in the old days were at least more honest and interested in justice than now. **'Official decisions do not gain in honesty and moderation by being arrived at collectively; for apart from the fact that, in the case of voting by majority, arithmetic and chance take the place of logical reasoning, that feeling of personal responsibility, in which lies the essential guarantee for the conscientiousness of the decision, is lost directly it comes about by means of anonymous majorities.'**

He found his work 'petty and tedious'. He retreated to the country to govern his estates with a poor view of the system. 'Renouncing the ambition for an official career, I readily complied with the wishes of my parents by taking up the humdrum management of our Pomeranian estates. I had made up my mind to live and die in the country after attaining successes in agriculture and perhaps war also if war should come. So far as my country life left me any ambition at all, it was that of a lieutenant in the *Landwehr*.'

1838 First Prussian railway, Berlin-Potsdam. Joint stock companies were first allowed in 1838.

Jan 1838 (JS) He wrote to his father that he was trying to evade military service by claiming injury (which the official edition of his papers omitted).

1838 A freak accident at Huskar Colliery near Barnsley. The investigation shocked the reading public and made public working practices including children as young as 5 working in mines. The Earl of Shaftesbury led a Royal Commission. Led to Coal Mines Act 1842 and Factories Act 1844.

1838 Working Men's Charter written — 'The Chartists' movement. They were not Jacobins or socialists, they wanted democratic votes and a secret ballot. In the 1840s, Peelite reforms and the Anti-Corn Law League (which had middle class support) sucked support from Chartists.

1838-9 Bismarck discharged his military obligation with a single year of officer training.

July (JS) He visited his mother in Berlin who was terminally ill and begged her to help him find a better position. She wrote to his father who made plans to hand over estates to him and withdraw to Schönhausen.

18 July Otto's father wrote to Otto's older brother, Bernhard: 'While Otto was here he really opened his heart to his mother. He not only told her how he loathed the whole business of public administration, that it was robbing him of all taste for life, and if he were to suffer almost his whole life long he might in the end become district president with an income of two thousand [taler] but could never hope to be happy. He besought his mother most urgently to give him another position. He offered, if we were to build another sugar factory, to go to Magdeburg and study the manufacturing process in practical terms and then run the factory in Kniephof... I have decided to bequeath the estates there [Kniephof] to you both as your property and derive my own livelihood from Schönhausen alone.'

Sep 1838 Wrote his father that he was studying agriculture and included a copy of a letter he'd written to his cousin, Caroline von Bismarck, and later sent another copy to his fiancée. A passage has become one of the most quoted he ever wrote: **'The activity of the individual civil servant among us is very rarely independent, even that of the highest, and for the rest their activity confines itself to pushing the administrative machinery along the tracks already laid down.'**

The Prussian civil servant resembles a player in an orchestra. He may be the first violin or play the triangle; without oversight or influence on the whole he must play his part, as it is set down, whether he think it good or bad. I, however, want to make my own music in my own way or none at all... My pride bids me command rather than obey.' Statesmen are moved not by patriotism but by 'pride, the desire to command, to become admired and renowned. I confess I am not free from these passions.' He wrote of the advantages of states with 'free constitutions' where people like Peel and O'Connell could rise. 'In order to take part in public life, one must be a salaried and dependent servant of the state, one must belong completely to the bureaucratic caste.' And he wrote that the prospect of an outstanding public role 'attracts me with a force that rules out all deliberation, as light attracts mosquitoes.' (KL: In 1835-6 he fell in love with this second cousin, Caroline, but she was already engaged.) Cf. letter from Keyserling, 25/2/55: 'Do you not remember what in probably lucid moments you prophesied to me then [university]: a constitution must come, that's the way to outward honours, at the same time one must be inwardly devout?'

1839

1837-9 *Oliver Twist*, Dickens.

1 Jan His mother died. He moved to Kniephof around Easter (JS). **1839-47, Bismarck was mostly in Shönhausen and Kniephof.** It was a period of 'frustration, isolation and loneliness after the failure of his attempt at a career and before his marriage and first appearance in public life' (OP). Although he said he did not understand Hegel he read him, Spinoza, Feuerbach and many others. He read enormously particularly history but 'he had no interest in historical synthesis or the philosophy of history' (OP). He became very close to his younger sister, Malwine. Stories spread of the 'mad Junker's' wild behaviour. One of his friends wrote how, after staying up late drinking he pushed a chest of drawers against the door to avoid being woken early in the morning — Bismarck fired two shots through the window into the ceiling knocking plaster onto his friend in bed (JS p54).

1839-42 First opium war. China's defeat meant East Asia was passive.

1839 Treaty guaranteeing Belgium's neutrality and independence (Palmerston).

1839 The Pope, encouraged by Britain, condemned the slave trade. Very little effect. Countries like Spain and Portugal saw it as vital to their national interests. There was no continental counterpart to Britain's movement for abolition (Clark p157ff).

1840

1840 Proudhon's *What Is Property?*... 'Property is theft'

1840 *The Organisation of Labour*, Louis Blanc. Advocated things like state managed 'social workshops'.

14 Feb 1840 Palmerston to a cabinet colleague: 'Sooner or later, the Cossak and the Sepoy, the man from the Baltic and he from the British islands will meet in the centre of Asia. It should be our business to make sure that the meeting is as far off from our Indian possessions as may be convenient.' (*The Empire Project*, p. 30)

7 June 1840 Frederick Wilhelm III died (having promised a constitution), FWIV succeeded.

FWIV was a spiritual Romantic seen initially as sympathetic to the national cause and not a reactionary (W Carr). While Frederick the Great, Frederick William II, and Frederick William III had been children of the Enlightenment, Frederick William IV was a child of the Romantic era. He loved romantic novels. He sobbed. Religion was central to his life and politics. His brother, Wilhelm, said he had been captured by 'fanatics' who had been able to 'gain complete control of his entire person and his labile imagination'. He insisted on marrying a Catholic and insisted she could convert in her own time. He loved the medieval 'society of orders'. He 'was steeped in the corporatist ideology of the romantic counter-enlightenment' (Clark). He wanted continuity. He viewed his kingship as

more of an older personal relationship between sovereign and people than as head of state. He was not rude about England's constitution. There were concessions to the Poles and a relaxation of censorship. He dismissed an unpopular police chief. However, he soon worried that he had created unrealistic and dangerous expectations from liberals and began to make clear that many of their hopes would not be met. He made clear that he would not grant an 'artificial' constitution and would continue ruling in 'patriarchal' fashion. Leopold von Gerlach worried about the poor coordination of conservatives as liberal pressure built among the educated population — 'the freshly blowing wind of the *Zeitgeist* ... which, with satanic cleverness, wages an unceasing and systematic war against the authority established by God'. (Clark)

Barclay (*FWIV and the Prussian Monarchy*): FWIV was an artist and his politics were inseparable from art, aesthetics and religion. Friedrich Meinicke said that he thought of 'the state as a work of art in the highest sense of that word'. He designed the Friedenskirche, the new church at Sanssouci with a 12th Century basilica lifted from Murano. He had a happy childhood and enjoyed his private tutors, including von Savigny (who later served as a minister) who seems to have influenced him towards a vehement rejection of natural law as the basis of public authority. He was fat, short-sighted and not interested in the army. He had an early interest in and talent for drawing and architecture. Like the rest of his family, his life was thrown into turmoil by the defeat at Jena and he had a lifelong hate for Napoleon and 'revolution'. One of his tutors wrote to him (~1811-12) that 'because the state does not consist of a Gothic temple, and because no people has ever been ruled on the basis of Romantic pictures, this perpetual drawing is becoming a pure waste of your precious time.' He travelled with his father 1813-15 across Germany and to France and he fell in love with the Rhineland landscapes and projects such as finishing Cologne Cathedral (begun 1248, untouched since 1560!), bound up with his love for the Holy Roman Empire. **His coming of age coincided with the religious renewal in Germany, 'the Awakening', which influenced many aristocratic Germans in hostility towards the Enlightenment and rationalism in politics and religion.** He detested the politics of reformers like Hardenberg. (Radowitz was born into a Catholic family of Hungarian origin and married into the Prussian aristocracy, an able man promoted rapidly in the Prussian Army then a tutor in maths and military to FWIII's youngest son which brought him into contact with FWIV from 1824.) His favourite retreat was Charlottenhof, which he co-designed. Barclay describes his view of his role as a desire for a *Gesamtkunstwerk* (*total work of art*) and an intense faith in the divinely ordained nature of his rule. He was also the first Prussian king to deliver speeches to the public and he was 'brilliant' at it (Barclay).

Multiple ceremonies in Sep-Oct around his coronation. Barclay: he thought that Prussia, which was only recently a monarchy, had no real sacral tradition of kingship and he was trying to create one in a new age in which the old attitudes of Metternich would not suffice. Cf. 9/1842.

Barclay: 6 groups vied for influence — cabinet, ministry, court officials, military entourage, royal family, personal friends. FWIV's habits immediately caused tension. Leopold Gerlach once said of him that he acted 'as though royalty were descended from a different Adam' and therefore was 'utterly indifferent to the people who work with him'. Thile complained that the king 'really does make things very difficult when he quarrels with his ministers about whether a village is called Griebau or Griebow.' There was a high turnover of key officials 1840-7 and frequent reorganisations, none of which worked because the king was not a disciplined character and was always casting around for new ideas. His younger brother Prince Carl was susceptible to shady confidence tricksters and got embroiled in various scandals that had to be covered up — and which FWIV feared would be politically serious if, like the Lola Montez scandal in Bavaria, they became public. FWIV played off advisers, hated to push anyone away, encouraged chaos that drove all factions mad. Radowitz said of him that 'he suffers from an inexplicable weakness or lack of clarity regarding people. Thus his judgement depends more on personal likes or dislikes than on objective considerations. Accordingly one finds the most oddly diverse kinds of people among those whom he likes.' Probably at no time after 1806 was Prussia closer to outright personal rule by a monarch than 1840-5. After 1845 the rise of Bodelschwingh and Canitz made it a bit more stable. He embarked on fruitless battles with his own officials and nobility about changes to titles

and inheritance. He spent ages on court reorganisations and medieval orders and ceremonies, and ideas about chivalric commitment to higher causes, thinking this would further his ideas about the strengthening of the monarchy. Cf. Barclay Chapter 3-5 for details of 1840-48.

August The Rhineland Crisis. Thiers tactlessly suggested the Rhine be restored as France's eastern border which would have meant annexing ~30,000 square kilometres of German land. Crisis passed but it sparked the creation of organisations, festivals etc and did not die out. Siemann (p443): At the height of the crisis Metternich considered a sort of League of Nations as a system of international law to prevent war in Europe. Palmerston was opposed.

1841

1841 (KL) He fell in love with Ottilie von Puttkamer (no relation of Johanna) but her mother disapproved of him and sabotaged his romance ('a woman who, to do her justice, is one of the nastiest I know'). Gall: it was a severe blow to his self-esteem and he spoke later of 'injured vanity at the fact that she did not love me enough to stand up to her mother'.

1841 (Gall) After Bernhard's election as Landrat they provisionally divided up their father's land with Otto running Kniephof. After their father's death in 1845 Kniephof and other land went to Bernhard, Shönhausen to Otto.

May 1841 Palmerston to Commons: 'As long as England remains pre-eminent on the ocean of human affairs, there are none, be they ever so unfortunate, none, be their condition ever so desperate or forlorn, who do not turn with a look of hope to the light that beams from here. They may be beyond the reach of our power, still our moral sympathy and our influence can support them under their reverses, and hold out to them, in the midst of their difficulties, the hope of better days.'

July 1841 The London Straits Convention. All warships were barred from the Straits except the Sultan's allies during wartime, thus keeping Russian warships out of the Mediterranean. (Why did Russia tolerate this?)

In late 1841 Metternich tried again to bring the Empire closer to the *Zollverein*. He wanted to exploit the patriotic fervour of the Rhineland crisis to push Austria to reform internally, improve railway links etc. On 17/11 there was a secret ministerial conference to discuss his ideas. He encountered 'unwavering resistance' (Siemann p709) and the ideas again came to nothing. The Bohemian aristocracy supporting Kolowrat did not want tariff reforms. After 1848 Metternich claimed that old Emperor Franz had, when approaching death, confessed to Metternich that his failure to adopt Metternich's ideas on tariff/economic reform had been a huge mistake. Metternich argued that the paralysis created by Kolowrat led directly to the chaos of 1848.

1842

1830-42 August Comte published *Course of Positive Philosophy*. He had worked for Comte de Saint-Simon, a utopian socialist. Another follower, Leroux, introduced the term 'socialist' into French politics in 1834 (and invented the term 'solidarity'). Louis Blanc added to Saint-Simon's 'To each according to his works' the slogan 'To each according to his needs'.

1842 Report on the sanitary conditions of the working classes in English towns by Edwin Chadwick led to much debate and the creation of a Public Health Association and a General Board of Health.

1842-3 Eugène Sue published a multi-volume novel on the Parisian underworld, *Les Mystères de Paris*. The style was copied across Europe.

1842 'The treaty of Nanking ... opened half a dozen 'treaty-ports' where British merchants were exempt from Chinese jurisdiction, laid down a maximum tariff that the Chinese could levy on imports and transferred the huge harbour at Hong Kong (then still a village) to the British. After the Second Opium War (1856-60), the list of ports was extended and the Chinese interior opened to foreign travel. To uphold these rights, the British maintained a fleet of between thirty and forty

ships, most of them gunboats, to police the coasts and rivers... The commitment seems surprising since the volume of trade remained comparatively modest even late in the century – far below the levels of Britain's Indian trade.' (Darwin)

1842 (KL) He rescued two men who from drowning in a lake.

1842 (JS) He went on a trip to England and saw 'the largest machine factory in the world' in Manchester. 'The politeness and kindness of the English exceeded my expectations ... even the common people are well behaved.' Gall: he also visited Italy and France.

1842 (1843 KL) At the neighbouring estate of his childhood friend, Moritz von Blanckenburg, he met Marie von Thadden, Blanckenburg's fiancée. He debated religious issues with two devout neighbours, Moritz and Marie. He could never remember talking to his father about religion. His mother was an Enlightenment child and was not a churchgoer, though she dallied with occultism. He later described his religious ideas as a student in different ways (deistic, atheistic, pantheistic). He respected Moritz and deeply loved Marie. Marie's father was a close friend of the Gerlachs and this Pietist network was very influential at court and throughout the upper echelons of army and bureaucracy.

Marie was a 'Pietist', what is now known as a 'born again Christian'. The revival movement began as a lay movement within the Lutheran church and was a resurgence of 18th century pietism which had declined among the educated classes during the tide of German idealism. It was something of a reaction against Enlightenment rationalism (OP, p49). With friends, she set out to convert him and succeeded. One of his few close friends, Keyserling, said of his religious conversion, 'Doubt was not fought and conquered; it was silenced by heroic will.' Although he began to read the Bible and pray daily, he rarely attended Church and Pflanze writes that he was attracted to pietism partly by its faith in man's capacity to reach God without the mediation of priests. It is 'highly doubtful' (OP) that his conversion decisively changed his character. His desire to dominate was a more elemental force. His cynical view of humans deepened with years. God was the judge of his actions, not the instigator. Religion strengthened his conscience and confidence in overcoming the will of others. Seeing himself as 'God's soldier' and listening for 'God's footsteps' absolved him of a sense of selfishness in his pursuit of power (OP p56).

Gall: for many years he carried with him a devotional annual containing text from the Bible for each day with accompanying commentaries by Luther. Cf. for example 27/9/70 after Sedan.

September In March FW4 had written to Metternich that 'the greatness, power, and honour of Germany' had become his life's main mission. In September after organising a ceremony and festival at Cologne based on his cathedral project, and giving a speech to the public, FW4 met Metternich who was not pleased with the romantic German national ideas of the new king. Remarkably he said of Prussia to Metternich: 'This thing [Prussia] has no historical basis; it consists of an agglomeration of territories, which themselves once had such a basis and then lost them.' Now there is single artificial unit held together by an oligarchy of officials. 'In this situation it is not possible to speak of anything that might logically be described as "reform", because one can only reform — that is, improve — something which already exists. In Prussia, however, we have to create something new, because what already exists there is an absurdity.' Barclay: for FW4, he saw Germany in Romantic and religious terms, and dreamed of a harmonious political order of kings and estates both in each individual state and at a German level with a restored Empire: monarchy protected, social conflict banished, German nationalism reconciled with kingly sovereignty, all contributing to a force that could roll back the tides of the hated French Revolution. But his ideas were more cultural than political and institutional.

1843

Bettina von Arnim published *This Book Belongs to the King*, a book of essays on poverty that reported on the Berlin slums and criticised the Prussian state for its neglect of the poorest.

7 Feb (JS) Marie wrote to Moritz of Otto: 'I have never seen anybody express his lack of faith or rather pantheism so freely and clearly... his bottomless boredom and emptiness... He was very

upset, was sometimes red in the face but could not get anywhere... a certain shyness before the blue haze of his image of God.' (KL) In 1843 Marie wrote: 'His fine carriage, his brilliance, both internal and external, attract me more and more. But when I am with him I always feel that I am skating on thin ice and might go through at any moment.'

May Marie wrote to a friend: 'Otto B no longer shows his face in Zimmerhausen; very good because dear, good Moritz [her fiancé] could not survive the comparison. That he stays away out of magnanimity I do not believe but because he has something else in mind.'

10 Sep He wrote: 'I love contact with women but marriage is a dubious proposition and my experiences have made me think twice. I feel partly comfortable, partly bored and very chilled in my spirits, and as long as I can hold out, I will... **I am toying with the idea of playing the Asian for a few years to bring a change in the stage design of my comedy and smoke my cigars on the Ganges instead of on the Rega**'. He did not go.

28-29 Oct Leopold von Gerlach diary: nothing is able to stand against 'the always freshly blowing wind of the *Zeitgeist*'. There are some attempts to resist but: '**What can these little manoeuvres possibly achieve against the onward pressing *Zeitgeist* which, with satanic cleverness, wages an unceasing and systematic war against the authority established by God**.' Metternich (1844) talked similarly: 'Out of the storms of our time, a party has emerged whose boldness has escalated to the point of arrogance. If a rescuing dam is not built to contain the streaming flood, then we could soon see even the shadow of monarchical power dissolve.'

1844

Metternich wrote a memo on the economic modernisation of Hungary. 'Industrial development is the natural result of civilisation, whose edifice must be built from the ground up.' It was discussed then handed to a commission and ignored (Siemann p656).

16 Feb Disraeli in Commons: 'I want to see a public man come forward and say what the Irish question is. One says it is a physical question, another, a spiritual. Now it is the absence of aristocracy, then the absence of railways. It is the Pope one day, potatoes the next. Consider Ireland as you would any other country similarly situated. You will see a teeming population which, with reference to the cultivated soil, is denser to the square mile than that of China; created solely by agriculture, with none of the resources of wealth which develop with civilisation; and sustained, consequently, upon the lowest conceivable diet, so that in the case of failure they have no other means of subsistence upon which they can fall back. That dense population in extreme distress inhabits an island where there is an established Church which is not their Church and a territorial aristocracy the richest of whom live in distant capitals. Thus you have a starving population, an absentee aristocracy, and an alien Church, and in addition the weakest executive in the world. That is the Irish question.'

7 April (Gall) He applied to resume civil service training.

May Disraeli published *Coningsby* in which he described the Tamworth Manifesto as 'an attempt to construct a party without principles', and the 'Conservative Constitution' as a 'Caput Mortuum'. 'The Tamworth Manifesto of 1834 was an attempt to construct a party without principles: its basis therefore was necessarily latitudinarianism; and its inevitable consequence has been Political Infidelity ... **There was indeed considerable shouting about what they called Conservative principles; but the awkward question naturally arose, what will you conserve?** The prerogatives of the Crown, provided they are not exercised; the independence of the House of Lords, provided it is not asserted; the Ecclesiastical estate provided it is regulated by a commission of laymen. Everything in short that is established, as long as it is a phrase and not a fact ... **Conservatism discards Prescription, shrinks from Principle, disavows Progress; having**

rejected all respect for Antiquity, it offers no redress for the Present, and makes no preparation for the Future... Whenever public opinion which this party never attempts to form, to educate, or to lead, falls into some violent perplexity, passion, or caprice, this party yields without a struggle to the impulse, and, when the storm has passed, attempts to obstruct and obviate the logical, and ultimately the inevitable, results of the very measures they have themselves originated, or to which they have consented ... The man who enters public life at this epoch has to choose between Political infidelity and a Destructive Creed.'

May-June Parliamentary battles for Peel. 'Young England' opposed the Factory Bill then allied with anti-slavery MPs to oppose Peel on equalising tariffs between colonial/foreign (i.e. slave) sugar. Peel tried to bully it through the Commons but his manner was increasingly offensive.

May (Gall) He had another crack at the civil service but abandoned it again after a few weeks. To a friend: 'I applied for a post in the provincial government, worked for six weeks but found the people and the duties as shallow and unsatisfying as before. Since then I have been on leave, and row without will on the stream of life without any rudder beyond the impulse of the moment and am completely indifferent about where it throws me up on the shore.'

June Uprising of textile workers in Prague. Spread to Silesia through summer, **the most violent upheaval in Prussia before 1848**. Marx: in burning the companies' books, the weavers had directed rage at the 'titles of property' and the system of finance capitalism. In 1892 performances of Hauptmann's *The Weavers*, about the uprising, were initially forbidden by Berlin police fearful of the emotions it might trigger (Clark, p68ff).

26 July As FWIV and the queen prepared to depart, a man approached their carriage and fired two revolver shots. Both missed. Barclay: FWIV bungled the response. There was an immediate wave of sympathy but whereas Berliners expected the would-be assassin's death sentence to be commuted, FWIV gave in to advice and had him executed secretly and with no public explanation. Public sympathy evaporated.

August (JS) He went on a holiday to Norderney (island off German coast) and first met future King Wilhelm and Augusta. He flirted with women, ate oysters, shot rabbits, swam, played cards. 'A monotonous but healthy way of life.'

1 Sep Zollverein-Belgium treaty, for 10 years, giving Belgium preferential access to the iron market at half the normal rate. It was seen in Berlin as avoiding a possible Franco-Belgian customs union while still providing iron foundries with protection from Britain. Cf. the negotiations 1853-4 between Prussia-Britain.

4 October Bismarck travelled to Zimmerhausen to attend the wedding of Marie and Moritz. (The wedding ended disastrously with a fireworks display destroying much of the village of Zimmerhausen.) At the wedding he met Hans von Kleist, the last new friend he made(?), and his future wife, Johanna von Puttkamer, only child of a Pomeranian landowner.

Dec FWIV, worried about the situation and growing tensions, decided to invite all provincial diets to Berlin within 3 years to discuss new taxes. He wanted to move away from bureaucratic absolutism without encouraging constitutionalism. He thought he had found a path through. Wilhelm was very unhappy with his plans throughout 1845. Long debates until 1847.

1845

An unusually wet summer combined with fungal blight (which had come from America a few years earlier) and the potato crop failed across Europe. **Famine or near-famine in much of Europe**. In Ireland half the crop failed and all of it failed in 1846. Peel imported maize from America and took other measures. He was brought down. Russell was more *laissez faire*. Roughly 1m out of 8m died. The drought in 1846 that helped recovery from the blight in turn hit grain across Europe.

Julius Stahl published *The Monarchical Principle*.

Engels published *The Condition of the Working Class in England*.

Disraeli's novel, *Sybil: Or the Two Nations*. Similar ideas about the growth of the urban poor ('pauperism'), decline of aristocratic paternalism, the potential for demagogues were expressed around Europe. Alexander Herzen's *Who Is To Blame?* (1846), deeply influenced by Hegel like Bakunin who had written a few years earlier, 'The passion for destruction is also a creative passion.' In Paris Bakunin met the 'Young Hegelians', open atheists, who were expelled by FW4. Bakunin also met Marx and they disliked each other immediately. Marx called Bakunin a sentimental idealist. He was right, said Bakunin: 'I called him morose, vain and treacherous and I too was right.' Marx also knew the Young Hegelians and absorbed Feuerbach's statement, 'Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world: the point is to change it.'

Sybil: "Yes," resumed the younger stranger after a moment's interval. **Two nations between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy**; who are as ignorant of each other's habits, thoughts, and feelings, as if they were dwellers in different zones or inhabitants of different planets; who are formed by a different breeding, are fed by a different food, are ordered by different manners, and are not governed by the same laws.' 'You speak of –' said Egremont hesitatingly. **THE RICH AND THE POOR.**"

Disraeli had fallen in with Smythe, Manners and others in 'Young England' — a network of mostly aristocrats who'd gone to school and university together (Disraeli was unusual in not being part of the Eton/Oxbridge background). It was a romantic, reactionary movement hostile to industrialisation and Bentham/utilitarian philosophy. They promoted works like Walter Scott and Thomas Carlyle. They criticised the Church for insufficient charity. Blake: 'Young England was the Oxford movement translated by Cambridge from religion into politics.. Viewed in its widest context, Young England, like Tractarianism and the Gothic revival, was the reaction of a defeated class to a sense of its own defeat – a sort of nostalgic escape from the disagreeable present to the agreeable but imaginary past. The aristocracy to which Smythe and his friends belonged was losing its ascendancy. It still possessed great power and influence, but the writing was discernible upon the wall, spelled out already by the Reform Act of 1832... Just as the Oxford movement set up for its ideal the revival of a pure, uncorrupted, pre-Reformation church which had never existed, in order to counter the Erastian and latitudinarian tendencies of the day, so Young England resuscitated a no less mythical benevolent feudal system to set against the radical, centralizing Benthamism which seemed to be carrying all before it in the 1830s and 1840s' (p170, Disraeli). In a 1870 commentary on his novels, Disraeli wrote, 'The writer [himself] and those acting with him looked, then, upon the Anglican Church as a main machinery by which these results might be realised. There were few great things left in England and the Church was one of them.' He blamed the secession of Newman for the failure of the Church to change politics. Blake (p209): 'if we take him literally Disraeli does appear to be arguing against the Parliamentary system, against self-government, against 'progress', against 'reason'; and that he is apparently substituting for them a sort of benevolent clerical monarchism supported by a conscientious aristocracy. The concept is indistinct and cloudy indeed, but unmistakably illiberal, whatever its virtues might be in improving the condition of the people.'

Blake concluded that we should not take Disraeli's 'political philosophy' or interpretation of history (in contrast to the Whig version) very seriously: 'Disraeli, though superficial in comparison, belongs to the same strand in nineteenth-century English thought as Coleridge and Carlyle, the romantic, conservative, organic thinkers who revolted against Benthamism and the legacy of eighteenth-century rationalism... Disraeli had no real historical sense; he wrote propaganda, not history, and projected the circumstances of his own times into the past.'

Trollope on Disraeli: 'In whatever he has written he has affected something which has been intended to strike his readers as uncommon and therefore grand. Because he has been bright and a man of genius he has carried his object as regards the young. He has struck them with astonishment and aroused in their imagination ideas of a world more glorious, more rich, more witty, more enterprising than their own. **But the glory has been the glory of pasteboard and the wealth has been the wealth of tinsel. The wit has been the wit of hairdressers, and the enterprise the enterprise of mountebanks.'**

Jan To a friend: 'Since then [the 1844 civil service experiment] I have been stuck here unmarried, very lonely, twenty-nine years old, physically healthy again but mentally rather unresponsive, running my business conscientiously but with no particular interest, seeking to make my subordinates' lives cosy according to their lights, and contemplating without irritation the way in which they cheat me for my pains. In the mornings I am peevish, after lunch amenable to every mild emotion. My company consists of dogs, horses and country squires and among the latter I enjoy a certain esteem because I am able to read written matter with ease, I dress properly at all times, and yet I can still skin my game with the precision of a butcher, ride quietly and boldly, smoke great big cigars, and cordially and cold-bloodedly drink my guests under the table.' According to Gall at this time he read widely including Heine, Spinoza and a lot of history.

Spring Peel had become convinced that he could not defend the Corn Laws but he knew that his Party thought he and they were pledged to uphold them so he resolved to wait until the 1846 session to make his view public and argue for it in an 1847 election. He kept his conversion secret from all but two in Cabinet. In March when Cobden launched an attack on the Corn Laws, Peel said to Sidney Herbert 'You must answer this for I cannot.' After bitter debate, Disraeli said (17/3), 'Dissolve if you please the Parliament you have betrayed and appeal to the people who, I believe, mistrust you. For me there remains this at least – the opportunity of expressing thus publicly my belief that a **Conservative Government is an Organized Hypocrisy.**' For Disraeli, Pitt was the last great Tory statesman but had been forced by world crisis to 'relinquish Toryism' and Disraeli portrayed the Tory Party from Waterloo to 1832 as *not* 'true' Toryism or bearers of 'the English system'. In *Sybil* Disraeli suggested the old Toryism could return: 'Even now it is not dead but sleepeth; and in an age of political materialism, of confused purposes and perplexed intelligence, that aspires only to wealth, because it has faith in no other accomplishment, as men rifle cargoes on the verge of shipwreck, toryism will yet rise from the tomb over which Bolingbroke shed his last tear, to bring back strength to the Crown, liberty to the Subject, and to announce that power has only one duty: to secure the social welfare of the PEOPLE.' (Blake, p186ff)

April To sister: 'Only with difficulty can I resist the urge to fill an entire letter with agricultural complaints: night frosts, sick cow, bad rapeseed and bad roads, dead lambs, hungry sheep, lack of straw, fodder, money, potatoes, and dung... I must — the Devil take me — marry. That has become absolutely clear to me. Now that father has gone away, I feel lonely and abandoned, and mild, damp weather makes me melancholy, full of yearning, and love-sick.'

May Marie to a friend: 'Otto has become much closer to me in these days than for weeks. We have reached out our hands to each other, and I think, that it is not a temporary contact. You have never understood that I see so much behind his often cold elegance so it may appear laughable to you that I have reached out for such a friendship, but it occupies me too much these last days for me to pass over it in silence. Perhaps it is the expression of a personal freedom, which makes so attractive this friendship with a Pomeranian phoenix, who is a prodigy of wildness and arrogance.'

Sep His father taken ill, could not swallow, Bismarck stayed with him as he died (November).

Sep The potato crisis hit. Peel lowered duty on grain but even so bread was too expensive for most Irish peasants. He imported maize from America. He could have suspended the Corn Laws by Order in Council as an emergency measure but didn't. (Why?)

Nov After a number of Cabinet meetings, Peel resigned, unable to persuade the Duke of Buccleuch and Stanley to agree repeal of the Corn Laws. The Queen sent for Russell, who took six days to make up his mind, accepted, then within forty-eight hours resigned because of the division in his own ranks. Peel returned with the support of all his old Cabinet, except Buccleuch and Stanley. (Cf. Blake, p222ff).

1846

Britain repealed the Corn Laws. Repealed Navigation Laws 1850.

Potato crop improved but bad grain harvest worsened food situation.

22 Jan Parliament met to discuss Corn Laws. The Anti-League, chaired by the Duke of Richmond, was pressuring Tory MPs. ('It is probably true to say that the parliamentary organization of the protectionist party was largely made possible by the Anti-League and that without some such basis Disraeli and Bentinck could never have carried on such a long struggle against the repeal of the Corn Laws. Blake, p. 225) Peel gave a long, detailed, often impenetrable speech that was received in silence by his MPs. Russell similarly fell flat. Disraeli wrote, 'The opportune in a popular assembly has sometimes more success than the weightiest efforts of research and reason'. He seized the moment. His speech became famous. He described Peel as similar to the defecting admiral of the Turks who steered his fleet to the enemy port and said 'the only reason I had for accepting the command was that I might terminate the contest by betraying my master'. He compared the betrayal of Protection with the image of a baby whose brains had been dashed out by its nurse, 'a person of very orderly demeanour too, not given to drink, and never showing any emotion, except of late'. He ended: 'Let men stand by the principle by which they rise, right or wrong. I make no exception. If they be wrong, they must retire to that shade of private life with which our present rulers have so often threatened us... Do not then because you see a great personage giving up his opinions – do not cheer him on, do not give so ready a reward to political tergiversation. **Above all maintain the line of demarcation between parties, for it is only by maintaining the independence of party that you can maintain the integrity of public men, and the power and influence of Parliament itself.**'

Crucial was that Disraeli acquired the support of Bentinck, younger son of a duke, wealthy, famous for his mastery of the Turf and exposing racing scams, grandson of one Prime Minister, nephew of another. Both teamed up with the Anti-League. Bentinck pushed for the organisation of whips for the parliamentary grouping. Disraeli argued that England must maintain the position of the landed aristocracy against manufacturing; that it was crucial to maintain the 'territorial constitution' because it was 'the only security for self-government; and more than that the only barrier to that system of centralization which has taken root and enslaved the energies of surrounding nations'; Cobden and the 'Manchester school' want to give manufacturers dominance over the aristocracy: 'I have not been slow in doing justice to the intelligence of that class; I do not envy them their wide and deserved prosperity, but I must confess my deep mortification that in an age of political regeneration when all social evils are ascribed to the operation of class interests, it should be suggested that we are to be reduced from the alleged power of one class only to sink under the avowed dominion of another... Instead of falling under such a thralldom ... if we must find new forces to maintain the ancient throne and immemorial monarchy of England I for one hope that we may find that novel power in the invigorating energies of an educated and enfranchised people.' Bentinck, like a grand 18th century Whig not much impressed with the House of Hanover, openly criticised Prince Albert in suggesting the Queen supported Peel.

In the vote in February, only 112 Tory MPs supported Peel, over 200 opposed him. Blake: Home Rule in 1886 and Munich 1938 are the closest equivalents to the bitter divisions created. Cf. 15/5.

Feb 1846 Uprisings and riots in Galicia (the name given to the southern portion of the old Polish state that had fallen to the Austrians during partitions in the 18th Century, ~1/5 of old Polish kingdom and ~1/3 of Polish population), put down by Austrian Army. The violence shocked Europe. Peasants beat, sometime flayed, local nobles to death, killed entire families. In March Metternich wrote to Field Marshal Radetzky (supreme commander in Italy), 'A new era has dawned. The democrats have mistaken their base, a democracy without the people is a chimera.'

Prince Schwarzenberg visited and recounted a story that was influential (whether it happened or not). He said he asked a group of peasants what they were up to and the peasants replied, 'We've brought in some Poles.' S: 'What does that mean, 'Poles'? What are you then?' 'We are not Poles. We are imperial peasants.' S: 'So who are the Poles then?' 'Oh, the Poles! That's the lords, the administrators, the clerks, the professors, but we are peasants, imperial peasants!'

Evans: the Galician chaos inspired moderate liberals across Europe to push for constitutional reform to blunt possible revolution. Clark (p72): the first uprising was an attempted national uprising organised by Polish elites, the second was a wave of peasant counter-revolutionary violence that stopped the first.

1846-8 His life changed through three events: religious conversion, marriage and the 1848 revolution that began his career.

February 1846 Moved to Schönhausen to look after that estate (his brother took over Kniephof) and in the autumn got his first public office — a dyke reeve responsible for guarding against floods on a stretch of the Elbe.

15 May Disraeli speech on **third reading of the Bill for the Repeal of the Corn Laws**. Ended: 'Will he [Peel] go with it [his plan] to that ancient and famous England that once was governed by statesmen — by Burleighs and by Walpoles; by a Chatham and a Canning — will he go to it with this fantastic scheming of some presumptuous Pedant? I won't believe it. I have that confidence in the common sense, I will say the common spirit of our countrymen, that I believe they will not long endure this huckstering tyranny of the Treasury Bench — these political pedlars that bought their Party in the cheapest market, and sold us in the dearest. I know, Sir, that there are many who believe that the time is gone by when one can appeal to those high and honest impulses that were once the mainstay and the main element of the English character. I know, Sir, that we appeal to a people debauched by public gambling, stimulated and encouraged by an inefficient and shortsighted Minister. I know that the public mind is polluted with economic fancies; a depraved desire that the rich may become richer without the interference of industry and toil. I know, Sir, that all confidence in public men is lost. But, Sir, I have faith in the primitive and enduring elements of the English character. It may be vain now, in the midnight of their intoxication, to tell them that there will be an awakening of bitterness; it may be idle now, in the spring-tide of their economic frenzy, to warn them that there may be an ebb of trouble. But the dark and inevitable hour will arrive. Then, when their spirit is softened by misfortune, they will recur to those principles that made England great, and which, in our belief, can alone keep England great. Then, too, perchance they may remember, not with unkindness, those who, betrayed and deserted, were neither ashamed nor afraid to struggle for the "good old cause" — the cause with which are associated principles the most popular, sentiments the most entirely nation — the cause of labour — the cause of the people — the cause of England.' He sat after three hours to a great ovation. **A majority of 98 for repeal.**

25 June Repeal of Corn Laws passed Lords. That night in Commons Peel was defeated on a Bill re Irish security by a combination of opposition and Tory rebels including Disraeli and Bentinck ('a blackguard combination' said the Duke of Wellington). **Peel resigned four days later, praising Cobden, the Queen sent for Russell.** It was 28 years until a Conservative PM commanded a clear Commons majority.

August (EF) He went on a trip to the Harz mountains with Marie and Johanna. Gall: after this trip he was decided on marriage.

August 1846 Bismarck wrote to his brother about the bad economic situation in his area — 'There is absolutely no money'.

July 1846 Palmerston again Foreign Secretary. Aberdeen wrote to him: 'When I came into office five years ago, you wanted to come back again and turn me out, and you accordingly attacked me in every way you could, as you had a perfect right to do. Circumstances are very different now. I do not want to turn you out, and I never mean to come into office again, and I am therefore come to tell you that I am ready to give you every information that may be of use to you, and every assistance I can. I have been so long in office that there are many matters of interest, on which it may be of great use to you to receive information from me; and if you will ask me any questions, I will tell you all I can that you may desire to know, and everything that occurs to me as desirable you should know.'

Nov 1846 Marie's sudden death in an epidemic had a profound effect on him, 'a shattering experience' (OP). The news of her impending death brought his first prayer in 16 years.

He wrote to his sister: 'If anything were needed to make the decision to leave Pomerania easier, this was it. **This is really the first time that I have lost somebody through death, who was close to me and whose passing leaves an unexpected hole in my circle of life... This feeling of emptiness, the thought never again to see or hear a dear person who had become necessary to me — and of those I have few — was so new that I cannot get used to it and the whole event has not yet become real to me. Envious is the confidence of the relatives. They think of this death as an early journey, which in the long or short run will be followed by a joyful reunion.**'

Henceforth he was a committed Lutheran. A week later he leased Kniephof (though he felt 'uneasy in my conscience' about renting land and workers who had been 'entrusted to me' by God). Within a few weeks he decided to marry Johanna. On 16 December he wrote his famous *Werbebrief* (suitor letter) to Johanna's father explaining his religious conversion and his love. 'At an early age I was estranged from my parental home and never felt fully at home thereafter. My education was dictated by the intention to develop my understanding and the early acquisition of positive knowledge. After an irregularly attended and imperfectly understood religious instruction, I was baptised by Schleiermacher in my 16th year and had no other faith than naked deism which soon became mixed with pantheistic tendencies ... **I spent many a hopelessly dejected hour with the thought that my existence and that of other men was pointless and unprofitable, perhaps no more than a by-product of Creation that appears and passes away like the dust from a turning wheel.** Eternity and the Resurrection lacked certainty for me and yet I saw nothing in this life that seemed worth striving for with any seriousness or energy... Thus without any control other than the conventional social limitations, I plunged into the world, partly seducer and partly seduced, and into bad company and found there people who made me ashamed... I felt myself soon at home in that circle and with Moritz and his wife who became dear to me as a sister to a brother, and discovered a well-being which I had never experienced before, a family life that included me, a home at last... I felt bitter regret over my previous existence... The news of the death of our dear friend in Cardemin [Marie], provoked the first sincere prayer without reflections about the reasonableness of the act that I had ever expressed and tears which I had not shed since my childhood. God did not hear my prayer but He did not reject it either. For I have not lost the ability to pray since that time and became aware of something not exactly peace but a will to live as I had never before known it ... What value you place on the change of heart hardly two months old I cannot say.'

The father replied asking for a firm commitment to a Christian life to which Bismarck replied: 'I can only reply in the affirmative to your next question, that I am firmly and in many ways determined to pursue that peace with all and that sanctification without which no one can see the Lord. Whether my steps are as secure as I would want them to be, I am not in a position to say. I see myself rather the lame person who without the help of the Lord will stumble.' On 12 Jan 1847 he was officially engaged. In 1847 he wrote to his wife quoting a passage from Lear: 'Wine loved I deeply, dice dearly, and in woman outparamoured the Turk. False of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand — hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey.' Winter 1846/7 was unusually long and severe.

1847

'I have nothing against constitutions. I admire the good ones and pity the state which is subject to a bad one, that is, to one that does not suit it. Constitutionalism I condemn to hell, it only lives on deception and fraud' Metternich. (He hated words ending in -ism: e.g. *communitas* and communism; *societas* and socialism, *pietas* and pietism, constitution and constitutionalism.)

Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*. Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*.

Aged 32



Memoirs: 'As early as 1847 I was in favour of an effort to secure the possibility of public criticism of the government in parliament and in the press in order to shelter the monarch from the danger of having blinkers put on him by women, courtiers, sycophants, and visionaries hindering him from taking a broad view of his duties as monarch, or from avoiding and correcting his mistakes. This conviction became all the more deeply impressed upon me as I became better acquainted with Court circles and had to defend the interest of the state from their influences and also from the opposition of a departmental patriotism. The interests of the state alone have guided me, and it has been a calumny when publicists ... have accused me of having ever advocated an aristocratic system. I have never regarded birth as a substitute for want of ability. Whenever I have come forward on behalf of landed property, it has not been in the interests of proprietors of my own class but because I see in the decline of agriculture one of the greatest dangers to our permanence as a state. The ideal that has always floated before me has been a monarchical power controlled by a representative body, independent and in my view based on estates or professional associations, to the extent that neither monarch nor parliament can alter the existing legal framework *unilaterally* but only *communi consensu*, with all government processes taking place in public and subject to public criticism by press and Diet.'

1847 Civil War in Switzerland. The victory of the radicals 'brought home to all politically interested contemporaries that the continent stood on the brink of a revolutionary outbreak. Everyone was prepared for the revolution, so that once it began it spread to almost the entire continent' (Sperber, p260).

13 Feb To Johanna: 'From illusions regarding the Arcadian happiness of a dyed-in-the-wool landowner, with double-entry bookkeeping and chemical studies, I have been retrieved by experience. The profession was at the time still overlaid for me with the beautiful blue mist of distant mountains. Occasionally when one of my old fellow students is making a rapid career for himself I still feel slightly piqued by the thought that "I too could have had that" but then the conviction always asserts itself that man seeks his happiness in vain as long as he seeks it outside himself.'

3 Feb FWIV needed money for railways, summoned the provincial diets to meet in Berlin on 11 April as a United Diet to authorise new taxes.

After the defeat of Napoleon, FWIII had promised his people a constitution and a parliament but only granted separate provincial diets in 1823.

Clark (p258): The State Indebtedness Law of 1820 prohibited the government from raising loans directly except through a 'national estates assembly'. In the 1820s and 1830s the finance ministry raised loans indirectly via a nominally independent bank and kept debt low but this was a fudge and now they needed cash for railways.

Most of the deputies were either liberals or aristocrats with a liberal tendency. Hardline royalists like Bismarck were a minority and were 'drowned out by the roar of liberal and radical critique' (Clark). Most liberals felt the Diet was far short of their legitimate expectations.

14 March To Johanna: 'One clings to principles only for so long as they are not put to the test. When that happens one throws them away as the peasant does his slippers and walks after the fashion that nature intended.'

April Berlin's 'potato revolution'. Over previous three years Germany, like much of Europe, had suffered an agricultural disaster — poor grain harvests combined with a blight that ruined the potato crop. This pushed up the price of food for some things including potatoes and wheat by ~100%. 1846/7 winter was long and severe. Continued railway building kept mining, iron, machine industries prosperous but hunger, disease and death afflicted many in rural areas and lower class areas of cities. In spring 1847, Bismarck saw food riots in his area and elsewhere. In Berlin there was a riot on 21-23 April. The food price shocks caused lower demand for manufactured goods. Also in 1845-6 and 1846-7 there were two shortfalls in the American cotton crop so prices shot up ~50%.

Sunday 11 April The ~600 deputies for the United Diet assembled in the White Hall of the royal palace in Berlin, the largest such assembly on German soil. It was a bleak snowy day after a long hard winter of great hardship. FW made clear in his Speech from the Throne: 'There is no power on earth that can succeed in making me transform the natural relationship between prince and people ... into a conventional constitutional relationship, and I will never allow a written piece of paper to come between the Lord God in heaven and this land.' He then made clear his real purpose was to authorise new taxes (necessary because of the 1820 State Indebtedness Act), not to hear their views of public opinion. The deputies were stunned. Barclay: Gerlach and the liberals were agreed — the King had annoyed almost everyone. Clark (p259): It proved the conservatives right. The liberals from across the country worked together and formed new bonds. They asked for the Diet to be transformed into a proper legislature and said if it wasn't then they would not approve taxes. The conservatives were a shambles. As champions of local diversity and autonomy they struggled to work together on national issues. 'One defeat follows another' wrote Leopold von Gerlach (7/5). Although adjourned in June it was 'enormously important' (Clark) — its debates were published and news travelled around Prussia, conservatives and royalists were seen to have no strategy and convinced many that real constitutional change was imminent.

May Bismarck enters the Diet as a substitute member. He opposed everything that weakened the Junkers whether proposed by the King or liberals.

17 May Bismarck gave his first speech to the United Diet. A liberal aristocrat had argued that domestic reforms 1806-14 and the expectation of freedom they created gave impetus to the resistance to Napoleon. Many liberals thought the current situation similarly required a burst of liberal reform like 1806. Bismarck rejected the entire argument. He mocked the idea that Prussians fought Napoleon for a constitution — foreign invasion was enough of a reason. 'It seems to me that the national honour is ill-served by supposing that the maltreatment and humiliation Prussia suffered at the hands of an alien oppressor were not sufficient to make the blood boil and cause all of the feelings to be swamped by hatred of the foreigner.' As liberals heckled, he took out a newspaper and waited for them to stop before continuing, a trick he would repeat.

18 May To Johanna: 'This whole business grips me far more than I thought', he was so excited he could scarcely eat or drink.

15 June Speech to the Diet exploring the foundations of power, legitimacy and Christianity. He agreed with the liberals that the core of the state was a legal system. The crucial question was, what is the basis of it, is it Christianity or not?

'If we remove this foundation [the Christian] from the state, we are left with a state that is nothing but a random aggregate of rights, a kind of bulwark against the war of each against each set up by the old philosophy ['war of all against all' – Hobbes' 'state of nature']. **Its legislation will therefore no longer renew itself at the well-spring of eternal truth but at the vague and changeable concepts of humanity as they happen to form in the heads of the people at the top.** How, supposing they feel strong enough to do so, people in such states are going to combat the ideas of, for example, the Communists regarding the immorality of property, regarding the high moral value of theft as an attempt to establish man's inherent rights, the right to assert himself, is something I am not clear about. These ideas too are seen as human by those who hold them, in fact they are regarded as the proper flowering of humanity.' The Enlightenment view of an abstract reasoned morality producing justice and order was rejected and he touched here upon issues that would engage Nietzsche and politicians today. On 17th the Diet rejected the right of Jews to hold public office or serve in the Christian state. Membership in district or provincial diets was also closed to them.

In a speech he admitted that he had absorbed anti-semitism 'with his mother's milk' and would be 'depressed and humiliated' at the idea of having to obey a Jew.

26 June Diet was prorogued having rejected FWV's request for taxes unless he granted his predecessor's promise of a constitution. Bismarck travelled and spent the rest of 1847 not focused on the failure of his initiative and the dangerous clouds gathering.

28 July Four weeks after the closure of the United Diet, **Bismarck married** at Reinfeld and went on his honeymoon through Prague, Vienna (where they walked in a moonlit garden in the Schonbrunn Palace), Salzburg. He remained extremely close to his wife until her death after his retirement. He once wrote to her (4/1/51), '**You are my anchor on the good side of the river. If that drags, may God have mercy on my soul.**' Private letters he wrote to friends made clear the extent to which he was still tempted by women after his marriage. Religion did not provide him with his politics and it did not make him the gentler, more saintly man he sometimes said he wanted to be. His adamant realism and personal will to power may have been expressed more calmly but do not seem to have been diminished by his conversion. In later years, it seems that religion was used as a shield – 'God will judge' he would say, but he did not tolerate dissent on earth.

He told his brother, 'I am marrying a woman of rare intelligence and rare nobility of mind who is at the same time extremely charming and *facile a vivre* [easy to live with?] like no female I have ever known.'

He wrote to his brother of his conversion that 'a sort of Treaty of Passau has been established between us' [the treaty of 1552 first allowed Lutheranism and Catholicism to exist side-by-side in

Germany]. The Lutheran pietist movement was an 18th Century revival which stressed personal communication with God, not the importance of the clergy and church hierarchy. Lutheranism did not claim to lay down principles for public policy and taught that service to the state was a religious duty. Cromwell would have understood Bismarck's religion better than modern liberals. 'I believe that I am obeying God when I serve the king.' Bismarck became friends with this network which extended to the Gerlachs and future King Wilhelm. When the latter became king, this network became even more influential. It was the Gerlachs who in 1851 persuaded the king to appoint Bismarck as Prussian Ambassador to the German Bundestag in Frankfurt. (Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach became an enemy of Bismarck in the late 1860s. In 1874 Bismarck dismissed his old master from the Prussian High Court.)

22 Aug Metternich to Field Marshal Count Radetzky: 'If the past imposed great efforts on us, it was at least better than the present. **You and I know how to fight against bodies, but against phantoms material force can achieve nothing, and today we are fighting phantoms everywhere.**'

July-August UK election: more Conservatives than Whigs but split between Stanley/Peel so Russell stayed as PM.

Sep 1847 A financial crisis in London, some banks closed.

6 Sep Bismarck and Johanna were in Venice where they met FWIV and Roon. He got the impression that FW was happy at his conduct in the diet. He returned home late September.

Nov Radowitz wrote a memo to FW: 'The most powerful force of the present, that of nationality, is the most dangerous weapon in the hands of the enemies of law and order... Through all hearts flows this desire for a community to develop in Germany, powerful and respected abroad, elevated and in harmony within... This is the only thought that extends beyond parties... It is therefore the only principle on which a strong state system and society can be constructed. It is Prussia's task, with the closest connection with the rest of Germany to pick up the reins lying on the floor and as a true moral authority to create the impetus towards a rebirth of Germany.' This needs binding Austria closer to the Bund and to call a ministerial conference for its reform.

Nov Marx told his father, after studying Hegel that year, that his excitement made him 'quite incapable of thinking' and he 'ran about madly in the garden'.

1848

'Two elements have appeared in society which are suitable to shatter its calm [*Ruhe*] to the core. I call these elements the extension of the *fundamental concept of nationality* to the realm of *politically and legally defined territories* and to their signification through language.' Metternich, in England in retirement.

Core factors in the buildup that contributed to contagion (Sperber, 258):

- Decline in living standards from ~1825 among key groups.
- Shift from economy based on feudal rights, guilds, an agrarian-artisan economy to more productive agriculture, growing industry, extension of free markets. In central and eastern Europe this was accompanied by a movement from a society of orders to a society of property owners, the decline of serfdom and the guild system. The breakdown of the guild system caused an increase in numbers of masters and journeymen by 1846 and many were in desperate straits. While many artisans adapted long-term, proto-industry had a major crisis in the 1840s: manifestation of problems in the 1844 Silesian weavers revolt. 'Forest conflict was the most common form of conflict over collective use rights' (Sperber). (Marx's father had represented peasants in a challenge over rights to wood and Marx said he'd started thinking about the social question because of an investigation he did in the early 1840s as a journalist into wood theft in the Moselle Valley.)

- States had been increasing taxes, recruiting and garrisoning soldiers. But coercive personnel such as police and tax collectors were few and far between. E.g in Ireland, police to public ratio of 1: 500, 14 times as many per capita as Prussia, four times France.
- The chaos of the Napoleonic years and settlement of Vienna in 1815 meant that many rulers were not familiar with their subjects, thus lacking dynastic and/or religious loyalty.
- In Vienna, the Emperor was mentally impaired and power was chaotic between members of the royal family and Metternich. Nobody could grip the crippling financial problems: they needed revenues but the privileged classes of the Empire would not tax themselves. So the crucial state in maintaining order hit crises in 1840s crippled by bad decision-making and bad finances.
- In many places: increasing *demands* by state, low *coercive capacity* of the state (barring send in the army), and low *legitimacy* of the state.
- Spread of liberal and national ideas: civil rights, representative national institutions, constitutions.
- Harvest failures 1845-6 then recession and unemployment 1847, food price spikes.
- Victory of radicals in Swiss Civil War was a signal to all politically interested people in Europe.
- Elite organisers.
- Media plus the telegraph transmitted news of riots from city to city. 'Revolution spread from one country to the next by force of example, not by force of arms.' With a rail and communication network very patchy by 1989 standards, the upheavals of spring 1848 occurred in about a third of the time it took in 1989.

Pflanze: it was *not* the liberal-national movement that propelled the March uprising. It was specific grievances deriving from three successive years of crop failures, food shortages and starvation, unemployment, declining trade. Pflanze argues there would have been no German revolution in March 1848 were it not for the news via the telegraph of the protests in Paris, Prague, Budapest and Vienna.

W Carr: Before 1840 nationalism and liberalism were 'relatively weak ideological concepts supported by a small minority of educated people'. German nationalists were not looking for political domination of Europe or folkish solidarity — they wanted a vehicle to express humanistic values and share German culture. It was a cosmopolitan movement. Germany was still overwhelmingly agrarian and people were rooted locally.

Clark (p87).

- In most of Europe the subsistence crisis of the 1840s was over by the time the 1848 revolutions broke out, thanks to the excellent grain harvest of 1847.
- Food rioters were generally not radical political actors, they were focused more on immediate material demands like minimum wages and protection from price spikes.
- The geography of hunger 1845-7 and geography of revolution 1848-9 were different. The hungriest areas were not the most active in 1848. In Prussia some of the hottest centres of revolutionary activity were towns where there were no food riots.
- In every city where revolution raged, calls for political change jostled for attention with demand for minimum wages, price controls etc.
- True revolutionaries played little part in 1848.
- After initial explosions, things worked differently in different places: in Paris, the regime was gone and two newspapers were central to developing what came next; in Palermo, Milan and Venice provisional authorities developed from insurrectionary movements; in Naples and Berlin the old regimes remained but changed; the Habsburgs lost control of Vienna and had to flee; only in Islaz and Bucharest could it be said that plans laid in advance come to fruition. Everything was fragile and provisional.

- Many liberals in new parliaments wasted huge amounts of time with long debates over new procedures.
- The new parliaments tended to be more conservative/liberal than expected by the socialists/democrats. There was a fundamental division between the middle class liberals who focused on parliaments, constitutional rights, laws, freedom of the press etc and the lower classes primarily driven by extreme hunger, poverty etc.
- Although the Frankfurt Assembly 'failed', it still had huge impact on subsequent debate in Germany. It developed *national* debates in which the idea of a German state was implicit/explicit, e.g over a national telegraph network.
- Nationalism was the most powerful idea haunting European politics in the 1840s, cf. Metternich 8/47 (above). It was the strongest energy driving insurgents but it also undermined their cooperation and set them against each other.
- The 1849 wave were dominated by radicals rather than liberals and better planned.
- The loyalty and effectiveness of the armed forces was the most decisive force of counter-revolution.
- The transnational revolutionary networks could not create the power needed to counter transnational cooperation of the old regimes. Prussia intervened in Baden, Bavaria, Saxony. France intervened in the Papal States. Russia intervened in Moldavia, Wallachia, Hungary. 'Towers prevailed over squares. Hierarchies beat networks. Power prevailed over ideas and arguments.'
- Marx & Engels on the irony of Prussia's position: 'Prussia had restored the rule of the forces of reaction everywhere but the more these forces re-established themselves, the more the petty princes deserted Prussia to throw themselves into the arms of Austria.'
- The news of a French Republic arrived in New York by steamship on 18 March and in Sydney on 19 June.
- Surveillance and espionage spread after 1849. So did constitutions.
- The free press that emerged all over in 1848 was curtailed from 1849 but it was not a return to the old censorship — there was a permanent advance of press freedom almost everywhere. There was a shift from pre-publication censorship to post-publication prosecution.
- In 1856 Bagehot published an essay on Peel contrasting him with Byron with whom he attended Harrow. Byron was intense, striking, original, dashing, free. Peel's mind was the opposite: steady, still, 'no particular stamp', his ideas could have been anybody's because they derived from 'the general diffused stock of observations'. Peel reflected a shift in politics from a focus on *what* to *how*. He was more a manager than an architect. Also in 1856 Guizot published a biography praising his 'essentially practical spirit'. Cavour praised Peel as important to Britain avoiding socialist chaos in 1848. This attitude became important in the 1850s. In Prussia, embodied in Otto von Manteuffel.
- In Russia the events of 1848-9 repelled the Tsarists, who were confirmed in their view of 'the West' as a virus, and the left, which turned towards the idea of a Russian, not European, path to the future.
- Many of the fundamental questions the revolutionaries, liberals and counter-revolutionaries were arguing over remain questions for us.

Rhineland Radicals, Sperber

Big conflicts before and during 1848 in Rhineland 'had their origins in a triangle of tensions, whose vertices were the market, the state, and the church'.

In the middle of the 19th Century much social and economic conflict in Germany centred on the preservation or abolition of pre-capitalist market restrictions such as feudal tenure or the guild system. In the Rhineland such institutions had been replaced by 'an unlimitedly capitalist economic system and a bourgeois social order' — and conflicts that occurred along these lines had 'more the

character of rearguard struggles'. Capitalism in the Rhineland was not the industrial capitalism of the late 19 century and lacked the opposition between owners of the means of production and proletarians who worked them. Production was carried out primarily by 'nominally independent small producers, or those who could reasonably expect to aspire to such a status, such as journeyman artisans or young, rural day labourers, who were often the adult children at present smallholders. Their great grievance was their lack of access to the market which was controlled by nonproducing mercantile and financial "capitalists"'. Living standards were declining even before the subsistence crisis of 1845-47. 'It was among these aggrieved small producers that the democratic movement recruited the bulk of its members.'

State activity was seen as crucial to injustice, for example the regulation of markets and taxes (similar to Chartists in England). In the Rhineland 1848-49 a *minority* supported regimes they were tied to by religious and dynastic loyalties against a *majority* without religious or dynastic allegiance. The *poor* attacked states for being too *strong*: they attacked the draft, garrisons, taxes, regulations etc, and expressed hostility via slogans, jeers, riots, and attacking symbols of the regime. The *more educated* attacked the states for being too *weak* and unable to deliver German unification. They were hostile to the Prussian state but wanted a new German state. In Prussian Rhineland the bourgeoisie were mostly Protestant (same as the monarchy) but most of the public were Catholic. The conflict in the revolution was between two forms of opposition to Prussia: a) Catholic-clerical, b) democratic. In spring 1848 the Catholic dominated, by 1849 the democratic.

The revolution in the Rhineland in 1848 was based on conflicts visible but masked in the 1830s then exposed by 'a chain of explosions triggered by events in the European revolutionary capitals, but occurring along the fault lines of pre-existing tensions, and characterised by attacks on targets of long suppressed popular anger.' The explosions were 'increasingly organised by the democrats [who] increasingly put themselves forward as leaders of popular struggles, attempting to direct them toward left-wing political ends.'

Summer 1848 was crucial. The left failed in violent protests and the elections to the Frankfurt National Assembly were disappointing. Activists started trying to improve their organisation and made progress over coming months. They organised outworkers, formed democratic clubs and tried to mobilise women, soldiers and peasants. In the military the Rhineland natives were accessible to the left's agitation but peasants from East Elbian Prussia were not. This was partly different attitudes to the King, partly the legacy of decades of insults and brawling in taverns, fairs and streets.

The revolutionary movement was defeated in Frankfurt in September, in Vienna in October, and in Berlin in November. The crushing of uprisings in the big cities June-November encouraged the democrats to *organise* in small towns and countryside. The revolutionary movement kept growing in the Rhineland and the uprisings of May 1849 were the 'culmination of a year of agitation and organisation'. By early 1849 they had overcome opponents and were 'the dominant political force in all of western Germany'.

The core reason for the failure of the revolution in the Rhineland despite the improving organisation of the democratic revolutionaries was *the unflinching loyalty of Prussian soldiers to the Crown and their role in controlling their Rhenish comrades and suppressing violent revolutionaries throughout the Rhineland (p474)*. In the famous slogan of General von Griesheim, '**Gegen Demokraten helfen nur Soldaten**': **against democrats only soldiers can help**. In Saxony and the grand duchy of Baden, royal governments were overthrown by insurrectionary regimes and both were suppressed by Prussian troops, the former swiftly, the second in July 1849.

At the more general level beyond the Rhineland, Sperber says (1) that the focus on Frankfurt debates plays down the importance of the streets. Street violence caused events, it was not caused by Frankfurt debates. (2) The Marx/Engels argument of the time that the revolution was betrayed by the bourgeoisie is largely false. Factory workers were much less important than outworkers and independent craftsmen. The Rhineland democrats were stronger *outside* the urban factory areas. The Cologne communists did not even spend much time organising the working class. (3) Some historians argue the importance of a 'crisis of modernisation'. E.g Economic change produced victims, especially artisans, who were prepared for violence and open to radical politics. Sperber mostly discounts the arguments. E.g the importance of religious arguments does not fit the thesis. **Popular movements and democratic politics were full of hostility to state officials and bureaucracy, the epitome of modernisation in Weber's thesis.** The idea of a linear march from 'traditional' to 'modern' structures does not fit the Rhineland.

There was a general north-south distinction. In the north, leftists were a minority, peasants were either passive or monarchist loyalists, democratic support was limited to the larger cities and some manufacturing regions and there largely to the artisans. In south Germany, the democratic movement had not only artisans but also a broader range of support including some urban bourgeoisie. In France there was also a north-south divide. The rural north was more conservative with leftist support restricted to the artisans and skilled workers of the large cities and manufacturing/industrial areas. In the south support for the left was socially more widespread and bourgeois democrats supported rural agitation over issues like forest use and taxes. In Germany and France revolution started with barricades in the capital cities and apolitical disturbances in the countryside. Then there were conservative victories in elections held under universal suffrage. In both the revolution then faded in the capitals and north while democrats made progress organising in the south. Both saw continued violence in 1849. 'The 1848 revolutions' label obscures this. (Interestingly many of the German democratic leaders left for America after 1849 where they influenced the Civil War and American politics.)

Sperber (1848): The revolutions did not primarily fail because of British and Russian action but because the forces of order were stronger. They did not primarily fail because of too great a spirit of conciliation or insufficient zeal: Lafayette et al in 1789 were prepared to compromise in all sorts of ways too. Conservatives had learned from 1789 the danger of being too passive particularly of losing control of the army. Louis XVI took two years to flee to loyalist forces outside Paris and his flight was a fiasco. In 1848 regimes pulled this off. **In 1848 moderates in the revolutionary forces remembered the French Revolution and were cautious about purging bureaucracies and officer corps lest they suddenly lose control to radicals.** They also tried to avoid a general European war, which had brought the French radicals to power in 1792. The small socialist element in France and Germany was a new element, not there in 1789, but many of its leaders rejected political action and placed their hopes in trade associations and cooperatives, and this lack of coordination weakened leftists in Paris in spring 1848. Marxist theories trying to generalise about revolution do not work for 1848: people remembered 1789 and acted on those memories.

The most significant effect of 1848 was the *abolition of serfdom* and other seigneurial institutions. These changes were reversed nowhere, even the most reactionary governments felt obliged to accept them. *Constitutional government* spread. Prussia and Piedmont-Savoy retained their constitutions. Austria repealed theirs but this did not survive the setbacks of the 1860s. By the end of the 1860s constitutional regimes were everywhere except Russia. 1848 put *nationalist* demands on the table and set the agenda for decades.

In 1848 pro-Prussian constitutional monarchists were a minority among German nationalists, outnumbered by the democrats with hostility for the Prussian monarchy, and by Catholics and south Germans also suspicious of or hostile to Prussia. While the Germany of 1871 looked a lot

like the German state proposed by the Frankfurt National Assembly in 1849, the king was stronger and it subordinated the little German constitutional monarchists to the Prussian monarchy.

In the early phases of 1848, organised labour and the political left were frequently disconnected. In the later phases, the labour movement was incorporated into the left but just as one part of it and far from the most important. 'This picture was broadly true throughout Europe but in the decades after 1850 the relationship between the labour movement and the political left began to diverge. In central Europe, leftist politics came increasingly to be identified with the organised urban working class; other social groups and organised interests fell away from the left'. In Mediterranean countries, organised labour became steadily more important for the left but other social groups particularly small farmers and small property owners continued to play a role in radical politics.

The 1848 revolutions were clear successors to 1789 with the social and economic preconditions distinctly similar and the main groupings of 1848 stemmed from analogous groups created 1789-93. 1848 was a 'greatly expanded, partially revised ... ultimately unsuccessful version' of 1789. In Germany, France and elsewhere those who died in 1848 were commemorated in marches for many decades.

In 1789 revolution led to war. This fear was powerful in 1848-9. 1848 showed that if the army stayed loyal then the revolution would fail. Revolutions could succeed after the army was beaten in war. In 1870 France, defeat led to revolution. In 1917-19 many European countries saw the same.

*

11 January Bismarck dined with the king and Ludwig von Gerlach. Over the next few days, news came in of riots in Sicily and Italy.

12 Jan Riots in Palermo. Someone had put up notices in early January saying that on 12th there would be a revolution. Clark: probably there was no actual serious conspiracy but the notices did prompt people to march that day and it all kicked off! Similarly an observer in Paris a few weeks later wrote, 'The event seems to have been engendered by the curiosity that attended it.'

Metternich was not perturbed by the news of insurgent success in Sicily. He had anticipated it and prepared counter moves with France and the other Powers (except Britain).

24 Jan James Marshall struck gold in Coloma, California. When news spread thousands came to California. The effects rippled through the world economy in the 1850s.

27 Jan The famous author de Tocqueville had been elected to the Chamber of Deputies in 1846 as a moderate liberal. He had not taken part in the banquet campaign because of distrust of the radicals. On 27 Jan, he gave a speech to the Chamber of Deputies calling for the expansion of the franchise to avert potential revolution. '**Do you [ministers] not feel, by some intuitive instinct which is not capable of analysis, but which is undeniable, that the earth is shaking once again in Europe? Do you not feel ... as if a gale of revolution were in the air?** This gale, no one knows where it springs from, whence it blows, nor, believe me, whom it will carry with it... Can you say today that you are certain of tomorrow? Do you know what may happen in France a year from now or even a month or a day from now? You do not know but what you must know is that the tempest is looming on the horizon, that it is coming towards us. Will you allow it to take you by surprise?' He was ignored.

6 February Metternich-Apponyi: 'Revolutions march fast! This saying invariably reminds me of that young, very popular poet Bürger in Germany: *The dead ride fast [Die Toten reiten schnell]*.'

Late February *The Communist Manifesto / Das Kommunistische Manifest* published by Marx and Engels. Published, initially anonymously, by the Workers' Educational Association (*Kommunistischer Arbeiterbildungsverein*), based at 46 Liverpool Street, London. Around 20 March 1,000 copies reached Paris. In spring it was edited and that version was subsequently treated as the authoritative version. It was not influential in 1848 and only became famous in the 1870s. 'By the

middle 1860s virtually nothing that Marx had written in the past was any longer in print' (Hobsbawm).

22 February The Guizot government tried to outlaw the banquets in Paris. (The banquet organisers had taken pains to avoid breaching public order laws and were hard to suppress. They did not incite violence or illegal acts.) The organisers called for a huge demonstration. **Banquets turned to demonstrations, clashes with soldiers, barricades went up. The army split and much refused to fight, the National Guard joined insurgents. As chaos engulfed the streets the Chamber continued debating the regulation of the Bank of Bordeaux: the Guizot government was paralysed. The King dismissed Guizot on 23/2, latter advised him to suppress the revolution with the army with all necessary force. Louis Philippe slumped in a chair, 'The sea is rising, the sea is rising!' Then, 'I abdicate'. He fled, a Republic was proclaimed.** When he heard the news from Paris, FWIV said, 'Satan is on the loose again.' He tried to organise concerted resistance in London, Vienna and St Petersburg. He sent Radowitz to Vienna to work with Metternich including a special congress of the Bund.

(Guizot's father was killed by the guillotine. He opposed extremism and the death penalty. He feared chaos and violence. His attempts at press laws to stop mockery of the king did not work. The press became more raucous and aggressive.)

23 Feb Metternich: 'If I may compare the revolution with a book I would say that we are still at the preface, whereas France has already reached the final pages.'

26 Feb A diplomat who visited Metternich described him as 'isolated and paralysed' in a word powerless'. The Habsburg inner circle of court and ministers was confused, divided, paralysed. Some wanted concessions, others to hold fast. Metternich was in the latter group. After the news came from Paris of the fall of the king, Metternich said, 'Everyone says we must do something. Well, of course, but what? ... We must make everything anew but such reconstructions cannot be improvised.' His enemy Kolowrat was scheming at court to remove him.

27 Feb Palmerston: 'I grieve at the prospect of a republic in France for I fear that it must lead to war in Europe and fresh agitation in England. Large republics seem to be essentially and inherently aggressive, and the aggressions of the French will be resisted by the rest of Europe, and that is war; while on the other hand, the example of universal suffrage in France will set our non-voting population agog, and will create a demand for an inconvenient extension of the suffrage ballot, and other mischievous things.'

28 Feb News from Paris arrived in Berlin newspapers.

March Mass meetings / riots and fighting across Europe including Prague, Cracow, Budapest, Netherlands, Copenhagen. Liberal ministers appointed in most smaller German states. Nationalist uprising in Schleswig-Holstein against Danish rule. Pre-Parliament meets in Frankfurt, calls for elections to a German National Assembly.

3 March Mass demonstration in Cologne dispersed by army.

4 March Mass demonstration in Munich.

6 March In Vienna, Kolowrat attended a meeting of the bourgeois opposition and criticised Metternich. Siemann: There was criticism of Metternich among the royal family and courtiers and open talk of removing him.

6 March King Augustus of Saxony was forced into constitutional reforms and to dismiss his conservative minister.

6-7 March Large public meetings near the Brandenburg Gate ended with an address to the King demanding big changes.

8 March Barclay: Bodelschwingh seems to have converted FWIV to the idea that a constitution could not be avoided. The Gerlachs opposed and wanted tough resistance.

9 March Liberals in Vienna demanded reforms including a parliament with budgetary powers etc. On 12/3 thousands of students gathered in front of the university. As chaos grew in Vienna news arrived of Kossuth's address to the Hungarian Diet on 3 March.

12 March In the evening a courtier said to Metternich's wife, 'Is it true you are leaving tomorrow?' and said to her that she and her husband would be 'sent away'. She realised a plot was afoot. (Some

date this to evening of 13th but Siemann says 12th and he seems to have looked at the original sources.)

13 March Vienna kicked off. The Diet convened to present the Emperor with demands for a constitution, crowds gathered, troops arrived and fired, violence spread, machines were smashed, gas pipes were ripped up and administrative buildings trashed. Metternich was too deaf to make out what the crowds shouted, a secretary took notes for him. **Metternich was pressured by the Archdukes, manipulated by Kolowrat, into resigning ~9pm.** When he returned to his residence on the Ballhausplatz his wife asked, 'Are we completely dead?' 'Yes, my dear, we are dead.' They fled in disguise for England, arriving after many adventures and dangers on 20/4. (His properties were confiscated, inquiries were launched into his expenses, he relied on a 100,000 ruble loan from the Tsar to subsist. In England he rhapsodised about the English constitution — England is 'the freest country in the world because the most orderly'.) On 14/3 the Emperor announced the end of censorship, food taxes lowered, and convening of a constituent assembly. On 17th the Emperor agreed to an autonomous Hungarian government and in April it became an autonomous constitutional monarchy (still a Habsburg king) with a widened franchise.

13 March (Clarke) The President of Police ordered new troops into Berlin, that night there were clashes round the palace, people killed. Barclay: this escalated fast with demonstrations spreading over next days.

14 March FWIV agreed the United Diet should meet on 27 April. Admitted he was 'completely demoralised'.

15 March Wilhelm had a row with the liberal-minded commander of troops in Berlin. FWIV went to Potsdam and considered not returning to Berlin but did.

15 March Mass demonstration in Budapest.

16 March News of Metternich reached Berlin (Clark says 15/3).

17 March News of Metternich arrived in Milan, revolt kicked off next day.

17 March Mass demonstration in Cracow.

17 March Ludwig Gerlach wrote to a friend in interesting terms given the collapse into chaos over the next week: '*Self-reliant* men, who nevertheless stand with the King, are what he needs... The delicacy which Leopold recommends reminds me of a man who sees his neighbour falling into a fire and thinking that it is too indelicate to grasp him firmly.'

17 March (JS) FW rejected advice of von Prittwitz (commander of the Guards Infantry in Berlin who wanted to use force) and agreed to lift censorship (after which there was a flood of critical material), introduce a constitution and call the United Diet for 2 April (instead of 27th). There were attacks on factories and machines thought to be undermining employment. Bodelschwingh and others prepared their resignations.

18 March Demonstration in front of the palace in Berlin, peaceful, pleased at signs of FWIV making concessions. About 1:30pm he appeared on a balcony to wave. People in the crowd demanded the troops be withdrawn and **FWIV suddenly ordered Prittwitz to use the cavalry to clear the demonstration.** Troops moved in. (Clark: There were two accidental discharges of weapons and stories spread that the soldiers were firing on civilians.) Chaos spread, people enraged with the king, barricades went up. FWIV and his entourage sat down for dinner in the palace but the ground was moving under their feet. Before midnight von Prittwitz advised that if the city did not calm down over the next few days it should be evacuated and bombarded. FWIV thanked him, sat down at his desk, put his feet into a furry foot muff, and started drafting a document. He finished after midnight and gave it to Bodelschwingh who took it to the court printer at 3am. It's unclear exactly what he was thinking but it seems (Barclay p143) the combination of Prittwitz's military advice and Vincke arguing for concessions pushed him into it. Prittwitz got a big shock early on the morning of the 19th when he read FW's message.

19 March FW's note 'To My Dear Berliners' was posted all over Berlin in the morning. He asked Berliners to clear the barricades in return for which he promised to remove the troops from the streets and only protect key buildings. As people read the proclamation confused meetings were happening with FW, officials and the military. News came in of barricades being cleared, plans were

drawn up for immediate withdrawal of the troops. In the chaos Bodenschwingh brought *an order to withdraw the troops at about 11 am* to a deputation of city officials. It was a big defeat for Prittwitz and Wilhelm. There was also crucial confusion. FW thought he'd made clear in his proclamation that the palace and arsenal would be protected but Prittwitz thought that if the troops began to withdraw they'd have to retreat to barracks or outside Berlin. *At 12:30 he ordered the troops to withdraw to their quarters*, soon the palace was guarded by only 7 companies of troops (who were also withdrawn over coming days). By the time FW and those around him realised that the troop withdrawal now left them at the mercy of the crowds, it was too late to change course or even leave the city. In the early afternoon, people in the crowd started shouting, 'the King must come'. White with panic and fear, the king, the queen and some generals appeared on the balcony before a huge and angry crowd. 'Hat off!' roared the crowd. FW obeyed the demand to remove his cap and pay homage to the corpses of those killed in previous days. Breaking the tension, some began singing *Jesus meine Zuversicht (Jesus I Trust in Thee)*. Later FW agreed the formation of a Citizens Guard to protect the palace and the formation of a first constitutional government to be headed by Count Arnim Boitzenberg. Inside the palace, it felt as if the guillotine might be close. The palace was in chaos. Thile spent the day organising the evacuation of the state treasury, crown treasury, state papers etc out of Berlin.

When Wilhelm, often referred to as 'the shrapnel prince' in Berlin at this time, heard of his brother's decision, he had a furious argument with Bodenschwingh in the late morning. He then had an even worse confrontation with his brother, saying furiously, 'I have always known that you were a babbler, but not that you're a coward! One can no longer serve you with honour.' Wilhelm flung his sword at his brother's feet. The King replied tearfully, 'This is just too bad! You can't stay here. You will have to go!' Wilhelm was smuggled out of Berlin in disguise and went via Spandau to London. Barclay: there, chastened, he soon decided there was no alternative to a constitution. Augusta sent word that his brother Carl was exploring options for taking over himself or his son. (The recent biography of Wilhelm by Fischer says that the 'cartridge prince' nickname was fake news, invented and repeated by the media, but in fact Wilhelm did not issue orders to the troops on or before 18/3 because he'd handed his Berlin command to Prittwitz. He was looking out himself on the scene and later said that two shots were fired by accident then someone else in the company fired thinking they were attacked. Fischer says that in the chaos of 18-19/3 a bullet narrowly missed Augusta. Augusta and the children stayed at Potsdam. In England Wilhelm talked with Metternich.) By his own account Bismarck first heard the news of the 18-19 from noblewomen fleeing Berlin. He was 'filled with bitterness at the massacre of our soldiers in the streets. Politically I thought the King would soon be master of the situation if only he were free. I saw the first thing to be done was to liberate him as he was said to be in the power of the insurgents.'

On 20 March he was told by peasants of a demand from some townspeople they hoist a black, red and gold flag. He told them to hoist instead a white banner with a black cross and began gathering weapons. He then went round the villages 'and found the peasants eager to march to the help of the King in Berlin.' His next-door neighbour was the only local supporter of the revolution and said that he would try to persuade the peasants not to march.

'You know that I am a quiet man but if you do that I shall shoot you.'

'I am sure you won't.'

'I give you my word of honour that I will and you know that I keep my word, so drop that.'

The neighbour dropped it.

21 March (JS) Bismarck went to Potsdam and saw General von Prittwitz who had been ordered by the king not to fight. He told Bismarck to send food, not troops, but that he could not fight: 'What can we do after the king has commanded us to play the part of the vanquished? I cannot attack without orders.'

21 March Placards appeared throughout Berlin in the morning proclaiming that to 'save Germany' FW had 'placed himself at the head of the entire Fatherland' and he appeared on the balcony to tell the crowd he would ride through their midst. He rode through the streets, gave speeches, and made clear he would support German nationalism. After the ride there was a proclamation: 'Today I

have assumed the old German colours and have placed Myself in My People under the honourable banner of the German Empire. **Henceforth Prussia will merge into Germany.**' (A senior Prussian soldier-courtier, Rauch, who was asked to ride with the king wrote of his despair and horror at the whole affair — 'I cannot describe the impression that this ride made on me. It seemed to me as if everything had gone mad... It was as if I had come from the madhouse.') There was talk of assemblies and a new army, with the army taking a new oath to the future constitution, 'genuine constitutional governments' etc. On 22/3 he promised electoral reform and ministerial responsibility. He even seemed to make concessions to a delegation of Poles asking for concessions.

21 March FW responded to demands from protesters that he take up the cause of a German parliament, he rode into Berlin on his horse with little protection and gave impromptu speeches about his support for an all-German parliament.

21 March (Clark) Denmark annexed Schleswig, the Germans in the south of the duchy formed a provisional government.

?21/23? March (Memoirs say 21st, other books & JS have this on 23rd. Augusta dated it 23rd according to Gall.) Bismarck went to speak to Wilhelm but he was referred instead to Augusta. Bismarck claims in his Memoirs he was trying to get Wilhelm to support military action to free the king and take back Berlin but that Augusta was plotting to be Regent in the event that neither the King nor Wilhelm were viable. She later claimed (July 1862, Gall) that Bismarck tried to persuade her to grab the throne in the name of her husband and son, to disown measures implemented by the King, and to 'question the latter's authority and soundness of mind' (Augusta). **The incident poisoned their relationship.**

(Barclay (p64): Augusta had impressed Goethe aged 12 as 'an utterly charming and creative creature who already has quite original ideas and whimsies'. She admired French literature and British institutions. Their marriage was not based on affection — in their early days Wilhelm complained of her irreligiosity and after becoming king he enjoyed their separations.)

Bismarck then got from the King's younger brother a letter saying the bearer has permission from me to speak to the King and inquire into his health and he hastened to Berlin. He went to the palace and there gave a letter for the King to read arguing the revolution was confined to the towns and he could regain control if he wanted. He returned to Potsdam and discussed action with Prittwitz and others. When someone said 'what can we do?', Bismarck sitting at a piano started to play an infantry charge march. Bismarck told them 'the country will thank you and ultimately the King too.' Some of the generals asked him to speak to others to see if there would be general support for action despite the King's instructions. He talked to some of them then returned to Schönhausen. He takes a delegation of peasants to see the situation for themselves. He went to Potsdam on 25th. (The chronology about his movements seems very confused across the books but proof-reading this I think this section could be much improved.)

25 March FW 'arrived unexpectedly' (OP) in Potsdam on 25th. FW told the troops at Potsdam that 'I have come to Potsdam in order to bring peace to my dear Potsdamers and to show them that I am in every respect a free King, and to show the Berliners that they need fear no reaction and that all the disquieting rumours to that effect are completely unfounded. I have never been freer and more secure than when under the protection of my citizens.'

Bismarck was an eye-witness and recorded that these words prompted 'a murmuring and clattering of sabres in their sheaths such as no King of Prussia in the midst of his officers had ever heard before, and, I hope, will ever hear again. Deeply grieved, I returned to Schönhausen.' In his Memoirs, he wrote that he had written the passages above with the newspapers of the time open before him and they 'contradict each other and my own recollection.' He then writes that in May he thought that rumours and false news had spread across the country about the events around the 18-19 March which were very damaging to the monarchy and should be rebutted quickly before they had permanent effect on the peasants who had initially strongly supported the King. He complained the military never gave a satisfactory account of what had happened until 1891! He argued to Prittwitz later that month that when Bodelschwingh ordered Prittwitz to withdraw troops from the palace

square, he should have had the minister arrested. He said he was told by officers in the King's immediate entourage that the King withdrew 'owing to a call of nature', the troops started marching away, when he returned he was asked by the officers if he had ordered this and denied it. (p34)

Barclay: there are at least five different versions of the King's Potsdam address.

29 March Count Arnim resigned and the king made Camphausen (a distinguished businessman and liberal) the 'minister-president' (sort of PM but without control of Cabinet appointments) and called the Diet to meet on 2 April. Bismarck went back to Berlin.

29 March Leopold Gerlach visited FW in Potsdam and was shocked: 'His discourses about the March events — a mixture of resignation, weakness, apathy, and desperation — made a frightful impression on me. Everything was confused, listless, and fantastic... I went home heavy with despair.'

30 March Leopold Gerlach diary: 'First attempt to set up a *ministère occulte*.' Leopold tried to persuade FW that foreign policy and the army were the foundations of restoring royal power. The Gerlachs tried to organise a key group, which became known as the Camarilla, around FW. The key members up to November were the two Gerlachs, adjutant-general Rauch, Massow. Edwin Manteuffel was close to them and played an important role. Ludwig's judgements of the King were and remained harsh, to the dismay of Leopold. Ludwig thought FW may abdicate and told his brother they had to be ready to make the monarchy itself their priority, not FW. In coming months they had to be careful about their meetings with FW to minimise rumours. (Barclay, Chapter 7.)
April Chartist demonstrations in Britain.

April War broke out between Prussia and Denmark over Schleswig-Holstein. The German population of Holstein, Lauenburg and southern Schleswig created a provisional government. Holstein and Lauenburg were in the Bund which supported them 12/4. Prussian troops deployed. Gall: Prussia was acting on behalf of the Bund in aiding the attempt by the inhabitants to leave the Danish Federation. Prussia had to abandon 26/8.

Barclay: At the start FW was supportive of using the army against what he saw as unwarranted aggression from Denmark. But he quarrelled a lot with Arnim and, with the Camarilla, was worried about upsetting Russia. He preferred to use the troops in Poland where operations began in April. Sperber: The movement in Schleswig Holstein became a popular nationalist cause throughout Germany: mess meetings, women raised cash and supplies, volunteers enlisted.

Clark: The Prussians marched into Schleswig on 23/4. The war stirred the emotions of the liberals who met at the Frankfurt Assembly in May but they didn't appreciate the European dimensions. Cf. 26/8 (Malmo) and 17/9 (fighting in Frankfurt).

2 April The United Diet reassembled. Bismarck said: '**The past is buried and it is a matter of more poignant grief to me than to many of you that no human power can raise it up again, since the Crown itself has cast earth on its own coffin.**' He broke into tears and had to stop speaking. 'His moderation aroused bitter criticism from ultraconservative friends' (OP) and he apologised to the Gerlachs. Gall: we don't really know what he was thinking then but if he was casting around for alternatives, he soon decided to row behind the Gerlachs again.

On 5th it passed an electoral law paving the way for elections to a Prussian National Assembly: elections were indirect (voters chose electors who chose deputies) but all votes were weighted equally, all adult males who had lived in the same place for 6 months and had not received poor relief (Barclay, p147).

8 April Speech to the Diet on the last day it sat. The new Finance Minister, Hansemann, who soon after founded the largest private bank in Prussia in the 1850s and 1860s, asked for a levy of 40m taler, some for military and some for 'the maintenance of industry'. Bismarck opposed. The statesman should survey 'all interests in the country with equal impartiality. I fear, therefore, that the burden of this new imposition will be laid mainly upon the provinces and upon small towns and that the money raised will be used predominantly for the benefit of industry and money transactions in the larger towns.' The government is taking this cash 'from the assets of taxpayers in order to pour it into the bottomless well of the needs of a faltering industry'. It would also shift

political pressure to the countryside. Over coming months and in election campaigns he repeatedly sided with the small businessmen in towns and craft tradesmen against big business and finance. He attacked the hypocrisy whereby big business repeatedly called for protection from competition (and got it) while simultaneously pushing *laissez-faire* theories that brought destitution to many more people. Gall (p47-8): he was successful in persuading many aristocrats similar to himself to turn away from support for liberalism on the grounds it was a) bad for Prussia and b) bad for themselves. Cf. the pressure groups founded later in the year.

10 April Chartists organised a big demonstration in London (Evans: estimated 150,000). They were met with a massive show of force: police (4k), army (12k), and an 85k militia of 'special constables' primarily of property owners (Evans: 100k) including Louis Napoleon. (Clark: nowhere else in Europe did a regime mobilise such a force.) Palmerston wrote the next day that it had been 'a glorious day, the Waterloo of peace and order', which would produce 'a good and calming effect', no need for the special constables to 'mash them [protesters] to jelly'. Some of his Cabinet colleagues feared that he interfered too much in other countries' domestic politics and lamented that Russell could not control him. Grey was alarmed that Palmerston sent diplomatic letters without clearing them with the PM and wrote in his diary (May) that had he 'played such a prank' in his father's government he would 'have been dismissed without ceremony'. In May his dabbling in Spanish politics threatened his position and Victoria was much annoyed. (Brown, p308ff) Evans: the government was anxious not to increase taxes at such a time so cut back on spending, stopped subsidising colonial planters and sugar growers and extended free trade to colonies, which in turn led to unrest there. Clark: after the June Days, the British government cracked down on Chartists and by September the movement was dead. Prussian police sent observers to talk to the British police and took back lessons.

13 April In a conversation with Leopold von Gerlach, 'the King excused himself for ... being weak and giving in; constitutionalism had to be recognised *because of Germany*, and in according it such recognition he acted upon the express counsel of his ministers among whom he particularly named Bodenschwingh and Canitz'. Gerlach was wary: 'Does the gentleman want to lie to himself or would he have it believed that he didn't sink as deeply as he really did?' Barclay thinks (p148ff) he was overwhelmed by chaos and the breakdown of process, meetings, advice etc over 18-20 March. He did believe in Germany unity if it could be done while maintaining monarchical authority. But he was also swept along in chaos for a few weeks. For months after March he was self-pitying, sullen, lethargic. On 14 June Leopold Gerlach wrote in his diary that according to a mutual acquaintance, 'The King stares into space for hours at a time — then outbursts of rage follow.' Cf. 28/8.

16 April A march in Paris of unarmed workers, chanting pro-republic slogans. They'd been given permission to march. When they arrived at the Hotel Ville, they faced the National Guard with tied bayonets. They were ordered to disperse. Leading radical clubs had premises raided by the Guard. The provisional government defended themselves saying they had intelligence of plots. Radicals were furious. Louis Blanc said that the rumours were engineered: unknown persons were 'sowing lies whose effects had been perfidiously thought through'.

20 April A manuscript sent to a newspaper from Schönhausen but not printed until 38 years later, in response to the release of Prussian citizens of Polish nationality who had been convicted of treason. The fact that they had soon formed 'bands that persecuted the German inhabitants of a Prussian province with plunder and murder, massacring and barbarically mutilating women and children' was the *least* damaging aspect of the affair. If this approach were continued it would mean 'German states deprived of the last of what German arms had procured for them in Poland and Italy over the centuries... This is what people are gaily prepared to throw away for the sake of the implementation of a visionary theory, a theory that must equally lead us to form a new Slav kingdom out of our south-eastern frontier districts ..., give the Italian Tyrol back to the Venetians, and with Moravia and Bohemia create an independent Czech kingdom right into the heart of Germany... [Re a Polish state] But how can a German, for the sake of whining compassion and impracticable theories, dream of creating on the doorstep of the fatherland a relentless enemy

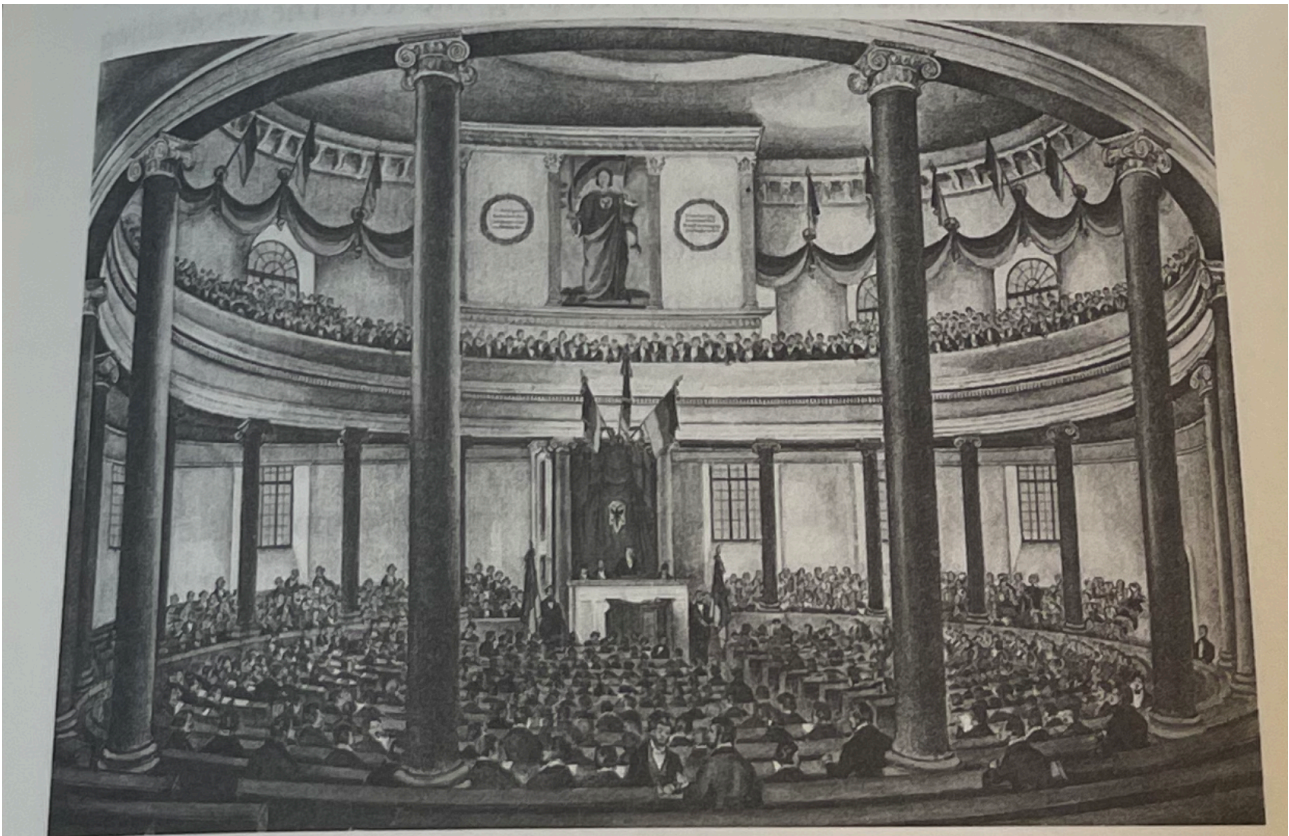
who will always be trying to deflect his feverish domestic unrest by means of wars and who every time we are engaged in the west will attack us in the rear: who will and must be far more avid for conquest at our expense than the Russian Emperor, who is happy if he can hold his present giant together and would have to be very foolish to want to increase, by conquering German lands, the already large proportion of his subjects prepared to take up arms against him. *We do not, however, need Poland to protect us against Russia, we can protect ourselves.* Cf. 3/61 and Jan-Feb/63.

Late April Letter to a newspaper (in *Collected Works* but may not have been published): 'Like every sensible person, the landowner will acknowledge that it is pointless and impossible to halt the flow of time or dam it up.'

23 April In France the largely rural electorate was worried by chaos in Paris and new land taxes. They voted for a Constituent Assembly dominated by moderates and liberals.

25 April In Vienna the government issued the 'Pillersdorf Constitution', named for interior minister who drafted it.

May Elections to the Frankfurt National Assembly, met 18 May. Evans: most states organised elections with an indirect suffrage based on property but it was quite low and most could vote. Three-quarters of deputies had a university education. Sperber (p279): the results, unlike those in France May 1849, suggest a sharp discontinuity with the next 100 years. The political map of 1900 and 1950 Germany was quite different. The main strongholds of the left in 1848 were in central and southwest Germany; by 1900 these strongholds were mainly in the north.



The German National Assembly in St Paul's Church, Frankfurt (1848-9), lithograph after a drawing by Leo von Elliot. Festooned with the national colours and with an enormous portrayal of Germania by Philipp Veit, this chamber was designed to reverberate to the great patriotic issues of the day.

May Also elections to the new Prussian National Assembly. Overwhelming defeat for conservatives, landowners less than 7% of deputies. First met on 22 May. In his opening speech FW

reminded deputies their job was 'to agree upon the constitution with me', but he also assured them that the 'unity of Germany is my fixed goal'. Barclay: while Arnim wanted to exploit the situation to Prussia's advantage, FW was absorbed in medieval fantasies and dreams of ceremonies in which the Habsburgs were again crowned as Holy Roman Emperors. Arnim rejected FW's schemes. FW was much shocked at the idea of *him* being crowned somehow the head of Germany, and declared that 'I will not accept the crown'.

May (OP) Bismarck decided not to become a candidate for the Prussian National Assembly which replaced the United Diet as he thought he had no chance of election. The new parliament attacked the Junkers' privileges, titles, hunting rights, judicial powers, and it imposed new taxes. 'A real estate tax is not a tax but a confiscation of capital.' The revolution's leaders had succeeded by 'misrepresentation' and 'exciting the greed ... and envy' of the poorer against the richer.

May (EF) He tried to become a candidate for the Landtag but could not get selected as a candidate even in his home area.

13 May The Austrian government ordered a botched clampdown in Vienna. It provoked marches, riots, storming of factories.

14-15 May A crowd marched on the Habsburg palace demanding revision of the constitution and democratic elections. Radical democrats were mobilising in Vienna. Ferdinand panicked and gave in, his cabinet resigned, two days later (17) **the royal household fled Vienna for Innsbruck**. 24/5 the university in Vienna was closed. National Guard went over to the students. (Clark gives slightly different dates, p489.)

15 May A crowd broke into the lightly guarded chamber of the National Assembly in Paris and read out a petition then marched to the Hotel de Ville to proclaim an 'insurrectionary government' to be headed by radicals. The government rallied the National Guard and dislodged the insurgents from the Hotel de Ville. Some were arrested.

4 June FW told the Cabinet he refused to dilute his personal authority over the army and he would abdicate rather than concede. The Cabinet backed down.

4 June Leopold Gerlach gave FW a report he'd written in May and discussed with others in the camarilla. LG thought that FW had 1) never shown interest in real governing, preferring occasional dramatic announcements and 2) never selected and worked properly with ministers and advisers. He wrote that confidence in the King and his government had been shattered by March events and he had to liberate himself from the constitutional system.

5 June (Evans) The Danish king was forced to declare the union of Schleswig and Holstein. (Evans implies the war kicked off after this, other books that it kicked off in spring.)

7 June Wilhelm returned from England and thanked Bismarck for being 'active on my behalf' (Memoirs). While he was away, he was heavily criticised. At one point a crowd marched on his palace and it was only saved by the guards waiting 'Property of the People' on the facade. It was announced on 10 May he would return. A delegation of liberals met Camphausen, one of them, Boerner, recorded that Camphausen seemed like 'a beleaguered schoolteacher', exhausted, 'seemed predestined to be betrayed and abandoned by all sides'. Clark: by June, revolutionary energy had peaked and was receding. Fischer: Camphausen asked Wilhelm to appear publicly in civilian dress, not uniform, but he refused.

9 June The mob attacked Count Arnim. Gerlach later chided FW for not being tougher in response.

14 June Crowds stormed the arsenal in Berlin after weeks of growing pressure. Arnim resigned the next day and the Assembly said it would not accept the Cabinet's draft constitution. Camphausen and the rest of the ministry resigned on 20 June.

17 June (JS) Prague revolt suppressed by Austrian forces.

21 June (JS) He told his brother he was going to Potsdam for a few days of 'political intrigues'. 3 July he wrote that he had found there the highest personalities 'more decisive and much clearer about their position than one would have thought given all that has happened. I was also able to assure myself through sight of a confidential letter from the Tsar that the danger of war with Russia is completely imaginary as long as civil war does not break out here and our ruler does not call for Russian help.'

22-26 June 'June days' in Paris. Sparked by plans to close the National Workshops set up by Louis Blanc (to provide work and minimum income for unemployed). Tens of thousands on each side fought in virtual civil war between government and insurgents. Artillery blasted the barricades. Paris was under martial law until October. Victor Hugo fought against the insurgents. Tocqueville (still a deputy) walked the streets on 25th to see what was happening, suddenly insurgents appeared on a nearby rooftop and fired on the troops, in the chaos he was knocked over and trampled by cavalry: 'I lost my hat and came close to losing my life.' While both Hugo and Tocqueville opposed the radicals, they both pondered for the rest of their lives on why violence had suddenly exploded. Marx described the revolt as a moral victory for the vanquished: 'The collisions that are generated by the very conditions of bourgeois society have to work themselves out through struggle, they cannot be reasoned out of existence. The best form of state is one that does not blur social contradictions or seek arbitrarily ... to contain them. The best form of state is one in which these contradictions play themselves out freely and thereby come to a resolution.'

25 June - 8 Sep Rudolf von Auerswald became Minister President in Prussia replacing Camphausen. He was a childhood friend of the King and mildly liberal in views (his brother would be killed by the mob in Frankfurt 18/9). He had reminded FW of his predecessor's promise of a constitution. A new draft constitution was hammered out but remained in limbo.

June-July News comes in of successful counter-revolutionary moves around Europe. (Tocqueville re Paris: 'the whole thing seemed to me to be a bad tragedy played by actors from the provinces'.) Bismarck helped organise conservatives including founding the *Kreuzzeitung*, which would be highly influential for decades, and the *Association for the Protection of the Interests of Landed Property* (the name was shortly extended to include 'the Prosperity of All Classes of the People'). Having apologised to the Gerlachs for his 2 April speech, he was connected to the secret Camarilla of ultraconservatives planning to persuade FW to launch a counter-revolution. One often reads that the Gerlachs were inherently ambivalent about the organisation of conservatives to mobilise the masses since the notion of 'persuading people' was itself contrary to their notions of authority and legitimacy. But Barclay writes that Ludwig Gerlach actually was a crucial driver of the *Kreuzzeitung* project and wrote a monthly column.

1 July First edition (after some test runs in June) of the *Neue Preussische Zeitung* (because of its iron cross it became known as the *Kreuzzeitung*). Bismarck wrote many pieces for it over the next few years but few can be identified with confidence now (OP p59). He also frequently wrote to the editor, Hermann Wagener whom he had known since university — e.g. demanding more adverts and social notices: 'there are not enough adverts. **In our rural economy adverts are a necessity.** The women cannot exist without them and in any case the survival of a newspaper rests on the fees from advertising. New papers can help themselves by reprinting the notices in the established papers and so by means of appearance eventually create the reality of an important information paper... Births, deaths, weddings announcements must be taken over from the *Spener-Vossische* in my view in full... You cannot imagine how many women read papers only for the notices and if they do not find them, forbid their husbands to buy the paper.' Within a year it tripled its circulation from an initial 1,000 and by the early 1860s it was 6-8,000. (Sadly we lack a thorough account of Bismarck's handling of the press over decades, which would be fascinating. Cf. Reptile Fund below.)

Gall: 'Here Bismarck evinced more and more strongly that anti-idealism, often grounded in cynicism, that was so much a part of his character.' The whole shift towards organising the lower classes, and promoting material interests over feudal loyalties, was necessarily deeply alarming to such as the Gerlachs. Was this really progress or self-destructive? *Different generations of aristocratic conservative thought differently.*

5 July Palmerston: 'Our duty, our vocation is not to enslave, but to set free; and I may say without any vainglorious boast, or without great offence to anyone, that we stand at the head of moral, social and political civilisation. **Our task is to lead the way and direct the march of other nations.** I do not think we ought to goad on the unwilling or force forward the reluctant: but when

we see a people battling against difficulties, and struggling against obstacles in the pursuit of their rights, we may be permitted to encourage them with our sympathy and cheer them with our approbation, and even if occasion require, to lend them a helping hand.'

24-25 July Marshall Radetsky defeated the Piedmont army and restored Austrian rule in north Italy. After the Italian uprising was defeated, Garibaldi wrote, 'I saw how little the national cause inspired the local inhabitants of the countryside.' Tuscan peasants crushed the Republican movement in Florence just as in France the peasants supported Napoleon.

August The counter-revolution gathers pace. Bismarck drafted a petition attacking the new financial legislation as 'a confiscation of private property' unequalled in history except by 'conquerors and dictators' and threatening the King that 'the great majority of the Prussian people will hold your majesty responsible'.

26 July A new draft of a constitution came from Weldeck's committee, more democratic and less power for the king.

29 July Leopold Gerlach recorded in his diary that FW had mentioned a plan to bring two regiments to Berlin to dissolve the Assembly. Gerlach warned he needed to have a serious replacement ministry prepared in advance of such steps.

31 July Troops fired on civilians in the Silesian city of Schweidnitz. It provoked votes in the Prussian National Assembly asserting orders over the army and insisting it acted in conformity with the constitution. The government, knowing FW's views, tried to duck the issue. Cf. 7 Sep.

16 August Disraeli to Parliament: 'The sentimental principle in the management of foreign affairs in the present day is to develop the principle of nationality. The noble Lord [Palmerston] is going, then, to mediate in the affairs of Italy on the sentimental principle of developing nationality. Now, I beg the Committee to remark into what inextricable difficulties and dangers any encouragement of such a course on the part of the noble Lord must lead this country'. How will we distinguish between places where we want to support the principle of nationality and those we don't, such as Denmark? Or Hungary? **If this House does not take the earliest opportunity to discourage the sentimental principle in settling the affairs of nations, I am convinced that we shall be involved in difficulties which it is impossible to contemplate; for I believe that such a policy, if it be fairly developed, will really resolve Europe into its original elements, and will not leave any social or political system in existence in the form which it now assumes... I protest against the attempt to regulate the world by a contrived concert with the Jacobin party... It is the system that commences with "fraternity" and ends with assassination; it is the system that begins by preaching universal charity, and concludes by practising general spoliation...** The noble Lord has it in his power to act in a manner which will add even to his influence, and to the greatness and the reputation of his country. He may in this craven age assert the principles of public justice in a manner which becomes a British Minister; and he will find that no bandits, whatever may be their position, will cross any mountains or invade any capitals, when they know that England is prepared to uphold the principles of public law. For, Sir, in public as much as in private matters, I have seen enough, and I am sure that every Gentleman from his own experience must have seen enough, to convince him, in the long run, nothing can withstand the majesty of law, the force of truth, and the inspiration of honour.'

18-19 August The 'Junker Parliament' in Berlin where the Junkers organised for their self-defence. Bismarck attended. Ludwig Gerlach voiced his basic argument: property is a Christian institution if and only if it is connected to 'the duties that arise from it... As mere means of enjoyment it is not holy but dirty. **Communism correctly rejects property without duties. For that reason we may not surrender the threatened rights — patronage [of church and school], police, the legal jurisdiction — for these are more duties than rights.**' Over the summer Bismarck also helped set up various pressure groups including *Association for King and Country*.

20 August In Charlottenburg, a small town west of Berlin, an angry royalist mob broke up a peaceful democratic march. Sparked violence in Berlin the next day. During an August trip, FW encountered much support and in Cologne workers at Marx's newspaper left work to join the celebration and the next issue had to be cancelled.

21 August Daughter Marie born.

25 August To Hermann Wagener: 'These questions have to do not only quite literally with the livelihood of a large section of the Conservative Party but with whether King and government, faced with a crucial decision, are going to throw themselves into the arms of the revolution, announce that it is here to stay and seek to apply it to the social sphere... **It is a criterion of nobility that it serves the country for nothing. To be able to do that it must have its own wealth, from which it can live; otherwise the thing simply will not work.** As result we have to be as materialistic as necessary to defend our material rights...'

26 Aug Prussia agreed the Malmö armistice with Denmark without consulting the Frankfurt Parliament and agreed to withdraw its army.

Gall: Prussia withdrew under pressure from UK and Russia.

OP: Prussian Army withdrew against Denmark before the threat of British intervention, this failure 'left a vivid mark on the liberal soul' (OP).

Sperber: In August Britain and Russia pressured Prussia over S-H, Prussia dropped support for the provisional government set up by German insurgents.

Clark: Frankfurt tried to resist the deal briefly but was forced to accept the Great Powers decision.

End August FWIV to a friend: '*I do not rule.* For God's sake don't ever forget that for a moment.'

27-28 August Ludwig to Leopold: we need to 'wait until ripe fruits fall into the King's lap and, in the meantime, let us prepare a ministry (Brandenburg, Prittwitz, Bismarck)'.

28 Aug Leopold Gerlach complained in his diary of the king's 'incomprehensible indifference and aversion to all complicated affairs' and the next day he expressed deep frustration with his 'cowardice and intentional confusion'. Cf. 13 April. Also his relationships with his new ministers were terrible and he was always complaining about them and firing off endless letters. Sometimes he would petulantly withdraw and tell everyone that the ministers disobeyed him. He seemed broken to many, occasionally floated abdicating. Many aristocrats, including in the army, referred to him with rage or disgust for his behaviour. Barclay: notions of abdication were still in the air, FW was bouncing between rage and depression, the Camarilla wanted action but was wary of the king flaking on them. On 21 August violence in Berlin gave the Camarilla an opening to push a crackdown but they had to contend with FW's continuing 'apathy and indifference' (Leopold).

Sep Russia deployed troops against Romanian nationalists in Wallachia.

7 Sep Assembly insisted 219-143 on the government carrying out measures regarding the army after the 31/7 incident. FW and the Camarilla were agreed on resisting any incursions by the Assembly on the king's power over the army. FW was full of schemes to overthrow the Assembly but couldn't stick to a plan and struggled to get ministers to serve. The Gerlachs kept insisting on the need for a tough, loyal and competent Minister President to execute any plan but did not try to push FW into a coup as they feared he would fold without the right support. They spoke to him on 9/9 after which Ludwig wrote in his diary, 'Everything is still as it was. We need heroic deeds, everything is ready, only the hero is missing.'

8 Sep (11/9 JS) Auerswald replaced by General von Pfuell who had been military governor of Berlin until 18/3. JS — Pfuell was a Junker with liberal sympathies who tried to stick to the March agreement.

Barclay: Pfuell was appointed on 21/9. (Sometimes a) historians conflate the resignation of X and appointment of Y to the same day, but there is often a gap, or b) there is a 'decision' on X but then a 'formal appointment' on Y and the dates are conflated.) Pfuell was a liberal and quickly disappointed FW (the Gerlachs had not pushed for him).

17 Sep (Sperber, p230) There were mass meetings across Germany protesting the Prussian decision on S-H. Frankfurt initially had rejected Malmö and voted to continue the war then u-turned.

Radical deputies organised a mass meeting on 17/9. **An enraged crowd tried to storm the assembly.** Insurgents were defeated after two deputies were lynched. The Prussian Army fired artillery and attacked the crowd. Clark: this violence pushed many liberals towards the conservatives. Robert Blum was so fed up he headed for Vienna.

23 Sep To Johanna: 'Either the government shows itself to be weak like its predecessors and gives way, something that I am working against, or it does its duty in which case I do not doubt for a minute that on Monday evening or Tuesday blood will flow. I had not thought the Democrats would be bold enough to accept battle but their whole attitude suggests that they will. Poles, Frankfurter, loafers, freebooters, all sorts of scum, have again appeared. They reckon that the troops will back out, probably through the speeches of a few unsatisfied chatterboxes who thus mislead the troops. I think they are wrong.' He stayed in Berlin.

29 Sep Ludwig told Leopold the time had come for a ministry including Brandenburg, Bismarck, Kleist-Retzow with Prince Wilhelm as 'generalissimo'.

By the end of September the revolutionary movement was defeated in Frankfurt.

3 Oct Ludwig Gerlach arrived at Potsdam and stayed for 17 days. Barclay: over the next few weeks the Camarilla managed to surround FW and influence him.

4 Oct FW was speaking of the cabinet's 'treason'.

6 Oct In Vienna the government ordered the Vienna garrison to march towards Hungary. A crowd gathered. Chaos. Minister of war lynched. Mutinies. Imperial arsenal looted. **Emperor fled Vienna again for Olmütz.**

6 Oct Meeting at Sanssouci with Gerlachs and FW. FW agreed he was not opposed to Brandenburg. He asked Leopold to go to Breslau where Brandenburg commanded the Sixth Army Corps and sound him out. Brandenburg was FW's uncle, a product of a FWII liaison. He had a distinguished military career but was unimaginative and in Valentin's phrase was 'bored by himself'. He agreed to serve but only if he had a free hand to direct the cabinet.

7 Oct Pfuel wrote to FW that he could not remain in office if FW would not accept the constitutional draft of the summer.

15 Oct FW rebuked the Assembly for passing a decree removing FW's title as King 'by the Grace of God' — a huge blow to him.

16 Oct The Cabinet offered to resign. FW agreed but asked Pfuel to stay until a new government could be named.

17 Oct Brandenburg arrived in Berlin. The Camarilla wanted a clean break with the previous ministers but Brandenburg considered keeping them. After days of exhausting discussions, the situation was resolved by the end of October.

18 Oct To Joanna: 'Not the slightest sign of revolt here. But instead bitter feelings between workers and civil guard, which can bear good fruit. The workers cheer the King and the army and want the King to rule alone etc.'

31 Oct Austrian army stormed Vienna, revolt crushed. Rebel leaders shot, Austrian troops looted Vienna as if it was an enemy city. Evans: Croatian troops looted and tortured house to house. (A stray cartridge started a fire in the Homburg roof and many books in the Imperial library were damaged by the water used to put it out.)

November Hinckeldey put in charge of the Berlin police. He was soon FW's main adviser on security matters and quickly got the right to report in person. FW often circumvented normal channels by giving him direct orders. Hinckeldey had an intelligence operation to monitor suspected revolutionaries, break up plots, and control the press — an operation he extended to other Bund states. Generally FW and Hinckeldey were focused on the left but sometimes Hinckeldey also confiscated the *Kreuzzeitung*!

Hinckeldey was 'one of the most remarkable and creative conservative officials in 19th Century Prussia', in some ways similar to Baron Haussmann (Barclay p240). Hinckeldey favoured a combination of repression and socio-economic activism. He was an unusual bureaucrat with enormous energy, willing to bend rules and not obsessed with process. He was shunned by the court society and hated among the *Kreuzzeitung* network. 1848-56 he became 'a kind of urban boss' (Barclay). He established a fire brigade, street-cleaning, soup kitchens, public washhouses in the poorest areas, refuges for unemployed female domestic servants. He planted trees and in 1852 he had an English engineering firm build a waterworks to supply fresh drinking water. He collected and

applied statistics. He did not enrich himself and lived happily with his wife and 7 children. When he complained about being underpaid, FW tried to get him promoted and enhance his powers. Ministers and officials resisted though FW eventually managed to get him more powers. (Cf. 18 July 1856.)

Along with Hinckeldey was Carl Saegert, another odd character who FW turned to and their relationship was 'one of the oddest in the entire annals of the Hohenzollern monarchy' (Barclay p238). Along with FW's secretary Schöning, and the queen's secretary, Harder, Saegert was the leading figure in what Leopold called 'a second Camarilla'. They were introduced in the chaos of spring 1848 and FW was impressed by Saegert's apparent grassroots knowledge about revolutionary events and characters. Saegert was a bourgeois social climber, a disreputable character who others despised. His influence peaked during the Crimean War.

1 Nov The Assembly was informed of Pfuel's departure and Brandenburg's appointment. Ludwig Gerlach arrived in Potsdam. The whole Camarilla, which wanted decisive action, was near the king, who was still toying with compromises. On 2/11 Leopold told Brandenburg the main thing was to 'show in every possible way that the King still rules in this country, and not the Assembly'.

2 Nov Pfuel replaced as Minister President by Count Friedrich Wilhelm von Brandenburg (the king's uncle and former commander of the VI Army Corps) until 11/50, who was also Foreign Minister. The Gerlachs and the wider Camarilla had been toying with the Brandenburg idea since at least mid-July, and cf. 29/9. Otto von Manteuffel was Interior Minister. When Bismarck's name was mentioned as a possible minister around this time, Gerlach reported the King wrote in the margin '**Only to be employed when the bayonet governs unrestricted.**'

4 Nov A meeting in the evening in Brandenburg's rooms near Sanssouci with the Gerlachs and others. Brandenburg sketched his plan to move the Assembly out of Berlin and said the King would have to be quiet and not make provocative comments, and generally had to be better controlled: 'A stricter etiquette has to be introduced here.' The Gerlachs were happy.

9 Nov (anniversary of Napoleon's coup 1799) Brandenburg told the National Assembly they were adjourned until 27/11 after which they would meet in Brandenburg (~60km from Berlin). At 2pm 13,000 troops under General Wrangel entered Berlin. Wrangel rode to the Assembly (sitting in a theatre) and told them to disperse, which they did by 5pm. Bismarck was angry the Assembly was not immediately dissolved. He was in Berlin and involved in the logistics around moving the Assembly out of Berlin, protecting ministers. (JS dates the troop movement to the next day.)

OP: the revolutionary enthusiasm of March 'evaporated with astonishing speed'. The middle classes were frightened by the extremism of the lower classes who were disillusioned with the modest aims of the *Mittelstand* liberals. By the end of November the revolutionary movement was defeated in Berlin. But it was still strengthening in the Rhineland and broke out again in May 1849.

Clark: the deputies called for a tax boycott. There was a heated debate at the Frankfurt Assembly about whether to support this, the moderate-conservative majority voted it down. But this closure energised the organisation of the left across Germany. In Saxony, December elections produced a lower house in which 66 of 75 seats were won by democrats. In Germany and France the liberals were increasingly squeezed between radicals and counter-revolution.

9 Nov In Vienna The radical Robert Blum, parliamentary deputy of the Frankfurt Assembly, was taken to execution by firing squad. (Confused reports about him had portrayed him to authorities in chaos as more revolutionary than he was. Schwarzenberg decided that his parliamentary privilege did not hold and martial law should apply: Blum is 'the most influential chief of the German anarchists' [false] and if he were condemned and shot 'his comrades [would] see that in Austria we do not fear them'.) His farewell letter to his wife, written as he awaited the firing squad, became a relic: '... Bring up our — now only your — children to be fine people... Everything I feel runs away in tears so I say again, live well dear wife... Farewell! Farewell! Thousand, thousand the last kisses from your Robert... They are coming! Farewell! Well!' An officer saw his tears and said, 'Don't be afraid, it will all be over in an instant.' Blum replied, 'This tear is not the tear of the parliamentary deputy of the German nation Robert Blum, this is the tear of the father and

husband.' This entered radical legend, the 'Song of Robert Blum' was sung across southern Germany into the 20th century, it identified him as 'a man of middle-class attachments and values, a private man who had entered public life' (Clark).

11 Nov Martial law declared in Berlin, the Civil Guards were soon dispersed.

13 Nov Ludwig Gerlach returned to Magdeburg.

16 Nov To Johanna: Yesterday he had dinner with FW.

19 Nov Leopold to Ludwig: he noted ministers wanted to impose a constitution which he and Rauch opposed. 'Brandenburg avoided talking to me. I find that odd in view of the curious way in which he entered the government. I can't find fault with him for wanting to show ... that he is not a creature or tool of the Potsdam Camarilla.' By 26/11 Leopold reported that 'the power of the Camarilla has largely been absorbed by the cabinet'. Brandenburg was wary of the king and unenthusiastic about the Camarilla's ideas. *He thought FW had to honour the promises made in March and a moderately liberal constitution would do the trick.* FW was instinctively with the Camarilla, to Brandenburg's annoyance, who blamed FW's March errors for the whole mess. In his diary 19/11, Leopold wrote that FW still saw Bunsen and Radowitz as his main allies 'and in comparison to those two he regards us cattle' — which was important 1849-50. The Camarilla never again had such influence after autumn 1848 (Barclay).

21 Nov Prince Felix von Schwarzenberg, a competent character and one of Europe's great landowners, took over in Vienna as Minister President (Carr wrongly dates this to October). He wanted to join Austria with the *Zollverein* in a new Customs Union; preserve AH dominance in Germany; revive the Bund and have it guarantee AH's borders so that a challenge anywhere required German states to defend her.

Gall: Bismarck appraised Schwarzenberg accurately, Radowitz 'formed a totally false picture' of him and 'vastly overestimated in particular the solidarity of opponents of the revolution'.

23 Nov FW, distraught at Brandenburg's plans, said, 'If I were not a Christian I would take my own life.'

27 Nov The Prussian Assembly met in Brandenburg amid scenes of commotion but it was too late.

2 Dec Emperor Ferdinand abdicated in favour of his nephew Franz Joseph.

4 Dec Schwarzenberg circular: 'Palmerston regards himself too much as the arbiter of Europe. For our part we are not disposed to accord him the role of Providence. We never impose our advice on him in relation to Ireland: let him spare himself the trouble of advising us on the subject of Lombardy.'

5 December Brandenburg dissolved the Prussian National Assembly and imposed a new constitution. It established equality under the law, personal and religious freedom, property was inviolable. FW remained monarch 'by the Grace of God' and had sole command of the army (which did not have to swear an oath to the constitution), huge powers to appoint officials, the power to dissolve either House and the unlimited power to appoint members of the House of Lords. **Universal and equal but indirect suffrage for men over 24** (the public chose Electors and Electors chose Deputies)... Clause 2 Article 105 (shaped by Manteuffel) allowed decrees with the force of law 'in urgent cases' when Parliament not sitting. It was used 30/5/49 to change electoral law to the three-class suffrage. A98 and A60 gave Parliament powers over tax but A108 — taxes continued indefinitely until amended, thus government could bypass Parliament if no agreement on budget (cf. 24/9/49).

OP: it was a return to the Stein-Hardenberg tradition of bureaucratic liberalism but this time reform was a strategy of reactionaries, not the genuine conviction of liberal officials (p24).

Barclay: In many ways it was remarkably liberal, in line with the Waldeck draft in the summer, and provided for *a ministry responsible to a parliament elected on a broad franchise*. Ludwig opposed the move (which he learned of on a train on 6/12) and had ideas for new ministers but it was all too late. They consoled themselves that they'd made progress and the new constitution wasn't as bad as it could have been.

On 5th there was a 'frightful scene' with FW, Leopold, Rauch and Massow in which FW insisted the constitution was unbearable. 'The King was in complete despair. They could declare him mad, he

said, they could call him a dog, but he could never agree to sign this thing' (Leopold diary). But he gave in. The Gerlachs were in a minority among conservatives, most of whom supported the move. 9 Dec Bismarck to his brother: 'From September on I have been like a shuttle-cock going back and forth between here and Berlin, Potsdam and Brandenburg... In general I flatter myself that I have poured pepper on the tails of the cowardly dogs and look back at my day's work with satisfaction.'

9 Dec Palmerston-brother: The abdication of the Austrian Emperor is a 'great event and give a chance that Austria may be reconstructed solidly upon a constitutional principle... I should not be sorry if it [events in France] ended in Louis Napoleon being made Emperor, and thus ridding us of both branches of the Bourbons; but the adherents of that family certainly imagine that they will be able to get rid of Louis Nap[oleon] and set up a Bourbon in his stead.' The Pope's loss of temporal and spiritual authority is also good news. In 1849 Palmerston would continue to be attacked by Grey and others in Cabinet but Tory divisions, including over free trade, kept them weak too.

28 Dec Schwarzenberg's reply rejected von Gagern's *kleindeutsch* position of 18/12: 'Austria today is still a German federal power. Nor does she intend to abandon this position which has arisen from the natural development of circumstances going back for a thousand years.'

Late Dec Disraeli to Stanley: 'The office of leader of the Conservative party in the H. of C., at the present day, is to uphold the aristocratic settlement of this country. That is the only question at stake, however manifold may be the forms which it assumes in public discussion and however various the knowledge and the labor which it requires. It is an office which, in my opinion, requires the devotion, perhaps the sacrifice of a life.' Blake: he did not mean the Whig grandees but the rural backbone of Tory England, the local squires who dominated local matters and who Disraeli thought of as the fundamental strength of the country that needed defending against London, the Whigs, the intellectuals, and the manufacturing/commercial interests.

In a 1846 speech: The 'territorial constitution' was a deal that was 'the only security for self-government, the only barrier against that centralizing system which has taken root in other countries. I have always maintained these opinions. My constituents are not landlords; they are not aristocrats; they are not great capitalists; they are the children of industry and toil, and they believe first that their material interests are involved in a system which favours native industry, by ensuring at the same time real competition, but they also believe that their political and social interests are involved in a system by which their rights and liberties have been guaranteed: and I agree with them – I have the same old-fashioned notions.'

In *Lord George Bentinck* he wrote: 'England is the only important European community that is still governed by traditionary influences, and amid the shameless wreck of nations she alone has maintained her honour, her liberty, her order, her authority, and her wealth ... But it is said that it is contrary to the spirit of the age that a great nation like England, a community of enlightened millions long accustomed to public liberty, should be governed by an aristocracy. It is not true that England is governed by an aristocracy in the common acceptance of the term. England is governed by an aristocratic principle. The aristocracy of England absorbs all aristocracies, and receives every man in every order and every class who defers to the principle of our society, which is to aspire and to excel.'

He described the Corn Law battle as one stage in 'the great contention between the patriotic and the cosmopolitan principle, which has hardly begun and upon which the fate of this island as a community depends'. In 1872 he declared that beneath the superficial struggles of politics over the past forty years there had been a fundamental cleavage between a party of change animated by 'cosmopolitan' notions, and the party which sought to 'resume the national principles to which we attribute the greatness and grandeur of the country' (Blake, p. 283).

Bismarck always thought the crisis in 1848 came from the weakness of FW, 'an unsteady character', not the liberal *Zeitgeist*: 'if one grabbed him, all you were left with was a handful of slime'. He later said, 'He always loaded his gun but never fired.'

Memoirs: FW4's 'national sentiment was heartier and livelier than that of his father but was hindered in its practical realisation by a garnish of medievalism and by a dislike of clear and firm decisions. This led to his neglecting the favourable opportunity of March 1848.' Between the revolution starting in south Germany/Austria and 18 March, while it was clear only Prussia remained on a firm footing, 'the German princes were ready to come to Berlin and seek protection under conditions which went even further in the direction of union than has been realised nowadays... Prussia was strong and intact enough to arrest the progress of the revolutionary wave, and to offer the remaining German states such guarantees for law and order in the future as then appeared acceptable to the other dynasties. 18 March was an instance how mischievous the encroachment of crude force may be even to the objects which are to be attained thereby. Nevertheless, on the morning of the 19th nothing was yet lost. The insurrection was overthrown. Its leaders ... had fled ... and only returned to Berlin after receiving the newspapers. **I believe that had the victory ... been more resolutely and more wisely turned to account, German unity was attainable in a stricter form than ultimately came to pass at the time I had a share in the government.** Whether it would have been more serviceable and durable I will not attempt to decide.' The King's weakness was exacerbated by 'the pressure of uninvited and perhaps treacherous advisors and the stress of women's tears'. 'A victory won on the pavement would have been of a different sort and of less range than that afterwards won on the battlefield. It has, perhaps, proved better for our future that we had to stray plodding through the wilderness of intestine conflicts from 1848 to 1866... We should hardly have been spared the wars of 1866 and 1870 even if our neighbours, who collapsed in 1848, had regained strength and courage by means of support from Paris, Vienna, and other quarters. It is a question whether the operation of historical events upon the Germans by the shorter and quicker path of a victory in March 1848 would have been the same as that which we see today, and which gives the impression that the dynasties, and more especially those which were formerly prominently "particularistic", are more friendly disposed towards the Empire than are the political groups and parties.' I.e. maybe a solution in 1848 would have avoided the path actually taken regarding Germany's constitution and dynamics of parties. (But his comments are tentative, as we would expect.) (1p44)

In Memoirs, he recounts a conversation with the King in summer 1848, when he was still furious about what had happened.

FW: What do you reproach me with?

B: The evacuation of Berlin.

FW: I did not want it done.

Queen: Of that the King is quite innocent. He had not slept for three days.

B: A King ought to be able to sleep.

FW: It's always easier to prophesy when you know. Something more than reproaches is wanted to set an overturned throne up again. To do that I need assistance and active devotion, not criticism.

'The kindness with which he said all this overpowered me [and] I went away completely disarmed and won over.'

The King believed that he must keep to 'the strict legal path' and only break with the new Diet if he had law on his side. 'I replied that strict legality and its limitations appeared to me obliterated in the actual situation, and would be as little respected by his opponents, when once they had the power, as on 18 March; and that **I saw the situation more in the light of war and self-defence than in that of legal argumentation.**'

FW was particularly influenced by General von Gerlach and von Rauch and subsequently Niebuhr the private secretary. Rauch was more practical. Leopold Gerlach 'had a weakness for clever aphorisms', had 'a noble nature with high ideals and was free from the fanaticism of his brother

[Ludwig], in private life was 'modest and helpless as a child, courageous and highflying in politics, but somewhat hindered by physical indolence.' He recounted saying to the two Gerlach brothers: 'If we three saw an accident in the street from where we are now standing at this window, the President would improve the occasion by a sententious remark on our want of faith, and the instability of human affairs; the General would immediately tell us the proper thing to do in order to help down below, but would not stir a finger himself; I should be the only one who would go down or call somebody to help.' The General was 'the most influential politician in the *camarilla*' but was 'hindered, intellectually as much as bodily, by his ponderous person [!] from a prompt execution of his excellent ideas... Gerlach was the wittier, Rauch the more practical.'

In general, the King underestimated 'the vital energies of the German dynasties' and over-estimated 'the forces which can be summed up in the term "barricade"... The danger of subversion lay not in the thing itself, but in the fear of it.' Governments folded in spring 1848 'partly through fear of the enemy, partly through the private sympathy of their officials with him.'

'The daily current which then roared its loudest in the press and in the parliaments imposed upon people as being the voice of public opinion, but it affords no measure of the people's mood, upon which depends the readiness of the masses to render obedience to the demands made upon them by the authorities. **The intellectual power of the upper of ten thousand in the press and the tribune is sustained and directed by so great a multiplicity of conflicting efforts and forces that governments cannot adopt it as a clue for their conduct, so long as the gospels preached by orators and writers, by virtue of the credence they find in the masses, do not command the use of material forces close packed in limited space.** If this is the case, a *vis major* [major force] comes upon the scene and politics have to reckon with it. So long as this effect (which as a rule is slow in coming) does not occur, so long as the noise is made only by the shrieking of the *rerum novarum cupidi* [revolutionaries] in the greater centres, and by the emotional needs of the press and parliamentary life, then so far as the politician of realities is concerned, Coriolanus' opinion of popular manifestations holds good, although no mention of printers ink is made in it. In those days, however, **the leading circles in Prussia allowed themselves to be deafened by the noise of parliaments great and small, without measuring its importance by the barometer afforded them by the attitude of the troops... The sympathies of the higher grades of officials ... contributed largely to the illusion ... as to the real relation of forces.**' If Prussia had been prepared for a 'warlike solution' in spring 1849, it could have crushed all insurrections inside and outside Prussia and been ready for further action.

Early on in the new Parliament, Bismarck discussed the infamous *Lucketheorie* (gap theory) that he deployed as PM. In a note to Prince Wilhelm in 1853 he wrote that Parliament 'must be equipped with the means to ward off new laws and new taxes and to exercise a controlling criticism over the governmental system, namely over the financial housekeeping and the inner administration' but that was all. 'It must never have the power to force the crown to act against the King's will or to coerce the King's ministers, otherwise it will unfailingly misuse that power' and it must not be allowed final control of the budget — until a new budget is agreed, the old one must remain in effect and taxes must continue to be raised. 'Prussia's greatness was by no means achieved through liberalism and freethinking, but through a series of strong, resolute and wise rulers who carefully nourished and saved military and financial resources of the state. They held these resources, moreover, in their own unshackled hands until the favourable moment came to cast them with reckless courage into the scales of European politics...'

5 Jan Schwarzenberg to Windischgrätz: 'Our relations with France must be conceived realistically and should not be adjusted to the principle of legitimacy or that of the *juste milieu*... The little nephew of the great uncle gives us no reason to sulk, least of all out of regard for the Elder and Younger Bourbons who have always been hostile to us.' He had looked favourably on Napoleon since his election to the French Presidency in December. This worried Austrian conservatives.

22 Jan Friedrich Dahlmann, a liberal delegate to the Frankfurt assembly: 'The path of power is the only one that will satisfy and satiate the swelling desire for freedom because it is not merely freedom that the German has in mind. For the most part it is the power that he has hitherto lacked for which he lusts.'

4 Feb Schwarzenberg-Schmerling: 'We can't untie the knot that binds German and non-German provinces nor accept the 'unilateral abolition of the Bund'. A unified German state is bad for Germany too. 'The continuation of Austria as a political unit is needed by Germany as well as by Europe.'

5 Feb Elections for the new Prussian parliament. Bismarck elected — (EF) it took string-pulling by one of Johanna's relatives to find a constituency in Brandenburg. 'The sessions of every kind are the more exhausting because the first word tells you what the whole speech will contain, like certain bad novels, but you cannot leave because of the possibility of votes.'

Gall: Feb elections were under universal suffrage but still conservatives won 53.

OP (p115): After the December move, FW was influenced (e.g by Radowitz) to consider social issues arising from industrialisation. During this first election campaign the King himself spoke about improving the lot of the 'poor and propertyless'. On 9 February the cabinet authorised local authorities to establish industrial councils to found or reconstitute compulsory guilds in more than 70 crafts. The training of apprentices were again recognised as guild functions. In the Landtag the biggest opponents were bankers and businessmen, the biggest supporter was Bismarck who defended artisans as necessary for the health of the 'state organism' and attacked the factory system for enriching individuals at the expense of undernourished workers. Cf. I6/5/53. (Hamerow: once the political crisis passed this sort of thing was mostly forgotten by the bureaucracy amid the 1850s boom.)

9 Feb Leopold Gerlach diary, Brandenburg says: 'I have tried everything with him [FW]. I have been rude, I have flattered him, I have been gentle, but always in vain.' Their relationship was already hopeless and FW undermined his Cabinet with everyone. Mixed signals bounced around from court and cabinet.

27 Feb Ludwig-Leopold: FW's continued fascination with Germany is a sure sign he has succumbed to Radowitz's advice 'to build himself a nest in the tri-coloured Gardens of the Hesperides of his imagination'. In the first months of 1849, Leopold favoured a simple return to the Bund with Austria retaining its dominance but was absent from court in much of the first half of the year. Rauch was ill with gout then later 1849 he returned to Russia (where he died June 1850). Ludwig was busy with the *Kreuzzeitung* and organising conservative politics and thought the king should focus on domestic problems not Germany. From late spring Leopold was in FW's company almost daily and took over Rauch's daily duty of reading reports to the king over morning coffee and he could count on support of the Queen. (He was formally appointed Adjutant General in April 1850.)

March Bismarck speech to Prussian Landtag: 'The battle of principle that has shaken Europe to its foundations in the past year is not of the kind that admits of mediation. The principles rest upon opposite foundations that inherently preclude each other. The one derives its legal authority ostensibly from the popular will but in reality from the club-law of the barricades. The other is based upon a decree ordained of God, a decree of God's grace, and seeks to evolve as an organic extension of the constitutionally established legal order... **The decision concerning these principles is not to be reached by parliamentary debates: sooner or later God, who directs the battles, must throw the iron dice of decision.**' (This is oddly very little quoted though it echoes the infamous 'iron and blood' comment.)

4 March Schwarzenberg dissolved the Austrian parliament, decreed a new constitution for the entire empire (drafted by Count Stadion) that gave almost all power to the Emperor (temporarily suspended after decreed and abolished in 1851 so never went into effect), and demanded the entire empire be included in a unified Germany. This scuppered last hopes in Frankfurt of Austria leading their plans and pushed Frankfurt towards a Small Germany led by Prussia. (Clark p649: in late October 1848 Frankfurt had voted for a Greater German solution with the Habsburgs' German lands included.)

Sperber: Until now the Small Germans at Frankfurt had been a clear minority. Now they did a deal with the Assembly's democrats, agreeing universal suffrage. **Democrats now mostly supported the proposal to offer the crown of a new state to the Prussian king.** This also was a final blow to hopes of Hungarian constitutional monarchists that some sort of arrangement could be reached between them and the Habsburgs.

25 March Schwarzenberg to Buol, Olmütz: 'The impious faction which has sworn to sacrifice the repose of the world to its insatiable cupidity and to its enormous pride as the 'happiness of peoples' has chosen unfortunate Hungary at this moment to be its theatre of activity. It is from there that adventurers without honour and without country, the scum of all nations, have made their rendezvous in order to establish the triumph of a detestable cause. Opposition to such a triumph is at this time a project worthy of the solicitude of all enlightened governments.'

28 March The Frankfurt National Assembly adopted a constitution with universal male suffrage for over 25s, secret ballot, ministers responsible to a bicameral parliament, no veto, and offered the Imperial throne and title (Kaiser) to FWIV. (Evans: 27/3)

3 April FWIV received the delegation from Frankfurt at his palace and rejected the offered Imperial crown as a crown 'of dirt and clay'. (Barclay (p194): FW and the cabinet did not want to reject the possibility of Prussia contributing to a federal state out of hand and his words were conciliatory but his tone was different and it was clear to all he had rejected the crown. To his uncle the King of Hanover he wrote that the crown was 'a dog collar with which they wanted to chain me to the revolution of '48'. So when/where was the 'dirt and clay' comment, endlessly quoted, actually made?) The Frankfurt National Assembly collapsed. The moderates went home and the army disbanded the remaining radicals.

OP: its fate and constitution 'met with general apathy; the popular movement had long since recoiled from its initial support'. All future problems were foreshadowed in the debates of the preceding year. Should Austria be excluded? If included, then all of it or just the German segment?

OP (p26): After this Radowitz persuaded FW to propose a federal union of princes under a conservative constitution, and a deal with Austria guaranteeing her frontiers but excluded from the new union. It was unpopular with the Gerlachs and Camarilla. The German princes played for time. JS: it had little support in Prussia, the ministers mostly disliked the scheme, the Camarilla hated it.

Gall: Radowitz was initially in sync with the Gerlachs — an opponent of bureaucratic absolutism, a supporter of the Christian ideals of a corporative state, a leader of the far right in the Frankfurt Assembly. He hoped his ideas would spark a rejuvenation of Christian conservatism across Europe. Bismarck re Radowitz: 'To this very day I do not know whether he was a catholicising opponent of Prussia or only bent upon maintaining his position with the King. It is certain that he made a skilful keeper of the medieval wardrobe in which the King dressed up his fancies, and contributed thereby to make the King dawdle away the opportunities for practical intervention'. (Sometimes quoted as 'the clever wardrobe attendant for the King's medieval fantasies'.) He also said that Radowitz was 'without an idea in his head', was purely out for 'popularity and applause', a man 'whom nothing raised above the level of the ordinary save an astonishing memory' (cf. 4/7/50). Gall: he was effectively 'director of Prussian foreign policy' from May 1849.

Barclay (Ch8): FW's relationship with Radowitz was extremely close, in some ways even closer than with the Queen. (Other books do not convey this.) In a marginal comment (10/4/51), FW compared Radowitz and Ludwig Gerlach: 'Both of them build on the same foundations according to the same principles and for the same course. But Gerlach is content to breathe no higher than at

the altitude of the Righi [a mountain range near Lucerne 1,800 meters above sea level], while Radowitz is in his element at the height of a Mont Blanc. *That is why Gerlach bites him in the foot, for no one is permitted to see further than he. Everyone is supposed to get dizzy where he does. Alas!* Leopold Gerlach agreed with Bismarck that Radowitz was a flatterer but also thought that he dressed up FW's ideas in maths and logic, 'two sciences of which the king has no idea at all', and played them back to him. Radowitz supported FW in his grand universal dreams, escaping the limited Prussian tableau. He thought FW had to respond to the two big forces of the age, the social question and the national question.

Sperber: FW delayed answering for a month before condemning it at the end of April. This led to mass meetings in favour of the Frankfurt constitution across Germany. Some of them saw the red flag waved, a symbol of radical republicanism. Demonstrations were increasingly in leftist strongholds. More moderate deputies started leaving Frankfurt and went home. By the second week of May demonstrations had turned to armed conflict in some places. Berlin, Frankfurt, Munich, Vienna remained quiet. Radical action in Saxony, always a stronghold of the left during the revolution, and the Palatinate (Bavarian province on west bank of the Rhine), was suppressed by Prussian troops with artillery and infantry.

On 3 and 28 April the Prussian government stated publicly that FW was willing to lead a German federal state (*Bundesstaat*) and urged other German governments to discuss with Prussia such a constitution. On 22 April Radowitz was summoned to Berlin from Frankfurt (where he was serving as a deputy and had voted to offer FW the crown!) and a week later Brandenburg asked him to meet with the cabinet to discuss the future of Germany. Radowitz would turn down the job of Foreign Minister and other formal appointments, staying an informal friend and adviser. In the first half of 1849 Brandenburg was happy to listen to him and agreed with much on Germany but changed his mind later in the year when the confrontation with Austria developed. Radowitz's strategy was based on an informal alliance of monarchical, constitutional and national liberals with moderate conservatives. He could work with the Gotha liberals in the summer but he could not organise grassroots and remained a court politician. (Barclay p 196ff).

21 April Landtag voted to recognise the Frankfurt constitution as legally binding in Prussia. In the debate in Landtag. Bismarck scoffed at the example of Piedmont and allying with revolution. Instead, he wanted Prussia to grab German dominance while Austrian and French domestic chaos provided a temporary opening – but not in alliance with liberals. He said that 'Prussia will always be in a position to give laws to Germany rather than receive them from others... The Frankfurt crown may glitter brightly but the gold which lends authenticity to its sparkle must be won by melting down the Prussian crown and I have no confidence that the smelting will succeed with the form of this constitution.' (AJPT – he originally put his name to a letter endorsing the call from Frankfurt for FWIV to take the crown — true??)

OP: April Debate in Landtag on Frankfurt constitution (think this must be 21/4). Bismarck said: it 'seeks to undermine and demolish that house of state constructed by centuries of glory and patriotism and cemented throughout by the blood of our ancestors'. The Prussian government should put forward its own plan for German unity. Bismarck thought that accepting the offer of the German crown would have come at the price of 'melting down' the Prussian crown. He wanted Prussia to take over Germany, not to be submerged in a weak liberal Germany. OP: occasional references to German unity in this period were tactical and greatly outweighed by his genuine expressions of support for Prussia to dominate.

Gall: In summer 1848 Wilhelm had said that Prussia must lead Germany, 'not become merged in it'. Bismarck entirely agreed.

Barclay: Late April the Landtag voted to recognise the Frankfurt constitution as legally binding in Prussia, the government dissolved it.

In mid-April the Hungarians retook Budapest and the National Assembly declared the Habsburgs dethroned and proclaimed national independence. Kossuth interim president. The Austrians needed Russian help.

28 April Prussian government rejected the offer, saying the constitution was intended 'to remove the supreme authority and introduce a republic'; and instead called on German governments to a conference in Berlin to consider a new way forward.

30 April King Friedrich Augustus II of Saxony sent the liberal deputies home and appointed a conservative government to impose order. By 3 May there were over 100 barricades in Dresden and the king fled and called for Prussian help. Among the revolutionaries were Richard Wagner (influenced by Proudhon and Feuerbach) and Mikhail Bakunin. Wagner: 'The old world is in ruins from which a new world will arise, for the sublime goddess REVOLUTION comes rushing and roaring on the wings of the storm.' Prussian troops were sent by train, marched on the city 9 May, demolished the barricades. Wagner dodged snipers then fled to Switzerland. Bakunin shaved his beard and fled but was arrested, sent back to Russia where he was exiled to Siberia. Wagner wrote to his wife that he'd learned he was 'anything but a true revolutionary', he preferred 'wife, child, hearth and home', and 'people of our kind are not destined for this terrible task... Thus do I bid farewell to revolution.' (!)

May Friedjung writes (p2) that in May FW4 spoke to Schwarzenburg in Vienna about the fanciful scheme for a new federal state excluding the Habsburg empire plus a new alliance between this state and the empire. (Doesn't seem to be mentioned anywhere else?)

May Elections to the French Legislative Assembly. The results showed a pattern that would endure for over a century. The areas of 'red France' in 1849 would continue to support the Left through radicals and socialists to communists in the mid-20th Century. Those regions supporting order in 1849 continued to support conservative parties. Maurice Agulhon (French historian): 1848 was the 'apprenticeship of the republic' when the political world of modern France came into existence. This pattern does *not* hold for the German elections of May 1848. (Fascinating that an electoral pattern can hold so long in one place but not another, we don't have good theories for why.)

May-July There were demonstrations in favour of the Frankfurt constitution throughout Germany suppressed by Prussian troops including Dresden, the Bavarian Palatinate (after King Maximilian rejected Frankfurt constitution) and Baden where Wilhelm put down the protests killing insurgents.

7 May (Clark) The Austrian Reichstag (moved out of Vienna after October) was dissolved. (On p404 Clark implies this may have happened on 4/3, unclear, perhaps it was decided then but formally happened 7/5?)

21 May Emperor Ferdinand met Tsar Alexander at Cracow and, kneeling, asked for full-scale Russian intervention. Alexander agreed. Over coming weeks Austrian and Russian forces converged on Budapest.

26 May Prussia, Saxony, Hanover agreed to form a union if other German states minus Austria agreed. The new constitution proposed two days later (details in Barclay p200) were 'a monarchical-conservative variation on the Frankfurt constitution and it was one with which many moderate liberals could live' (p200). The new Imperial President would be the Prussian King. An Upper House of state delegates. A Lower House elected by German people.

30 May The Prussian government changed electoral law to the three-tier suffrage using A105 which allowed decrees when the Landtag not sitting (this clause important 1862-6). Bismarck opposed this at the time and argued no voting system could properly reflect national will and argued to conservative friends it should be replaced but after a few years he decided it wasn't necessary and the key issue was controlling parliament's powers. *For the rest of his career he grappled with the dilemma: too weak and parliament could not resist the bureaucracy, too strong and it threatened the Crown.* (OP p63-4).

Hamerow (p299ff): it did not require property ownership either for voting or holding office. Every male aged 24 and above could vote who had 'not lost possession of his civic rights ... provided that he does not receive poor relief from public funds' and if he has 'had residence or abode [in the place he wants to vote] for six months'. 1849-61 between ~10-25% of males over 24 were excluded by poverty, change in domicile, or transgression of the law. In Prussian elections 1849-63 an average of 5% of voters belonged to the first class, 13% to the second and 82% to the third.

Participation was 32% in 1849, no figures for 1852, 16% in 1855 (height of the reaction), 23% in 1858, 27% in 1861, 34% in 1862, 31% in 1863. The public vote allowed the bureaucracy and government to influence voters. In 1855 Wilhelm wrote that 'downright terrorism was directed against people and institutions'. Only roughly half of the richest voted 1849-63 but dominated (much higher in Berlin).

June Russia deployed troops against the revolutionary government of Hungary.

18 June The Frankfurt Assembly (which had been forced to relocate to Stuttgart) was told by the Württemberg Minister of Justice that further meetings were prohibited. Deputies were turned away by troops. The papers of the assembly were packed up and sent to Switzerland.

Late June (OP) Moderate liberals assembled in Gotha, agreed to cooperate with the Prussian government in creating the German union. This group became known as the *Gothaer* or old-liberals. They were repelled by the excesses of the radicals. They hoped for Prussian leadership on German unity under a moderate constitution. Von Rochau, a journalist who had shifted from radical to moderate, distinguished between philosophy and practical politics, *Realpolitik*: '**Neither a principle, nor an idea, nor a treaty will unite the splintered German forces, but only a superior force that swallows up the rest.**' His work was influential. The young Treitschke said, 'I'll go with the party that shows the strongest national initiative'.

OP: after the passions of 1848, moderate liberals were terrified by the potential for extreme revolutionary forces. In the 1850s the upper Mittelstand focused on business, trade, finance and the powerful economic changes, not politics.

Barclay: There was a natural overlap between the Gotha liberals and Radowitz's strategy.

1 July An important note by FW describing his notion of royal authority over the military.

July Elections to Prussian Landtag under new 3-tier system. Gall: Conservatives won 114, about a third of 352. Bismarck's Feb victory was repeated. After this he moved his family to Berlin.

10 July Schwarzenberg to Hübner, then Austrian envoy to France: 'Do me the favour of explaining to me this species of sympathy which still exists at Paris for Piedmont, for this government without honesty or law, for this frog in the fable, for these men dear to the revolution and abhorred by the rest of Italy, for this country which corrupts everything it touches and is incapable of making either war or peace.'

13 July Davis (p76) Palmerston voiced support for the Prussian scheme. He was prepared to see a reorganisation of Germany provided it didn't lead to a big increase of power for either Prussia or Austria. Radowitz's scheme seemed to offer the only sensible way to preserve duality and independence for the smaller states. He took the FO by surprise. Palmerston tried to dampen the reaction but Cowley reported from Frankfurt that there was 'great suspicion that the policy of Great Britain is in favour of Prussian supremacy in Germany' and his assurances to the contrary were ineffective. In Germany debates over protection vs free trade were entangled with suspicion of Britain's supposed desire to divide-and-rule Germany. But, says Davis (p78), there is no evidence that Palmerston's support for Prussian plans had anything to do with trying to foil Bruck's ideas and instead was based entirely on political considerations of trying to maintain the Vienna settlement. Commercial policy remained focused entirely on lowering tariffs. The *Times* supported Austria's talk of a more liberal commercial policy (cf. 10/11/49).

August Austria crushed Hungarian uprising with Russian help and with Russia pressured Prussia. Kossuth fled to England and America, ended his days in Turin where he recorded the first Hungarian voice on a phonograph in 1890.

Bismarck realised this had changed the game: he wrote, 'What we chatter and resolve about it has no more value than the moonlight reveries of a sentimental youth, who builds castles in the air and believes that some event for which he hopes will make him into a great man.'

Gall: FW and Radowitz, unlike Bismarck, didn't realise that other German states were going along with them to play for time. Gall says that around this time Bismarck kept his opposition to Radowitz quiet, though placed two articles in *Kreuzzeitung* August 1849 unsigned (which infuriated FW but he didn't discover who'd written them).

15 Aug Leopold Gerlach diary: Radowitz said that Ludwig's newspaper articles against him 'border on high treason'. (Were both Gerlach and Bismarck writing articles against him in August? Were Bismarck's secret and Gerlach's public? Is Gall confused?) Both Gerlachs had very poor relations with Radowitz from spring/summer 1849 and hostility deepened. The Gerlachs wanted friendship with Russia and Austria but opposed the idea of restoring the Holy Roman Empire and Schwarzenberg's centralising and absolutist policies which they thought undermined the struggle against revolution and Austria's role in it. They wanted a restored Bund with greater Prussian influence.

17 Aug FW-Charlotte: 'I want to make Austria mightier and greater than ever before, with one wing over Germany, with the other over Italy, united and strong within.' Radowitz's projects are not at all inimical to Austrian interests, he insisted.

By the end of August (JS) 28 German states recognised the new union, but Bavaria held out and the support of Hanover and Saxony was never strong. Barclay: By the end of 1849 26 states agreed to join the new Union. By late 1849 Saxony and Hanover had essentially pulled out. Radowitz's poor diplomacy was partly the reason but they faced concerted opposition from Russia and Austria. In August Schwarzenberg insisted the Bund had only been suspended and he began to press for its resuscitation.

6 Sep Landtag debate. Liberals were pushing for a commitment that the Prussian constitution would be changed to reflect the new Union constitution. Bismarck objected — the liberals were again trying to grab what they had failed to get in the chaos. He asked the Landtag, what would Frederick the Great have done, relying on the Army and the 'martial element ... the prominent feature of the Prussian national character'?

'He would have had the choice of joining up with his old comrades-in-arms, Austria, following the break with Frankfurt, and there taking over the brilliant role that the Russian Emperor had played in destroying, in alliance with Austria, the common enemy, the revolution. Or he would have been at liberty, with the same right with which he conquered Silesia, having declined Frankfurt's offer of the Imperial crown, to tell the German people what constitution they were to have, under threat of his bringing the sword to bear. That would have been a national policy for Prussia. It would have placed Prussia, in the first case together with Austria, in the second on its own, in the right position to help Germany to acquire the power that is its due in Europe... All of us want the Prussian eagle to spread its wings, to protect and rule from Memel to the Donnersberg.' But these wings must remain free of a new Holy Roman Empire and any liberal constitution. (This was the question he confronted 1862-6: work with Austria or against her?) Craig puts the 'iron dice' quote in this speech, not March 1849 (maybe he repeated it?). (Gall p71)

OP (p68) In Sep he gave a speech (presumably it's the same 6/9 speech):

He opposed the idea of dissolving Prussia, 'the best pillar of German power', in a German union. **'What preserved us [Prussia] was that which constitutes the real Prussia. It was what remains of that much stigmatised *Stockpreussentum*, which outlasted the revolution: that is, the Prussian army, the Prussian treasury, the fruits of an intelligent Prussian administration of many years' standing, and that vigorous spirit of cooperation between King and people that exists in Prussia. It was the loyalty of the Prussian people to the hereditary dynasty. It was the old Prussian virtues of honour, fidelity, obedience and bravery, which permeate the army from its nucleus, the officer corps, outward to the youngest recruit. This army harbours no revolutionary enthusiasm. You will not find in the army, any more than in the rest of the Prussian people, any need for a national rebirth. They are satisfied with the name Prussia and proud of the name Prussia... Prussian we are and Prussian we wish to remain.'** When he was attacked in the debate for being 'a lost son of the great German fatherland' he replied, **'My country is Prussia and I have never left my country and I shall never leave it.'**

9 September Palmerston instructed his envoy in Vienna to express 'openly and decidedly the disgust' which Austrian 'atrocities in Italy, Galicia, Hungary, and Transylvania' had excited among the

public in Britain. He officially referred to the Austrians as 'really the greatest brutes that ever called themselves by the undeserved name of civilised men.'

24-5 Sep Debate re A108 of Constitution on tax (taxes continue indefinitely until amended by law). Bismarck defended it arguing the monarchy was under no obligation to go the British way and become merely 'a decorative ornament on the dome that sits atop the building of the state... I see our [Prussian Crown] as its central, load-bearing column'.

26 Sep JS says Radowitz became foreign minister with 'no support around the cabinet table'. NO. Sep 1850.

28 Dec Bismarck's son Herbert was born.

1850

David Copperfield, Dickens.

1850–I Repeal of the Navigation laws in Britain encouraged free trade. Davis (*Britain and the Zollverein*): suspicious protectionists in Europe claimed it was hypocritical, that after climbing ahead via protectionism Britain was now trying to kick away the ladder for others. But this misunderstood Britain. It was supreme economically. It wanted to preserve the status quo in Europe. Public opinion was rarely bothered by Europe unless the press whipped something up. The security of Britain guaranteed by the navy was taken for granted. Free trade was seen as a domestic issue, not one mainly of international relations or national security. Free trade became infused with the evangelicalism of the mid-19th C. The supposed implications of spreading free trade — 'progress' including smaller government, less power for the landed aristocracy, less international tension — were welcome to British liberals of many types. Cobden: **'I see in the Free Trade principle that which shall act on the moral world as the principles of gravitation in the universe — drawing men together, thrusting inside the antagonism of race, and creed, and language, and uniting us in the bonds of eternal peace.'** Unilateralism dominated in the 1840s and 50s, then Cobden-Chevalier 1860 and other treaties including Prussia 1865, then after 1867 unilateralism revived until the 20th C. Unilateralists dominated the Board of Trade: not so much a department as an auxiliary to other departments; small staff; President a political appointment but not an integral part of the Cabinet; 'characterised by a sense of the *ad hoc* and the *ex officio*' (Davis); they saw trade as separate from politics. What European countries saw as hypocrisy hiding hidden plans was in reality an institutional vacuum generated by a feeling of unchallenged supremacy. The Board of Trade was heavily influenced by Benthamite arguments of the 1840s — cf. *Report on the Prussian Commercial Union, 1840*, which saw the *Zollverein's* effect of pushing commercial union and deregulation as positive, and went a long way to support unilateral free trade and argued the Corn Laws had created growth in industry and protectionism in Europe. Many free traders thought that Prussian interests were hostile to protection and the Prussian government realised this — *but this was a serious misunderstanding*. Britain engaged in a 'propaganda campaign of enormous force' driven by moralising internationalism.

(Davis p22ff) Until Clarendon's 1857 reforms, the main source of commercial information re the *Zollverein* was quarterly reports from Consuls (situated at ports and trade centres like Leipzig). Their focus in 1830s and 40s was the supply of corn to UK and export of manufactured goods especially textiles. This system did not keep pace with the huge changes of the 1850s. Statistics were poor and encouraged London to underrate the growth of German industry. (Cf. Loftus report for Clarendon, 1856). Diplomats were not much interested in trade in the 1840s/50s. Until 1860 the *Zollverein* was Britain's main source of wheat and the largest market for industrial produce in Europe, taking 2X that of France. Zoll: coal production rose from 4.4m tonnes 1848 to 11.4m 1857; raw iron from 111k tonnes 1830-4 to 1m in 1865-9. 1829-30 agriculture was 88% of total value of exports from Prussia of which most went to Britain; by 1867 this was just 42%. In 1850s the pattern of British exports of coal, iron, textiles changed significantly but this was masked

by statistics and the overall growth of trade as Germany industrialised. London did not have good intelligence on what was really happening and why.

Davis (p48ff) In German states there was fascination and love-hate relationship with Britain. Commercial and industrial interests wanted to learn from Britain but also feared competition. There was widespread hostility for what was seen as British desire to undermine German modernisation and to divide-and-rule Germans.

Jan Schwarzenberg plan for new Customs Union uniting the whole Habsburg monarchy, Zollverein and Confederation (70m people). The ideas had been developed by Bruck (Minister of Commerce 11/49). It would have reduced Prussia to a 'second-rate power' (OP). The plan fizzled out and after Schwarzenberg died the ideas were mostly abandoned. (Heller, biographer of Schwarzenberg, who searched all available documents, concluded: 'The *mitteleuropäische* idea, exactly like the *kleindeutsch* idea, was not the intellectual property of any one man. Schwarzenberg and Bruck advocated it from the beginning of their joint efforts in complete agreement and with frank determination.') In late February (Barclay), Schwarzenberg encouraged Bavaria, Hanover, Saxony, and Württemberg to call for the inclusion of the entire Habsburg Empire in the reformed Bund.

Davis (p75): Bruck's plan held out the prospect of reviving Article 19 of the Federative Act, 1815, which had foreseen the Bund as the centre of commercial organisation. The Bruck plan was also explicitly seen as anti-British, as wresting control from Britain — *Mitteleuropa* had to compete with Britain.

31 Jan FW proclaimed the new constitution. Other conservative features were added to the constitution in the 'constitutional charter'. But even so the overall result of the 1848-50 constitutional changes was 'a constitutional monarchy of mixed powers' similar to what moderates had long advocated — though it was 'a constitutional facade behind which the old order remained essentially intact' (OP p24). Radowitz had developed a compromise to punt some decisions to 1852. The Camarilla's attempts to prevent the oath failed (Barclay p215).

31 Jan (JS) Elections for the new Erfurt Union, met 20 March.

6 Feb FW After spending the previous night in Potsdam (he tried to avoid Berlin after March 1848) he appeared in uniform in the Knights' Hall in Berlin to swear an oath to the new constitution in front of deputies and ministers. His speech was odd, including the sentiment that 'I do not govern because I enjoy it, God knows! But because it is part of the divine order of things...' To Ludwig's disgust he chatted with some liberal deputies afterwards.

2 March (OP p118) Despite Hardenberg's land settlements 1811-16 and ~360,000 serfs escaping manorial obligations by 1848, servile dues were still a source of peasant unrest in 1848. The Manteuffel government introduced a statute that created state land banks to issue mortgage bonds to indemnify estate owners for remaining dues and services. The rural nobility was appeased by the restoration of its right to establish entailed estates (1852), its powers in county and provincial government (1853) and its manorial police authority (1856). Except for some hunting rights and judicial powers 'the Junkers had regained the prerogatives they possessed before the revolution' (OP). Many of the newly 'independent' farmers were too small and vulnerable to escape dependence on landlords and depended on payment in kind and wages. By 1856, only 60% of the 12,339 noble estates were still in the hands of aristocratic families including recently ennobled: average size 1,200 acres. (Barclay: more than 5,000 of 12,399 estates had been taken over by bourgeois owners.) Feudal rights were an attribute of the estate so acquisition by bankers, businessmen etc gave them social ascent. Cf. INTRO and 1807 reforms.

Barclay: there were fairly liberal reforms to local and regional government, repealed 1852.

11 March A Prussian ordinance: clubs organised for political purposes were required to register with the police, and prohibited participation by women, students and apprentices. For politically motivated workers the 1850s were a time of 'surveillance and espionage, arrest and imprisonment, flight and exile' which fed the emerging socialist movements of the 1860s (OP).

15 March Metternich: 'The imperial government could have used the revolution in the interest of the necessary reforms, as the field was prepared for what was needed in terms of the new!' But the government didn't know how to use 'the freedom that the heavens had dropped on it.'

20 March Erfurt Union assembly met, elected on a limited suffrage and with the Union's armed forces under Prussian control. Russia made clear its opposition. (It was 'almost exactly the Germany which Bismarck created twenty years later. But at the time he could not denounce it enough.' AJPT) Democrats had boycotted the elections so it was almost entirely Gotha liberals and extreme conservatives like Stahl and Ludwig Gerlach. There was a row over whether the constitution should be agreed *en bloc*, as the Gotha set and Radowitz wanted, or revised bit by bit, as the Gerlach set wanted. FW wavered, a compromise was hashed out and a Congress of Princes was called to meet in Berlin in early May. By this point FW was losing enthusiasm. Only 12/26 states accepted the constitution. Further fudges and punting of decisions. By now Radowitz was under concerted attack at court by the Camarilla and was himself complaining about FW's unreliability and susceptibility to dodgy unofficial influences! (Barclay p201).

April Leopold Gerlach formally appointed Adjutant General, role at court now official and even more powerful. He did not overestimate his influence and often felt isolated and depressed (Barclay p203-4). He came close to resigning in autumn 1850 when it seemed Radowitz's ideas might triumph.

15 April (JS) Bismarck told the new Erfurt parliament — if you try to ignore the old Prussia and prattle about a 'German empire', you will 'dumped into the sand'. On 19th he wrote to Johanna that 'things are heading for a crisis', Radowitz and Manteuffel oppose each other, FW is pulled this way and that, Manteuffel will insist on ditching Erfurt.

May Austria started insisting on the reinstatement of the old Bund, supported by Russia who strongly opposed the Radowitz plan. By June Manteuffel was saying he could not stay in the government if Radowitz continued with his plans (which Manteuffel increasingly thought were being hijacked by domestic enemies). Cf. 19/8.

Mid-May (Barclay p205, unmentioned almost anywhere) Russia hosted a conference in Warsaw with the Tsar, Schwarzenberg, the Prince of Prussia. Inconclusive.

22 May At noon FW went to the train station with the Queen, a man in an army uniform ran up and **shot FW at close range** hitting his arm. Not a serious injury. The would-be assassin (discharged from the army for mental problems) was beaten and arrested. The King went to Charlottenburg to recover. There was little public outcry. There were rumours that he had been used by a conspiracy of royalists who wanted FW replaced. Even the King himself and the Gerlachs came to believe this was possible(!) and they worried FW's response may lead to a 'tyrannical regime'. FW became more worried about security. As the decade went on there was greater use of spies, informants, press censorship etc. (I've only seen mention of this affair in Barclay, p215ff.)

31 May New French electoral law used residency and tax qualifications to exclude over 3m from voting.

6 June Bruck-Schwarzenberg: We must prevent 'above all' the Zollverein, due to expire in 1852, renewing 'before the Austro-German Customs Union is irrevocably settled on a sure foundation.' If we fail and it's renewed Prussia 'would scarcely be persuaded to enter the Customs Union with Austria'. We need to sell our vision publicly, the economic and political and cultural benefits.

25 June Palmerston's '*civis Romanus sum*' speech in Commons over Don Pacifico:

'We have shown that liberty is compatible with order; that individual freedom is reconcilable with obedience to the law. We have shown the example of a nation, in which every class of society accepts with cheerfulness the lot which Providence has assigned to it; while at the same time every individual of each class is constantly striving to raise himself in the social scale — not by injustice and wrong, not by violence and illegality — but by persevering good conduct, and by the steady and energetic exertion of the moral and intellectual faculties with which his Creator has endowed him. To govern such a people as this, is indeed an object worthy of the ambition of the noblest man who lives in the land; and therefore I find no fault with those who may think any opportunity a fair

one, for endeavouring to place themselves in so distinguished and honourable a position. But I contend that we have not in our foreign policy done anything to forfeit the confidence of the country. We may not, perhaps, in this matter or in that, have acted precisely up to the opinions of one person or of another — and hard indeed it is, as we all know by our individual and private experience, to find any number of men agreeing entirely in any matter, on which they may not be equally possessed of the details of the facts, and circumstances, and reasons, and conditions which led to action. But, making allowance for those differences of opinion which may fairly and honourably arise among those who concur in general views, I maintain that the principles which can be traced through all our foreign transactions, as the guiding rule and directing spirit of our proceedings, are such as deserve approbation. I therefore fearlessly challenge the verdict which this House, as representing a political, a commercial, a constitutional country, is to give on the question now brought before it; whether the principles on which the foreign policy of Her Majesty's Government has been conducted, and the sense of duty which has led us to think ourselves bound to afford protection to our fellow subjects abroad, are proper and fitting guides for those who are charged with the Government of England; and **whether, as the Roman, in days of old, held himself free from indignity, when he could say *Civis Romanus sum* [I am a Roman citizen]; so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England, will protect him against injustice and wrong.**

When he left the House crowds gathered and cheered. His enemies, who had thought they might get rid of him for a major error, were confounded and his popularity grew. Over the next year he repeatedly made the case that Britain should support liberals in Europe and frequently intervened. Evans: the 'principle of the age' in 1850s Britain was self-help, its bible was *Self-Help: with Illustrations of Character and Conduct* (1859) by the Scottish journalist and ex-Chartist Samuel Smiles. It sold 20,000 copies in its first year and 250,000 by the time of the author's death.

28 June To sister: 'The boy screaming in a major key, the girl in a minor one, two singing nannies and me as the suffering father of the family between wet nappies and milk bottles.'

30 June Letter to Hermann Wagener, having left Erfurt and enjoying summer on his estate lying in the sun, reading poetry, listening to music: **'A state that cannot, as a result of a salutary thunderstorm, tear itself free from a bureaucracy such as ours, is and remains doomed to extinction... The bureaucracy is cancerous from head to foot; only its belly is sound and the laws it excretes are the most straightforward shit in the world. With this bureaucracy including the judges on the bench we can have press laws written by angels and they cannot lift us from the swamp. With bad laws and good civil servants one can still govern, with bad civil servants the best laws cannot help.'**

July peace with Denmark over Schleswig-Holstein.

4 July Bismarck on Radowitz. He is average other than 'an astonishing memory' and has figured out how to manipulate FW's weaknesses. As a private person he is 'a decent and unobjectionable human being, an excellent father of his family, but as a politician without an idea of his own, he lives from small expedients and fishes for popularity and applause driven by immense personal vanity'.

7 July - 2 Nov The Kassel Conference of the Zollverein. Prussian ideas re raising tariffs discussed at the conference were very unpopular in London. David: There was mutual incomprehension between London and Berlin, with Berlin pursuing primarily political aims. The conference was halted in November because of the row over Hesse-Kassel. Cf. 9/51.

8 July To sister: 'The nearer it comes the more I see this as a ticket to the madhouse or to the Upper Chamber of parliament for life. I see myself with children on the platform at Genthin station, then in the compartment where both satisfy their needs ruthlessly and emit an evil stink, the surrounding society holding its nose. Johanna too embarrassed to give the baby the breast so he screams himself blue, the battle with the crowd, the inn, screaming children on Stettin station and in Angermünde I hour waiting for horses, packing up, and how do we get from Kröchlendorf to Külz? If we had to spend the night in Stettin, that would be terrible. I went through that last year with Marie and her screaming... I am, I feel, somebody to whom a dreadful injustice has been done. Next year I shall have to travel with three cradles, three nurses, nappies for three, bed clothes; I

wake at 6 in the morning in a gentle rage and cannot sleep at night because I am haunted by all sorts of travel pictures, which my fantasy paints in the blackest hues, right to the picnics in the dune of Stolpmünde. And if there were only daily payments for this but instead it causes the ruin of a once flourishing fortune by travelling with infants — I am very unhappy.'

19 August A stormy Crown Council confrontation between Radowitz and Manteuffel. By now Stockhausen (War Minister) also opposed Radowitz and even Foreign Minister Schleinitz (the 'servile' (Gerlach) supporter of Radowitz) had doubts. Manteuffel insisted Prussia make clear the Union is abandoned and with it the constitution. Radowitz answers that the only alternatives to a German federal state were 'the revolutionary unitary state or the old form of a confederation of states' which had been a failure. Barclay: after this 'furious debate', FW could not bear to break with his friend but the Union idea had 'sputtered out' and Radowitz knew it. Barclay (p210): in Sep-Oct, Leopold Gerlach withdrew to his estate at Rohrbeck, weary of the FW's distrust and temper, and attempted to resign over Radowitz.

27 August (JS) Schwarzenberg declared the Erfurt Union plans incompatible with the Federal Act and called for an emergency meeting of the Confederation on 2 September in Frankfurt.

2 Sep Schwarzenberg forced through reconstitution of the Bund (without delegates from the union territories) at Frankfurt. He tried to increase its powers and expand QMV.

September A crisis in Hesse-Kassel ('a small territory that straddled the network of Prussian military roads linking Rhineland and Westphalia with the East-Elbian core provinces' Clark). The reactionary Elector (a 'degenerate', Barclay) and his minister Hassenpflug tried to force through counter-revolutionary measures. Elements of the bureaucracy and army refused, the supreme court pronounced the Elector's decisions unconstitutional. (Gall: 'for the first and only time in a German state in the nineteenth century — the armed forces offered actual resistance to their sovereign'.)

On 17 Sep the Elector called on the Bund for a federal execution, i.e. military intervention, to restore his authority, on the basis of the 1815 treaties and it being the job of the Bund to safeguard the monarchical principle. While the Elector looked to Vienna, the opposition looked to Berlin.

Schwarzenberg saw an opportunity: 'the deployment of Confederal troops in Hesse-Kassel would force the Prussians to back away from their unionist plans and to accept the resurrected Confederal Diet, with its Austrian presidency, as the legitimate political organization of the German states' (Clark p496). The issue was vital for Prussia because roads connecting her east and west territories, vital to the army, ran through Hesse. Both Prussia and Austria claimed the right to send troops into Hesse-Kassel to quell trouble.

6 Sep To Leopold Gerlach: 'My estates come to me so burdened by debt that once I quit my own four walls scarcely enough of my regular income remains for me to wear *la cape et l'épée* with decency.'

21 Sep Bund decided to intervene for the Elector. Bund then was a 'rump' (Gall) dominated by Austria, with Prussia and others not sitting. Prussia strongly objected. Radowitz replaced Schleinitz as Foreign Minister, a clear signal FW would resist Schwarzenberg. (Tsar unhappy by the appointment, Wilhelm supported it.)

Mid-October Schwarzenberg engaged Bavaria and Württemberg to take joint action, including military action, against Prussia. He also had support from Russia. Nicholas I had been furious with FW ('king of the pavements', he mocked) though he also pressured Vienna to negotiate, he did not want a war.

26 Oct Bund ordered Bavarian and Hanoverian troops to invade Hesse-Kassel. Prussian troops were on the Hessian frontier poised to resist. (EF account seems confused)

Gall: only Radowitz was set on fighting if necessary, the King, Minister President and War Minister wanted a way out, Gerlach's opposed war with Austria (p75)

Barclay: Brandenburg had been sent to Warsaw to negotiate a deal with Schwarzenberg and the Tsar. He was dismayed to learn of Radowitz's language. When he returned from Warsaw on 31/10 it seemed Radowitz would be pushed out.

1 Nov A cabinet meeting. Brandenburg, Manteuffel and Stockhausen opposed Radowitz. Two other ministers came out in opposition at a second meeting later that day. That evening news reached Berlin the federal execution had begun; Bavarian troops had entered Hesse.

2 November Morning, a Crown Council at Bellevue Palace, **Radowitz forced out**. The majority of ministers announced opposition to full-scale mobilisation in response, and supported accepting conditions for talks set out by Schwarzenberg in Warsaw. FW, Wilhelm, and Radowitz opposed the majority. But FW said — I'm shattered by this situation, I disagree with the majority, but I'll accept it and ministers must take responsibility. Weeping he complained to Leopold about his 'un-Prussian, craven' ministers especially Manteuffel. A weeping Wilhelm cursed the ministers. Radowitz had already written his resignation. He was sent on a 'special mission' to London. The shock pushed FW to hysteria for weeks, constantly crying, furious, despairing, and talking of abdication again — he was 'theatrical and self-absorbed' particularly when most depressed (Barclay). Prokesch described him on 10/11 as 'broken to the depths of his being' (presumably this was passed back to Schwarzenberg).

EF: Bismarck wrote to Wagener that he had drunk champagne and ridden around his dining table on a chair in celebration of Radowitz's dismissal (this is often referred to in the context of Olmutz a few weeks later).

Barclay: Schwarzenberg did not relent, he now demanded Prussian troops evacuate military roads on Hessian territory. On 6/11, Prussia reversed and reluctantly agreed **general mobilisation**. (JS says 1/11, wrong.) Ill since his return from Warsaw, Brandenburg suddenly died (unmentioned in practically all books!). An exasperated Tsar said, 'In Berlin they have done Rauch to his death, they've driven Brandenburg to his death, they really won't rest until every imaginable person is driven to his death! How many people has the King used up already!' (!)

Otto von Manteuffel took over as Minister President and Foreign Minister on a temporary then from 4 December permanent basis. The new government demanded parity for Prussia in the control of the Confederation. But the government was divided and confused. Russia sided with Austria. Prussia backed down. (OP p27)

November Bismarck simultaneously summoned to his regiment as an officer of the Landwehr and as deputy to the impending session of the chamber. On his way to his regiment via Berlin he spoke to the War Minister, von Stockhausen, 'a dashing old soldier'. He told Bismarck that they must avoid war for now and play for time as they did not have sufficient forces ready to stop the Austrians. Memoirs: It was not Stockhausen's fault but the King's and government's. 'Men were too much preoccupied with public opinion, speeches, newspapers and constitution-mongering to arrive at decided views and practical aims in the domain of foreign policy.' Stockhausen ordered Bismarck to stay in Berlin and try to organise his friends.

8 November there was a skirmish between Prussian and Austrian forces near Fulda on Hessian territory. 'Germany hovered on the brink of civil war' (OP).

10 November FW told Schwarzenberg's envoy, Baron Anton Prokesch von Osten: 'Austria is the first, Prussia is the second state in Germany.' We 'will come to an understanding within a short time over the question of the Confederation,' he added. (Quoted in Engel-Janosi, *A Struggle for Austria in Berlin and Frankfurt, 1849–1855*, p. 45.)

Pflanze describes Bismarck's changing mood in this crisis and says we cannot now construct exactly what he thought as the crises evolved. He was pleased on hearing of Radowitz's dismissal (OP p71). Pflanze does not give precise dates for the below, but it seems this was after Prussian troops had moved into Hesse and before 19 November. Bismarck and Leopold Gerlach disagreed on the right course. Gerlach thought that the priority was avoiding war between the conservative monarchies. Bismarck said that Prussia could not tolerate 'too much Austrian impertinence... We cannot permit 100,000 Bavarians and Austrians to take up positions between our eastern and western provinces'. Gerlach said Austria was acting for the Confederation and in accordance with the law. Gerlach's daughter recorded Bismarck's shocking reply: 'He recognises no law in foreign affairs, only convenience. Friedrich II, 1740, is his example.' But 'three days later' (OP) Bismarck wrote to his wife in terms that were close to Gerlach — Radowitz had sent troops into Hesse-Kassel 'in



The face of the 1850s. Sensible and practical administrative men set the tone for the reforms of the 1850s. With his buttoned-down appearance and professional demeanour, the Prussian Minister President, Otto von Manteuffel, exemplified a new type of political leadership.

violation

of

international and confederate law', there was now almost agreement on a joint occupation, why would we lay waste to Europe over such a 'petty issue' that was really just 'a matter of military etiquette'. 'There is the greatest danger that for the sake of such bagatelles conservative armies, which love and respect each other, will slaughter one another and place the fate of Germany in the hands of foreigners.' France might try to grab the Rhineland. England would not help. The democrats of national revolution would be our only allies and the only winners. (OP doesn't give the dates for these different statements.)

19 November (13/11 Gall) Bismarck published an article in *Kreuzzeitung* arguing for parity in the Confederation. If Prussia were refused, war would be justified.

21 Nov FW opened the new session of parliament with a bellicose speech justifying mobilisation and denouncing the invasion of Hesse.

24 Nov Schwarzenberg issued an ultimatum demanding complete Prussian withdrawal from Hessian territory within 48 hours. Manteuffel and the Austrian emissary Prokesch were 'desperate' (Barclay) for a settlement. Manteuffel wanted to meet Schwarzenberg, FW agreed and

sent him to meet at the Bohemian city of Olmütz. At first Schwarzenberg didn't compromise but softened on the second day. (Barclay p208ff)

28-9 November Olmütz agreement. Prussia demobilised, dropped the Radowitz plan and Erfurt Union, agreed to discuss a reconstituted German Confederation without a commitment of parity with Austria. The only face-saving was an announcement of conferences of ministers of the Bund to discuss reform ideas which occurred in spring. (7/1/51 Leopold Gerlach diary: Manteuffel thought 'we had no option but to choose between an alliance with the great powers of Europe or with the revolution; in that situation the choice was not in doubt'. LG described Bismarck as a waverer in the battle.)

Heller: Schwarzenberg had always thought that only Austria and Prussia together could defeat 'revolution' and create a solid conservative *Mitteleuropa*. But he supports Friedjung's view that his moderation at Olmütz allowed the opportunity to slip of a Habsburg-led *Mitteleuropa*. (Heller, Schwarzenberg, p. 119–20)

AJPT (*The Habsburg Monarchy*, p. 90): 'Schwarzenberg devised a new policy; his failure was in not conducting it with new weapons. A policy of adventure could not be based solely on the Habsburg army; it needed demagogy, the appeal to German nationalism. Ten years later Bismarck solved the problem which had baffled Schwarzenberg: with the assistance of German nationalism he gave Germany, and the Habsburg monarchy too, security against both Russia and France, and yet tied German liberalism to the service of the Prussian King. Schwarzenberg had Bismarck's daring and freedom from prejudice; he lacked Bismarck's master-weapon, the call to popular enthusiasm.'

Gall (p77): reasonable to argue that Prussia sort of lucked out — in a terrible situation the outcome stopped Schwarzenberg pushing his desired goal — but at the time the overriding impression was one of Prussia's abject humiliation.

3 December (Gall has typo of September) Bismarck defends Olmütz publicly. He began by arguing against the idea of a war against Austria and Russia while France 'mobilises on our frontier, eager for conquest'.

What sort of war is being proposed? 'No expedition by individual regiments into Schleswig or Baden, no military parades through restless provinces, but a war on a grand scale against two of the three major continental powers, while the third, eager for booty, arms on our frontier and knows very well that Cologne Cathedral holds the treasure that would be just the thing to end the revolution in France and strengthen that country's ruler, namely the French Imperial Crown. A war, gentlemen, that will place us under the necessity of giving up some of the more remote Prussian provinces from the outset, in which large tracts of the country will be immediately overrun by hostile armies and in which our provinces will experience the horrors of war to the full.'

The liberals have no good justification for 'a long vista of battlefields', burning ruins, destitution and corpses. The Union constitution, changing ministers in minor states, loss of face for some politicians — are not good enough. Prussian honour does *not* require war.

However, 'I would not shrink from such a war, nevertheless; in fact, I would advise it, if someone could prove to me that it is necessary, or could show me a worthy goal ... that cannot be attained in any other way. **Why do large states go to war nowadays? The only sound basis for a large state is its egoism and not romanticism; this is what distinguishes a large state from a small one. It is not worthy for a large state to fight for a thing that is not in its own interest. Just show me an objective worth a war, gentleman, and I will agree with you.**' (OP p73: France had mobilised and put 40,000 on the Rhine frontier. Bismarck was referring to the romanticism of FW and Radowitz embracing the nation cause, not the Gerlachs' romanticism.)

Neither the German union nor the integrity of Hesse were such objectives, he argued. Prussian interest lay in 'avoiding every shameful alliance with democracy' and achieving parity with Austria. 'We do not wish to make conquests. I do not want to discuss here how much this fact is to be deplored, nor how willingly perhaps one might conduct a war simply because his king and commander says, "This country strikes my fancy and I want to have it." ... At the moment this question does not concern us.' We should await the outcome of discussions in Dresden before

deciding to demobilise. (OP — he had apparently not been told that at Olmütz FW had already agreed to demobilise.)

The nation has risen to support the King. I came here hoping to find the same spirit. 'I have found nothing great here but personal ambition, nothing great but mistrust, nothing great but party rancour. These are three greatneses that, in my opinion, stamp this age as petty, and afford the friend of his country a dismal glimpse into our future... It is easy for a statesman ... to use the people's wind to give a blast on the war trumpet while warming his feet at his fireside or delivering rousing speeches from this platform, and to leave it up to the musketeer bleeding in the snow whether or not his system wins the day and reaps the glory. **There is nothing easier, but woe betide the statesman who in this age fails to seek a reason for war that remains valid after the war is over.** Prussian honour does not consist in Prussia playing the Don Quixote all over Germany for the benefit of every disgruntled parliamentary celebrity who feels his local constitution is in jeopardy... I seek Prussia's honour in this: that Prussia should first and foremost hold itself aloof from every ignominious association with democracy, that in this present question, as in every question, Prussia should not permit anything to happen in Germany without Prussia's consent, that what Prussia and Austria, after joint independent consideration, regard as sensible and politically right should jointly be put into execution by the two equal protecting powers of Germany.'

He also warned the liberals 'you will never succeed in turning the Prussian army into a parliamentary army; it will always remain the army of the King and seek its honour in obedience.' And he warned conservatives that nobody should 'deceive themselves who believed they could start such a war under the banner of the Union and stop it too.' Such a war would soon see the Union mantle 'torn from their backs' and 'nothing left but the red lining of that most flimsy garment'. It would be 'a propaganda war' that would lead Prussia 'to ignominious ruin even in victory'.

In his Memoirs he claimed that he was trying to delay any war 'until we were equipped' but could not say so clearly at the time. The negotiations in Q1 1851, though, were not used either to gain a greater result or a justifiable pretext for war, though it is unclear whether this weakness came from the King or Manteuffel.

20,000 copies of his speech were distributed by the conservative network.

7 December 1850 Schwarzenberg memo on Olmütz. It's unclear when Bismarck saw it, he refers in his *Memoirs* to 'a crisis in my views which occurred in Frankfurt when Prince Schwarzenberg's dispatch of 7 December, 1850, until then unknown to me, first came under my eyes. In this he represents the results of Olmütz as if it had depended on him to "humiliate" Prussia or magnanimously to pardon her... [Notwithstanding Olmütz] I had come to Frankfurt well disposed towards Austria. **The insight into Schwarzenberg's policy of *avilir puis démolir* [debase then demolish] which I there obtained by documentary evidence, dispelled my youthful illusions. The Gordian knot of German circumstance was not to be untied by the gentle methods of dual policy, it could only be cut by the sword:** it came to this, that the King of Prussia, conscious or unconscious, and with him the Prussian army must be gained for the national cause, whether from the 'Borussian' point of view one regarded the hegemony of Prussia, or from the national point of view the unification of Germany, as the main object: both aims were co-extensive. So much was clear to me and I hinted at it when in the budget committee (30 September 1862) I made the much misrepresented deliverance concerning iron and blood.'

He elaborated — 'Never, not even at Frankfurt, did I doubt that the key to German politics was to be found in princes and dynasties, not in publicists, whether in parliament and the press, or on the barricades.' Opinion of the cultivated public might push the dynasties but also could provoke their resistance. Different states had different interests and many feared Prussian dominance. In the 1850s it became clear that there was no future in a dual entity, of a friendly partnership. Given 'the basis of the authority of the Bund', Prussia would not even be able to restore her position pre-1848.

'In order that German patriotism should be active and effective it needs as a rule to hang on the peg of dependence upon a dynasty... The German needs either attachment to a dynasty or the goad of anger hurrying him into action, the latter phenomenon however by its own nature is not permanent. It is as a Prussian, a Hanoverian, a Württemberger, a Bavarian or a Hessian, rather than as a German, that he is disposed to give unequivocal proof of patriotism and in the lower orders and the Parliamentary groups it will be long before it is otherwise... The German's love of Fatherland has need of a prince on whom it can concentrate its attachment. **Suppose that all the German dynasties were suddenly deposed: there would then be no likelihood that the German national sentiment would suffice to hold all Germans together from the point of view of international law amid the friction of European politics...** The Germans would fall prey to more closely welded nations if they once lost the tie which resides in the princes' sense of community of rank... The other nations of Europe have need of no such go-between for their patriotism and national sentiment... The preponderance of dynastic attachment, and the use of a dynasty as the indispensable cement to hold together a definite portion of the nation calling itself by the name of the dynasty, is a specific peculiarity of the German Empire. The particular nationalities, which among us have shaped themselves on the bases of dynastic family and possession, include in most cases heterogeneous elements, whose cohesion rests neither on identity of stock nor on similarity of historical development, but exclusively on the fact of some acquisition by the dynasty whether by the right of the strong, or hereditary succession by affinity or compact of inheritance, or by some reversionary grant obtained from the imperial Court as the price of a vote.

'Whatever may be the origin of this factitious union of particularist elements, the result is that **the individual German readily obeys the command of a dynasty to harry with fire and sword, and with his own hands to slaughter his German neighbours and kinsfolk as a result of quarrels unintelligible to himself.** To examine whether this characteristic be capable of rational justification is not a problem of the German statesman, so long as it is strongly enough pronounced for him to reckon upon it. The difficulty of either abolishing or ignoring it, or making any advance in theory towards unity without regard to this practical limitation, has often proved fatal to the champions of unity, conspicuously so in the advantage taken of the favourable circumstances in the national movements of 1848-50... **In the German national sentiment I see the preponderant force always elicited by the struggle with particularism, for particularism came into being only by resistance to the collective German community, to Emperor and Empire, in revolt from both, leaning first on papal, then French, in all cases on foreign support, all alike damaging and dangerous to the German community...**

'The German people and its national life cannot be portioned out as private possessions of princely houses... That the dynasties have at all times been stronger than press and Parliament is established by the fact that in 1866 countries belonging to the Bund, whose dynasties lay within the sphere of Austrian influence, disregarded national policy and sided with Austria, those alone which lay under the Prussian guns throwing in their lot with Prussia.' (Memoirs, p319ff)

23 Dec December The Central Agency for Press Affairs was created to coordinate press policy in Prussia, used by Bismarck after 1862. It subsidised some journalists.

1851

'The stream of time flows inexorably along. By plunging my hand into it I am merely doing my duty. I do not expect thereby to change its course.' On beginning his career in the foreign service.

Some time in 1851, to Otto Manteuffel: 'I consider a violent step to abrogate the constitution, a formal violation of it, not even desirable, much less then necessary. The constitution has, through the way in which has been developed and interpreted in the last two years, ceased to hinder governing as such and it's becoming more and more a receptacle whose content is provided only by the personalities which govern.'

In 1851 the *Preussisches Wochenblatt* (*Prussian Weekly*) was founded: a hub of those who wanted a more liberal and pro-British policy. Gall: they saw themselves as a sort of 'German Whig' party: e.g. von Bunsen, von Pourtales, von Usedom, Robert von der Goltz, von Bethmann Hollweg. Wilhelm got close to them, pushed by Augusta. For much of the 1850s Wilhelm was military governor of the Rhineland and Westphalia and they lived in Koblenz. Augusta arranged a much more interesting court than that of FW and they preferred to stay at Koblenz even during the winter season. FW and his circle were annoyed and it was a constant source of tension and rows with FW sometimes threatening to purge Wilhelm's *entourage*. The civil governor of the Rhineland, Hans von Kleist-Retzow, organised surveillance of their activities. Their counter-court remained a focus of opposition until 1857. There was important overlap between this court and the *Wochenblatt* network.

Early 1851 Bismarck considered becoming chief minister in the tiny Anhalt-Bernburg, traversed by the Elbe above Magdeburg. To Johanna: 'The Duke is an imbecile and the Minister is Duke.' Feb Bismarck delivered a speech opposing greater financial power for parliament on the grounds it would make foreign policy impossible. Unlike in Britain with its clear choice of two parties and iron discipline among the majority party controlled by a leader from the Cabinet, Prussia had 5 or 6 parties creating 'a very complicated diagonal of forces'. But his 1853 note to Wilhelm showed this argument was bogus and he opposed parliamentary involvement in foreign policy in any circumstances.

By the end of March at the latest (Gall), it was clear that the Dresden conferences agreed to at Olmütz would simply re-establish the *status quo ante*, i.e. the 1815 constitution for the Bund. Austria would not grant dual leadership, Prussia would not allow the rest of the Austrian Empire to join the Bund.

Spring 1851 German Confederation restored. Showalter: the major states of the Bund established an association of political police forces which met regularly from 1851 to share information on dissidents. Many irreconcilables emigrated to America.

Friedjung: after the Dresden conference, Schwarzenberg said, 'I am no admirer of the existing federal constitution. We have made a serious effort to create something real and practical but if nothing comes of it, things must remain as they are, for a torn, threadbare coat is, at any rate, better than no coat at all. In my humble opinion, 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.'

April Leopold Gerlach persuaded FW to appoint Bismarck as Prussian envoy to the Confederation.

9 April Schwarzenberg to Manteuffel: 'We had hoped for better things and have honestly striven for them. I confess that the malicious and inept allusions of the press which see in the restoration of the old Confederation a triumph of Austrian reactionary policy anger and nauseate me.' (Heller, p. 143)

10 April Landtag closed for Easter holidays.

20 April He described Olmutz and the prevention of war as 'very fortunate'. OP: luckily for Bismarck, FW was angered by the article but never learned that Bismarck was author.

23 April (JS) Bismarck's friend von Kleist told him that Manteuffel had told him (vK) that Bismarck would be made envoy to the Bund. (Kleist gave him Psalm 149 and years later he would be struck by how apposite it had been. Steinberg, p. 108ff)

28 April He wrote to his wife telling her he had accepted the job: 'I cannot refuse to accept, although I foresee that it will be a fruitless and thorny office. In spite of my best efforts I shall lose the good opinion of many people. But it would be cowardice to decline.' In May (Gall) he wrote to her: 'I am God's soldier and I must go where He sends me, and I believe that He is sending me and that He is cutting out my life as he needs it.' Two days later: 'God helps me along with Him I am more equal to the task than most of our politicians who, but for Him, might be in Frankfurt in my place. I shall perform my office, it is up to God whether He gives me the wit to do so.'

1 May-Oct Great Exhibition Queen Victoria: 'the *greatest day* in our history, the *most beautiful* and *imposing* and *touching* spectacle ever seen'. A few months earlier she'd written in her diary 'We are capable of doing anything.' Hardy wrote that 1851, the year of the Great Exhibition, marked 'an extraordinary chronological frontier ... a precipice in time.'

The Duke of Devonshire's gardener designed Crystal Palace. 6m visited. Prizes for most ingenious mechanical inventions. Workers got discount tickets. One of the attractions was the flush toilet — 'spend a penny' on a visit, shoe-shine, a towel and comb. Spread of sewers and fresh water as Europe urbanised was one of the great social changes of 1850-1914. Bazalgette built sewers in London from 1858.

May (Gall) The three kings met, in principle sorted out issues viz Danish King and S-H, in principle agreed on the Russo-Danish candidate, Prince Christian von Glücksburg. Gall: the SH war had restarted after the 8/48 armistice. Bismarck sought to keep the Bund out of the affair. He also persuaded Augustenburg not to pursue his claims in return for cash. Cf. 4/52.

8 May (EF) He spoke to FW about the Frankfurt job. Gall: there was a two-month transition in which the St Petersburg envoy, von Rochow, would formally head the legation and show him the ropes. FW praised his courage in taking the position. Bismarck (Memoirs): 'The courage is entirely Your Majesty's in entrusting such a position to me...' He was also appointed a Privy Councillor, 'an irony with which God is punishing me for all my abusive remarks about privy councillors' (to Johanna). 2 days later (i.e. 10th) he went to Frankfurt. When Prince Wilhelm found out he said, 'And this *Landwehrleutenant* [junior Landwehr officer] is to become our envoy to the Diet?'

The liberal *Nationalzeitung* saw his and Kleist-Retzow appointments as a final victory for the Junker Parliament and a signal of political and social reaction. Gall: on one hand, his appointment was universally seen as a triumph of reaction and defeat of the revolution, while 'Bismarck himself embodied a radical metamorphosis of that revolution seen as a principle of dramatic political, economic and social change, that through him it was ultimately moving along quite new paths to reach its goal — that was something no one suspected at the time, least of all the man himself.' And the idea that *the means with which he 'often thoughtlessly availed himself'* — 'in order to make Prussia great and to maintain and strengthen the traditional power of the Prussian Crown and the Prussian state' — 'might in themselves be ends far greater and more momentous than those he used them to pursue [i.e. Prussian greatness, the traditional order]' — he recognised only dimly to the extent his faith taught him to leave the course of history to God. 'Yet it was precisely in his releasing of means that contain their own end that lay not only the secret of his success but also his importance in terms of world history, in other words what we call historical greatness in a supra-personal sense' (p87). 'He clearly owed his success in the main to an ability to sail before the storm' (p91).

11 May (JS 10/5) Went to Frankfurt (a 25 hour journey then). After his first week (others have different dates for these letters) he wrote, '**Nobody, not the most malignant doubter of a democrat, can believe the amount of charlatanism and self-importance there is in this diplomatic game...** Those from the small states are caricatures of pig-tailed diplomacy, who immediately put on their 'official report' face when I ask them for a light for my cigar.' The same day he wrote to Hermann Wagener that he had 'little hope for a favourable results' from the Diet. After setting up a communication channel safe from espionage (he told Wagener to address his letters to a servant) he told Wagener, 'The Austrians intrigue under the mask of jovial good fellowship, they lie, steal dispatches (even the most upright among them), gamble, whore, and seek to get the better of us in the small formalities that have thus far been the whole of our activity.' He told the Gerlachs and Kleist-Rettow, 'The Austrians are and remain card sharpers.'

14 May 1851 To Joanna: 'Read as much French as you can but not by candle light and not if your eyes hurt... I did not marry you in order to have a society wife for others, but in order to love you in God and according to the requirements of my own heart, **to have a place in this alien world no barren wind can cool, a place warmed by my own fireplace, to which I can draw near while it storms and freezes outside. And I want to tend my own fire and lay on wood, blow the flames, and protect it and shelter it against all that is evil and foreign.**' He thought he

would have 21,000 Reichsthaler as salary but a large household to support with it. (p114 JS) JS: this income (~£3,100) was roughly that of Wilfred Thorne in Barchester Towers, published 1857.

18 May To Johanna: 'Frankfurt is horribly boring ... In essence nothing but spying on each other as if we had something worth finding out and worth revealing. Life here is almost entirely pure trivialities with which people torture themselves. I am making astonishing progress in the art of using lots of words to say nothing. I fill pages with nice round script which reads like leading articles in the papers and, if Manteuffel, after he has read them, can say what's in them, then he knows a lot more than I do.'

In his Memoirs, he recalls that he arrived 'well disposed to Austria' but that insight into Schwarzenberg's approach 'dispelled my youthful illusions'. OP: he later 'exaggerated the change that occurred in his attitude at Frankfurt in order to heighten his case against Austria as the sole source of the friction that rent the confederation. More accurate is what he wrote to Otto Manteuffel at the end of his first month: 'When I came here, my expectations of results from the Diet's deliberations were not high but since then they have decreased.'

He took strongly against his counterpart, Count von Thun and got thoroughly under his skin. He described to Leopold Gerlach his Austrian opponent, Thun (22/6 JS): 'He is a mixture of rough-hewn bluntness, which can easily pass for honest openness, aristocratic nonchalance and slavish peasant cunning. He always has "no instructions" and on account of ignorance of the business he seems to be dependent on his staff and entourage... Insincerity is the most striking feature of his character in his relationship to us ... There isn't a single man among the diplomats of any intellectual significance. Most of them are self-important pedants filled with little business who take their letters patent and certificate of plenipotentiary powers to bed with them and with whom one cannot have a conversation...' (Thun wrote of him (21/9/51): 'In all fundamental issues, which concern the conservative principle, Herr von Bismarck is perfectly correct and will cause damage more by his overly great zeal than by hesitation or indecision. On the other hand, he seems to me, as far as I can judge, to belong exclusively to that party which has its eye only on Prussian interests and places no great confidence in what the Bundestag can accomplish in that cause. Having never previously been in the diplomatic service or even held public office, he has no proper knowledge of affairs and argues all matters purely in accordance with his previous parliamentary experience.') Stories became part of the later legend of how in every detail Bismarck thwarted and challenged Austria. Previously, only the Austrian delegate smoked and removed his coat; now, Bismarck lit up in shirtsleeves. He pushed the personal and political needling to the point where he and Thun came close to a duel.

Schwarzenberg was trying to break the *Zollverein* and create a new customs arrangement for Germany. Bismarck fought tooth and nail. He thought from the start in Frankfurt that a) the Bund was fundamentally a problem for Prussia, b) Prussia should seek to use the *Zollverein* and similar treaties to make the Bund obsolete and strengthen Prussia's position in Germany. OP: these calculations recurred in his calculations until 1870. The smaller states now generally sided with Austria as they had seen Prussia flirt with the national idea and they thought they had more to fear from Prussia than Austria. The southern states had a dilemma: *politically* they wanted closer economic ties with Austria to counter Prussia, but *commercial* interests warned that secession from the *Zollverein* would be a disaster. Bismarck tried to break up Austria's alliances and sow divisions. 'Fear and fear alone, that is the only thing which has any effect in the palaces from Munich to Bückeburg.' (From 1853 he sent many of his dispatches first to Gerlach, still the most influential person on the king, who returned them to Bismarck who then submitted them formally to Manteuffel. Do we know when this started?)

'Alliances between large states are of value only when they express the actual interests of both parties... In the middle of Europe it is impossible to wait passively upon the march of events or to try to stay removed from them... **If we do not prepare for ourselves the role of the hammer, there will be nothing left but that of the anvil.'** Later 1851? (OP p77)

June 1851 Bismarck-Gerlach: Prussia 'should make some noise' about commercial issues. 'I would consider it very useful if we concerned ourselves in good time with questions of German material

welfare. **The side which seizes the initiative in this matter, whether it be the federal diet, the Zollverein, or Prussia alone, will have a great advantage in winning the sympathies of those affected,** for these matters *quae numero et ponder dicuntur* [number and weights] are more important to the majority of Germans than to you and me. Although I don't value uniformity in weights, measures, bills of exchange and other gimcracks of that sort very highly and regard them as difficult to put into effect, we must still show goodwill and make some noise about it, but more through Prussia than the confederate diet... [T]he consolidation of the sound north German elements with the bond of material interests, even if it should be purchased with the loss of the south German members of the Zollverein, ... would enable us to regard with greater equanimity the development of the policy of the Bund.' He set up various front organisations and mobilised the press to help Prussia in this area at Austria's expense. He spoke of moderate liberals as a useful force to be *temporarily* mobilised behind Prussian foreign policy; 'at home we have no use to them, but in the small states they are the only elements that want anything to do with us' (11/53). OP (p127ff): He knew that there was potential in reaching over the heads of German rulers to mobilise their publics behind material questions and nationalism, to undermine relations between those rulers and Vienna.

June (EF) He wrote about talking to old Amschel Mayer Rothschild, eldest of five sons of the original Rothschild: 'entirely the old haggling Jew and does not want to pretend anything else... a poor man in his palace, childless, widowed, deceived by his own men and badly treated by his frenchified and anglicised nephews and nieces, who will inherit his treasures, without gratitude or love'.

11 June Leopold diary: 'He [FW] takes the credit for everything that turns out all right; things which go bad he blames on his servants.'

3 July To Joanna: 'I cannot understand how a reflective person who knows or wants to know nothing of God can bear his life for contempt and boredom, a life that passes away like a stream, like a sleep, or like a blade of grass that soon withers; we spend our years like a piece of idle gossip. I don't know how I used to stand it; if I lived now as I did then, without God, without you, without the children, I really would not know why I should not cast aside this life like a dirty shirt.'

4 July (JS) Letter to friend von Kleist after weeks of separation from his wife: 'The chief weapon with which evil assaults me is not the desire for external glory but a brutal sensuality that leads me so close to the greatest sins that I doubt at times that I will gain access to God's mercy. At any rate I am certain that the seed of God's word has not found fertile ground in a heart laid waste as it was from youth. Otherwise I could not be so much the plaything of temptation, which even invades my moments of prayer... I am often in hopeless anxiety over the fruitlessness of my prayer. Comfort me, Hans, but burn this without speaking of it to anyone.' Some time over the summer he wrote to his wife about sitting lonely in a window and hearing 'one of your beloved Beethoven pieces' played by an unknown neighbour, 'for me it sounded more beautiful than any concert'.

Mid-August (JS) His temporary appointment was officially made permanent though he also suffered a pay cut.

Sep (EF) **Prussia negotiated for Hanover, Electoral Hesse and some other smaller states to join the Zollverein** (cf. Feb 1853 renewal). Gall: Bismarck made clear to Manteuffel that Prussia ought to support coming to power in Hanover 'only such a ministry as would be prepared to fall in with our policy as embodied in the treaty of 7 September, whatever its political colour'. (There was a power struggle in Hanover with the more conservative faction also the more pro-Austrian.) Davis: It was negotiated in secret to avoid Austrian interference. It was very significant. It seemingly committed the *Zollverein* to liberalisation and was a great political coup for Prussia: it extended the *Zollverein* to the North Sea coast thus securing the commercial future of Prussia with or without the southern states. It was generally seen as a sign that Britain was working with Prussia against Austrian plans. The deal was seen as good in London but it was not organised by London. Other *Zollverein* members were told they had to accept it if they wanted the *Zollverein* renewed in 1853. In November Schwarzenberg published a new Austrian tariff as the basis for a new Austrian-led commercial union. Other states were invited to Vienna to discuss in Jan 1852. Only Prussia did not

attend but Schwarzenberg died before discussions ended (see below). In 1852 the FO and Board of Trade thought that the extension of the *Zollverein* was generally a liberalising force and welcomed it but declined to push publicly for fear of political blowback. The passivity of London's policy 1851-3 was often criticised by British representatives on the ground.

24 Sep A tugboat pulled HMS Blazer down the Thames — it would lay the first trans-Channel cable. *The Times*: 'This conquest gained by science over the waves must ever remain recorded as amid the greatest of human achievements since record has existed of the mighty feats accomplished by man.'

29 Sep To Manteuffel: 'A conservative opposition can only be conducted with and through the king ... not through the public prints, but through personal influence at court; anything else has no basis with us or must become radical...'

Oct (Gall) He moved house, out of town to a modest house in the *Bockenheimer Landstrasse*, yards from the legation chancellery. A year later he moved back into town, in May 1858 the legation and his home moved again.

November Bismarck reported a conversation with Thun to Manteuffel.

Thun argued that a) Vienna wanted closer links to the *Zollverein* and could not tolerate being excluded, b) the Confederation should have a greater role in customs and tariff policy. He was sorry to see Bismarck trying to reduce the Bund to 'a police and military institution', and mouthed '*grossdeutsch* fantasies'. 'A predominant Austrian influence in Germany was in the nature of things, he said, provided that Austria devoted itself to Germany without self-seeking'.

Bismarck reported: 'He spoke like Posa [the grandiloquent marquis in Schiller's *Don Carlos*] and exhibited Greater German zealotry. To complete his train of thought I pointed out that the existence of Prussia and further of the Reformation constituted a regrettable fact but one we were both powerless to alter; **we must reckon with facts, not with ideals...** [A] Prussia that, as he put it, "renounced the legacy of Frederick the Great" in order to be able to dedicate itself to its true destiny as Lord High Chamberlain to the Emperor did not exist in Europe, and **before I sent home a recommendation for such a policy the issue would have to be decided by the sword.**' Thun likened Prussia to a gambler 'who, having once won the hundred-thousand-taler jackpot [i.e. Frederick the Great's triumph], now bases his budget on a yearly repetition of that event.' (Gall: this was a view widely shared in Europe.) Bismarck replied that 'if these views were as clear in Vienna as they were with him, I must say that I foresaw Prussia's having to rely on the aforesaid lottery once again; whether it won or not was in the hands of God.' The conversation had been conducted 'in a rather jocular tone' but it had fortified him in the conviction that 'Austria must experience the importance of our alliance or our aversion, before it will understand the value of it or act on that understanding'. Gall: In the 1880s, when the Germany-Austria spheres of influence and new alliance were clear Bismarck had the documents of his Frankfurt period published almost in entirety. He wanted to show that he had been *consistent in his goals*, despite the necessary twisting and turning forced by circumstance — and he had been.

6 Nov Palmerston-brother: 'I do not see any rock ahead which is likely to wreck the government.' He thought Derby, plagued by gout, preferred to deal with his estates than politics. Weeks later he was gone.

December He wrote to Leopold Gerlach that there is 'nothing to be done' with the Confederation: 'The only way of achieving anything in Germany is through associations within the Confederation, the Customs Union, the military convention, and so on'. Cf. 1/5/53.

2 Dec (Anniversary of Austerlitz) Napoleon's coup against the Second Republic. He dissolved the National Assembly, proclaimed martial law, arrested leading republicans, made himself President for life. Over previous months he had said: 'the name of Napoleon is in itself a programme. At home it means order, authority, religion and the welfare of the people; and abroad it means national self-respect.' In *Der 18te Brumaire des Louis Napoleon* (written 1851-2), Marx said of the coup: 'Hegel remarks somewhere that all great world-historic facts and personages appear, so to speak, twice. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce.'

Napoleon's determination to overthrow the existing European order was an obvious threat to Austria and opened up new squares on the European chessboard for Bismarck, including the potential to intimidate Austria and south Germany by threats of a French alliance. AJPT: 'If indeed there was a decline in international morality, the origins of this are to be found in Napoleon and his associates ['gangsters'], not Bismarck. He only applied the maxim *a corsaire, corsaire et demi*.' Palmerston wrote to his brother-in-law that it was 'probably true' that the Assembly would have arrested Napoleon if he hadn't dissolved them and 'it seemed to me to be better for France & for the tranquility of Europe that the President prevail over the Assembly than the Assembly over the President because the success of the Assembly who had no good candidate to offer for the government of France would probably lead to civil war.' He therefore signalled approval when he met the French Ambassador on 3/12. His colleagues opposed. On 13/12 news of Palmerston's move leaked. Cabinet patience snapped. The Queen demanded an explanation from Russell. Meanwhile another row had grown. In December Kossuth, who had led the recent nationalist uprising in Hungary, came to Britain on a speaking tour. Palmerston met him officially. Colleagues objected. Palmerston replied, 'It is not as chief enemy of Austria that Kossuth has hitherto been looked upon, nor is it in that capacity that he is about to be received by the British nation. He has been regarded as a man who among others has stood up for the rights of his country.' Russell tried to forbid the meeting. Palmerston threatened to resign. Russell backed down.

On 17/12, after the Cabinet row over Napoleon, Russell finally asked for Palmerston's resignation after complaints 'too frequent & too well-founded... [M]is-understandings perpetually renewed, violations of prudence & decorum too frequently repeated have marred the effects which ought to have followed from a sound policy and able administration'. **Palmerston resigned.** But Russell and the Cabinet then stressed that they were not changing policy. Across Europe people struggled to understand why he had gone. He'd been criticised for being too liberal but was he pushed out for supporting Napoleon's coup?

Thereafter Schwarzenberg, who had an acrimonious feud with Palmerston, followed a more moderate policy in dealing with Britain. Granville briefly took over from Palmerston. He thought that 'considering the great natural advantages of our foreign commerce, one of the first duties of a British government must always be to obtain for our foreign trade that security which is essential to its progress' but that HMG representatives abroad should push liberal institutions and reduction of tariffs only when the locals asked for advice. Davis: by now, the FO, Board of Trade and chambers of commerce all agreed on the matter of non-interference on trade, and that action should be only reactive and non-political. *Trade was considered as separate from foreign policy in the minds of almost all key players.*

31 December The Austrian Ambassador to France reported that Schwarzenberg had said, 'The days of principles are gone.'

31 December (Evans) Schwarzenberg cancelled virtually all concessions and constitutions.

1852

Marx described the 'ragged working class': 'Alongside decayed *roués* with dubious means of subsistence and of dubious origin, alongside ruined and adventurous offshoots of the bourgeoisie, were vagabonds, discharged soldiers, discharged jailbirds, escaped galley slaves, swindlers, mountebanks, *lazzaroni*, pickpockets, tricksters, gamblers, pimps, brothel keepers, porters, literati, organ grinders, rag pickers, knife grinders, tinkers, beggars — in short, the whole indefinite, disintegrated mass, thrown hither and thither, which the French call *la bohème*.'

In France the Pereire brothers founded Crédit Mobilier, an investment bank designed to channel capital towards industrial projects.

Smythe, friend of Disraeli and one of the Young England set, fought the last duel on English soil.

In 1852, there was a clash in which the Rothschilds got caught in the middle, in their capacity as bankers of the Confederation. For a brief period relations were hostile and Bismarck took measures to attack their interests but the row was soon patched up.

18 Jan A proposal for the restructuring of the Upper House was introduced. FW had become obsessed with the issue, seeing it as part of the larger game of finding a way to legally escape his oath and ditch the constitution. The next day he wrote a memo: 'I demand to be the one and only organiser of the First Chamber', an arrangement he described as essential for the 'honour, prestige, and future of the Prussian crown'. Leopold Gerlach was appalled by the King's plans and thought they'd be a disaster. He preferred to leave the constitution alone and let it collapse in contradiction at some point. FW's plans also alienated some of the *Kreuzzeitung* network, including Stahl, who feared a British-style House of Lords would exclude many of the Junker gentry. Manteuffel gave FW only lukewarm support. There were rows rumbling on for months (details in Barclay, p245ff). On 7 May 1853 there was a formal constitutional revision which led to a decree in late 1854 altering the composition of the First Chamber. The upper house, after 1855 called the House of Lords (*Herrenhaus*), no longer had any elected members, the King had the right to appoint but had to select from certain categories in an elaborate compromise. Cf. 28/9/53.

9 Feb Russell introduced a Reform Bill lowering the county franchise to £20 and the household borough franchise to £5.

21 Feb Russell's government fell. Russell had introduced a Bill for reform of the 'local' militia, Palmerston put down an amendment (on Friday 20th when most had gone to the country) to remove 'local', MPs supported Palmertson. Russell resigned. 'I have had my tit for tat with John Russell', said Palmerston. Derby came back to London. The Queen first spoke to Aberdeen and Wellington but both declined. She then summoned Derby.

22/2 **Derby took over as PM of a minority government, Disraeli as Chancellor.** This became known as the 'Who?Who?' Ministry because the Duke of Wellington called out 'Who? Who?' when the jobs were announced in the Lords. (Derby and Disraeli wanted to bring Palmerston into the Cabinet but he declined. Derby made Disraeli Chancellor and Leader of the Commons: 'You know as much as Mr Canning did. They give you the figures.') Protectionism still very divisive. Derby and Disraeli feared urban radicalism and swamping of county representation by rural voters but knew free trade was dominant in Parliament. Disraeli wanted to pursue other tax reform rather than return to protection. Derby thought France incapable of 'rational self-government' and inevitably ruled by a master. He knew Napoleon because in 1848 Napoleon had served as a special constable with Derby's eldest son during the Chartist demonstrations. He wanted friendly relations with France, Austria and Russia; peace in Europe without Britain getting entangled in its alliances and rivalries so the British Empire, founded on trade and the navy, could flourish; what he called 'a calm, temperate, deliberate and conciliatory course of conduct' without interference in internal affairs of European states. His strategy on protection was to keep the party together and let the next election resolve it — he and Disraeli expected free trade to win again and then they could move on. They would pass some sensible things, such as militia reform, before an election.

25 March After months of needling, he fought a pistol duel with von Vincke. It came after a speech (date?) in the Landtag (he had given up his seat according to the law in autumn 1851 and been re-elected). In a debate on the defence budget the liberals pushed for a strengthening of the Landwehr. Old arguments resurfaced about 1806. Again he warned, as in 1847, against mistaking the view of the big cities, often misled by 'ambitious and deceitful demagogues', for 'the true Prussian people' who would know 'how to bring the big cities to heel, should they rise up once again, even if it means obliterating them from the face of the earth'.

Bismarck's account in a letter to his mother-in-law (4/4, p120 JS): Vincke had attacked him in the Landtag then challenged him; they drove out to a beautiful spot by a lake; 'the weather was so beautiful and the birds sang so merrily that all sad thoughts disappeared as soon as I got there. I had forcibly to avoid thoughts of Johanna for fear of weakening'; the challenge was reduced from four bullets to two; Bismarck refused to apologise for his comments; 'we both took our pistols,

shot on the command ... and both missed... I would have preferred to continue the fight. Since I was not the person insulted, I could say nothing. That was it, everybody shook hands.'

5 April Schwarzenberg unexpectedly died aged 51. Count Karl von Buol-Schauenstein ('Buol') appointed foreign minister.

April Gall (p 114): Bismarck was instructed to explore a Prussian initiative to involve the Bund in agreements over S-H that needed formalising (partly to offload responsibility for unpopular measures, partly a gesture of goodwill to Vienna). Bismarck strongly opposed. In a letter drafted 6-7/4 he wrote: a crucial goal of Schwarzenberg's policy was 'to absorb Prussia's external activity in that of the Confederation and to develop more and more the representation of the latter by the presidential power... The entry of the whole Austrian Empire into the Confederation would provide a basis, and tariff unification at least a building-site, for the system [i.e the Schwarzenberg system] and I have repeatedly had occasion, both in private conversation and in official proceedings, to convince myself that the presidency would welcome every opportunity of involving the Confederation in diplomatic negotiations as a single, integrated power.' Maybe this will change given Schwarzenberg's death but there's still no reason to make a risky concession now. He also thought it would not even work because of opinion in the Confederation. Thun agreed with him and the proposal was shelved for the moment.

30 April Disraeli's Budget speech (for interim budget, main budget see December). Tried to bounce Derby with a very pro free trade speech, signalling he'd surrendered on the issue.

8 May Treaty of London. Austria and Prussia promised to respect the integrity of the Danish monarchy. Succession was awarded to Christian, whom Germans henceforth referred to as 'the Protocol Prince'. Denmark promised never to incorporate Schleswig. After signing, the issue of the Bund acceding cropped up repeatedly. Bismarck kept insisting the Bund should be kept out.

End May FW summoned him to Potsdam. Told Bismarck he should go to Vienna as substitute for the ill Ambassador. FW gave him a letter for FJ which stressed Bismarck's 'hostility even to the very roots of the revolution' and stressed FW's 'unchanging, urgent hope that Your Majesty and I are wholly at one in the truth that our triple [i.e including Tsar], steadfast, devout, and vigorous concord is the *one thing* capable of saving Europe and our mischievous and yet so beloved German fatherland from the present crisis'.

He found Vienna unpleasant. He was disliked for his behaviour in Frankfurt and **Vienna wanted a CU with Prussia which he opposed.** 'A certain degree of similarity in the matter of consumption is a necessary basis for community of interest in customs; even the difference of interests within the German Zollverein ... is productive of difficulties, only to be overcome by that goodwill which springs from national cohesion.' While in Vienna, gossip poisoned his relations with Manteuffel. (In 1852/3 Manteuffel was also feuding with conservatives and the *Kreuzzeitung* over his spin doctor, Quehl.) The Ambassador's recovery allowed Bismarck to leave and return to Frankfurt which pleased him.

Bismarck wrote to Manteuffel after the mission that he had understood the purpose as to make relations more friendly 'without giving any ground on the tariff question, without creating unnecessary tensions and without allowing the importance of the tariff question and the divergence of opinions on the same to grow any more than necessary and begin to influence other questions as well as relations in general between our two powers.' Why did he write this letter? Gall: he discovered from Wagener that 'the rumour is being very deliberately put about in Berlin that I did not properly understand it or even that I exceeded my instructions'. Gall: the view did exist and Bismarck knew it was held in the circle around Wilhelm, where the shame of Olmütz was still keenly felt, and at the Foreign Ministry where Manteuffel viewed Bismarck with increasing distrust. Gall: despite intense efforts, he did not shake these suspicions and both camps now saw him as an unreliable character who said different things to different people depending on the moment, and Manteuffel was convinced Bismarck was trying to push him out of office. The *Kreuzzeitung* blasted government policy for being too pro-Austrian which Manteuffel saw as an attack on himself by Bismarck. Gall stresses (p 112): the division between FW, Gerlachs, Manteuffel

versus Wilhelm's circle was not so great, while Bismarck's desire for a major change of direction and counter-offensive against Austria was not supported by either circle.

Bismarck did not think a ministerial role with FW was likely. In his *Memoirs* he looked back on this period: 'He [FW] looked upon me as an egg which he had laid and hatched himself and in cases of differences of opinion would have always had the feeling that the egg wanted to be cleverer than the hen.' Further, FW suffered from 'fits of autocracy, with his often abrupt changes of view, his irregularity in matters of business, and his accessibility to uninvited backstairs influences ... *pharmacopolaе, balatrones, hoc genus omne* [*Ambubaiarum collegia, pharmacopolaе, mendici, mimae, balatrones, hoc genus omne* — The flute-girls' guilds, quacks, beggars, actresses, buffoons, and all that breed — Horace]'.
June Some liberal reforms of March 1850 were repealed.

2 June Disraeli, speech to electors of Buckinghamshire: 'The time has gone by when the injuries which the great producing interests endure can be alleviated or removed by a recurrence to the laws which, previously to 1846 protected them from such calamities. The spirit of the age tends to free intercourse and no statesman can disregard with impunity the genius of the epoch in which he lives.'

1 July Derby dissolved the House for an election in July. Free trade continued to have the majority in Parliament. Derby continued as PM of a minority government.

16 July Ludwig wrote to Leopold Gerlach: 'All we can do is accept the anarchy, as the French say; we must accommodate ourselves to the fact that it exists and that we can't get rid of it. Anarchy isn't totally intolerable for us. We've more or less got used to it.'

1 August Bismarck's son Bill born. [KL's/Wikipedia dates for the births of all kids are different to Pflanze??]

Autumn (EF) Bismarck gave up his seat in Landtag.

8 Sep After a row over an appointment, in which FW characteristically tried to appoint Radowitz to run military education without informing his Minister President, Manteuffel threatened to resign (again) when he found out. FW begged him to stay and agreed a cabinet order that dramatically increased the powers of the Minister President: 1) only the Minister President and minister of war could henceforth have direct access to the King, the MP got the right to sit in on other meetings; 2) the MP gained the right to proclaim the affairs of a ministry to be a matter for general cabinet discussion. (This became relevant to the final showdown with Bismarck and Wilhelm II in 1890.)

Manteuffel was depressed by his dealings with FW and the constant chaos caused by his freelancing but like Gerlach was resigned to his duty of being 'used up'. Throughout the 1850s FW bounced between Gerlach's *ständisch* patrimonialism (closest to his heart), Manteuffel's statist neo-absolutism, Hinckeldey's repression and crypto-Bonapartism, and Stahl's constitutional monarchism.

14 Sep Duke of Wellington died. (Derby got the news while visiting the Queen at her new purchase, Balmoral, and wrote to his wife that the place was wretched, the shooting poor, and he felt obliged to let Albert win at billiards.) Wellington had an unprecedented lying-in-state in Westminster Hall. In autumn, fears across Europe that Napoleon would declare an empire and invade Belgium. Pressure on Derby to increase military expenditure.

4 Nov French Senate announced a referendum proposing a Second Empire.

24 Nov Bismarck wrote a letter to Manteuffel deploring the King's anti-Bonapartism.

3 Dec Disraeli budget. Very difficult backdrop. Blake (p329): 'In the decade preceding Disraeli's budget, government expenditure varied between £48m and £55m. Rather over half of this, about £28m, went on the service of the National Debt. The other principal item was the armed services. From 1825 to 1852 expenditure on the Army, including the Ordnance, which counted as a separate service until 1854, averaged £8¾ m, on the Navy £6½ m. Civil expenditure ran at about £5m–6m. When in opposition everyone talked about extravagance and the need for economy, but no one who had any experience seriously believed that substantial cuts could really be made. The service of the Debt could not be much diminished. Expenditure on the armed services tended to rise with technical innovations, and any attempt at reduction met severe opposition from the Court... On the revenue side recent budgets had shown receipts of about £20–21 m from the Customs, £14½

m from the Excise, £6 m–7 m from the stamp duties, £4 m from a variety of direct taxes, and £5 m–5½ m from the unpopular income tax, reimposed, after an interval of twenty-six years, by Peel in 1842. Income tax was defended as a temporary measure designed first to remove the deficit inherited from the Whigs, secondly to tide over the loss to the revenue incurred by the great tariff revisions of 1842 and 1845. These had been very successful: the remission of a large number of vexatious duties had greatly increased trade; the reduction to a low level of many others had not only increased the volume of trade but, after a year or so, actually augmented the revenue, for higher consumption outweighed the effect of lower rates. But income tax remained intensely unpopular.'

Then a war scare swept London, the services demanded higher budgets and Derby sided with them. (For details cf. Blake p330ff.) It was pro-free trade: no import tariffs, other tax changes to help agriculture (e.g reduction in malt, tea taxes); proposed modifying income tax to tax earned ('precarious') income less than unearned ('realised') income. Initially praised in many quarters but hostility across Parliament grew as it was debated. On 16/12 at the climax of the battle, Disraeli tried to defend the budget, attack and divide opponents and proclaimed, amid a dramatic thunderstorm as backdrop, 'This, too, I know, that England does not love coalitions.' Amid passionate scenes, Gladstone denounced him in a devastating speech. After a 3am division the next day the budget was defeated. In the gallery watching, Derby said, 'Now we are properly smashed; I must prepare for my journey to Osborne to resign.' (In complex negotiations to try to find votes, Disraeli talked to Bright who, it seems, recorded that in discussing morality in politics, Disraeli waved away such talk with 'We came here for fame', cf. Blake p343. Derby disapproved of Disraeli's plotting with Radicals.)

Aberdeen took over as PM with a coalition of Whigs, Peelites; Russell as Foreign Secretary, Gladstone as Chancellor, Palmerston as Home Secretary. (Palmerston said the HO was much less work than the FO. He worked on London's sewers, child labour laws, pollution, prisons.) Croker's verdict: 'You have died a death so ignoble that it has no name and the coroner's verdict is *found dead!* Why did you not die in the Protestant cause – or something that some party could take an interest in.' Derby retreated for Christmas to his estate where he shot rabbits and muttered, 'There goes Gladstone' etc. Disraeli thought Tory backbenchers the product of 'the wretched school and university system', ignorant of 'the ideas of their own time' and distracted from Parliament by field sports. They distrusted him as did Derby who suspected Disraeli had led his younger son astray into gambling and had undue influence over his oldest son and would 'do anything and act with anyone' for office. In 1853 a depressed Derby would complain that 'real political power was not to be had in England: at best you could only a little advance or retard the progress of an inevitable movement'; the only posts of power remaining were the Governor Generalship of India and the editorship of *The Times*. Initially Derby thought the Aberdeen coalition would quickly collapse.

Blake: before 1852 it was normal for opposition leaders to treat many government proposals on their merits but Disraeli opposed everything and pushed the idea that this was the duty of the 'Opposition'. Derby disagreed: he advised against consolidating by 'an active and bitter opposition ... the present combination between those who have no real bond of union and who must, I think, fall to pieces before long if left to themselves'. Derby also realised that much of the cohesion of the new government was based on hate for Disraeli and thought vehement opposition would consolidate this hate. He also did not want a repeat of 'Who? Who?' and wanted to wait until he could bring over defectors to strengthen a government.

4 Dec To Leopold Gerlach: For Prussia and Austria to achieve an 'ultimately essential understanding', the 'threads' of such an understanding could not be spun from Frankfurt but 'only between Vienna and Berlin direct, from Cabinet to Cabinet ... if possible untouched but at any rate unruptured by our domestic quarrel over *German* politics... Regarding the great and noble ideas of our most gracious Lord, Vienna will continue to be unreceptive as long as it does not once again find itself in deep water, and therefore our and Austria's German policies necessarily remain incommensurable. The advantage we achieve is that the consequences of our marital tiffs do not

make themselves felt beyond the frontiers of Germany.' Gall: i.e he was telling them — viz German politics the Bund could not be the basis for a joint policy, new solutions were needed, though the two could pursue conservative solidarity, as the Gerlachs wanted, in European politics. But in reality he was looking for a chance to play the European card against Austria because he saw the European level as the level at which Prussia could gain in Germany. Gall: this is a great example of the trickiness of interpreting some of what Bismarck said in the 1850s, as he tried both to push Berlin towards what he wanted while keeping in with the Gerlachs and seeming to remain in sync with traditional conservative solidarity. In the Crimea and Italian wars he thought he saw such opportunities to use the European balance of power to advance Prussian interests. Both attempts failed and worsened his reputation as an 'unprincipled gambler'.

27 Dec Russell in Lords (interesting it sat between Christmas and NY then): 'The truth is that for the last 30 years the principles of the foreign policy of this country have never varied.'

1853

Bleak House, Dickens.

Hausmann appointed by Napoleon to rebuild Paris. Demolished much of old Paris and replaced with wide streets. Cleared space for grand buildings like the Opera House, new railways.

Bismarck described the problems with the guild system: 'Here the guild system has so far remained intact, and we are spared none of the disadvantages that it brings — that is, excessive prices for manufactured articles, indifference to customers and therefore careless workmanship, long delays in orders, late beginning, early stopping, and protracted lunch hours when work is done at home, little choice in ready-made wares, backwardness in technical training, and many other deficiencies.'

Gladstone unilaterally cut some tariffs viz Prussia/Zollverein in his budget. Prussia and Britain talked past each other in mutual misunderstanding on the subject. Prussia wanted to use British changes as a lever against the southern states but found this vanished. The southern states then opposed liberalisation. Even though the 1844 iron tariff had been brought in to defend against English competition and this had now changed, Wurtemberg also argued that it was dangerous to rely on Britain for something so crucial to Germany's security interests as acquisition 'could become difficult at any moment'. Prussia prioritised keeping the *Zollverein* together so backed down on the iron tariff. London was disappointed but hadn't understood the intricacies of the political dynamics and was unable to make reciprocal deals. In Germany it was assumed that Britain was trying to pull strings secretly but in fact it wasn't. Prussia was the active player with a policy based on reciprocal measures and self-interest while Britain rejected reciprocal measures and believed in the universal moral principle of free trade. (Davis Ch4)

Jan 1853 Prokesch, specialist in Eastern affairs, replaced Thun in Frankfurt. EF: Bismarck came to despise and distrust Prokesch even more than he had Thun. Before he arrived, he said: 'I think of him the way Old Fritz thought about the first Cossacks he saw: "That's the kind of — we're up against here.'" Prokesch hated him too: '... an arrogant, mean disposition full of swollen-headed self-conceit, with no awareness of law, lazy, lacking in sound knowledge ... a skilful sophist and word-twister full of petty and underhand resources; full of envy and hatred against Austria, hence also his continuous campaign against the presidential powers; a non-believer but one who carries his Protestantism like a banner.'

27 Jan Bismarck wrote to Gerlach advocating a more hostile attitude to Austria. Conservatives in Berlin were too contemptuous of Napoleon, there was counterproductive sneering about his marriage in the *Kreuzzeitung*. 'I am convinced that it could be a great misfortune for Prussia if her government should enter an alliance with France, but even if we make no use of it, we ought never to remove from the consideration of our allies the possibility that under certain conditions we

might choose this evil as the lesser of two.' By removing the impression of implacable hostility, Prussia could regain the 'freedom of position that our illustrious ruling house has in the past used successfully for the expansion of its power.' OP: some historians argue he changed his mind about the Austrian alliance *after* Crimea but this is wrong, he changed his view over winter 1852-3 and later used the Crimean War 'to justify a policy actually arrived at on other grounds' (OP p87). He wanted Prussia to float freely without commitments to either Austria or France, play them off against each other to see what could be gained. **Some time later in the 1850s (OP does not give date): 'In the final analysis, the influence of a power in peace depends upon the strength that it can develop in war and on the alliances with which it can enter into the conflict... The conquest of influence in Germany depends entirely upon the belief among the confederate states in the possibility, probability, or certainty that Prussia could count on foreign alliances in the event of war.'**

19 Feb Austro-Prussian Treaty: The Zollverein was renewed for 12 years, Prussia agreed 'to reconsider after 1860 Austria's bid for an economic union' (Pflanze). Prussia, with the skilled Delbrück handling negotiations, had defeated the Brück-Schwarzenberg plan for a customs union by insisting on tariffs too low for Austria to accept (without intolerable pressure on her infant industries) then threatening to withdraw unless the lesser states accepted Prussia's terms (OP p27). In 1852, Prussia had secured a trade deal with Hanover and then threatened to abandon the Zollverein unless others renewed on Prussian terms. EF & Gall: the Hanover deal was Sep 1851. Carr: under pressure from other members Prussia negotiated a commercial treaty with Austria that was relatively generous in some ways: zero import duties on Austrian raw materials and some semi-manufactured goods and preferential treatment for some other manufactured goods, plus MFN status in respect of new tariff concessions given to other states. Over the next few years Austria liberalised and modernised in various ways but not as fast as Prussia. In 1859 access to trades and professions was freed of restrictions.

Showalter: *Zollverein* exports to Austria doubled in 8 years to over 1/3 of the Empire's international trade. Austria exported much less in return. The MFN clause gave Prussia leverage — it could cut tariffs and make Austria's industries vulnerable to British and French competition. Austria was held back by its bureaucracy and large debt that attracted capital away from industry.

Gall: The negotiations were either direct or via the Zoll institutions; the Diet and Bismarck had little to do.

May Russia claimed the right to protect Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire.

May-July 'Turkish resistance to Russia's demand for a protectorate over the Christian population in the Ottoman Empire led to Russian occupation of the Danubian principalities' (OP). **Russia crossed Pruth river on 31/5 then occupied Moldavia and Wallachia (JS).**

1 May To Ludwig Gerlach: the Bund would never be 'anything other than an insurance (and a poor one) against war and revolution'. Cf. to Gerlach, 12/51.

16 May Heydt initiated a statute prohibiting child labour under 12 and limiting the hours of children 12-14, prohibiting night work, requiring 3 hours of schooling for under 15s. At the time child labour in England and France was prohibited under 8. (Cf. Feb 1849.)

29 May Palmerston told Malmesbury that he favoured 'decided measures against Russia' but Aberdeen opposed.

16 June (David Brown) The Porte officially rejected Russia's demands.

July Commodore Perry entered Edo Bay intending to force Japan to open trade as Britain had done in China.

July Gerlach writes to Bismarck: Manteuffel says that Goltz will only enter ministry if he, Gerlach, is replaced. Goltz is supported by Bethmann-Hollweg's large fortune.

3 July Russia entered the Ottoman Empire. Palmerston argued for naval intervention. Aberdeen wanted negotiation. Clarendon, Foreign Secretary, caught between Cabinet tensions.

15 July (Gall) Bismarck suggested to Manteuffel a delay in commitment viz the Eastern situation — he couldn't see 'why without a cogent reason or strong inducement of any kind we should have to

rush into taking sides', certainly not with Austria without a clear *quid pro quo*. 'The cases where in European politics Austria needs us or fears us ... [are] the only ones where we can make progress in German politics... If only I could hold this daily before His Majesty like a "My Lord, remember the Athenians"' [What does this reference mean?!] Armed neutrality 'if possible in association with the other German states and Belgium ... would be a position in accordance with our interests and dignity and one that would lend fresh vigour to our influence in non-Austrian Germany'. He hoped Manteuffel's 'quiet cool-headedness' would not 'yield to the excitement of other advisers ... purely for the glory of having been involved' — but 'if we can get something out of it, that's different'.

28 July The Vienna Note — output of a conference of Austrian, French and British diplomats, proposed a settlement, rejected by Turkey. (Details only became public in August, Derby worried that vacillation was encouraging Russia, cf. Hawkins p79.)

Autumn Cholera swept Britain. Palmerston pushed for public health measures in cities, sewers, drains. The expense of dealing with an epidemic far exceeded the expense of dealing with it, he argued (cf. covid). Arguments in British Cabinet re how to deal with Russia. Aberdeen brought forward franchise reform partly to keep Russell on board (Brown).

Sep Offered minister of state in Hanover. Replied that he could do it only if Hanover would go 'completely hand in hand with Prussia. I could not take off my "Prussianity" like a coat.'

11-13 Sep Around then Manteuffel tried to resign after FW had blown up at him. FW said no: 'I am really a harmless creature but a very harassed one, and I've got nerves.' Barclay: 'Prematurely ageing, nervous, frequently depressed, and increasingly suspicious, he was keenly aware that many of his subjects — especially high-ranking ones — held him in scorn and contempt. A voracious reader of newspapers, after 1848 he became hypersensitive to what he regarded as personal affronts from journalists and other mediators of public opinion.' He knew it would be extremely hard to revive his pre-1848 plans. 'As the burdens of his office and his feelings of guilt weighed more heavily upon him, he craved more than ever the intimate company of old friends and a regular daily routine.'

Given his dislike of Berlin post-1848 he stayed mostly at the three palaces of Potsdam, Sanssouci, and Charlottenburg. He and the queen liked a routine. They had breakfast 730-8 with Leopold (what became known as 'the coffee report'). After 1848 the former first secretary of the cabinet ministry was now responsible to the Minister President and the veteran official who headed that section, August Costenoble, held the title of State Ministerial Counsellor. With the right to report directly to the King he served as liaison between the ministers and the King. After 1850, Manteuffel increasingly allowed Costenoble to handle routine ministerial reports on his own. FW spent much of his time in the 1850s on his architectural projects which were almost all unfinished, 'a kind of metaphor for the monarchy in the 1850s: imposing but fragmentary.' He also spent time reorganising the court, titles and uniforms again. He met roughly monthly with the cabinet in Crown Council, usually at Bellevue Palace, at which he talked too much. He constantly undermined and infuriated his officials and ministers by saying one thing then undoing it behind their backs, and with his frequent tantrums. He constantly manoeuvred between different factions. Court intrigue was intense throughout the 1850s. Lord Bloomfield remarked in 1854: 'There is perhaps no court in Europe at the present moment where such a maze of intrigue is being carried out as at Berlin... The King thinks that by not avowing his partiality for any particular party, by playing fast and loose with all, that he maintains his own independence and freedom of action, and though he pleases none he also quarrels with none.' Ludwig Gerlach wrote to Leopold 16 July 1852: 'All we can do is accept the anarchy, as the French say; we must accommodate ourselves to the fact that it exists and that we can't get rid of it. Anarchy isn't totally intolerable for us. We've more or less got used to it.' (Barclay p229ff)

28 Sep FW letter to Franz Joseph: He complained he'd been forced to 'take an oath to a miserable, French-modern constitution!!!!' but 'it happened, and my word is sacred, and I will not break it. But with the help of the very laws to which I swore ... I will *replace* and kill the "French ideologies" with real German *ständisch* institutions... However, as long as we are afflicted by the French constitution, and especially as we free ourselves from it, we still need majorities!!'

4 Oct The Sultan declared war on Russia, encouraged by Britain and France. OP: The Austrian Foreign Minister Buol a) was alarmed by Russian troops around the Danube, b) saw a chance to shut Russia permanently out of the Balkans and increase Austrian power there. Conservative ministers opposed him, Franz Joseph was dubious. Britain had long argued that the European balance required the preservation of the Ottoman Empire. In 1841, Britain and France had barred Russian access to the Mediterranean in the London Straits Agreement (all warships were barred from the Straits except the Sultan's allies during wartime).

Gall (p122): hardcore conservatives in Vienna, like in Berlin, wanted an alliance with Russia and partition of Balkans into Russian/Austrian spheres of influence. The liberals around Buol, like the *Wochenblatt* network around Wilhelm, preferred alliance with the West and Austrian protectorate over the whole Balkans. A network of Schwarzenberg and Metternich fans preferred armed neutrality and watching for the chance to consolidate and extend the Bund.

16 Oct Pourtales to Bethmann-Hollweg: 'Bismarck is continually using and abusing his party colleagues. To him they are ... post-horses on which to ride to the next stage. His knightly exterior hides nothing but a Judas and I will not go one step of the way with him.' Gall: the verdict of 'opportunist loner' was very much in the air and very damaging. Bismarck said of Pourtales that he was one of 'the thickest numbskulls I have ever come across ... with a faint touch of church, salon, scholarship and brothel about him'.

Nov The Battle of Sinope: Russian navy destroyed Ottoman fleet.

Nov To Gerlach: 'We are in the same position with regard to the Gothaer [moderate/old liberals] as were Louis XIII and XIV to the German Protestants. At home we have no use for them, but in the small states they are the only elements that want anything to do with us.' OP: Richelieu had exploited Lutheran Protestants against the Habsburgs, Bismarck was suggesting a similar move.

14 Dec Palmerston resigned as Home Secretary. This was ostensibly over differences re extending the franchise. There were also big foreign policy differences. Cabinet ministers and the public thought foreign policy was the real reason for the split. Palmerston wanted a tougher approach to Russia. He argued autumn 1853 that Turkey was not a 'dying power' and remained crucial to the balance of power. To Clarendon (14/10): 'We maintain the integrity & independence of Turkey, not for the love and affection for the Turks, but because we prefer the existing state of things there, to any other state of things which at present wd be humanly possible, because the interest, political and commercial of England & of Europe would be dangerously injured by the destruction of that integrity and independence. For these reasons, we have undertaken to defend Turkey against Russia... Unless England & France are prepared to sink down into the condition of second rate powers they *must* prevail, by negotiation if possible, but by force of arms if necessary.' But the resignation triggered such reactions that ministers immediately started discussing how to get him to recant and rejoin. A long Cabinet meeting decided to make him an offer (a letter from Victoria objecting didn't arrive in time because the messenger stopped off and got drunk). On 24/12 he returned having got assurances re despatch of a fleet to the Black Sea. His position was much strengthened. Derby and Disraeli thought the episode contributed to the disintegration of the government and helped them steady conservatives.

Dec (Barclay) Prussia joined Austria, France and Britain in a note to Russia calling for the maintenance of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

19 Dec Bismarck-Gerlach: 'Our politics have no other exercise room than Germany, not least because of the way we have grown and intertwined with it and Austria hopes desperately to use this fact for itself. **There is no room for us both as long as Austria makes its claims. In the long run we cannot coexist with each other. We breathe the air out of each others' mouths;** one must yield or must be 'yielded' to the other. Until then we must be enemies. I regard that as an 'un-ignorable' fact (if you will pardon the word), however unwelcome it may be.'

Gall: he repeated this idea so many times over the years that there is no doubt he sincerely believed it.

19-20 Dec (Gall) To Leopold Gerlach (but this may have been 5/57 see below): '**We cannot make an alliance with France without a certain degree of meanness, but in the Middle Ages very**

admirable people – even German princes – used a drain to make their escape, rather than be beaten and strangled’ (AJPT). Gall quotes similarly (‘thrashed or throttled’) but says this sentence was in a letter to Leopold Gerlach 19-20/12/53. (In 1853 Ludwig Gerlach referred to the 1848 revolutions — conservatives had ‘seized the artillery of the revolution and turned it against the revolution itself, via public speeches, the free press and political organisation’.)

22 Dec To sister Malwine, he sneered of the Bund: ‘That well-known song of Heine’s, “*oh Bund, du Hund, du bist nicht gesund*” [oh Bund, you dog, you are not healthy], will soon be adopted by unanimous resolution as the national anthem of the German people.’

1854

Hard Times, Dickens.

Eastern crisis develops: Russia pushing south, war with Turkey.

Northcote-Trevelyan Report led to modern civil service.

From 1854-73 the Foreign Office was presided over by PUS Edmund (later Lord) Hammond, an imposing man. His appointment was partly because of the influence of the Northcote Trevelyan reforms and the Foreign Secretary thought he ought to appoint an insider. Palmerston approved of the choice. He said of himself that Palmerston’s was ‘the school in which I was brought up’. After Crimea there were drastic economies in the FO. Gladstone and the spirit of the time pushed many inquiries including into organisation of diplomacy. Ambassadorial representation was cut back with only Paris and Constantinople retaining embassy status. St P and Vienna regained status in 1860 and Berlin in 1862. The PUS also had responsibility for the Secret Service Fund. Hammond insisted the accounts were personal (not official), therefore not transferable to his successor, and destroyed most documents relating to how he spent the money. Evidence suggests £23,000 per year in the 1860s. In 1860 he started upgrading cypher security. Hammond opposed most innovations, such as using printers instead of manual copying. He fought to keep the FO’s business hidden from Parliament and HMT. He had a close relationship with Clarendon and Granville, much less so with Russell.

In 1854, Bismarck wrote from Frankfurt to Leopold Gerlach about the struggle against ultramontanism: ‘It is not a Christian creed, but a hypocritical, idolatrous Papism full of hate and cunning, which conducts an unrelenting struggle with the most infamous weapons against the Protestant governments, and especially against Prussia, the worldly bulwark of the evangelical faith. The struggle goes on in practical affairs from the cabinets of the princes and their ministers to the feather-bed mysteries of the married set. Here in the city and diet, and at nearby courts, “**Catholic**” and “**enemy of Prussia**” are identical in meaning.’ There can be no peace, ultramontanes are more dangerous than democrats.

Showalter: In 1854 the Bund’s Military Commission tried to establish inspections of Bund contingents but they were whitewashes.

22 Jan Palmerston had opposed Russell’s proposals over winter to extend the franchise. He worried about extending it to ‘a great number of electors of a lower class in regards to intelligence, property and independence’. In Jan he warned Russell that ‘**A low class of electors may naturally be expected to chuse a low class of representatives but even where men of a superior kind are chosen, these men insensibly and unavoidably adapt the language, the tone, and their votes, to the lowest class of electors, if that class is numerous; just as actors are led to neglect the boxes and the pit, and to play for the shilling gallery.**’ We will get MPs ‘incapable of taking large views’ for the sake of some ‘fleeting popularity among the lower classes’ and in defiance of ‘the

intelligent & respectable classes whose good opinion is most to be valued'. A few days later he added to Aberdeen that it was bad timing and 'Can it be expected that men who murder their children to get nine pounds to be spent in drink will not sell their vote for whatever they can get for it?'

End Jan Crowds gathered outside the Tower of London in the belief they would witness the imprisonment for treason of Lord Aberdeen and Prince Albert. Effigies of the two were burned. Feelings were running high viz the Eastern Crisis.

31 Jan Derby denounced government policy as confused and 'discreditable', shrouded in dangerous obscurity and indecision.

13 Feb Russell introduced a Reform Bill. Badly timed. Cabinet chaos. On 3 March he told Parliament further consideration was delayed, on 11 April he had to withdraw it for the rest of the session, and burst into hysterical tears during his speech.

15 Feb (Gall) Letter to Manteuffel: 'I should be alarmed if we sought protection from the approaching storm by tying our neat seaworthy frigate to Austria's worm-eaten old battleship. Great crises constitute the weather which favours Prussia's growth, provided that it is fearlessly (perhaps even ruthlessly) turned to account by us. If we want to keep on growing, then we must not be afraid to stand alone with 400,000 soldiers, especially as long as the others are fighting and we can by allying with everyone of them still do better business than through a premature and unconditional alliance with so weak and dishonest a confederate as Austria.' OP (p89) Bismarck advised that Prussia should wait until Austria was committed in the east and her troops were deployed in the Balkans then suddenly present Vienna with a demand: either Prussian support against Russia in return for a secret deal establishing spheres of interest, including Austrian respect for Prussia's veto in the Diet; if refused, then Prussia attacks Bohemia.

OP: In Berlin there was confusion. The ultra-conservatives such as Gerlach were pro-Russian, Wilhelm was pro-western. The king (whose sister had married Tsar Nicholas) was erratic driven by a desire for neutrality, a fear of isolation and wanting to preserve solidarity with Austria. Tsar Nicholas said of FW, 'My dear brother-in-law goes to bed as a Russian and wakes up as an Englishman.'

20 Feb To Leopold Gerlach: 'Let's have no sentimental alliances in which the wages of noble self-sacrifice must be the awareness of having done a good deed.'

March John Bright MP in Commons: '[I]f this phrase of the "balance of power" is to be always an argument for war, the pretext for war will never be wanting, and peace can never be secure.'

7 March (Barclay) FW said, 'The war that is breaking out is an *unjust* one on both sides. And I will not let Prussia be forced into an *unjust* war. Prussia should remain firmly neutral.' Gerlach was pro-Russia but given the problems of open support was prepared to support neutrality. Manteuffel leaned towards the western powers early but then supported neutrality. The *Wochenblatt* network challenged neutrality. On 1 March Bunsen and some of the *Wochenblatt* network tried to push FW but the Camarilla pushed back. On 19 April, Bunsen, aware of the pressure, asked FW to replace him and the reluctant King appointed Count Bernstorff. Bonin soon followed after a statement rejecting an arrangement with Russia, see below. Gerlach was delighted. Unknown to almost everyone, Saegert was an important factor on FW and was strongly pro-neutrality.

19 March Palmerston circulated a paper to Cabinet on how the balance of power should be adjusted after a British victory.

27-28 March Britain and France declared war on Russia. Palmerston then went quiet and focused on the Home Office for months.

5 April British troops arrived at Gallipoli.

13 April To Gerlach: 'The sentiment of all my colleagues here, and as far as I can see all the governments of the middle states, is one of deepest concern that the war policy of Vienna should sweep us into an engagement against Russia.'

20 April FW renewed the defensive alliance with Austria agreed in 1851, with a mutual territorial guarantee and establishing that Austria might act in the east only in agreement with

Prussia. If war came in the east, Berlin would mobilise 100-200,000 troops on the eastern frontier. **Bismarck strongly opposed the treaty.** Memoirs: 'At Frankfurt ... I could not avoid a feeling of shame, of bitterness, when I saw how, in face of the demands of Austria ... we sacrificed all our own policy and every independent view; how we fell back from one position to another and, under the pressure of our own inferiority, sought protection on Austria's towing-line, in fear of France and in humility towards England.'

21 April To Gerlach re Gorchakov: 'G is a solemn, uncouth tom fool, a fox in wooden clogs, when he tries to be clever.'

May (Gall p124) Bismarck had to mediate in the conflict between FW and Wilhelm, a serious crisis that 'brought the regime to the brink of crisis' says Gall but doesn't really explain what it was. Barclay explains that it arose out of the purge by FW (under the influence of the Gerlach circle) of leading elements of the *Wochenblatt* network including Pourtales, recently appointed under secretary of state in the FO, Bunsen (London ambassador), and Bonin (War Minister). Wilhelm was 'almost hysterical' (Barclay) in rage at his allies' dismissal. In a violent letter of 5 May, Wilhelm told his brother that advisers were trying to move Prussia 'into the Russian camp', complained at the lack of consultation, said 'I must regard Bonin's fall as directed against myself and thus, as the first officer of the army, I herewith submit a most firm protest against his release, and beseech you at this important moment to retract Bonin's dismissal immediately, for *your own good*, that of the *army*, and for *your own political position*', otherwise he would immediately leave Prussia and go to Baden to dissociate himself from the King's policies. This was gross insubordination. FW tried to calm the situation and didn't want it to blow up and make Prince Carl the heir, but insisted on an apology for 'you have set a very wicked example for my army and my subjects'. Wilhelm backed down and apologised.

Bismarck was obviously happy about the domestic implications but worried that the counter-effect would be a lurch towards a simple conservative solidarity of the three eastern Powers with Prussia playing third fiddle and getting nothing. Gall: His relations barely improved with Wilhelm and rumours spread in Berlin that he favoured a French alliance, even an alliance with liberalism.

?May He argued to the King that instead of fulfilling the April agreement, Prussia should put 200,000 in Upper Silesia. Here they could cross 'either the Russian or the Austrian borders with equal facility... With 200,000 men your majesty would at this moment become the master of the entire European situation, would be able to dictate the peace and win for Prussia a worthy position in Germany.' FW replied, 'A man like Napoleon can commit such acts of violence but not I.' FW continued to cooperate tentatively with Austria much to Bismarck's rage: *must Prussia always play Leporello to the Austrian Don Juan (i.e act as servant)?*

10 May To his brother: 'That at the sound of the first shot against the Russians we shall turn ourselves into the whipping boy for the Western Powers and let them dictate to us the terms of peace while we carry the main burden of war is as clear as a school arithmetic exercise.'

2 June (KL) Gerlach discussed with him the possibility of becoming Minister President but wrote in his diary, 'He is not completely transparent and hence unreliable.' (KL footnote #32 dates this to 1864, which I assume is a fat finger.)

3 June Austria immediately took advantage of the deal with FW. Buol issued an ultimatum forcing Russia to withdraw troops from the Danubian principalities which Austria occupied. Tsar was enraged by Austrian ingratitude after saving her against Hungary in 1849 and then helping viz Prussia.

7 June (JS) FJ and FW met in Teschen.

July (KL) He was appointed one of 26 new KL members of the advisory Council of State that FW convened in Berlin.

24 July (Gall) Prokesh summed up Bismarck's attitude as based 'not so much on love of Russia as envy of Austria, not so much on any conservative principle as on a ravenous appetite for more power in Germany'.

August Disraeli letter to Lady Londonderry complaining about Derby: 'There are a thousand things which ought to be done which are elements of power, and which I am obliged to decline doing or

to do at great sacrifice. Whether it be influence with the Press, or organisation throughout the country, everyone comes to me, and everything is expected from me. **Tho' so many notables and magnificoes belong to the party there was never an aggregation of human being who exercised less social influence. They seem to despise all the modes and means of managing mankind.** As for our Chief we never see him. His House is always closed, he subscribes to nothing tho' his fortune is very large; and expects nevertheless everything to be done. I have never yet been fairly backed in life. **All the great persons I have known, even when what is called 'ambitious' by courtesy, have been unequal to a grand game.** This has been my fate and I never felt it more keenly than at the present moment, with a confederate always at Newmarket and Doncaster, when Europe, nay the world is in the throes of immense changes and all the elements of power at home in a state of dissolution. If ever there were a time when a political chief should concentrate his mind and resources on the situation 'tis the present. There cannot be too much vigilance, too much thought, and too much daring – all seem wanting.'

August Britain, France, Austria demanded that Russia: abandon its protectorate over the Danubian Principalities, abandon its claims to be protector of Christians in Turkey, recognise the freedom of shipping on the Danube, and accept a revision of the 13 July 1841 treaties.

August To Leopold Gerlach: Prussia is to be 'reduced to the role of a source of money and recruits ... without our being allowed any hand in the matter'.

Sep Battle of the Alma, allied troops beat Russia and threatened Sevastopol.

?? Bismarck's first visit to Napoleon.

1 September Bismarck annoys the King: his wife was ill, he left the palace to be with her. Gerlach told him this had gone down badly (Memoirs 1p161).

Oct (OP p93) Bismarck talks to Russian attaché at Frankfurt about a Russia-Prussia alliance and encouraged the idea of a joint attack on Austria 'while she is still unprepared', while FW was negotiating the treaty with Austria. When Nicholas refused, Bismarck replied, 'Necessity will compel you to do it.' Nicholas replied that this was 'just as sad as it is possible'. The rumours that swept Berlin of his ideas strengthened his reputation for unprincipled adventures.

25 October Battle of Balaclava, and, after a miscommunicated order in the fog of war, the charge of the Light Brigade.

Nov Bismarck made a 'royal peer' of the Upper House.

Nov Battle of Inkerman. After this, siege of Sevastopol.

2 Dec Triple Alliance of Britain, France, Austria agreed. They invited Prussia to join them.

Barclay: It was a shock to Prussia and seemed contrary to their agreement with Austria for the maintenance of peace in central Europe. FW said it was 'an infamous betrayal'.

8 Dec (EF) To Manteuffel re Austria's policy: 'This Jewish mixture of cowardice, greed and impudence which characterises present Austrian policy will, when sobriety returns, bring the imperial state severe misery.'

12 Dec To Kleist: 'Our foreign policy is bad for it is driven by fear. I have had nothing to do with it since September and appear to have fallen a bit into disgrace, at least I have become rather dispensable.'

12 Dec Derby denounced the government's handling of the Crimea war: 'The fatal words "too late" had adhered to the whole conduct of the war.' On 19/12 *The Times* dropped its support for Aberdeen and denounced the mismanagement of the expedition.

15 Dec Bismarck-Gerlach: Re the 2/12 Treaty, 'I would absolutely not join the coalition, because everybody will see that we did it out of fear and conclude that the more they frighten us, the more they get from us. Decorum alone forbids it in my view ... The moral is that in all German cabinets from the tiniest to the greatest, **fear is the only thing that determines decisions**; each is afraid of the other, all are afraid of France.'

21 Dec Bismarck-Gerlach: 'Three days ago I got a letter from Manteuffel which made me very happy. He too thinks that we should not join the 2 December ... As long as we show relaxed self-confidence, the others will have respect for us. **As soon as we betray fear, they will use this**

ignoble weakness and try to increase and exploit it... In order to fill the Federal states with sufficient fear, as they have of Austria, we have to show ourselves capable, if others make us desperate, to join with France and even Liberalism. As long as we behave well, nobody takes us seriously and then all go where the threat is greater.'

1855

Sevastopol Sketches, Tolstoy.

He became a member of the House of Lords to which he belonged for the next 43 years.

1855 Gustav Freytag's *Soll und Haben (Debit and Credit)* became one of the best-selling novels of the period. It portrayed Jews appallingly.

Early in 1855 (JS) Buol wrote to Thun arguing: if there is war, it's better if Prussia sides with Russia then we in alliance with France can grab Silesia, restore Saxony 'and we have peace at last in Germany', and 'for this price France can gladly take the Rhineland'.

Jan (OP) Austrian ambassador in Berlin reported that on visits to Berlin Bismarck was arguing that dualism in Germany could no longer be tolerated and Austria should be ejected from Germany. Jan Buol replaced Prokesch — who Bismarck despised but wanted to stay because, as he wrote to his brother, 'such a clumsy opponent I shall never get again' — with Rechberg and invited Manteuffel to replace Bismarck. Manteuffel refused. The Austrians tried to get the Bund to join their alliance against Russia. Bismarck countered them in the arcania of the Bund treaties and exploited the south German fear of France. (JS p127 — Buol's suggestion re Bismarck was made on 20/2.)

6 Jan To Gerlach: 'Please don't take me for a Bonapartist, only for a very ambitious Prussian. From this perspective I consider it as impolitic to allow Austria to believe that we would never see a separate understanding with the West, as to ram it down Western throats that we would never tie ourselves to Russia.'

10 Jan (JS) Bismarck summoned to Berlin, stayed until 18th.

20 Jan Palmerston saw failures of Britain to prosecute the war effectively as reflecting serious domestic problems: 'The true cause [of failure] lies in the apathy and indifference the neglect, the incapacity, the want of foresight the want of thought, the want of resource on the part of men in authority in the Crimea, and I should fear, in the want of sufficiently stimulating, peremptory and directing instructions to those men from home.' (Syntax per original.)

25 Jan Russell resigned from Cabinet after a radical MP gave notice of a motion for a select committee to inquire into the conduct of the war. Derby, who had been hesitant, agreed the Conservatives had to join the attack.

30 Jan (JS) Bund rejected Austria's motion to mobilise and Austria withdrew it. Bismarck insisted any mobilisation had to be 'neutral' and 'in every direction', that is, stopping its anti-Russian and pro-French flavour.

30 Jan Commons passed a motion for a committee of inquiry into the war (305-108, such a big majority that the shocked MPs burst out laughing). Aberdeen had presided over the war without enthusiasm and under constant attack for vacillation. **Aberdeen resigned**. Victoria tried everything to avoid making Palmerston PM. The Queen asked Derby to take over but Derby insisted on trying to get Palmerston to serve; he wouldn't. Not settled until 6/2, after many discussions between the Queen and leading aristocrats, when **Palmerston became PM**. (Disraeli was furious and always maintained Derby had made a huge error; Gladstone agreed. Disraeli was wrong in predicting that Palmerston was too old and would quickly fail.) Gladstone reluctantly joined but within days resigned over the inquiry and took some Peelites with him. Palmerston complained to his brother of the difficulty of finding talent to appoint: 'I have had a very harassing work of it to fill up all the

vacant places. It is so difficult to find men fit to be appointed & willing to accept while there are shoals unfit, & pressing for appointments but I have nearly done.' Cf. 20/1, he focused on procurement, transport, health and sanitation of the army (received news from Florence Nightingale and read reports from soldiers at the front). (Derby was blamed by Disraeli and others for his failure to navigate the complex negotiations and form a ministry. Derby, like many others, underrated the prospects of Palmerston being to form and maintain a ministry.)

25 Feb Letter from Keyserling: 'Do you not remember what in probably lucid moments you prophesied to me then [university]: a constitution must come, that's the way to outward honours, at the same time one must be inwardly devout?'

28 Feb To Manteuffel: 'I was certainly no opponent of Austria's on principle when I come here four years ago but I should have had to disown every drop of Prussian blood had I wished to retain even a moderate affection for Austria as its present rulers understand it.'

March 1855 Nicholas I died (married to Wilhelm's sister), Alexander II emperor (Wilhelm's nephew).

March A conference convened in Vienna to discuss peace terms. Palmerston insisted on Britain's war aims being fulfilled: particularly the Ottoman Empire's preservation and limits on Russia's presence in the Black Sea. Britain was represented by Russell who embarrassed himself by agreeing to terms in Vienna, attacking them in the House of Commons, and was ridiculed. He resigned shortly after in July.

Eve of his 40th birthday, April 'One goes on imagining that one is at the beginning of one's life and that life proper is still to come [but in reality one was already] over the top and it is downhill all the way now to the Schönhausen crypt.'

9 May Rechberg-Buol re Bismarck: '... with his petty politics and with his choice of means, in which he allows no considerations to deter him, not even those that a gentleman owes to his government as he does to himself, [Bismarck has] seriously harmed his reputation with his colleagues...

Ambitious above all things, he has already shown on several occasions that he knows how to adapt his opinions to the circumstances. However ardent his hatred of Austria may appear today, in altered circumstances he would surely not withhold his services from a policy based on reaching an understanding with Austria.'

2 June Moltke summoned to FW and told to take up post of Adjutant to the King's nephew, Prince FV. For 2 years Moltke attended the prince on his travels and got to know Wilhelm.

22-23 June At FW's instigation, the police raided hotel rooms of a young aristocrat, von Rochow, which were used for gambling. There was an outcry about aristocratic officers being arrested by a civilian. Hinckeldey was in the firing line. He asked FW for support. FW promised to help then left him in the lurch, denying he had ordered the raid. Cf. 10/3/56.

5 July FW, influenced by Saegert, had authorised an unofficial mission, behind Manteuffel's back, of Usedom (part of the Wochenblatt network) going to London to discuss an arrangement with the western powers. FW wanted to participate in the forthcoming Vienna peace discussions. On 5/7 FW wrote: 'Let Lord Clarendon, let the Queen with all her ministers know that *I am not inclined towards Russia*; I am not flirting with Russia. The Russian character is not to my taste.' The mission was a 'fiasco' (Barclay) and only suggested in London and Paris that FW was thoroughly unreliable. Usedom got so enraged with being undermined in intrigues he threatened Manteuffel with a duel. (The whole farce seems very characteristic of FW.)

11 July Leopold diary: 'Our goal is and always was the struggle against a Bonapartism and an absolutism based on the revolution and revolutionary ideas. There is no such thing as a *parti moscovite*. The King, Ludwig, Stahl, and I do not have the remotest Russian sympathies. In Russia we see only the opposition to Bonaparte as well as a proven ally in the coming struggle.'

16 July Russell forced to resign.

30 July Motley to his wife after a visit to Bismarck: 'It is one of those houses where everyone does what one likes. Here there are young and old, grandparents and children and dogs all at once, eating, drinking, smoking, piano-playing and pistol-firing (in the garden), all going on at the same time.'

August Trip to Paris ostensibly for the world exhibition. He met Prince Albert who was courteous but 'in his manner there was a kind of malevolent curiosity', he assumed because of his advice not to ally with Britain. Victoria was 'amiable and courteous like one unwilling to treat an eccentric fellow in an unfriendly way'. The conduct of people at Versailles led him to conclude that 'the breeding and manners' at the Imperial Court were not on a higher level than Berlin and 'the times were past when one could go to Paris to receive a schooling in courtesy and good manners.' Only in 'Legitimist circles' were manners good albeit with some exceptions among 'the younger gentlemen spoilt by their contact with Paris, who borrowed their habits not from the family but from the club.'

He spoke with Napoleon a few times. Napoleon was not hostile concerning Bismarck's opposition to a Prussian policy of alliance with the western powers and he spoke 'to the effect that [Prussia and France], which by reason of their culture and their institutions stood at the head of civilisation, were naturally thrown upon each other's assistance' (Bismarck paraphrasing Napoleon). This visit displeased some at court including the Queen Elizabeth, which was made clear to him at the end of September.

OP: During this trip he told Prince Heinrich von Reuss that war with Austria was unavoidable.

'The following winter', the King asked Bismarck of his impression of Napoleon:

'It is my impression that the Emperor Napoleon is a discreet and amiable man but that he is not so clever as the world esteems him. The world places to his account everything that happens, and if it rains in eastern Asia at an unseasonable moment chooses to attribute it to some malevolent machination of the Emperor. Here especially we have become accustomed to regard him as a kind of *génie du mal* who is for ever only meditating how to do mischief in the world.' (To his brother he wrote that 'He looks frightened, like the frontal view of a rat.')

This also went down badly with the Queen. The displeasure at his discussions with Napoleon 'sprang from the idea of "Legitimacy", or more strictly speaking from the word itself, which was stamped with its modern sense by Talleyrand and used in 1814 and 1815 with great success and to the advantage of the Bourbons as a deluding spell.'

8 Sep Fall of Sebastopol, effectively ended the war. 6/10, Palmerston speech: 'Here are the two greatest nations of the world — I say it without vanity and without exaggeration, but without one particle of diminution, that England and France, standing as they do the head of everything that dignifies human nature, are presenting to the world the noblest possible spectacle of two great people casting into the shade of oblivion all former jealousies and rivalships and extinct animosities, and uniting for purposes generous and, as far as any sordid motives are concerned, entirely disinterested; looking for no trumpery or profit or gain, territorial or otherwise, for themselves, but seeking simply to establish the liberty of the world, in which they are deeply interested, upon a solid and permanent foundation, and making sacrifices, not wantonly or for abstract principles, but for sound political considerations.' The victory produced crisis in Tory high command: Disraeli wanted to shift towards demands for peace, and argued you couldn't have a government and opposition on the same side; Derby firmly rejected this and said it would be better for the party to disintegrate than to stick together on the basis of undermining a government prosecuting a just war.

October Wilhelm Stieber was a ruthless Prussian policeman working in Berlin. In 1854 he became Director of the new Seventh Department for Criminal Police Affairs in the Berlin police force under Hinckeldey. He deployed bribery, physical intimidation, and perjury. In October the police revealed that papers belonging to Leopold Gerlach and Niebuhr had been secretly transcribed and transmitted to third parties. Suspicion fell on Carl Techen, a shady former army lieutenant who had been involved in espionage at the residence of the French minister in Berlin, and Ferdinand Seiffart. In early November two servants of Gerlach and Niebuhr were arrested and charged with making

and selling copies of papers. Techen was arrested but released. It was discovered Gerlach's servant had been paid since at least July 1853 and many of the Gerlach-Niebuhr papers had ended up in the French embassy. The papers included highly sensitive diplomatic and military reports. Through this the French learned about Russian naval forces in the Baltic and morale at Sebastopol. Cf. Jan 1855.

Oct Landtag elections. Only 1/6 of eligible voters bothered voting. Barclay: 205/352 were thought to be pro-government.

5 Dec Leopold diary: Wilhelm is characterised by 'complete mindlessness, Prince Carl by perversity, and both by the absolute absence of any concept of honour'!

21 Dec Bismarck re Buol: 'Everyone in Munich and Stuttgart is unanimous in condemning Buol; most of all, the opponents of Russia, who say that his direction of Austrian policy has been incredibly bad. At any rate, he has managed to destroy all faith in Austria and all respect for himself. Pfordten [the Bavarian minister] compared him to a locomotive, which doesn't know where it is going and, on being asked, answers only with steam and whistling.'

1856

Madame Bovary, Flaubert.

Lord Aberdeen: 'An English Minister must please the newspapers ... and the newspapers are always bawling for interference. They are bullies, and they make the Government bully.'

30 Jan (Cf. 10/55.) Carl Techen arrested again 29/1, on 30th Stieber and a colleague got a signed confession. Who had hired him? 'For a long time I have been employed as a secret agent of the Minister President, Baron von Manteuffel. I had to deliver reports to him on the situation in Potsdam and for that I received indefinite payment.' Manteuffel had hired Techen to spy on the *Kreuzzeitung* network including Gerlach whom he suspected of intrigues. It seems Manteuffel did not pay much so Techen went freelance and sold copies to France. (This was referred to in Bismarck's Memoirs, and he also thought Manteuffel used intelligence to profit from insider stock trading. Manteuffel also hired the secret agent Georg Klindworth, then an employee of the King of Württemberg. Palmerston also had dealings with him, cf. 10/2/64. So did Disraeli in 1858-9 over Italy. Is there a good article on this character?) Manteuffel denied everything but was not believed. Aspects of the weird affair leaked out and connections spread leading to various legal actions. It was seen as a sign that the Prussian state was in poor shape.

11 Feb Letter to Gerlach: The Government's approach is making me ill. Austria is demanding we give up our independent position as a Great Power and even 'prescribes to us the forms in which we are to make our abdication'. We should be negotiating direct with England and France, not going to the conference 'as merely an arrow in Buol's quiver'. Memoirs: we were subject to 'contemptuous treatment' by Austria and this shaped later relations.

Feb (OP) He argued to Manteuffel that a Franco-Russian alliance was desirable 'provided we jump in with both feet', it was 'the only means with which to escape the Austrian snare and domination by the medium states'. OP: later in 1856 he returned to the policy of the fulcrum. He wanted to force Austria into accepting the expansion of Prussian influence and use the fear of a Franco-Prussian alliance to push Austria and others into accepting Prussian demands. But FW could not be persuaded to do anything that would lead to a breach with Austria. These calculations lay behind his famous letters to Gerlach in which **Bismarck emphasised the priority of advancing Prussian interests and Gerlach emphasised the priority of not siding with revolution.**

10 March Hinckeldey killed in duel after months of scandal rumbling on since the arrest of Rochow the previous summer. Hinckeldey was called a liar and challenged Rochow to a duel. FW did not intervene. Hinckeldey was short-sighted and couldn't fire a pistol. Rochow killed him. Rochow was arrested but released. There was revulsion in bourgeois Berlin that an effective official had been killed in such a way and tens of thousands attended his funeral. Interestingly Edwin Manteuffel told FW and Leopold Gerlach that Hinckeldey had been acting as a royal official, the affair should not

have been allowed to happen, the aristocracy had become too isolated from normal society in recent years, and he advised the prosecution of Rochow. FW rejected the advice. When he learned Berliners were blaming him, he wailed 'The public regard me as *the one* who sacrificed my beloved Hinckeldey to myself, as though I were a Moloch!!!' He then complained Hinckeldey had been 'too plebeian for me' and hoped his successor would be 'a more refined character'. (This incident in particular makes me think of Bismarck's comment about FW being 'a handful of slime'.)

30 March The Treaty of Paris ending the Crimea War. The waters of the Black Sea were 'formally and in perpetuity interdicted' to ships of war. The war weakened Russia. Russia-Austria and Russia-Britain relations were bad for years. Napoleon could exploit the block on Russia-Austria and Russia-Britain alliances. Russia was determined to separate Austria and France, which helped Bismarck. After this, Napoleon's position was seen as much stronger, politicians across Europe looked to Paris, and France's intellectual and artistic influence also strengthened. The British Cabinet were satisfied with the eventual deal. Many in London were worried about their ability to continue the war if a deal was not done. When the terms were debated in parliament in May, there was little dispute and general acceptance.

(Total British war expenditure came to £69.3m, and the net creation of national debt during the war years was £39.7m. The army's dismal performance led to many reform proposals.)

April Alexander II replaced Nesselrode as foreign Minister with Gorchakov who strongly believed in a French alliance.

26 April 1856 Bismarck's 'Prachtbericht' memo (sometimes referred to as 'the splendid report' or 'the showpiece report'). France holds the central position: 'Meanwhile all [cabinets] great and small, in expectation of the way things may turn out, are seeking to obtain or to retain the friendship of France, and Emperor Napoleon, however new and apparently flimsy the foundations of his dynasty even in France itself, can take his pick from among the alliances currently available.' We should expect an alliance between France and Russia: 'Of all the Great Powers it is these two that because of their geographical situation and their political objectives contain within them the fewest elements of antagonism, having virtually no interests that necessarily clash.' The Holy Alliance and Nicholas I's personal views hitherto prevented this — now with 'Emperor Nicholas dead and the Holy Alliance smashed by Austria', there is nothing 'to inhibit the two countries natural attraction for each other'.

Schwarzenberg had seen this possibility and calculated that Austria could join it and therefore continue to dominate central Europe. But the bottom has been knocked out of this. 'Given the Russians' present antipathy towards Austria and given France's increased pretensions to influence in Italy, it cannot be assumed that Austria will automatically be called to be the third member of the alliance, although it will surely not be lacking in the necessary goodwill.'

Could Austria form a counter-coalition with Britain and Prussia? Who would want to bear the burden of possible two-front war? The other states of the Bund have shown recently 'that they regard it as their honourable duty to abandon the Confederation should the interests, not to mention the security, of their own prince or country be jeopardised by clinging to the Confederation'. Why should they oppose a new Rhenish Confederation under French patronage, given the experience of the past? After all, he wrote sarcastically, in 1813-14 German rulers were spared 'at least the inconvenience of a constitution, particularly tiresome for a prince' — and servitude to France at least 'had its rateable fleshpots and was not so arduous for the princes that in order to escape from it they would have needed to risk country and people and like that emperor in Bürger's poem go "through heat and cold, through the tents of war, eating black bread and sausage, suffering hunger and thirst" for the sake of their own and Germany's freedom'. The successors of the Rhenish Confederation princes think similarly. The 'inner rottenness of the Confederation ... [had] become visible and obvious both abroad and at home'. (Cf. letter to sister, 22/12/53: 'That well-known song of Heine's, "*oh Bund, du Hund, du bist nicht gesund*" [oh Bund, you dog, you are not healthy], will soon be adopted by unanimous resolution as the national anthem of the German people.') ['Particularly arduous for a prince ... fleshpots...' — absolutely characteristic sarcastic cynicism about royalty which often popped up despite his monarchist

beliefs. Cf. also for example his comment in 1857: 'We cannot make an alliance with France without a certain degree of meanness, but in the Middle Ages very admirable people – even German princes – used a drain to make their escape, rather than be beaten and strangled.']

The essence of his argument: An Austro-Prussia-Britain bloc could not work partly because the Bund is too flaky under French pressure and a 'Third Germany' is a fiction.

He was also sceptical of Austria's fundamental soundness, asking whether 'with the enemy's first successful thrust into the interior the whole artificial edifice of its centralised regiment of scribes would not collapse like a house of cards... The Viennese policy being what it is, Germany is clearly too small for the two of us. So long as an honourable agreement over the influence of each in Germany is not reached and executed, we shall both plough the same disputed acre [narrow furrow?] and Austria will remain the only state to whom we can permanently lose or from whom we can permanently gain... We have ... a great many conflicting interests, which neither of us can give up, without renouncing the mission in which each believes for itself; they are, therefore, conflicts which cannot be peacefully unravelled by diplomatic correspondence. Even the most serious pressure from abroad, the most urgent danger to the existence of us both, could not in 1813 nor in 1849 forge this iron. For a thousand years the German dualism has every so often — since Charles V regularly every century — regulated its mutual relations by means of a thorough-going internal war. In this century also no other means than this can set the clock of historical development at the right hour.

'I do not intend by this reasoning to reach the conclusion that we should immediately direct our policy to bringing about the *decision* between Austria and ourselves in as favourable circumstances as possible. I only wish to express my conviction that we shall be obliged, sooner or later, to fight for our very existence against Austria and that it is not within our power to avoid this, since the course of events in Germany offers no alternative. If this is correct, which of course remains more a question of faith than knowledge, then it is not possible for Prussia to take self-denial to the point where she puts her own existence at stake in order to protect the integrity of Austria — in what is in my opinion a hopeless struggle... [He refers to the post-Crimea position of Austria facing pressure in Balkans and Italy.]'

Should Prussia fight France and Russia to maintain Austria's position and the Bund? 'We cannot possibly exert our last ounce of strength for it.'

Austria would probably use an alliance with Prussia purely 'to procure at our expense better terms for an understanding with France and if possible with Russia... It will play Don Juan to every Cabinet when it can produce so stout a Leporello as Prussia, and true to that role it will always be ready to extricate itself from a tight corner at our expense while leaving us in it.' (Cf. similar reference to Don Juan/Leporello in 5/54.) If a Franco-Russian alliance does come for the purposes of war then 'we cannot, I am convinced, be among the opponents of the same, because we should probably be defeated and possibly, *pour les beaux yeux de l'Autriche et de la Diète* [for the fair eyes of Austria and the Diet], bleed to death even in victory'.

'In 1851, particularly in the early part of that year, the dangers of a revolutionary overflow from France and Italy were more obvious and there was a feeling of solidarity between the monarchies against that danger...; a similar situation would recur only if the French Empire were to be overthrown. As long as it [i.e. the French Empire] stands it is not a question of holding off the democrats but of Cabinet politics, in which the interests of Austria do not in fact coincide with our own.' I.e. the Holy Alliance revival may occur *if Napoleon falls*, but if Napoleon stands then our policy is *not* determined by fighting democracy. This was a fundamental difference from the Gerlach perspective (is there a record of how they saw this document?).

(Gall stresses the importance of this passage. For Gall, the story that Bismarck preserved the old ship of Prussia — the old social and political order — from going under and made it seaworthy again — this story is false. No country (other than possibly Japan) changed more swiftly 1840-90. Though he was trying to persuade the Gerlachs that he was being consistent, he was not — and

'from now on his own power interests drove him farther and farther away from the ideas and interests not only of those who had been his political friends hitherto but subsequently also of the social group to which he belonged'. He'd started as a spokesman for the Junkers. His 'secret ambition had been ... a career as the leader of a major conservative aristocratic party in a monarchical state that had been forced back into the traditional corporative mould.' This now had 'little basis in reality.' Instead he was on the edge of an arch-conservative Camarilla surrounding a chronically indecisive monarch with mental illness. Conservatives in the Landtag had no sense of purpose or strategy and were pushed around by the bureaucracy. The *Wochenblatt* network had the probable successor to FW on side. In time his power would come to depend on 'a precarious equilibrium' between the old order and revolutionary forces. In time he would create counter-forces to both Crown and revolutionary forces.)

He wanted the Gerlach network to understand: 1) regardless of romantic talk of conservative solidarity, Austria always put her own interests first, 2) Prussia should do the same and 3) therefore be ready to attack Austria, possibly in alliance with France, when she got into difficulty. It was not put here as starkly as later but the message was clear.

Gall: two days later he wrote to Leopold Gerlach that conflict with Austria was only 'a question of time and opportunity... *when* it chooses to make the decisive attempt to hamstring us; *that* it intends to do so is politically speaking an absolute necessity.' Even if Prussia tries to 'piteously avoid' war, 'Austria will wage it at the first favourable opportunity'.

Memoirs: the liberal faction (the 'Wochenblatt' group) — Pourtales, Bethmann Hollweg (grandfather of the later chancellor), Goltz, 'sometimes Usedom' et al — had ideas about an alliance with Britain against Russia and creating a liberal Germany. (EF: Hollweg and his supporters had their base among the aristocracy and upper bourgeoisie of the western provinces and Silesia.) He described this as 'childish utopias'. (Goltz and others created fabricated Russian documents they leaked to the press to try to bolster support.) How would they cope with Russia as a permanent enemy ready to attack Prussia in any war with France? Wilhelm was also won over to an anti-Russian position, mainly because of his wife's intrigues. Bismarck stressed to him that '**we had absolutely no real cause for a war with Russia, and no interest in the Eastern question that could possibly justify a war with Russia, or even the sacrifice of our prolonged good relations with Russia.**' Getting involved in such a war would put Prussia in a position like 'an Indian vassal-prince who has to conduct English wars under English patronage' (I p125). (He mentions that Manteuffel recruited an agent who was a great burglar to steal documents from the King, Gerlach, and Niebuhr but because the agent was 'paid with Prussian frugality' he 'sought a wider market' including with the French ambassador. I p125. Bismarck also thought Manteuffel used intelligence to profit on foreign stock markets (Busch, II, 484). See above, 30/1/56.)

In his Memoirs: 'Before 1866 we could only claim the title of a Great Power *cum grano salis* [*with a grain of salt*], and after the Crimea war we considered it necessary to sue for an outward recognition of this position by dancing attendance at the Congress of Paris. We confessed that we required the testimony of other Powers in order to look upon ourselves as a Great Power... Her belated admittance could not obscure the fact that a Great Power requires for its recognition above all else the conviction and the courage to be one. I regarded it as a deplorable lack of self-knowledge that, after all the slights that had been put upon us by Austria and all the western powers in general, we still felt the necessity of gaining admittance to the Congress and adding our signatures to its conclusions... How dignified and independent would have been our position if we had not forced our way in a humiliating fashion into the Paris Congress, but had rather declined participation, when our invitation did not arrive at the proper time. Had we shown a suitable reserve we should have been courted when the new grouping took place, and even outwardly our position would have been more dignified if we had not made our inclusion among the great European Powers dependent upon our diplomatic opponents, but had based it simply upon our own self-knowledge, refraining from any claim to participate in European negotiations, which were of no interest for Prussia, instead of **seeking ... after the vanity of prestige and the discussion of things which did not concern us.**'

The King kept offering Bismarck Manteuffel's job but he could not 'shake the impression' that this was just to push Manteuffel into doing what the King wanted.

Summer 1856 (JS) Bismarck visited Paris. He wrote to Leopold Gerlach: 'You scold me that I have been to Babylon but you can hardly expect from a diplomat eager to learn the rules this sort of political chastity... I have to get to know the elements in which I have to move from my own direct observation when the opportunity arises. You need not fear for my political health. **I have a nature like a duck and water runs off my feathers and there is a long way between my skin and my heart.**' (JS dates this to 1856 and 1857, p130.)

In their correspondence somewhere, perhaps in 1857, Gerlach wrote: 'The kings of the earth perceived the nearness of the Lord; they realised the old system of politics no longer sufficed; they concluded the Holy Alliance... The princes declare that they derive their power from God, and that they want to rule in accordance with God's commandments. It was precisely this, however, which the revolutionaries did not like. There should no longer be any authority instituted by God. Men wanted to establish it by themselves, to control it by themselves, and so forth. The subjects wanted to be rulers and the rulers should become subjects... You cannot and must not disavow the principles of the Holy Alliance. They are nothing other than that authority comes from God, and that the princes must accordingly govern as agents commissioned by God.'

18 July Leopold Gerlach to Edwin von Manteuffel: Re Hinckeldey's police reports to FW, they are 'mostly quite unimportant. They contain a lot of absurd, contradictory stuff. But the King likes them, because he believes that they give him a chance to hear a point of view different from that of his *entourage*.'

Sep The Neuchâtel Affair. Neuchâtel had seen a republican insurrection in 1848. FW had never reconciled himself to it and badgered other Powers to no avail. In September a small group of royalists staged a coup and were arrested. FW tried to support them. Manteuffel and others did not want a diplomatic row over one of the King's foolish spasms. In autumn 1856 Leopold Gerlach was at his estates dealing with family illness. Cf. Jan 1857.

3 Oct *The Arrow*, a ship, arrived at Canton harbour. It was Chinese owned and crewed, with an Irish captain, registered in Hong Kong therefore entitled to British protection (though it turned out to have not been renewed and therefore lapsed in September). One of the crew was accused of being a pirate. Crew were arrested. The captain went to the local British consul, Parkes, and alleged an insult to the British flag (doubtful whether this happened). Parkes was unreliable, sent on dubious reports, and escalated the situation then involved the governor of Hong Kong who, by the end of October, had ordered British ships to shell Canton. The affair rumbled into 1857.

End of 1856 Disraeli visited Napoleon in Paris to try to detach him from Palmerston who he wanted to overthrow. Napoleon was firmly with Palmerston and thought of the Tories as his 'hereditary enemies'. An attaché at the British Embassy, Ralph Earle, supplied Disraeli with documents concerning a secret treaty agreed in December 1854. Britain and France had been trying to bring Austria into the war and secretly agreed to promise her that they would make no trouble for her over Italy. In 1857 Disraeli tried to ambush Palmerston over it in Parliament. Palmerston had to admit he'd misled the House in denying it had been signed and handled the situation poorly but survived. (Blake sees Disraeli's use of Earle and Earle's behaviour, which continued for years and included trying to tempt Napoleon into action that would cause chaos with Palmerston, as disgraceful and from his account it's hard to disagree.)

1857

'Machinery, which is gaining the upper hand, worries and alarms me. It rolls on like a thunderstorm, slowly, slowly. But it has taken aim, it will come and strike.' Goethe 1821.

The Social Foundations of German Unification, Hamerow. After 1849 there was a boom and focus on the economy. Railways, mines, factories, river traffic, construction of ships and machinery all accelerated sharply. The stock exchange rose. There were complex globalisation dynamics such as

the California gold rush and British interest rates that helped. By 1856 there were warnings of overheating and speculation. Complex globalisation dynamics contributed to the crash too, with banks failing in Ohio spreading east then hopping the Atlantic in a wave. The stock market declined steadily from summer 1856 then precipitously in September 1857. There was recession in 1857 that stretched to 1859/60. Some blamed greed and luxury. Some blamed divine retribution. Businesses failed, incomes fell.

Various indicators like pig iron grew much faster 1848-57 than 1860-70. 1860 Germany was mining 17m tons of coal versus 8.3m for France and 81m for Britain. Many commented in the 1860s that political uncertainty was holding back investment. The textile industry was the most important in the *Zollverein* employing ~750,000. But there was investment in heavy industry: of the 107 industrial joint stock firms formed in Prussia 1850-9 about two-thirds were in mining and smelting viz a tenth in textiles. In the 1850s the new modern companies such as Krupp co-existed with the mass of traditional very small independent enterprises. The great age of machine building came after 1871, before 1871 the most important area for investment was railways which were kings of every stock exchange in Germany: more than half of the ~3 billion marks at which joint stock companies were capitalised on the eve of the Franco-Prussian War had gone into the construction of railway lines. German rail network grew from 5,800 km in 1850 to 11,000km in 1860 and 18,600km in 1870 (only America and Britain saw more growth). The Prussian government had started encouraging from 1842 and significant ownership after 1848 under von der Heydt. In 1860 2,800 of 5,700 km of Prussian railroads were under government ownership or administration.

Between 1848 and the depression of 1857 about 14 major joint stock banks were established in Germany. ~2.4 billion marks invested in new joint stock companies in the 1850s: about 1B in transport, 800M in banking, 600M in industry. Of 359 issues traded on the Berlin stock exchange in 1870, 175 were in railroads, 99 in government loans (domestic and foreign), 76 in banking institutions, only 9 in industrial enterprises. It took time for the new banks to be accepted and there was conflict within the elite over them (cf. Pflanze above). The Darmstädter Bank, founded by Oppenheim and Gustav Mevissen in 1853 on the model of *Crédit Mobilier*, found itself under considerable attack in the 1850s. Rothschild and others succeeded in frustrating most new credit institutions in Frankfurt. It was not until after 1871 that German banking really took off.

1850-70 Germany advanced more in mechanisation from a fifth to over half of UK and overtaking France (table shows horsepower deployed). This accompanied growing productivity in mining, blast furnaces. It also saw growing scale and concentration.

	Germany	France	Britain
1850	260k	370k	1.3m
1860	850k	1.1m	2.5m
1870	2.5m	1.9m	4m

In agriculture 1849-64 the area under cultivation grew over 1.5m hectares. Bigger farms gobbled up land from smaller. East of the Elbe many aristocrats combined growing farms for rye and wheat with refining sugar, distilling alcohol etc. the distinction between aristocratic and bourgeois farming crumbled. By 1885 only about a quarter of *latifundia* beyond the Elbe had been in the possession of the same family for over 50 years and noble landowners were in a minority even in the east. All this involved huge disruption. Independent handicraft spinners of linen thread in Prussia dropped from 84,000 in 1849 to ~15,000 in 1861. Handicraftsmen and artisans of all sorts were impoverished by competition. Millions left the countryside for America or the city.

Hamerow p77: While industrial labour shifted into unions and supported socialist parties, the material and spiritual foundations of life for handicraftsmen were 'disintegrating' and 'an entire world of traditions, loyalties, beliefs, and aspirations was about to succumb': 'reduced opportunity, intensified competition, bewilderment, hopelessness, and resentment ... demoralisation.' Yet the crisis did not immediately reduce the size of the artisan class: it remained larger than the industrial labour force and grew 1846-60. But they are forced out of producing industrial goods into tailoring, leather making, wood carving, toy making, decorating. Growth came from numbers of journeymen and apprentices who lived an increasingly precarious existence. Conspiracies and anti-semitism spread in a decaying environment.

In the German countryside the class structure 1850-70 was still stable but in the cities there was a social metamorphosis: decline of handicraft trades and guild organisations, emergence of factory proletariat composed of uprooted peasants and declassed tradesmen with a harsh experience of mill and colliery, and *most important a new bourgeoisie*, 'small in numbers, but energetic, ambitious, dissatisfied, and above all affluent. Its effect on the fabric of society was bound to be disruptive, for a shift in the distribution of wealth engendered demand for a shift in the distribution of power. Here was the heart of the political conflict of mid-century which found its resolution in the achievement of national unification.'

Economic growth and increasing material well-being for most expanded hopes and expectations. Manufacturers, entrepreneurs, financiers and merchants gained from the industrial growth of the mid-century. Landowners large and small similarly gained from growing productivity and demand generated by urbanisation. Artisans and handicraftsmen lived very precariously. Many lower class families lived mainly on potatoes, coffee, and bread and butter. Sickness pushed them into dependence on charity. For workers outside the artisan occupations, wages were mostly rising. Hamerow says significant contemporary records from Prussian bureaucracy and tax statistics suggest the standard of living of the lower classes generally was steadily growing. Overall the bourgeoisie and richest gained faster than the lower classes and absorbed disproportionately more of the gains from growth.

Liberals had a strong sense that history was with them. The professor of history von Sybel wrote that however he looked at the problem, 'the computation always produces the same result. With every decade our nation has advanced in regard to the active patriotism of its people and the natural development of its conditions. It cannot possibly miss the goal. In the near future the call will resound irresistibly from one frontier to the other: *Deutschland über alles*.'

In spring 1857, Miquel wrote to Marx: the period of reaction has made Germany an economic totality, lawmaking encroaches by means of treaties on the independence of individual states, the Bund extends its authority and makes people more accustomed to a central administration — but 'petty, vulgar, self-centred, and greedy behaviour of the small states disgusts everybody more and more, the hereditary princely house becomes every day more burdensome, and the realisation penetrates every cottage "that we must begin to clean up, first at home and then in Frankfurt".'

But liberals were also split on how fast to push: many thought that Germany was not ready for an English system of ministers accountable to Parliament and pushing too fast for it could bring disaster, either in reaction or in lower class radicalism. Miquel warned that 'universal suffrage forces us to wage a difficult struggle against the stupidity of the masses'. Von Sybel warned it would be 'the beginning of the end for any form of parliamentarianism'. Even Karl Blind, the fiery insurrectionist, warned that it 'often served to consolidate princely despotism'. Many liberals looked at Napoleon III and the rumours of discussions between Bismarck and Lassalle as a menace and preferred to think of democracy as something at best as a goal for the far future, after the poor had been taught to resist demagogues. Outside Prussia some liberals hoped for a sort of Jeffersonian or Swiss ideal

of free democratic local communities bound in a federation outside the dominance of Prussia or Austria, but this seemed increasingly far-fetched (p.150).

Many liberals 'were inclined to share the scriptural view that we have the poor always with us' (Hamerow), while much could be done to help them, there were limits: as the *Nationalverein* put it, there are limits on the total amount of production 'which down to the present day has been and probably will also remain in the future much too small to provide for the entire population or even for a majority that carefree existence and life of pleasure which would be desirable for all the world. The earth is too poor and the labour of man too barren for the fulfilment of such wishes.' And many believed that equality of property was not even a good ideal in principle — inequality was a necessary spur to efforts and an enemy to indolence. 'Work and save!' advised famous economists, 'self-help and self-improvement' advised liberal politicians.

Generally there was widespread support for a very far-reaching agenda of economic freedom in all areas and, through the 1860s, no serious agenda for dealing with a host of social problems. Chambers of commerce pushed for free markets and free movement of labour within the Bund, tearing up old restrictions of all kinds. Bankers wanted the repeal of usury laws which generally established a maximum interest rate of 6%. They lobbied for uniform regulation of all kinds. Arguments among liberals were much more political than economic and there was huge overlap between liberal politicians and the business and financial communities.

The Junkers saw themselves as defenders of the old order and truths against: commercial wealth, propertyless urban labourers, extreme free markets, de-christianisation, and Jews. They saw their role in the army and agriculture as crucial and linked: in war they had to make the biggest sacrifices and their land was so they could bear the burden. Cf. the launch of the Prussian People's Association 9/61. One of the conservatives' main targets was the liberal campaign for relaxed usury laws: this was seen as an economic, social and political attack on the aristocracy and land. The PPA also mixed in some anti-semitism. Otto von Manteuffel summarised the Junker view of the connection between army, aristocracy and land: 'in the event of war landed property has to endure by far the greatest sacrifices and it must be able to bear them.'

Deep down most conservatives did not trust the instincts of the uneducated lower classes and agreed with liberals that were not fit to be given the vote. Wagener wrote in his memoirs that conservatives did not understand the social dynamics unleashed or their political effects: 'the great mass of the conservatives still had absolutely no understanding for questions of this sort... They were often satisfied merely to be able once more to drink their glass of wine and play their game of *omber* [cards] in peace... In those days I got to know many gentlemen who did not consider it worth the effort even to open the communications which they received from the lower house of the legislature, and who therefore had no idea of what was being debated.' Busch noted that in the small towns and country of the 1860s 'people were almost without exception indifferent to all politics, vegetating comfortably in their everyday existence without any idea whatever about the great questions of the day'.

Liberals also did not want to appeal to the lower classes. Georg von Vincke proudly stated in the Landtag: 'Never in my life have I sought the position of a representative. I have not issued a single declaration to my voters. I have never received from them an address expressing confidence or no confidence. I have always refused to permit it... I believe that with respect to my voters I am thus in a completely independent position.'

As the 1857 recession kicked in, Engels, in England, turned to his military studies and fox hunting to prepare for crisis: 'Chronic pressure is necessary for a while to heat the populations. The proletariat will then fight better'. It was a false hope. The recession passed without major

disturbances. Marx and Engels still did not believe that party organisation was worthwhile and thought universal male suffrage 'not a weapon but a snare'. When the crisis came with Prussia-Austria, Engels expected mutinies and a Berlin uprising. Lassalle organised the *German Workingmen's Society* in 1863. 'In my early youth I thought that I was meant to be a dramatic actor. But later I realised that I am destined to play in life itself the role which I wanted to portray on the stage.' He wrote to Sophie, 'I had the impression constantly that this is how it must have looked at the establishment of new religions.' Unlike Marx and Engels he campaigned for universal suffrage.

In 1855:

- total expenditure of Prussian government was 335M marks
- 91M (27%) went to army and navy
- 7M (2%) for public instruction
- 5M on penal institutions.

In 1865:

- total expenditure of Prussian government was 452M marks
- 133M (29%) went to army and navy
- 10M (2%) for public instruction
- 6M on penal institutions.
- Of the 10M on public instruction in 1871, 4M to universities (~15,000 in 22 German universities), 2M to secondaries, 4M to primaries.

An estimate of literacy in 1845 put the rate at 93% in Russia, 36% France, <10% in Prussia. Army recruit tests suggests this was right (though variable from 1% to a third in different parts). The 1871 census showed ~10% of males over age of 9 could not read or write (Hamerow p 276ff).

The democratic campaigner Franz Ziegler, 5 April 1866: 'Legitimacy, Caesarism, republic etc, all of that is intertwined with cotton, brandy, coal, and iron. A terrible time is coming for thinking men, but the bourgeoisie will wallow in rapture and bliss... People want to trade, earn, enjoy, and get along; they want not a state but a trading company.'

Bismarck-Gerlach in 1857: 'A passive planlessness which is content to be left alone cannot be maintained in the middle of Europe.'

Late Jan The Neuchâtel affair (cf. 9/56) sprang back to life. Gerlach, recovering from the death of his daughter, and cross with Manteuffel for cooperating with Napoleon, pushed FW to reignite the row. He was forced to back down in March. Barclay: there is no reference in FW's writings of an 1857 event much bigger than this, the financial crisis.

Feb Gladstone told Derby he wanted Palmerston out even if it meant a Tory government. He opposed Palmerston's economic and foreign policies.

End Feb *The Arrow* incident was debated in Parliament after coming into the news (via *The Times*) in January. Press and parliament were divided. Some argued strongly that Britain was in the right and connected free trade to Britain's imperial mission of civilising China. Others suspected it had been handled very poorly by the local decision makers and Britain's position was questionable. Disraeli scented victory and in the last night of debate on 2 March he challenged Palmerston to go to the country on a platform of 'No Reform! New Taxes! Canton blazing! Persia invaded'.

3 March British government was defeated over *The Arrow*. 4th Cabinet agreed there'd have to be an election. 5th announced dissolution of Parliament. Palmerston turned the election campaign into a judgement on his leadership and stressed that although he always wanted peace, it must be peace 'with honour, peace with safety, peace with the maintenance of our national rights, peace with

security to our fellow countrymen abroad'. Disraeli argued that, devoid of ideas, Palmerston was distracting the people with foreign politics: 'His external system is turbulent and aggressive that his rule at home may be tranquil and unassailed... Such arts and resources may suit the despotic ruler of a Continental State exhausted by revolutions, but they do not become a British Minister governing a country proud, free, and progressive, animated by glorious traditions, and aspiring to future excellence'. 'The general election of 1857 is unique in our history: the only election ever conducted as a simple plebiscite in favour of an individual' (AJP Taylor). Brown: Palmerston got most of the national media onside and the 'peace' campaigners like Cobden were overwhelmed. March Conference opened in Paris for settlement of disputes between Prussia and Switzerland. Napoleon told Bismarck that he was not interested in the left bank of the Rhine — it would simply create a coalition against France — and he was more interested in Italy. If it came to war with Austria over Italy then he wanted Prussian neutrality — and they shared, he claimed, an interest in undermining England's naval power. He asked Bismarck to speak to the King about this. Bismarck warned against making such an offer saying it was bound to be refused, it would leak, and 'you would get stuck in the mud'. Napoleon thanked him for his frankness and assurance of silence.

April Palmerston won the election. Over 50% of seats were uncontested (compared to over 55% in 1847). Hawkins: where there were contests they remained largely a result of intense local allegiances with 'national issues a gloss overlaying local politics'. Palmerston punted a new Reform Bill to the 1858 session and, ill, kept the new government modest in its initial plans. Conservatives again predicted Palmerston's government would soon crumble from divisions.

10 April Cowley-Clarendon: I spoke to Bismarck re the SH duchies. He said that detaching the duchies from Denmark and giving them to the Duke of Augustenburg would not be in Prussian interests and if it were to happen 'Prussia would be far more likely to find therein an enemy than a friend.' NB. This was his attitude in 1863.

29 April Leopold Gerlach-Bismarck: 'How can a man of your intellect sacrifice principle to one single man such as this LN [Napoleon]? He impresses me too, notably by his moderation, which in a *parvenu* merits double recognition, but he is and remains our natural enemy, and the fact that he is and will inevitably remain that will soon emerge.'

(Possibly around now Gerlach wrote: 'Just hold fast to the belief that Bonaparte is our only important adversary. Everything else is secondary... Believe me, Bonapartism is the arch enemy of Christianity, and that will become even more apparent this time than during its first appearance.')

May 1857 The Indian Mutiny began. Brown: news didn't arrive in London until late June. This diverted much of British attention from Europe. Ended June 1858.

May Memo to Manteuffel (OP p134): The princes of the lesser states are aware that their 'exaggerated sovereignty' is an 'evil for Germany... They know very well that Prussia's disunited situation is difficult enough in itself to bear and that the unnatural compulsion of the small intervening states to assert their independence has become a severe handicap for us and for German life and development. Only outside Germany are the means available to consolidate our position in the interest of Germany itself.' (Cf. Booklet 3/58.)

2 May Reply to Gerlach's 29/4. He denied that he had been fooled or impressed by Napoleon: 'The man does not impress me at all... **The ability to admire people is but moderately developed in me, and it is rather a defect in my vision that it is sharper to detect weaknesses than strengths...** I completely subordinate this [a principle to be applied to France and its Legitimacy] to my specifically Prussian patriotism. **France interests me only in so far as she reacts upon the condition of my country, and we can only deal politically with the France which exists, and this France we cannot exclude from the combinations...** As a romanticist I can shed a tear for his fate [Louis Philippe]. As a diplomat I would be his servant were I a Frenchman. **Being what I am, however, I count France only as a piece and to be sure an unavoidable one in the chess game of politics, no matter who happens to be her ruler. In this game it is my business to serve only my own king and my own country. I cannot feel it right, either in myself or others, that sympathies and antipathies with regard to foreign**

Powers and personalities should take precedence over my sense of duty in the foreign service of my country; such an idea contains the embryo of disloyalty to the ruler or to the country which we serve... Not even the king himself has the right to subordinate the interests of the country to his own feelings of love or hate towards foreigners.' Austria has an 'innate and natural interest ... in preventing Prussia from growing stronger and in lessening her influence in Germany'. She 'pursues this design zealously and cleverly', and has shown 'numerous and striking proofs of perfidy and untrustworthiness as a member of the same federation.' The German middle states in time of war look on us with fear and distrust 'and no angel can talk the distrust out of them so long as there exist maps at which they can cast a glance.'

'If we desire to go on living in such isolation, unheeded and occasionally bullied, I have of course no power to change it. If, however, we desire to come once more into consideration we cannot possibly attain that aim by building our foundation solely on the sand of the German Bund and calmly awaiting its collapse. As long as each of us is convinced that a part of the European chess board will remain closed against us by our own choice, or that we must tie up one arm on principle while everyone else employs both his to our disadvantage, this sentimentality of ours will be turned to account without fear and without thanks. I do not at all desire that we should conclude an alliance with France and conspire against Germany. But is it not more sensible to be on friendly than on indifferent terms with the French so long as they leave us in peace? All I want to do is to rid other people of the belief that they may adopt whomsoever they wish as brothers but that we would rather have our skin cut into strips then defend it with French aid. Courtesy is a cheap coin, and if it does no further service than that of ridding the others of the belief that they are always sure of France against us and we at all times in want of help against France, that is a great thing gained for the diplomacy of peace. If we despise this resource, and even act contrarily, then I do not know why we do not rather save or reduce the expenses of our diplomacy... What can I here or any other of our envoys effect if we create an impression of being friendless or of relying upon Austria's friendship?... Our prescription for every evil is to throw ourselves upon the neck of Count Buol and to pour out our brotherly hearts to him. When I was in Paris a certain count sued for a divorce after having caught his wife, formerly a circus-rider, *in flagrante delicto* for the twenty-fourth time; he was held up to the admiration of the court by his lawyer as an example of a gallant and indulgent husband, but his magnanimity is nought compared with ours in regards to Austria.

'Our domestic relations suffer scarcely more from their own defects than they do from the painful and universal feeling of our loss of reputation abroad and the totally passive part played by our policy. We are a vain nation. We feel hurt directly we cannot swagger, and much, even in regard to our pockets, is forgiven and permitted a government which gives us importance abroad... We are the best natured and most harmless of politicians and yet no one in reality trusts us. We are regarded as unsafe allies and harmless foes, precisely as if we behaved like Austria in foreign affairs and were as rotten at home... To go on in this way we really do not require the whole apparatus of our diplomacy...

'You tell me that the man [Napoleon] is our natural enemy and that it will soon be proved he is so and must remain so. I could dispute this, or say with equal Justice: "Austria, England are our enemies and that they are so has long ago been proved..." ... I consider it expedient ... to go on allowing people to believe ... that the tension with regard to France is not an organic defect, an innate weakness of our nature, upon which everyone else can speculate with safety.'

Gall: Gerlach replied on 6/5: 'My principle is and remains the struggle against revolution. You will not persuade Bonaparte that he is not on the side of revolution. Nor does he wish to be anywhere

else for that is what gives him his decisive advantages... But if my principle, like that of opposition to revolution, is right ... it must always be adhered to in practice as well.'

In a followup letter on 11th, Bismarck added: 'So far as concerns foreign countries I have, throughout my life, had a sympathy for England only and her inhabitants, and I am, in certain hours not yet free from it. But the people there will not let us love them, and as soon as it were proved to me that it was in the interests of a sound and well-thought out Prussian policy I would, with the same satisfaction, see our troops fire on French, Russians, English, or Austrians.'

21 May Gerlach: Your ideas are right in many details 'but, if you will forgive me, it lacks the head and tail of policy, namely principle and objective'. Napoleon is committed to Revolution. In a triple alliance with Russia and France, Prussia would be the weakest therefore Prussia would unavoidably have to help Napoleon, i.e the advance of Revolution. 'Revolutionary absolutism is by its very nature out to conquer since it can only sustain itself at home when the same conditions prevail all around it.'

In a further letter on 30th, Bismarck added that the difference lay 'in the foliage and not in the root': **'In replying to your last two letters I labour under a sense of the imperfection of human expression, especially in writing. Every attempt to make ourselves clear engenders fresh misunderstandings.** It is not given us to commit to paper or to put into words our whole selves, and we cannot make others receive from the fragments which we bring forth the same sensations as they gave ourselves. This arises partly from the inferiority of speech compared to thought, partly because the external facts to which we refer seldom present themselves to two persons in the same light...

'The principle of the battle against the Revolution I acknowledge to be mine also, but I do not take it to be correct to view Napoleon as the only representative of the Revolution, or even as its representative *par excellence*, and **I do not believe it is possible to carry out principle in politics as something whose remotest consequences break through every other consideration and which forms to a certain extent the only trump suit in the game, the lowest card of which still beats the highest of every other suit.**

'How many entities are there left in the political world today that have not their roots in revolutionary soil?... England [has] her foot today consciously planted on the glorious revolution of 1688... **Even for that territory which the German princes of today have won ... no perfectly legitimate title of possession can be shown and in our own political life we cannot avoid the use of revolutionary supports.** Many of the conditions referred to have become naturalised by antiquity and we have accustomed ourselves to them... [T]he principles of the American and English revolutions were, independently of the measure of bloodshed and the religious disturbances that shaped themselves differently according to the national character, pretty much the same as those which in France caused an interruption in the continuity of the law... [We see now] the open acknowledgement and propagation of the fundamental ideas of the Revolution on the part of the English government... What then is there peculiar to Napoleon III and the *French* revolution generally?... **The Revolution is much older than the Bonapartes and much broader in its foundations than France. If one wants to attribute to it a terrestrial origin, such origin must not be sought in France but rather in England, if not still earlier in Germany or in Rome...** The impulse to conquest is no less an attribute of England, North America, Russia, and other countries than of Napoleonic France and as soon as power and opportunity are at hand moderation and love of justice have a hard task in keeping even the most legitimate monarchy within bounds. The impulse in question does not seem to dominate Napoleon III as an instinct... He did not call the revolutionary conditions of the country into

existence, nor did he gain his sovereignty by opposition to a lawfully constituted authority; he fished it up as unclaimed property out of the whirlpool of anarchy. If he were now to lay it down again, he would greatly embarrass Europe, which would more or less unanimously beg him to take it up again...

'We must ... go through with the reality or the appearance of closer relations with France. Only by this means can we bring Austria so far on the road to reason and renunciation of its extravagant Schwarzenberg ambition as to seek an understanding with us ... and only by this means can we stop the further development of direct relations between the German middle states and France. England too will begin to recognise how important an alliance with Prussia is when she begins to fear that she may lose it in favour of France... A visit from Napoleon would ... render our voice more effective than it is now. They [the German states] will become considerate and even affectionate to us in precise proportion to their fear of us. Confidence in us they will never have. Every glance at the map robs them of that. They know that their interests and particular desires stand in the way of the general direction of Prussian policy... Fear, if we but knew how to inspire it, would place the whole Bund at our disposal. That fear would be inspired by ostensible tokens of our good relations with France.'

Somewhere in this letter he makes the striking comment: **'We cannot make an alliance with France without a certain degree of meanness, but in the Middle Ages very admirable people – even German princes – used a drain to make their escape, rather than be beaten and strangled.'** (Quoted in AJPT) Gall quotes similarly but says this sentence was in a letter to Leopold Gerlach 19-20/12/53.

In Memoirs he concludes the chapter saying that after a further reply from Gerlach he did not continue this correspondence.

OP (p98): He was set on coercion, not war — coercion by threat followed by negotiated settlement, or coercion by violence and a settlement from the fortunes of war. The former was less dangerous and preferable, the latter more dangerous but given Austria's nature and the dynamics in Germany probably more likely.

Gall: a few days after his last Gerlach letter he wrote to Manteuffel making a similar point: 'Bonapartism is a consequence not the creator of revolution.' Gall: everyone had to re-evaluate after Crimea. The prospects of Bismarck taking a leading role were 'never dimmer' than summer 1857 and they remained dim.

19 June (OP) Bismarck talked with Rechberg.

24 June Malet-Clarendon: Bismarck said to me re the SH duchies: 'I said the other day to Count Rechberg that we were like two cowards marching on a battery, each anxiously watching [for] a sign of hesitation in the other, to justify his own turning back.'

27 June Massacre at Cawnpore. Interestingly Disraeli discounted the news and tried to downplay the need for reprisals (as he did with Bulgaria 20 years later). He wrote: 'I for one protest against taking Nana Sahib as a model for the conduct of the British soldier. I protest against meeting atrocities by atrocities. I have heard things said and seen things written of late which would make me almost suppose that the religious opinions of the people of England had undergone some sudden change, and that, instead of bowing before the name of Jesus we were preparing to revive the worship of Moloch.'

29 June FW letter: 'The revolution is stalking the world once more. May God have mercy!' He was in Marienbad where the doctors had sent him. His health had been declining. He was obese. He drank too much. His memory was failing.

13 July FW and FJ met in Vienna. At Pillnitz on the way back from Vienna, **FW suffered a stroke**. Although he recovered he complained to Leopold at the end of July of his loss of energy and memory.

27 July Bismarck noticed the King was ill during a parade and he sensed 'his diminished flow of thought'.

Aug Tsar and Napoleon met at Stuttgart.

17 August While hunting in Sweden he fell over a rock and severely injured his shin 'and unfortunately I neglected it in order to go elk hunting'. Cf. recurrence of this injury in St P. summer 1859 with near fatal consequences.

Sep Reports of recapture of Delhi and relief of Lucknow helped Palmerston.

September The stock market had declined steadily from summer 1856, now fell precipitously. Hit bottom November, and gradually started recovering. Wholesale prices fell in 1858 then recovered. Foreign trade of the *Zollverein* fell in 1858 and 1859 then rose 1860. 1858-60 formation of new joint stock companies nearly stopped.

Oct Palmerston drew up a new Reform Bill — moderate, kept borough franchise at £10, lowered county suffrage to £20, gave vote to officers of Army and Navy, lawyers, doctors, clergy, clerks of manufacturers etc.

Oct-Nov British economy suffered from the instability caused by the mutiny. America's economy was suffering and there was a banking crisis that cascaded to London. Domestic banks were shaky and the Bank of England couldn't bail them all out. Expenses for India were mounting. Discussions over the East India Company, decided 25/11 that a new government of India would be created to replace its rule.

6 October FW condition worsened by trip on in which he sat in the same train carriage as the Tsar who was a very heavy smoker, and FW found tobacco 'as intolerable as the smell of sealing wax' (and the fact that the King had to have his letters sealed outside his presence 'had a very serious side to it'). **King fell seriously ill.**

7 Oct Leopold diary: 'If this immensely gifted man dies or deteriorates, how much will end with him? *Stände*, the United Diet, the House of Lords, the Supreme Church Council, Sanssoucci and its buildings, artists, friendships, humour, and above all that truly Christian feeling of one's own sinful nature.'

19 October With the prospect of Wilhelm imminently becoming king, he had a long walk with Bismarck. They discussed whether he should accept the constitution unaltered or demand its revision. Bismarck advised against. There was 'no urgent need' to touch the constitution and focus should be on improving Prussia's position viz the German states and Europe. When he returned to Sans-Souci, he found Edwin Manteuffel 'agitated' about his walk and he suggested Bismarck return to his post. He replied: 'I am much more necessary here.'

23 Oct FW signed a document giving Wilhelm limited authority to govern for 3 months, renewed a few times until October 1858.

29 Oct Moltke appointed Chief of the General Staff, provisional at first, partly because Wilhelm was acting on behalf of his brother, permanent from 18 Sep 1858. He had 64 men. He reorganised them into 4 geographic areas and created a Railway Department and a Military History Department. Moltke was interested in railways. He had been on the board of a railway company in the 1840s and put his own assets into company stock.

Showalter: railway building in 1850s was focused mainly on commercial factors, not military. Even the eastern railway built at government expense to the Russian border was done for economic reasons and its routing and infrastructure were not 'directly' influenced by military considerations. Dec Palmerston forced to call an emergency session of Parliament to deal with banking/financial crisis, to approve a bill of indemnity authorising the Governor of the Bank of England to issue extra banknotes.

19 Dec Bismarck to Leopold Gerlach: he complained that Edwin Manteuffel 'treated me as a doubtful political intriguer who had to be got out of Berlin as soon as possible.'

OP: In one of these 1857 letters to Gerlach he argued that since the 1832 Reform Act, British policy rested on shifting parliamentary majorities and she could not be relied on, though Britain was an 'unnatural enemy' given her interests are not in conflict, and once the Austro-British coalition passed she could become a 'natural ally' for Prussia (GW, XIV, 436,440,468).

1858

A Royal Commission was established under John Peel to investigate the performance of the UK armed forces in the Crimea. It reported 1862. Most of its recommendations were not adopted.

'The acquisitive and reasoning classes sought in fact to gain control of the power of the state through the right of decision over the budget and the term of military service.' Jacob Burckhardt, 1870s, re the constitutional conflict that began in 1858.

'The stagnation, the utter paralysis of business in the years 1848, 1849, and 1850 had ended after the fall of the French republic. The totally depleted warehouses had to be filled again, and when at the same time the effects of the introduction of California gold and of the low discount rate made themselves felt by way of England, there gradually developed a spirit of enterprise more powerful than any experienced in Germany up to that time. And although now the magnificent wave of expansion has to be paid for with a business depression, its appearance was so beautiful that we can never forget it. The steamboat traffic on the rivers, the shipment of goods on the railroads, the construction of ships and machinery grew at an extraordinary rate. Railroads and machine shops, coal mines and iron foundries, spinners and rolling mills seemed to spring out of the ground ... and smokestacks sprouted from the earth like mushrooms.' Max Wirth, liberal economist, looking back in 1858.

Jan Landtag, worried about the crash of previous autumn, approved a three-month suspension of restrictions on interest rate. Cf Feb 1859.

14 Jan Orsini, an Italian republican, and a gang tried to assassinate Napoleon. As he rode with his wife in a carriage to the theatre, a gang threw bombs, killed bystanders, he was lucky to survive. The terrorists had lived in London and the bombs made in Britain. The French government asked for assurances that Britain would take steps not to allow a repeat.

23/1 Palmerston circulated a note: across Europe we are suspected of harbouring terrorists and revolutionaries to cause havoc everywhere, while we hide behind constitutional arguments to the effect that we cannot stop such plotters operating here; while some of the argument is nonsense, it's widely believed and partly fair. He proposed that the government was to have the right for the next five years to expel by order of the Secretary of State any foreigner suspected of plotting against a foreign power or its ruler, the expulsion subject to secret Parliamentary scrutiny. France will be asked to 'leave off' sending disruptive elements in French society to Britain and should be encouraged to send them to the United States instead, 'the only difference being that the longer passage would be a little more expensive'.

Cabinet was mainly opposed to his measures. With previous Alien Acts the object had been protection of the UK government, never foreign governments. A compromise was suggested to Parliament. Palmerston tried to get agreement with Derby on a Conspiracy to Murder Bill, introduced on 8/2. In the meantime, French newspaper reports suggesting hostility to Britain wound up MPs and the government was criticised for its handling of the affair. It lost a vote in February. Palmerston wrote that after winning a vote by 145, many MPs left London for the weekend and he'd been ambushed! (Brown p411) (Evans: one of Orsini's accomplices was sent to Devil's Island from which he escaped and ended up in General Custer's 7th Cavalry where he somehow managed to survive the massacre at Little Big Horn!)

25 Jan The Prussian Crown Prince married Princess Victoria in London.

Feb The Crown Princess arrived in Berlin. Bismarck soon convinced that she was hostile to him. Memoirs: after the 1866 war the two sat next to each other and she said 'in a half-jesting tone' that he was ambitious to be a King or 'at least president of a republic'.

Feb The War Ministry presented ideas for army reform to Wilhelm. Gordon Craig (GC): Neither Wilhelm nor liberals were looking for a conflict over the army at the start of his reign. Wilhelm had first asked for ideas in October 1857 before he was Regent.

12 Feb Palmerston introduced the India Bill to abolish the 'double government' of the East India Company and the Governor General. By now, Palmerston was engulfed in many problems: response to France, India, radicals opposing him viz domestic Reform and a clampdown on revolutionaries in London, he'd enraged people by promoting Clanricarde, rumoured to be at the suggestion of his wife. (When Lord Lansdowne heard of the appointment he asked Palmerston 'if he was out of his mind'. Disraeli to Lady Londonderry: 'The appointment has greatly injured the Government – but I hear that everything was tried and everybody sounded before it was decided on.... When all failed, Lady Palmerston rallied, and made a successful charge, and carried her protégé. There is nothing like female friendship – the only thing worth having.'))

20 Feb After losing the vote on the Conspiracy to Murder Bill the previous night, the Cabinet did not want to fight on as a government and Parliament went to the Queen and resigned, **Derby took over as PM, Disraeli as Chancellor** (this government fell June 1859). (Cobden and Bright, Gladstone, Russell, all were somewhat hostile to Palmerston but he kept control of the Liberals.) In spring, Parliament considering an India Bill, Palmerston and other liberals opposed, but Russell and others wary that defeating Derby might bring Palmerston back. A lot of clandestine factionalism and personality-driven politicking.

March 1858 Bismarck's 100 page 'Booklet': Austria will manoeuvre Berlin into having to choose between violation of the Bund constitution or surrender of Prussian independence. Prussia will have to choose the former and Austria will force a war. (OP: it's 'highly unlikely' Bismarck actually believed this.) What should Prussia do? Mobilise the middle states, economic interests and nationalism to counter Austria. Prussia's 'needs and course of development' are 'homogenous with those of the rest of the German population'. Instead of Bund legislation, Prussia could give Germans what they wanted — viz commercial rules, customs, railways etc — on the model of the Zollverein. **'There is nothing more German than the development of Prussia's particularist interests as properly understood'**. He was thinking about some sort of Parliament to go with the renewal of the Zollverein in 1865. (Cf. similar idea to Auerswald, 11/60.)

OP (p135): In May 1857 he had written that Prussia had to improve her position via European and German combinations. Now he argued for looking *inside* Germany. This was a new argument for Bismarck who in the 1850s had consistently opposed (and often mocked) those who appealed to the 'German' interest. By now he had conceived 'a revolutionary plan for Prussian expansion, the execution of which would one day startle Germany' (OP) — the exploitation of the moral and material power of nationalism. His core aim was the same — the furtherance of Prussia's, and the Prussian monarchy's, interests. Neither Gall nor Pflanze think this got much serious reading from Wilhelm, any more than the *Prachtbereit* memo of 1856. When he talked to Wilhelm about these ideas in the summer he got nowhere and the new government chose a different path from October.

He argued that while opinions may differ as to whether a close alliance with Austria is desirable, there could be no doubt that Prussia could not rely on feelings of gratitude or feelings of any kind. 'Her interests constrain her [Austria] to fight against and detract from Prussia's prestige and influence in Germany to the best of her ability, but in case of war or any of the multifarious dangers by which Austria is surrounded becoming imminent, she desires to be able to count upon the fullest support on the part of Prussia's armed forces. In this twin necessity lies Prussia's only possibility of coming to a clear and satisfactory arrangement with the southern German Great Power; she must give Vienna plainly to understand that her support, at a moment of peril to the Empire, will be languid and even doubtful, unless Austria shall observe greater

moderation in her German policy, and make terms with Prussia’. Prussia must face that she is being ‘tricked and fooled in every direction’ by Austria and emancipate relations from ‘the conventional formula of disingenuous expressions of good will and reestablish them upon the firm basis of respective interests’. Prussia should greatly limit her cooperation in the Bund to nothing more than the barest minimum and make clear there would be no customs union with Austria. Other German states will become easier to deal with ‘when they shall have recognised that Prussia is resolved to bear, in every respect, with the inconveniences of an isolated position, rather than allow them to dictate laws to her for the regulation of her own behaviour and interests.’

OP (p150): In a 1858 letter to Below-Hohendorf, he first discussed the possibility that Prussia may be forced to dissolve the Zollverein in 1865 when it was due for renewal. It would, he argued, then be necessary ‘to adopt one of the features of the project of 1849 by establishing a kind of customs parliament with provision for *itio in partes*, if the others demand it’. (*itio in partes*, *going into parts*, was a reference to a procedure in the Holy Roman Empire.) It would give to German taxpayers an institution to counteract the particularism of the lesser states. Economic interests could be rallied behind Prussia’s interests. Further, ‘Parliament and the press could become the most powerful aids for our foreign policy.’

March Lord Aberdeen-Guizot: There’s been a very rapid change in public opinion, ‘the Emperor has become universally unpopular’ and people look at France with alarm.

1 March Derby in Lords: ‘My Lords, in politics, as in everything else, the same course must be pursued – constant progress, improving upon the old system, adapting our institutions to the altered purpose they are intended to serve, and by judicious changes meeting the demands of society.’

14 March to Manteuffel: ‘My period of office here, nearly seven years of it, has ... been one continuous struggle against encroachments of all kinds, against the incessant attempts that have been made to exploit the Confederation as an instrument for the exaltation of Austria and the diminution of Prussia.’

April Disraeli presented his budget. He didn’t have much room for manoeuvre. But after this he had to prepare his next budget and although he didn’t give it, the issue is important. **In 1858 ironclad ships suddenly presented a huge challenge to all navies**. Suddenly Britain’s dominance since Trafalgar was potentially disrupted. *Warrior*, Britain’s first ironclad, was launched in 1860 but the decision to build it was 1858. These calculations affected Disraeli’s budget. Later in the year in November, Disraeli argued that the navy and some officials were exaggerating the money needed. Derby would always listen to reason but told Disraeli that economy could not come ‘at the sacrifice of great national objects’. He wanted to use a loan and treat the old wooden navy as if it had been wiped out — if your mansion were destroyed by a fire, you would not try to pay for the whole lot out of current income but would charge the capital sum by way of a loan against the estate. Blake: Disraeli’s approach to the question was blinkered and wrong.

25 June (JS) Wilhelm asked Roon for a plan for army reform.

July Napoleon secretly met with Cavour at Plombières to plot the unification of Italy. They agreed on how to provoke Austria while keeping Britain and Russia out. In return for helping Piedmont, Napoleon would get Nice and Savoy.

July Loftus-Malmesbury, memo on British commercial policy. The *Zollverein* is industrialising fast. Railways are spreading. There will be growing competition for trade in the East. Davis: British free trade changed tone after the Crimean War. The first real expression was initiatives re sea and river dues and the issue of transit.

21 July (JS: 18/7) **Roon delivered a plan for the reform of the *Landwehr* and an extension of military service from two to three years**.

OP (p166): Under the reforms of 1814-15 Prussian citizens had to serve three years in the regular army then two in the reserve and 14 years in the militia (*Landwehr*). Scharnhorst intended to develop the idea of a citizen’s army motivated by patriotism to replace the mercenary army of the

18th century. The concept of the army as a civilian force became as crucial to the liberals as the concept of the *Rechtstaat* and constitutionalism.

The size of the army had not kept pace with the growing population because of the restricted military budget. Only half the eligible youths were drafted. The usual term of service in the line had come to be two years; increased to three in 1856, reduced to 2.5 in practice. The reserve and *Landwehr* received only a few weeks training. Instead of being an extension of the regular army, the *Landwehr* had become almost a separate organisation and most of its officers had only 1 year of military training. Gall: the middle classes found it increasingly burdensome and it was ever harder to find suitable candidates as *Landwehr* officers.

Wilhelm wanted to change the system. He thought that three years training for infantry and four years for other branches were necessary. He wanted to raise the number of draftees, lengthen service, and increase service in the reserve. This would double the size of the army. And he wanted to change the *Landwehr*, the sorry sight of which he had disliked watching on military parades. He wanted it separated from the regular army and relegated to the rear.

Roon and Wilhelm disliked the *Landwehr* for precisely the reasons the liberals liked it. Roon described the *Landwehr* as a 'politically false institution'. Roon hated the idea that part of the army was 'civilians in uniform' therefore the King had to consider public opinion when considering the use of the army. (FWIV had said, 'I know that my army is the condition for the existence of my throat.') They did not (unlike some absolutists of previous decades) want to drop universal conscription — they wanted to extend the period of it to make it more effective in imbuing conscripts with the right ideas. The plan would require an increase in taxes of ~25%. When these ideas became known, the middle classes rightly feared the Junkers were trying to strengthen their own position.

It was *not* primarily a military-technical issue. In April 1862 a board of 15 generals appointed by Wilhelm, including Moltke, agreed that 2.5 years was enough. Under Wilhelm II, it was changed back to two years.

GC: Roon's later claim that he was motivated just by technical issues, not politics, is incompatible with his memo but he probably was mainly driven by military issues (p140). Bonin, the War Minister, thought Roon's plan was politically explosive but did not fight directly, he procrastinated and tried to persuade Wilhelm not to listen. Bonin's delays 'irritated Wilhelm profoundly'. After the Italian War, Bonin's enemies were strengthened, particularly Edwin von Manteuffel — chief of the military cabinet (1857-65), cousin of the minister-president — who also fought Bonin's insistence on the war ministry's involvement in military affairs per the Constitution.

Manteuffel was 'the most interesting and the most controversial' (GC) of 19th Century political generals in Germany. He was 'an incurable romantic', 'a gifted military administrator, a diplomatist of more than ordinary competence, and a field commander who was to prove himself' in 1866 and 1870. He was held back by 'the distrust caused by his intense personal vanity and his burning ambition.' Even admirers were amused/repelled by his attempts to model himself on Epaminondas and Hannibal. Bismarck, often irritated by him, once referred to him as 'a fanatical corporal'. He thought granting a constitution had been a catastrophe. He generally agreed with Roon about ends and he helped persuade Wilhelm to make Moltke chief of the General Staff with wide powers. As chief of the military cabinet, he had a 'curiously dual position' (GC) — he was both head of the Division of Personnel in the War Ministry and chief of the bureau which handled Wilhelm's military correspondence. This gave him a lot of scope to keep information from the War Minister and therefore Parliament. He also tried, with incomplete success, to remove all matters of personnel from the Ministry's jurisdiction. (p224). See 9/1859.

July Memoirs: An attempt was made to get the Queen to get the King's signature to a letter taking back control of government, with government then under control of the Queen and 'gentlemen of the Court'. Bismarck refused to participate saying it would be 'government by harem'. Bismarck told Wilhelm about it and advised him to summon Manteuffel who 'was at his own estate awaiting the result of the plan, with which he was acquainted.'

August First Atlantic cable from Newfoundland to Ireland, a joint effort by the USS Niagara and HMS Agamemnon. In New York, hundreds of thousands of people celebrated. 'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill towards men' read the first electric message between London and New York. It didn't last long and new cables were laid in 1865-6.

Sep *The Congress of German Economists* founded to argue for free trade and free enterprise. Local chambers of commerce started discussing common problems in 1858 and in 1860 formed the *Prussian Commercial Association (Handelstag)*. Hamerow (p340): the Congress was more important than the *Nationalverein* or other similar pressure groups. It mobilised the true intellectual and business elite. It generally supported political liberalism and small German unification (though it claimed impartiality viz Prussia v Austria). Cf. 13 May 1861.

7 October Wilhelm became regent. He had supported Radowitz's plan, but opposed Olmütz. He had shared his brother's enthusiasm for the ill-fated Erfurt Union. 'Whoever wants to govern Germany must conquer it first. Whether the time for this unification has come, God alone knows; but that Prussia is destined to stand at the summit of Germany is an underlying fact of our history. But when and how? That is the question,' he had written in May 1849. In the 1850s he wanted the *Zollverein* and legislation — moral, not military, conquests — to lead Prussian policy. He deplored the military state of Germany and was determined on military reforms. He supported Prussia's right of parity in the Bund. He wanted the Bund's forces in wartime to have two commands, Prussian and Austrian.

He dismissed the unpopular Interior Minister, Westphalen, on 8 Oct.

26 Oct He swore an oath to uphold the constitution against the advice of FW and hardliners.

Nov Palmerston, who had been forced out partly because of perception he was too pro-French, visited Napoleon, criticised by British press.

Nov Throughout November a committee of the UK Cabinet held repeated meetings to draft a Reform Bill for the next session. Tortuous discussions. Presented in Feb.

6 Nov 1858 Wilhelm dismissed **Otto Manteuffel**, announced a new ministry and 'New Era' with more liberal-inclined ministers (JS: Manteuffel resigned 'to give the Regent a free hand', others say dismissed). **Prince Karl Anton of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen** replaced Manteuffel as **Minister President**, **von Schleinitz** became **Foreign Minister**, **Bonin** became **war Minister**. Bethmann Hollweg became culture minister. Von Auerswald became minister without portfolio. Pourtalès (Bethmann's son-in-law) went to Paris in January, Goltz to Constantinople, Usedom to Frankfurt. The new circle drew heavily from the *Wochenblattpartei* (which the talented, but hated by Bismarck, Goltz belonged to). The new ministers were liberal conservatives who opposed a reactionary approach and wanted to keep the constitution. Many saw Britain as a model for domestic development. Gall: they wanted reform in the British direction, alliance with the right of liberalism, a small Germany led by Prussia without Austria. (Bismarck told Wilhelm the new cabinet did not contain 'a single individual of statesmanlike calibre'!)

OP: The new Cabinet decided on rapprochement with Austria and Britain, and even Gerlach approved because of fears of France, so it was natural for them to move Bismarck from Frankfurt.

8 Nov Speech from Throne announcing a new program. 'Prussia must make moral conquests in Germany by wise legislation at home, by accentuating every ethical element and by seizing upon unifying factors such as the Customs Union, though this will need to be reformed. The world must know that Prussia is everywhere prepared to protect the law. A firm, consistent and if necessary resolute conduct of policy, coupled with wisdom and circumspection, must earn Prussia the political respect and give it the position of power that it is not able to achieve by its material might alone.' Gall: People largely overlooked those passages that reflected the views of Wilhelm. 'Above all I would warn against the empty cliché that the government must let itself be pushed farther and farther in the direction of developing liberal ideas because otherwise these will force their own way through... If all its actions bespeak truth, lawfulness and consistency, then a government is strong because it has a clear conscience and that gives one the right robustly to withstand all evil.' Bismarck noticed these qualifications and hoped they were reliable signals.

12 Nov EF: He was toying with shifting career to Parliament. To sister Malle: 'After 30 years it matters nothing to me whether I play the diplomat or the Landjunker and up to now the prospect of a brisk, honest fight, without official handcuffs ... has had as much attraction for me as a continued regime of truffles, telegrams and grand crosses.'

Nov 1858 Landtag elections. KL: turnout was much higher than the 1/6 of 1855. The conservatives declined from 181 to 47 (per Gall – some say 57); liberals led by von Vincke grew from 48 to 151. But the liberals were moderate and were not pushing a radical agenda, they wanted cooperation with the new regime. 'The radical tradition was nearly extinct' and 'for the first time in Prussian constitutional history, monarch, cabinet, chamber, and people appeared united' (OP). The only opposition was from the tougher conservatives. But even before the election Wilhelm was suspicious — 'What have I done to merit praise from that crowd?' Gerlach and Wagener both lost their seats. Ludwig Gerlach wrote in his diary some time after this, 'A look at my desolate life. The blossoms have all vanished, how many of them without fruit! No Frederick William IV anymore, ... no party. All prospects are gloomy in the state and even more so in the church.'

Hamerow (p374): conservatives declined from 236 to 57; liberals grew from 57 to 210.

Feuchtwanger: conservatives declined from 'about 200 to 60'; liberals grew from '60 to about 210'.

4 Dec (JS) At Roon's first audience with Wilhelm to discuss his possible appointment as Minister for War, he urged him to appoint Bismarck as Minister President. (Surely it cannot have been a month between Wilhelm dismissing Manteuffel and talking to Roon?)

OP: Bismarck conceived his plan to exploit German nationalism over 1858/9. Conditions seemed ripe. Wilhelm wanted to reconcile the Crown with subjects. There was enthusiasm for the 'new era'. The *Nationalverein* seemed willing to act as a bridge between the monarchy and nation. But the new era was an illusion. Wilhelm's main three advisers were Alvensleben, Edwin von Manteuffel, and Roon. Liberal ministers never had control. (Pflanze Vol 1.p.164 ff.)

Memoirs. Bismarck says Wilhelm had not been well prepared for the role but took his duties very seriously and read all the papers, studied, sacrificed other pleasures to focus on his job. His only recreation was a box at the theatre and even there Bismarck would bring him papers and discuss affairs. He was never cross even when woken in the middle of the night. (Steinberg writes that a legacy of Frederick the Great was that Prussian kings thought they had to do their homework diligently.) He had good common sense but stuck too much to 'princely, military and local traditions'. Wilhelm was not vain and 'no one would have dared to flatter him to his face.' But Augusta — whatever I wanted to do, she pushed for the opposite the whole time. 'I found no work more disagreeable and difficult than the provision of the necessary supply of phrases for speeches from the throne and similar utterances.' **'He was one of those figures, princely alike in soul and body, whose qualities belong more to the heart than the understanding.'** (2p303ff)

In his Memoirs (1p41) he wrote: 'I was obliged to recognise in Queen Augusta an opponent who put both my ability to do what I considered my duty and my nerve to the severest test they ever experienced' and mentioned three particular episodes — the four years of constitutional conflict, the Austrian War, and the *Kulturkampf*. She would set out at the breakfast table certain things for Wilhelm to read, often at Schleinitz's bidding. If Bismarck remarked on this to Wilhelm, he refused to listen. The Queen's behaviour also drove Alvensleben mad — her behaviour would sometimes 'put him at times into a state of excitement to which he gave vent in words that I do not want to repeat, but that expressed all the indignation of a patriotic soldier over ladies playing at politics in language that very nearly came within the penal statutes.'

1859

Thomas Aveling devised the first self-propelling steam traction engine enabling threshing and other machines to be moved and operated using steam power. All sorts of new agricultural machinery took off over the next decades.

On the Origin of Species, Darwin. Species had evolved.

Showalter: 1859 'arguably a more significant watershed in European history than 1848' — French victory strengthened its primacy and brought it Nice and Savoy, Austria seriously weakened in Italy, Austria sought closer relations with France and helped Napoleon's adventure in Mexico.

GC: In 1859 Bonin gave Moltke the right to report directly to the King rather than through the War Minister.

January (Brown; another book ?? says 30 June, it makes more sense in Jan than June) Palmerston-Granville: 'I am very Austrian north of the Alps but very anti-Austrian south of the Alps... the Austrians have no business in Italy and they are a public nuisance there. They govern their own provinces ill and are the props and encouragers of bad government in all the other states of the peninsula... I should therefore rejoice and feel relieved if Italy up to the Tyrol were freed from Austrian domination and military occupation.' However he also feared a weakening of Austria in central Europe that might tempt Russia and Hungary to expand and lead to a 'dismemberment' of Austria.

At a ball in Jan, Bismarck heard gossip he would be moved to St Petersburg.

1 Jan (OP) At a reception Napoleon shocked the Austrian Ambassador by saying, 'I regret that our relations are not as good as I wished, but please report to Vienna that my personal feelings toward the Kaiser are unchanged.'

9 Jan (Steinberg) Roon thought Bonin would try to drop Roon's plan.

11 Jan (Steinberg) Roon was opposed by the new War Minister, Bonin, who disliked his plan and 'babbled on impatiently like a small boy' after admitting he still had not read Roon's paper. 2 days later Bonin told the Cabinet that Roon would lead a commission to explore the ideas but Roon was sceptical of progress.

26 Jan Bismarck asked Wilhelm not to send him to St Petersburg and advised that appointing Usedom would cause problems (he was 'more of a gossiping courtier than a statesman' and his wife would 'embarrass us'). The King said — you should take this is a sign of my confidence in you. Memoirs — my advice was not taken and Usedom was a disaster: he boasted of underground connexions and his office in Italy was manned by an Austrian spy. (See row with the King in Feb 1869.)

Bismarck: 'Your Royal Highness has not a single statesmanlike intellect in the whole ministry... [Bonin] cannot keep a drawer in order, never mind a ministry. And Schleinitz is a courtier but no statesman.'

The king: 'Do you take me for a sluggard? I will be my own Foreign Minister and Minister of War.'

Bismarck: 'At the present day the most capable provincial president cannot administer his district without an intelligent district secretary and will always rely upon such a one. The Prussian monarchy requires the analogue in a much higher degree. Without intelligent ministers your Royal Highness will find no satisfaction in the result.'

27 Jan Wilhelm II born in Berlin.

29 Jan Bismarck appointed ambassador to Russia, left Frankfurt 6 March for Berlin where he stayed until 23rd. He referred to it as 'honourable exile'.

29 Jan Franco-Piedmontese treaty: codified discussions between Napoleon and Cavour in July 1858. In the event of an Austria-Piedmont war with Austria the aggressor, France would support Piedmont and create a Kingdom of Upper Italy under the House of Savoy. OP: Bismarck was the only major figure to predict this move by Napoleon and he advocated that Prussia use the moment to seize North Germany.

Feb Landtag referred to the Cabinet a petition requesting that 'every legal limitation of the interest rate in the lending of money and other forms of capital be repealed as soon as possible'. Cf. Jan 1860.

2 Feb Palmertson-Cowley: 'If [Austria] were dismembered, France and Russia would shake hands across Germany and the independence of Europe would be gone. But France ought to evacuate the Roman states'.

4 Feb Napoleon pamphlet on Italy published. He would liberate Italy and reduce the power of the Habsburg Empire. This 'set of tremors' put Bismarck in power (Steinberg).

20 Feb (JS) He wrote to Leopold Gerlach: 'In foreign affairs I have nothing to write and feel depressed. When, as now in Berlin there are neither pre-nor post-considerations, neither plans nor signs of a stirring of the will, so the awareness of an entirely purposeless and planless employment lowers the spirits. I do nothing more than what I am directly ordered to do and let things simply slide.'

25 Feb Palmerston challenged the government to state its policy on Italy. Disraeli replied that they had sent Cowley to Vienna to seek a compromise.

28 Feb *The Times* published details of the imminent Reform bill and a leader approved them. (Blake: the Bill was introduced on 28th and leak was the day before.)

Derby had been working on it since summer 1858, looking for a modest measure that he could keep the Tories united behind, with intense ministerial negotiations through the winter. He was furious about the leak, suspected Disraeli, Disraeli denied it. Disraeli presented the plan to Parliament later that day. Weeks of debate followed. Russell and others opposed it, some radicals, some ultra Tories. Derby stuck to his guns: it's a modest measure the country can unite behind and it won't be amended by either extreme.

The Tory Reform Bill depressed Gerlach who wrote, 'What difficult times these are. The wretched ministry, the reawakened [national] endeavours in Germany, and the confused reforms in Austria... The turn with the reform bill in England has made such an impression on me that I dreamed about it all night. In old England with a Tory ministry there is no resistance against advancing democracy, that is, against advancing socialism... It seems to me sometimes that we are obsolete.'

Early March Lord Russell called a meeting of the Liberal Party to discuss parliamentary reform. Palmerston and Russell still sparring for leadership and to replace Derby when he fell.

3 March (OP) Secret treaty by which Napoleon secured the benevolent neutrality of Russia as prelude to war with Austria (as Bismarck had foreseen in April 1856).

14 March Moltke wrote that it would take 6 weeks to concentrate 250,000 troops on the Rhine and Main. Two weeks could be saved by double-tracking some existing line and completing some others.

23 March Bismarck left Frankfurt (Steinberg 6 March) for Berlin then onto St.P. (Before leaving, the Austrians tried to bribe him via a local banker. After trying and failing to get the agent to put the offer in writing, Bismarck threatened to throw him down the hotel stairs. He told Wilhelm about this. After he became minister he suppressed such activities but nothing happened because, he claimed, the agent was protected by Schleinitz and the King's wife (Memoirs 1p235). He also had dinner with Mayer Carl von Rothschild, head of the family bank in Frankfurt — 'a real old Jew haggler [*Schacherjude*]' with 'tons of silver, golden spoons and forks'. On his advice, Bismarck appointed Bleichröder to be his private banker.

It was a more than a week-long trip, first by train to Königsberg then 8 days in carriages and snow — he had to get out of his carriage and push at various points. He put up initially in the Demidov Hotel (Nevsky Prospekt) until in July he found a house in the English quarter by the bridge over the Greater Neva.

Memoirs: Nicholas helped Austria in 1849 with 150,000 troops to subdue Hungary and re-establish Austria's authority, without asking for anything — an 'act of disinterested friendship', which was continued at the time of Olmütz, based on Nicholas' view of FJ as his 'successor and heir in the leadership of the Conservative triad' and his lack of confidence in FW (and his own son).

(Interesting that Nicholas so distrusted his own people that he hired two Prussian soldiers to give

him a special form of massage because he did not trust any Russians to be next to him with his face down and lying down! (p240)

He discerned three generations in St P society. First, 'the highest quality', 'that of the European and classically cultured *grands seigneurs* from the reign of Alexander I' which was dying out: men such as Nesselrode and Mentchikoff, and, below them on account of his 'overweening vanity', Gorchakov — 'men who were classically educated, who spoke well and fluently not only in French, but German also, and belonged to the cream of European civilisation.' Second, the generation contemporary with Tsar Nicholas who were 'usually limited in conversation to affairs of the court, theatres, promotions and military events.' Some were intellectually closer to the old guard, like Shuvalov — 'the keenest intellect with whom I had relations there.' The third generation had 'less courtesy, occasionally bad manners and as a rule stronger antipathy towards German and especially Prussian elements, than the two elder generations.' Foreign diplomats had to wear a noticeable livery and this was a 'judicious regulation of the police' that allowed diplomats, who normally would not wear uniform or orders, to escape 'unpleasantness and the resulting altercations which a civilian without an order, and who was not known as an eminent man, might easily experience' from 'the police and members of the higher society... In Napoleonic Paris I observed the same thing... Nevertheless within the circle of the court and of "society" perfect high tone still prevailed, and also in the homes of the aristocracy, especially as far as the ladies held the sway. But politeness of manners decreased considerably when one met younger men in places uncontrolled by the influence of the Court or of distinguished ladies.'

Gorchakov would sometimes show him confidential dispatches from his agents in Berlin, unopened, 'to coquet with his confidence' as Bismarck described it in his Memoirs (2p247). It, combined with later experiences, made him hostile to the tendency to include gossip and wit in official reports as he saw how such caused ripples of misunderstanding and bad blood. Ambassadors should not, he said, include 'all the foolish talk and spiteful things that arise at the ambassador's place of residence.' Gorchakov was friendly 'so long as he had the feeling of looking upon me as a younger friend' but these relations became untenable when Bismarck became a minister. '*Hinc irae*... His benevolence turned to disfavour.'

The Russians had broken our cipher. This was easier because all embassies were obliged to employ Russian servants who would be hired by Russian authorities. In Vienna too there was constant skulduggery to acquire secret communications. 'I once had in my hands a secret Austrian official document and this sentence has remained in my memory: "Kaunitz, not being able to find out which of his four clerks had betrayed him, had them all four drowned in the Danube by means of a boat with a valve."' He also recounted a conversation with the Russian ambassador in Berlin in 1853/4 in which the latter alluded to the possibility of kidnapping officials if they were sent to the Aegean.

He did not get on with the Prussian first secretary, Schlözer who referred to him as 'the Pasha' and regarded him as 'a man such as I have never encountered before, who knows no consideration for anyone, a brute, always snatching at dramatic coups, out to impress, a know-all without ever having seen it all... Bismarck is politics personified. Everything is fermenting within him, pressing to be activated and given form.'

KL: At some point he went hunting and shot a bear, he kept two of the cubs in his house in St P and later donated them to Frankfurt zoo. Keudell wrote how the cubs wreaked havoc in the home. 31 March Disraeli speech on Reform Bill: 'I have no apprehension myself that if you had manhood suffrage tomorrow the honest brave and good natured people of England would resort to pillage, incendiarism and massacre. Who expects that? ... Yet I have no doubt that ... our countrymen are subject to the same political laws that affect the condition of all other communities and nations. **If you establish a democracy you must in due course reap the fruits of a democracy.**' How? Great impatience at taxation combined with great increases in expenditure; 'wars entered into from passion ... peace ignominiously sought and ignominiously obtained'; 'property less valuable ... freedom less complete.'

1 April British government defeated on Russell's motion on the Reform Bill. Palmerston did not think Derby would dissolve Parliament if he lost the vote so rallied opposition. **On 4 April Derby announced dissolution of Parliament (on 19th)**, an election, and in the Lords 'presented Russell's career as a sordid tale of selfish subterfuge', undermining one government after another for his own ends (Hawkins, p213). Disraeli thought they'd gain 40-60 seats.

4 April Letter to Johanna: '**One cannot imagine how low the Austrians are here... the hatred is beyond measure... The entire Russian foreign policy has no other aim but to get even with Austria.** Even the calm and gentle Emperor spits fire and rage...'

19 April In London, Malmesbury learned that Piedmont had agreed to disarmament as a precondition of a Congress, as demanded by Austria, but the same day (19th) **Austria sent an ultimatum to Sardinia-Piedmont demanding disarmament in three days on pain of Austrian military intervention.** Austria's blunder set the stage for war. In London, there had been cross party agreement on the crisis but now it ruptured. Russell accused Derby of having disguised a pro-Austrian policy and liberals spoke out in support of Italian freedom.

22 April In response to Austrian demands Wilhelm ordered the army onto war footing but held in its garrisons.

23 April (OP) Buol sent an ultimatum to Sardinia.

Austria declared war on 26th. (Steinberg: FJ decided for war on Piedmont on 27th.)

Huge Austrian blunders, war ends July. During the Italian War Bismarck still hoped to influence policy in Berlin as he had tried at Frankfurt. 'I had not realised that the extraordinary exertions which I had imposed upon myself in my dispatches ... must be absolutely fruitless, because my direct reports and my communications ... reached the Regent either not at all or else accompanied by comments which prevented them from making any impression. The only result of my labours, besides a complication of the disease which medical poisoning had induced in me, was that suspicion was cast on the accuracy of my reports as to the inclinations of the Emperor; in consequence of which Count Munster, formerly Military Plenipotentiary at St Petersburg, was sent there to keep control over me.'

Showalter: In 1855 Italy provided a quarter of Austrian tax revenues. Austria's procurement system was a corrupt disaster. The railway system was a mess and did not support the Austrian army in Italy despite the possibility of a war being obvious for years. When the Solferino battle started many Austrian soldiers hadn't eaten for a day, water supplies were poor so soldiers drank polluted water then dropped out of the fight because of their bowels, and many drank brandy and started fighting drunk.

28 April To wife: After a funeral he sat in church and talked with Gorchakov. 'In the black festooned church, after it emptied, I sat with Gorchakov on the black velvet pew with a covering of skulls and we 'politicked', that is, worked, not chatted. The preacher had cited the passing of all things in the psalm (grass, wind, dry) and we planned and plotted as if one would never die.' [*As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. Psalm 103*]

29 April (Siemann) Austrian troops entered Piedmont. That day the French Ambassador in St Petersburg (the Duke of Montebello) talked to Bismarck who sent a telegraph to Berlin. 'The Duke of Montebello asks me ... whether we would be prepared to promise neutrality by way of an exchange of notes, if France promises to respect the federal borders, including within Austria, under all circumstances. He sees this as the only way, but also a reliable way, of keeping the war within harmless dimensions, and of guaranteeing Austria the security of its German provinces and peace from the Russian side. Without such an agreement, the expansion of the war, which he thinks has already broken out, across the whole of Europe, threatening all states, is in his view unavoidable. Russia and, according to the English envoy, England are inclined to think the same and would probably favour guaranteeing such an agreement, and thus here the decision is put into our hands.'

1 May To sister, who had asked if he was reading the *Kreuzzeitung*: 'yes the advertisements, all foreign affairs I haven't read for weeks, for this total rubbish wouldn't even be of interest to a medic.'

5 May To Alvensleben (OP p137): 'The current situation yet again holds the jackpot for us if we just let Austria's war with France really bite and then move south with all our armies carrying the border posts in our knapsacks and banging them in again either at the Lake of Constance or wherever the Protestant confession ceases to predominate.' Prussia could unite its two halves and rally Germany 'especially if the Prince Regent will do them the favour of rebaptising the kingdom of Prussia as the kingdom of Germany'. This was 'the safest play'. At the very least Prussia should either change its relationship to the Bund or 'release ourselves from it'. (EF says such advice 'couldn't be taken seriously but it seems to me it was meant seriously and could be taken seriously.)

9 May *The Times* printed Tennyson's poem '*Riflemen Form!*' People enlisted in the Volunteer Rifle Movement as fears of a French invasion spread. The London stock exchange panicked.

12 May Bismarck to Schleinitz: 'I have brought away, as the result of my experience, from the eight years of my official life at Frankfurt, the conviction that the present arrangements of the Bund form for Prussia an oppressive and, in critical times, a perilous tie, without affording us in exchange the same equivalents which Austria derives from them, while she retains at the same time a much greater freedom of separate action. The two powers are not measured by the princes and governments of the smaller states with the same measure; the interpretation of the objects and laws of the Bund are modified according to the requirements of the Austrian policy.' Look at the organisation of the Bund, naval issues, *Zollverein*, laws on the press etc. '*Invariably we found ourselves confronted by the same compact majority, the same demand on Prussia's compliance.*'

The German princes are with Austria in resisting the development of Prussia's power and influence. 'The completion of the present formation of the Bund, by placing Austria at its head, is the natural aim of the policy of the German princes and their ministers. This can only be achieved in their sense at the expense of Prussia, and is necessarily directed against her alone, as long as Prussia will not limit herself to the useful task of ensuring her allies, who have an equal interest and duty in the matter as herself, against too great a preponderance on the part of Austria, and to bear, with never-failing complacency and devotion to the wishes of the majority, the disproportion of her duties to her right in the Bund. **This tendency of the policy of the middle States will reappear with the constancy of the magnet after every transitory oscillation, because it represents no arbitrary product of single circumstances or persons, but forms for the smaller states a natural and necessary result of the conditions of the Bund. We have no means of coming to a satisfactory and reliable arrangement with her within the circle of the present Diet treaties.**'

Our only chance to change the dire Bund situation is in times of disruption and crisis like now — in normal times we can't make progress, in crises we're told it's the wrong time to raise disputes. 'For us, however, an opportunity, if we leave the present one unused, will perhaps not turn up again so soon and we must afterwards once more resignedly confine ourselves to the fact that in more orderly times the matter admits of no alteration.'

The smaller states are trying to drag Prussia into war using the Bund. They want us to 'stake our lives and property for the political wisdom and thirst for action of governments to whose existence our protection is indispensable' but they want us to accept 'theories of the rights of the Bund the recognition of which would put an end to all independence of Prussian policy'.

'I am going, perhaps, too far in expressing the view that **we ought to seize upon every legitimate occasion which our allies offer us, to attain that revision of our mutual relations which Prussia needs that she may be able to live permanently in orderly relations with the smaller German states.** I think we should readily take up the gauntlet, and should look upon it as no misfortune, but as an improving step of the crisis toward convalescence, were a majority in Frankfurt to arrive at a resolution in which we perceive an overstepping of its competency, an

arbitrary alteration of the object for which the Bund exists, and a breach of the treaties in connection with the Bund. **The more unequivocally such a violation comes to light the better.** In Austria, France, Russia, we shall not easily find the conditions again so favourable for allowing us an improvement of our position in Germany, and our allies of the Bund are on the best road to afford us a perfectly just occasion for it, and without even our aiding their arrogance...

'I prefer the word "German" rather than "Prussian" to be written on our flag only after we are more closely and suitably united with our countrymen than previously; it will lose its charm when used as it is now in connection with the Bund... ... **I see in our relationship to the Bund a Prussian infirmity that we shall sooner or later have to repair *ferro et igni* [iron and fire] unless we undergo a cure for it in good time and at a favourable season.** If the Bund were simply abolished today without putting anything in its stead, I believe that by virtue of this negative acquisition better and more natural relations than heretofore would be formed between Prussia and her German neighbours.' (It's unclear in OP but EF makes clear these quotes are from the same letter.)

17 May Rechberg, Bismarck's old opponent in Frankfurt, became Austrian foreign minister: a disciple of Metternich and supporter of Holy Alliance (Pflanze).

18 May British general election. (Brown refers to the election as 'later in March', p428.) The Conservatives gained ~30 seats in a quiet election but not enough for a majority. In May Disraeli had tried to persuade Palmerston to join the Conservative government, with control of foreign policy and the chance to 'dictate the terms' of a Reform measure. Palmerston declined.

Opinion supported Italy. Palmerston made it a feature of his election address. Malmesbury thought the French Embassy was secretly distributing cash to help liberal candidates. Derby was seen as pro-Austrian like the Queen. Disraeli was left cold by Italian nationalism but he could see opinion and pushed Derby to tack accordingly.

June The day after going riding then returning home with a fur, Bismarck had 'rheumatism in all my limbs which gave me trouble for a long while'. When it came time for him to fetch his wife to St P, he had recovered except for a pain in the leg he had injured hunting in Sweden in 1857 (see above). He accepted advice from a doctor recommended by former Grand Duchess of Baden. He turned out to be a charlatan who put some sort of bandage on his leg which turned into a disaster, then tried to deal with the wound 'with some sort of metallic blade. The pain was unbearable and the result unsatisfactory... I realised the ignorance and unconscientiousness of my physician [who] with an apologetic smile [explained] it was a mistake of the chemist's.' The chemist and the quack blamed each other and hid their correspondence. 'I have been asked since whether this poisoning might have been done on purpose. For my part, I merely ascribe it to the ignorance and audacity of this medical swindler' who had been made director of all the children's hospitals in St P. This disaster badly damaged a vein in his leg.

1 June Metternich died, 15 June very elaborate funeral full of symbolism stretching back to the pre-1815 days and the Holy Roman Empire. On his family's coat of arms was the motto, 'Strength in law'. In 1829 Metternich contemplated future historians analysing him. 'Unmoved by the errors of our time — errors which will always lead society to the abyss — we have had the satisfaction, in a time full of dangers, to serve the cause of peace and the welfare of nations, which never will be advanced by political revolutions. In the reports and lampoons of our epoch, a fixed significance has been attached to our name. We have not been able to recognise ourselves in these descriptions. It belongs to posterity alone to judge according to our deeds...' He hoped for a 'calmness and impartiality which are always wanting to those who have taken an active part in the events'. His ally Kübeck was more realistic: 'Alas, history is rarely more just in its judgements than the contemporary world which, after all, passes on the information to it. And even though the contemporaneous passions recede more into the background, and the causes and effects of action can be better placed in their context, the perspectives of the various parties continue to resonate from the present into the future for a long time, and posterity is no less susceptible to invectives, slander, and insinuations, and it is no less gullible than the contemporary world. **The appeal to**

posterity is therefore little consolation for the men who are presently subjected to slander and a hope in vain for those who are celebrated. One's own conscience, this divine court, stands above both the contemporary times and posterity' (diary, 26/5/49).

Siemann argues many standard beliefs about him are wrong: he was not an absolutist, he was not all-powerful in Vienna, he did not create 'a proto police state', there was no 'Metternich system', he supported economic and social reform. Generally Metternich was very complimentary about the English constitution, a 'historically evolved constitutionalism' and was influenced by Burke as well as his trips to England where he watched Parliament.

4 June Battle of Magenta.

That day he wrote to his wife about St P: 'With these short nights even the dawn brings no real coolness, but the night air is sheer balsam, and in the secretive dusk, which hovers over the water at midnight, I could ride and drive around for hours, if the rising light did not remind me of the next day and its cares and work and if sleep did not demand its tribute.'

6 June Meeting of ~300 Liberals, Radicals, Whigs, Peelites with Palmerston and Russell at Willis's Rooms, seen as a successful reconciliation with each pledging to serve the other depending on who the Queen sent for. Blake (p406): 'That meeting may fairly be called 'a turning-point' in English political history. It is true that if all the historians who have used this expression are right, English history would be as full of turnings as the Hampton Court maze; but there are occasions when it is legitimate. The meeting marks the real beginning of that union of Whigs, Peelites and Liberals which became the Liberal party of the later nineteenth century. The experiment had already been tried under Aberdeen; and it had ended after a bare two years in bathos and discredit. No one could have been confident in the aftermath of that fiasco that the alliance could ever be put together again.' Again, an important force was extreme distrust of Disraeli, often described in terms like 'Jew adventurer' (Graham to Herbert).

7 June Disraeli tried to preempt opposition votes by himself engineering a swift no confidence vote but his trick failed and there was a debate over 9-10 June with a vote in the early hours of the 11th which was narrowly lost. (Malmesbury published a Blue Book of diplomatic correspondence in the Lords in the first week of June to refute charges made by the liberals. But Disraeli never published it in the Commons! Many thought this could have made the difference in the confidence vote as the telegrams improved the government's reputation and showed many accusations had been false. Hawkins does not explain why Derby did not notice this and insist that Disraeli publish it. Disraeli had been dripping poison in Derby's ear about Malmesbury for a year and perhaps prioritised this vendetta. Hawkins, p229. Also Disraeli thought Malmesbury was being manipulated by officials and was thoroughly disastrous.)

11 June Derby government fell, replaced by Palmerston. Victoria turned to Granville first but he could not form a government. She then turned to Palmerston. Palmerston wanted to give Clarendon the FO but Russell demanded it and got it. He first offered the Treasury to George Cornwall Lewis but Gladstone demanded it and got it. The main thing separating Gladstone and Palmerston now was personality and style. (Gladstone reflected that you'd have to be 'a very bad minister indeed' if you don't do ten times as much good in office than out of it.) He offered Cobden President of the Board of Trade but he declined given his hostility to Palmerston on foreign policy and told him, 'I believed you to be warlike, intermeddling, & quarrelsome, & that your policy was calculated to embroil us with foreign nations; — & at the same time I have expressed a general want of confidence in your domestic politics.' Disraeli thought the new government wouldn't last long.

During the election Palmerston had said Britain should stay neutral but he favoured Austria being pushed north of the Alps. British opinion was confused. They were anti-Austrian and anti-French, happy to see Austria pushed north but unhappy at Napoleon strengthening. (Cf. Greville end June.) Palmerston wanted Austria out of Italy and to reform itself as he thought a powerful Austria north of the Alps 'to be of the utmost importance for the general interests of Europe'. He therefore

lamented the continued Austrian presence in Italy after the Treaty of Villafranca. As the year went on, he and Russell became more supportive of Piedmont viz Italy. Cf. Jan 1860.

Derby constantly referred to the unpatriotic behaviour of the liberals in pursuing party interest over the national interest during a crisis, scuppering moderate reform and encouraging dangerous radicalism. In July he said his strategy would be 'masterly inactivity' and Disraeli similarly wrote: 'We shall have to keep together a great party ... whose strength will really increase in proportion to their inaction. But a party does not like to be inert; and to combine repose with a high tone of feeling in the troops is difficult.'

There were six parliaments between 1841 and 1868. The only one where the Government commanded the support of Parliament at the beginning and end was Palmerston 1859-65, all other governments cracked up. 'Parliament then truly was what in legal theory it still is, a sovereign body to which Cabinets were really, not fictitiously, responsible, and which could make and unmake governments at will' (Blake). It was also dominated by the aristocracy. Cobden to a friend in 1858: 'During my experience the higher classes never stood so high in relative social and political rank compared with the other classes as at present. The middle classes have been content with the very crumbs from their table ... Half a dozen great families meet at Walmer and dispose of the rank and file of the [Liberal] party just as I do the lambs which I am now selling for your aldermen's table.'

14 June (OP) Wilhelm, like FW during Crimea, could not arrive at a clear policy. He was sympathetic to Austria but opposed Buol's ultimatum. He was alarmed by Napoleon's attack and at the rage across Germany. He wished neither to ally with Austria nor exploit the situation. After Magenta, **Wilhelm ordered mobilisation of six corps as a warning to Napoleon** and proposed in London and St P 'armed mediation'. In Vienna he demanded the command of Bund contingents. The first troop trains were scheduled to depart 1 July, this was cancelled then restored.

14 June (JS) Moltke called a meeting to discuss the failure of the Prussian mobilisation which led to a major reorganisation of the General Staff including a new railroad department. (But if army mobilised on 14 June this date seems likely to be wrong?)

15 June Roon-Perthes: 'Our Prussian pride is headed for another deep humiliation. We have done too much for us now to do nothing ... and now we cannot do anything more because without England the risk would be greater than the reward. It is a horrible dilemma. That comes from too much trembling, timidity and hesitation.'

21-24 June Battle of Solferino. Franco-Piedmontese army under Napoleon defeated Austria. (So many wounded it prompted founding of the Red Cross.) Evans: it was the last battle in world history in which the armies were commanded by their respective sovereigns.

OP: After Wilhelm's diplomacy post-Magenta, Russia threatened that she would not allow Prussia to join Austria and defeat France. Bismarck bitterly complained about 'pulling Austria's chestnuts out of the fire'. Bismarck pushed the Russian line hard and made no secret of his disagreement with his own government, news of which filtered back and Wilhelm considered a reprimand or recall.

25 June To Johanna: 'I feel terribly homesick for you and everything ... lying here so alone... My thoughts have moved at the moment closer than ever to the possibility, when the occasion serves, of giving it all up. Who knows how long we shall live together in this world, and who knows what times we will see.'

July He went to Berlin looking for medical help after the quack had botched his leg. While lying in a Berlin hotel he read in the newspapers of the plans for the *Nationalverein* (launched in September) and talked to Viktor von Unruh, an industrialist and leading liberal. They had known each other for years, disagreed but respected each other (in 1856 Bismarck had tried to protect him from persecution). Unruh recounted in his memoirs how Bismarck had told him that Prussia's goal must be 'to remove Austria from Germany proper' and expect opposition from the other German states, 'quite natural, since the individual states knew quite well that Austria could not absorb them whereas Prussia made them fear for their lives... Prussia is completely isolated... **There is but one ally for Prussia if she knows how to win and handle them ... the German people!**

Laughing at Unruh's astonishment he said, 'I am the same Junker as ten years ago ... but I would

have no perception and no understanding if I could not recognise clearly how things really stand.' Gall (p147) dates this to March just before Bismarck left Berlin.

But Wilhelm won't do it. In Memoirs, Bismarck blames Schleinitz ('devoted to the Austrian interest'), William's wife, and the press babble ('phrase-making') which always opposed action. *'There was no clear conception of the nature of the goal, the direction in which it was to be sought, or the means of attaining it.'* Prussia nearly joined the war which would have got Prussia fighting against France and enmity from Russia. *'The Regent and his minister at that time believed in the truth of the saying: 'Il y a quelqu'un qui a plus d'esprit que Monsieur Talleyrand, c'est tout le monde.'* *Tout le monde*, however, in point of fact takes too long about finding out what is right, and, as a rule, the moment when the knowledge might be useful is already gone by before *tout le monde* gets at the back of what ought really to have been done.' Memoirs, p310ff. In 2p311, he claims Schleinitz was fed information from officials which he used to attack Bismarck's position in the royal household, and was even in league with people in the pay of France. Later in the 1870s, Schleinitz was blamed by Bismarck for promoting the accusations against Bismarck in the Kreuzzeitung.

1 July (Friedjung) Bismarck: 'We are not even acting as Austria's reserve, we are actually taking the war off her hands altogether. With the first shot on the Rhine, the German war alone will count, because Paris will be threatened. Austria will get a breathing space; will she use it to help us to improve our position in Germany? ... And if the war goes badly, the federal states will abandon us as ripe plums fall from a tree in a wind, and every prince on whom French troops are billeted will run for shelter to a revived Confederation of the Rhine.'

2 July To Johanna: 'As God will, it is all merely a matter of time; nations and individuals, folly and wisdom, war and peace, they come and go like waves, and the sea remains. What are our states and their power and honour in God's eyes but ant-hills or bee-hives that the hoof of the bullock tramples flat or fate overtakes in the person of the bee-keeper come to collect the honey?'

4 July Wilhelm ordered five corps to the Rhine but the rolling stock had scattered amid the chaos and Moltke said it would take another 11 days to start large scale movements. Villafranca rendered it all moot. On 25 July Wilhelm ordered demobilisation. The chaos showed the need for serious reorganisation of the railways to serve the army. In July there were exercises with a new system that worked well. Moltke also started sending officers to France to evaluate its railways.

(Showalter, p69ff)

12 July Napoleon and FJ agree the Treaty of Villafranca.

Evans: Cavour had encouraged nationalist uprisings in central and northern Italy which forced out Austrian backed rulers in Bologna, Tuscany, Modena and Parma. Napoleon now feared Piedmont would be too successful. He made peace without consulting with Cavour and left Austria in possession of Venetia.

OP (p138): 'Prussia had antagonised all and gained nothing.' The new Cabinet in November had been welcomed across Germany. Many German nationalists were hopeful given Wilhelm's support for Radowitz in 1850. The 1859 war 'aroused the question of German unity from a decade of uneasy slumber'. Conservatives and liberal nationalists were disturbed by Napoleon's attack on a Bund member. Memories sparked of the first Napoleon's war in Italy as preface to expanding French borders and attacking Germany. The war exposed the weakness of the Bund again. Debates over big or small Germany: the strength of 'big' lay mainly in the south among farmers and rural nobles, small town burghers and politically active Catholics; the strength of 'small' lay mainly in Protestant Germany among the upper *Mittelstand*, especially businessmen, professionals and intellectuals.

Gall (p150): there had been no 'jackpot' that Bismarck had claimed; German opinion generally supported Austria and thought she was fighting France to protect Germany; since they made peace so fast when Prussia mobilised, it shows how little room for manoeuvre there really was; there was very little German support for Prussia exploiting the situation to advance a version of small German unification; Bismarck 'probably admitted as much to himself'.

Aug Roon described the army reforms to Parliament.

Sep By September Wilhelm, after a year of lobbying from Manteuffel et al, was sick of Bonin. He decided to bypass the Ministry and give Roon the job of drafting a reform bill.

12 Sep Unruh wrote to Bismarck: Austria is hostile, we are waiting 'with great suspense' to see if Prussia will support us and mobilise energy in the national question, and that you become Foreign Minister. 'Now more than ever Prussia needs a clear, firm, bold policy. The bolder it is, the less risky it will be, relatively speaking.' Bismarck received the letter at Baden-Baden whence he had been summoned to talk to Wilhelm. He spoke to Unruh again at the end of September who told him about the launch of the *Nationalverein* and how Metz had called out to great applause, 'Rather the most severe Prussian military government than the misery of petty disunion'. Years later Unruh said he and Bismarck had discussed a 'temporary military despotism' (though it's murky what each of them meant by this!). (Gall dates the Unruh conversation to March 1859.)

15 Sep ***Nationalverein* founded in Frankfurt.** Showalter: 'an elite body, not a mass movement' dominated by intellectual and commercial middle class. It reflected the view of middle class liberals that the Confederation could not meet the economic, political and cultural needs of the liberal movement. Its members were attracted to Prussia's tolerant Protestantism in contrast to Pius IX's ambitions. Its supporters wanted a military force that could defend against France. Liberals were ambivalent about the Prussian army — on one hand it was a force that could promote Germany, on the other it provoked fear.

OP: The connections between the Congress of German Economists (1858), the *Nationalverein* (1859) and Progressive Party (1861) were strong with many belonging to all three. The 'small' German leaders dominated it. It succeeded 'by virtue of the vagueness of its first platform in uniting moderates and democrats who had split in 1848-9' over the offer of the crown to FW. While there were inevitable differences its leaders were relatively moderate and willing to accept unification under a constitution preserving the authority of the Hohenzollerns. It was elite with a few thousand members led by Bennigsen, not a mass movement. Its membership fees were too high for workers to join. (The *Nationalverein* evaded the laws on political clubs by founding a national organisation *without* local branches, which had not been foreseen.)

Hamerow (p317ff): contra Bismarck's claims, it opposed both 'a violent revolution from below as well as a conquest from above', both 'the revolutionary party which wants to construct a new Germany out of a general overturn, ... and to the specifically Prussian party which would like to treat Germany like an artichoke to be consumed by old Prussia leaf by leaf.' It cheered the creation of the Progressive Party but it barred the masses from membership by charging 3 marks per year. Membership: 5k 1860, 15k 1861, 25k 1862, 23k 1863, 21k 1864, 11k 1865, 5k 1866.

Hamerow: the growing patriotic events, displays, festivals etc were worrying to the old guard — e.g it was noted that Wilhelm hurried out of a music festival before the first notes of *Des Deutschen Vaterland*. But Prussia did not persecute it, Wilhelm thought that would only give it 'an increasing and dangerous importance', Vienna agreed.

24 Sep To sister: 'I have almost gone mad from annoyance, hunger and too much business... The left leg is still weak, swells up when I walk on it, the nerves have yet to recover from the iodine poisoning, I sleep badly ... flat and embittered and I don't know why.'

19 October Letter to Joanna from Warsaw: he was enjoying himself in Poland, talking with the two Kings, eating and drinking well, sleeping well, and happy.

23-24 Oct Wilhelm & Alexander met in Breslau. Russia still looking for revenge against Austria over Crimea. Wilhelm won't join the Franco-Russian alliance but promised not to help Austria.

27 Oct Disraeli to Derby: '[I]t is at this moment the fashion of the Court of France, and the example circulates in all circles, to speak disparagingly of England; that by not taking part in the Italian war, we have sunk into a second-rate Power'.

Nov Conference in Württemberg of middle states to discuss Bund reform and ideas to force their views more on Austria and Prussia.

Nov 100th anniversary of Schiller's birth — festivals, parades, speeches. The year had seen revival of nationalism and anti-French sentiment.

In November, his injured leg produced a blood clot that lodged in his lungs and his doctors expected it to be fatal. It was serious enough that he settled his will and 'anticipated my end with that calmness which is induced by unendurable pain' (Memoirs, p260). OP: over winter he stayed at von Below's to recover. (OP mentions that Below thought his illness mainly psychological but does not mention the blood clot and near death.) Slowly recovered and in March 1860 he was well enough to travel to Berlin where he stayed until May.

Nov Bonin's resistance to the decision of September had infuriated Wilhelm. He sent a note criticising Bonin's arguments and on **29 Nov Bonin resigned and was replaced by Roon. Roon made clear to Wilhelm he did not agree with 'all this constitutional business' but neither was he a Gerlach-like reactionary (GC, p143).** JS: Roon was appointed on 29th but the order was dated 5/12. Showalter: Bonin resigned on 27 Nov.

4 Nov Palmerston-Clarendon: 'Governments and nations are less influenced by resentment for former antagonism or by gratitude for former services than by considerations of present or prospective interest.'

Dec Vienna, under pressure of the year's disasters, made significant shifts towards greater economic freedom including freedom of enterprise throughout Habsburg possessions and ending corporative control of production. Hamerow (p121): after this 'the entire system of corporative industrial regulation in central Europe began to crumble.' Nassau followed 1860, Saxony 1861, Württemberg and Baden in 1862, Frankfurt 1864. By the middle of the decade 16 states and 34 million people in the German Confederation had come under the system of industrial freedom. This was a disaster for the artisan masses. Cf. August 1860.

1860

Jan Anglo-French trade deal, pushed by Cobden. This gave Prussia leverage in the Zollverein to push for lower tariffs. Davis (p146): it was a climbdown from blind faith in free trade theory. When the Corn Laws had been abolished Cobden had told voters that 'there will not be a tariff in Europe that will not be changed in less than five years to follow your example'. This isn't what happened. But it wasn't a total break. In England it was seen as a continuation of universalism. Concessions to France were intended to be extended to all countries. Gladstone said that 'our treaty with France was, in fact, a treaty with the world'. It was primarily driven by a desire to avoid war with France and the treaty rested more on the pacifism of Cobden and Gladstone than a revival of reciprocalism. Napoleon, the main mover, saw it as a way to pacify Britain over Italy. It was followed by a treaty with Belgium then an approach to Prussia. Britain found itself having to follow France, mopping up benefits as it could be getting MFN agreements. London found itself facing declining exports to America and a rapidly changing European scene. It also did not have the information-gathering institutions it needed to grasp what was happening in Europe. From Feb 1861 to March 1862, London tried to get simultaneous negotiations with France and Prussia but failed. The negotiations stayed top secret much to London's frustration.

Jan Minister of Commerce von der Heydt announced to the cheering members of the lower house the introduction of a Bill abrogating the usury laws. 'The well-intentioned objective of the law, insofar as it wanted to provide protection against an excessive interest charge, has not been attained, as experience teaches us, and on the other hand the price of money cannot be regulated by legal stipulations.' Lower House passed 201-105, upper house rejected it 93-8. Cabinet dropped it. Liberals and business pressure groups complained.

Jan British Cabinet discussed Italy. Palmerston: we should support Italy against Austria and therefore get closer to France; Britain cannot stand aside, he argued; if we do a deal with France, it will make war less likely. Russell supported but others in Cabinet were not keen. Palmerston effectively told Cabinet the government would fall if it didn't support him and Russell. They resisted. The two backed down. Palmerston continued to see Austria's role in Italy as a 'malignant fiend'.

3 Jan Metternich told the French government that Vienna considered France had broken the deal made after the 1859 war. Clark: FJ felt he'd been duped by Napoleon. In 1860 Palmerston let Vienna

know about Napoleon's secret help for Cavour talking to Hungarian revolutionaries, which went down very badly in Vienna.

4 Jan Napoleon replaced Count Walewski (conservative and Russophile) with Thouvenel, a radical Russophobe and friend of Italy, as foreign minister. There were soon reports of plans to seize Nice and Savoy. OP: Russia was 'shocked' by the consequences of her gamble in 1859 with France. Nationalism was advancing in Hungary, Rumania and Poland. In May, Garibaldi landed in Sicily and the Neapolitan kingdom collapsed.

Feb 1860 Roon presents army reform Bill to Prussian Landtag: increase peacetime strength from 150,000 to 210,000 (~40,000 to 63,000 annual conscription), three year service (not two), downgrade of Landwehr. It's rejected, Roon says it will be implemented anyway. Barry: it was striking that Moltke and the General Staff were not involved in these plans or even formally consulted about them.

GC: in the context of the economic recession of 1857, many deputies, not just liberals, were worried about the cost. The deputies sent it to committee on 15/2. Initially they were looking for a compromise that would strengthen the army without undermine the Landwehr. It was soon clear that a compromise was very unlikely.

Gall: objectively it could have been negotiated in a reasonable way but Wilhelm decided from the start that his rights were under threat and acted defensively and this became a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Showalter: the reforms would require a ~25% annual budget increase, ~9.5 million thaler.

Feb (Friedjung p33) Moltke wrote a note on possible war with Austria: if it happens 'the struggle will produce a strong empire under Habsburg or Hohenzollern but Germany will have to pay for her unification with the loss of provinces in the east and the west.'

12 Feb Bismarck to his old friend Moritz von Blanckenburg: 'Russia concedes little to us, England nothing, but Austria and the ultramontanes are worse for us than the French. France will often be our enemy out of insolence and lack of restraint but it can at least live without fighting us. But Austria and her allies can only flourish on a field where Prussia has been plowed under as fertiliser. To cling to the slavico-romantic mixed state on the Danube and to whore with Pope and Kaiser is just as treasonable against Prussia and the Lutheran faith, indeed against Germany, as the most vile and bald Rhenish confederation. The most we can lose to France is provinces and that only temporarily; to Austria, the whole of Prussia and for all time. Less than that Vienna is not interested in as an ultimate objective.'
March 1860 he is well enough to travel to Berlin where he stayed until May.

1 March Russell presented the new Reform Bill to Parliament. It was not a success and after months of wrangling and division it was withdrawn on 11 June.

1 March (Brown) Napoleon made clear he would claim Nice and Savoy for France, then grabbed them. Across Europe politicians feared his next move, perhaps on the Rhine. In March Napoleon chastised Cowley, British Ambassador, and said 'it was impossible to maintain friendly relations with England'. Hawkins: France officially announced the grab on 13/3 and embodied it in treaty with Piedmont-Sardinia on 24/3. Derby rallied Conservatives to oppose the commercial treaty and attack the government for letting France expand.

5 March Under pressure FJ had dismissed Bach, the minister for internal affairs, and promised changes to legislation and administration. On 5/3 he announced a 'assembly of notables'. This was seen as a disappointment. The leader of the Hungarian liberals, Deak, denounced the plans and demanded autonomy. This row festered through the summer.

10 March (JS) Manteuffel to Roon: 'the unconditional maintenance of the Military Cabinet, particularly at the present moment, is a necessity'. Cf. Jan 1861.

11 March (JS) Manteuffel to Roon: 'When a question of principle arises, everyone advises concession and compromise and advises against bringing matters to a head; and when this or that minister has acted upon those rules of prudence and the momentary mood has passed, then everyone says: "How could he have given in like that?"' Wilhelm and Roon went along with him until mid-1862 (GC, p151).

23 March Russell denounced French conduct in the Commons. The Volunteer Movement was further energised. In June the Queen reviewed 20,000 volunteers in Hyde Park. Palmerston reinforced Derby's support for the Volunteer Movement and more naval spending, against Gladstone who opposed defence spending.

26 March Crown Council. Wilhelm listened to discussion and after wrote to Schleinitz directing closeness to Austria but not alliance. France is our main danger. We must beware 'the sad possibility' that south Germany will seek a separate deal with France. We must come to some sort of understanding with Austria. Schleinitz wants to give up opposition to Austria in the Bund and make an explicit alliance. Others oppose this. 'I will never play a part in Germany such as that played by Victor Emmanuel in Italy.' We must try to pull the Bund back to its 'legal limits' but not seek 'a special alliance with Austria for German purposes'. If Austria wants an alliance for non-Germany purposes 'it should not be discussed until she actually faces an enemy that she is unable to withstand alone'.

27 March Palmerston had tough words with the French Ambassador, suggesting French conduct might lead to war. Brown (p445): at some point in 1860, the French Ambassador told Palmerston that if Britain did not support France over unification of Danubian principalities then British dockyards would be destroyed. France had been strengthening Cherbourg which had been noted in London. Palmerston used growing fears of France to justify higher defence spending.

Early April (OP p141) Wilhelm summoned Bismarck and Schleinitz to present their opposing views. Bismarck argued for alliance with Russia, drastic action of the Bund and a German parliament. Schleinitz: France is the main enemy and we should stick with conservative Austria. Wilhelm immediately agreed with Schleinitz but refused Bismarck permission to return to St P until June. OP: the date of the conference is uncertain. There had been a crown council on 26/3. Schleinitz offered resignation on 5/4, refused. The press reported Bismarck's presence in the palace on 3 & 11 April. On 10 April Bismarck wrote that if there had been a crisis over the position of foreign minister 'ten days ago' it was 'now' over. In his famous letter to Gerlach on 2/5, he described this recent experience of dealing with Wilhelm about possible new jobs as 'the cheap situation of an envoy in his leave hotel engaged in backstairs intrigues against his boss'.

March - May Memoirs: Bismarck had discussion with Wilhelm and Schleinitz re policy.

Bismarck advocated what he did later: make clear to Austria we are ready for rupture and war, rapprochement with Russia. Crimea makes it easier to get cosy with Russia. Austria uses the media and secret service money cleverly to keep us scared of her and ignore the gains of taking a tough line. 'Our submission to the Austrian illusion recalled the experiment of fixing a hen to the spot by drawing a chalk line in front of it' and we need to 'break through the witchcraft of the chalk line'. Schleinitz: we must maintain relations with Austria, France is the biggest danger, alliance with Russia is condemned by public opinion. William sided clearly against Bismarck. Bismarck thought this was partly a move by Augusta who disliked Russia, Napoleon, and Bismarck. Schleinitz was 'a courtier without any political opinion of his own.' Hohenzollern, 'convinced that the Princess and Schleinitz were stronger than he, soon withdrew from all active participation in affairs although he bore the name of Minister-President until 1862.' (p261ff)

OP (p150): In 1860 when there was a dispute over Hesse-Kassel again, Bismarck advised Schleinitz to subvert the Bund, condemn condemnation in internal affairs, attack the Bund for failure to realise national aspirations and call for 'a representative assembly in the confederation'. It was 'the most radical statement yet to come' from Bismarck (OP who doesn't give a date in 1860).

May Queen Victoria re France: 'Really it is too bad! No country, no human being would ever dream of disturbing or attacking France; everyone would be glad to see her prosperous; but she must needs disturb every quarter of the Globe and try to make mischief and set everyone by the ears; and, of course, it will end some day in a regular crusade against the universal disturber of the world! It is really monstrous!'

May Garibaldi landed in Sicily, the Neapolitan kingdom collapsed. Garibaldi had returned from adventures in Britain, South America, and China settling quietly on the island of Caprera in 1854. He had learned guerrilla warfare in South America. He quickly beat the royal army. Then crossed to

Naples where he beat the army in September. Britain got panicky, Russia was nervy re revolution and nationalism spreading.

2 May In his last letter to Leopold Gerlach (died Jan 1861), Bismarck wrote: 'Fundamentally you want nothing to do with Bonaparte and Cavour. I do not want to go with France and Sardinia — not because I hold it to be morally wrong but because I consider it harmful to the interest of our security. **Who rules in France or Sardinia, once the Powers have been recognised, is a matter of complete indifference to me, a matter of fact not right or wrong...** I am a child of different times than yours but just as true to mine as you to yours... **To me France would be the most dubious of all possible allies, although I must keep open the possibility, because one cannot play chess if 16 of the 64 squares are forbidden from the beginning...** I should overestimate the value of this life strangely if I did not constantly bear in mind that after thirty years, and possibly from a great deal earlier, it will be irrelevant to me what political successes I or my country have achieved in Europe. I can even think out the idea that some day "unbelieving Jesuits" will rule together with a Bonapartist absolutism... From my twenty-third to my thirty-second year I lived in the country and I shall never get the longing to return there out of my veins. I am in politics only half-heartedly.'

5 May The Government, knowing it would lose the vote on army reform, withdrew the Bill and asked for a grant of 9 million thaler as a *provisional* grant without prejudice to later decisions over the issues under discussion, the money would only be used to strengthen existing units. The liberals did not dig deeply and accepted Patow's assurances (that the government would not put into effect the parts of the plan objected to by Parliament) at face value in a vote on 15 May. This turned out to be 'a tactical mistake of the highest order' (GC, p148). Cf. Jan 1861.

7 May To Joanna: 'I sit here and the wheel of time has forgotten me... I finally ran into Schleinitz by chance at dinner... I explained rather drily that I would rather resign than continue this life of hanging about and worrying in suspended anxiety. He urged me to be calm "for a few more days" and made unclear references to undefined alterations.'

12 May To brother: 'I am doing my level best to get back to St Petersburg unmolested and resignedly watch developments from there. If, however, the ministerial horse is nevertheless paraded in front of me, I shall get on whatever my concerns about the state of its legs... If we go on driving before the wind like this it will be a miracle and a great mercy if we do not run so firmly aground that such questions as the Jews and the land tax soon seem very unimportant.'

29 May (JS) Manteuffel-Roon: 'I consider the state of the army morale and its inner energy imperilled and the position of the Prince Regent compromised if these regiments are not established definitively at once.'

June (OP p144) Bismarck told to return to St P for another winter. Over the next few months he was attacked in the nationalist press for supposedly being happy to have an alliance with Napoleon and cede German territory and was not defended by his conservative friends. To his wife: 'One ought not to rely upon people. I am thankful for every impulse that draws me within myself.' By now the *Nationalverein* had shifted and given up on the idea of cooperating with the Prussian government. He had alienated some of his conservative friends but not gained other support. He asked Gorchakov to make an official denial that he had proposed an alliance against Austria and the cession of German land. Gorchakov refused. He wrote to Auerswald 3/8 stressing that he opposed such an alliance: '... if I considered the promotion of a Franco-Russian alliance and our adherence to it an advantage I would say so. The Regent knows me and believes that I would honestly obey while I remained in his service, if I could do so no longer, I would leave.' He was stretching the truth.

June Wilhelm met Napoleon at Baden.

June (OP) Alexander expressed to Bismarck a desire for an alliance with France and Prussia so the two could keep Napoleon in check. After annexation of Nice and Savoy the Tsar became more worried about Napoleon. Bismarck watched Gorchakov carefully and concluded that Russia was basically focused on internal problems and Gorchakov's diplomatic intrigues were mostly empty and designed to give an appearance of activity, 'basically just a sham fight having neither aim nor

result, a gymnastic performance executed with elegance and distinction by this brilliantly capable artist and then repeated'. Pflanze reports a letter to Schleinitz around this time (1860/1) in which he wrote that 'Napoleon's great talent is to conceal himself in a cloud of vapour in such a way that no-one knows where or whether he will emerge. Perhaps he will remain within and steam leisurely away *ad infinitum*'.

End July (EF) Wilhelm and FJ met at Teplitz. Clark: their personal friendship was restored. FJ was pleased to hear of Wilhelm's distaste for Napoleon but would not agree on alternating presidency of the Bund. FJ hinted re Prussia commanding federal troops in the next war. No clear deal and no written support from Wilhelm re support if AH attacked. FJ was encouraged by Biegeleben — a conservative Catholic — who opposed concessions to Prussia. Rechberg was more open to a deal. Biegeleben was more interested in trying to use public opinion. Both appreciated the dangers latent in Prussia's small-Germany ambitions, and thought war inevitable, possibly when Prussia tried to exploit a Venetia crisis. Both thought Vienna had to sort out Hungary in order to be able to function in Europe. Biegeleben, like Schwarzenberg, favoured a hard line — enforce the Bund constitution, don't concede to Prussia. Rechberg, like Metternich, preferred a softer line that blurred Austria's formal dominance. Interestingly Biegeleben proposed Rechberg for the job because of the latter's success as envoy in Frankfurt. They maintained friendly personal relations despite disagreements. Biegeleben's 'manner and style were more incisive and convincing than Rechberg's' (Clark). Biegeleben was generally supported by von Schmerling from December 1860. August Handicraftsmen started organising to represent handicraft guilds across Germany to counter liberal pressure for the establishment of industrial freedom. (See 9/2/49, 12/59, Bismarck discussions with Lassalle 1863 etc.) They were cheered by the conservative *Neue Preussische Zeitung*. 'We rejoice that we can march on the same road... There was a time when the urban guilds often fought the landed aristocracy, not with the weapons of competition and capital, but with sword and mace. That is over now and the handicrafts are fighting another sort of aristocracy, if it is permissible to apply this noble word to the men of capital.' They managed to get an organisation going — 'anti-capitalistic, anti-liberal, anti-intellectual, and anti-Semitic' (Hamerow) — that met in 1862, 1863 and 1864 but by then it was disintegrating. Cf. 12/64.

Sep The 'Macdonald Incident' — a 'somewhat arrogant British traveller' (Mosse) found himself in a dispute with a zealous railway official in Bonn, was arrested and apparently mistreated.

11 Sep Piedmont troops marched into the Papal territories under the pretext of restoring order.

Oct FJ's latest constitutional offer was rejected by Hungarian liberals and 'bitterly disappointed' Austrian liberals and the bureaucracy (Clark). Hungary wanted the 1848 constitution.

4 Oct To sister: 'Daily life controls my every movement from the breakfast cup to about four with every manner of duty, in paper or person, and then I ride until six. After dinner I approach the inkwell on doctor's orders only with great care and in the most extreme emergency. Instead I read documents and newspapers that have arrived and about midnight I go to bed amused and thoughtful about all the strange demands that the Prussian in Russia makes of his ambassador. Before dropping off to sleep I think then of the best of all sisters but to write to that angel becomes possible only when the Tsar orders me to appear for an audience at 1 and I have to take the 10 a.m. train. So I have two hours during which the apartment of the most beautiful of all grandmothers, Princess Wjäsenski, is placed at my disposal, where I write you... I look out over the desk and through the window down the hill over birch and maples in whose leaves red and yellow dominate the green, behind them the grass green roofs of the village, to the left of which a church with five onion-shaped domes stands out and that all framed against an endless horizon of bush, meadow and woodland. Behind their brown, grey tints somewhere, visible with a spy-glass could be seen St Isaac's in Petersburg ... After the long wanderings since the beginning of 1859 the feeling of actually living with my family somewhere is so soothing that I tear myself from the home and hearth very unwillingly.'

25-27 Oct Wilhelm, FJ and Alexander meet in Warsaw. Bismarck attended. Austria won't cede dual command of Confederation; Russia, though nery of spreading revolution, won't drop France;

Wilhelm won't either join Russia against Austria or ally with Austria. The Holy Alliance can't be put back together despite fears in London. (The three didn't meet again until 1873.)

EF: Shortly after this meeting Prussian first secretary Schlözer: 'My Pasha is in a dreadful state of excitement ... he thinks his moment has really come. There will be a heated session of the chamber, Schleinitz will leave in high dudgeon — and Pasha hopes to move in ... nothing reaches him from the Wilhelmstrasse. They don't like him there... He makes his own policy... he does not entertain here, complains it is too expensive, does not get up til eleven or half past in the morning, spends the day in his green dressing gown, takes no exercise, drinks a lot — and curses Austria.'

26 Oct Garibaldi greeted Victor Emmanuel: 'Hail to the King of Italy.'

27 Oct Palmerston speech: '[I]n a country like this, where the whole nation participates in the function of government, **public opinion is as powerful as the edict of the Premier's authority**, time and delay are often necessary for the accomplishment of good and useful legislation.'

November To Auerswald: '**In the long run we have actually but one reliable support, the national strength of the German people** (if we do not intentionally reject it). This will be true as long as they see the Prussian army as their defender and their hope for the future and do not see us conducting wars for the benefit of other dynasties than the Hohenzollern.' OP (p145ff): His views had changed a lot since 1857. (But cf. similar idea in his 'Booklet'.) He had not become a convert to German nationalism but appreciated its potential value for expanding Prussian power. He now stopped discussing his idea of 1856 of jumping in 'with both feet' into a Russia-France alliance. But he still thought Prussia should dangle the possibility of a French alliance in front of Austria and the other German states. His reports to Berlin were angled to improve relations with Russia. He did not think a Russia-Britain alliance was at all likely — as he wrote to Auerswald, these two Powers had been hostile for decades and their interests diverged from Balkans to India. After the Warsaw meeting in October, fear of revolution receded and Austro-Russian rivalry in Balkans increased. By 1861 he had little to report other than domestic affairs.

22 Nov Palmerston-Lewis: 'Now I beg to submit that the prevention of evil is the proper function of statesmen and diplomatists, and that the correction of evil calls for the action of generals and admirals; evils are prevented by the pen, but are corrected by the sword; they are prevented by ink shed but can be corrected only by blood shed; the first is an operation of peace, the second an action of war.'

Dec von Schmerling became Austrian Interior Minister. He was seen as a moderate liberal and supporter of constitutional government.

1861

'Never was so great an effort made for so worthless an object,' commented the *Times* in 1861 re the Crimean War.

AJPT: 1861 was the 'high water mark' of middle class liberalism... Alexander II emancipated the serfs. Austria got a parliament. Italy was united under a constitutional monarchy.

Showalter: 1861 the General Staff studies on the Italian war concluded that the increasing range and accuracy of rifles gave the defence an advantage best overcome at the operational and strategic level — tactical defensive with rifle and artillery to shatter charges then counterattack.

Greater training needed and this was a justification for the 3-year term. Another argument was that modern life was increasingly good and this made it necessary to train people longer in a military mindset and be prepared to risk death! (p.90) By 1861 roughly a third of the active army's officer corps was non-aristocratic — a lower fraction than in Saxony (1/2) or Bavaria (2/3).

2 Jan FW died (two strokes in 1859 had left him incontinent in a wheelchair), Wilhelm became king. Leopold von Gerlach noted in his diary 2/1 that Wilhelm would be dominated by Augusta 'which is extremely dangerous in view of her strange, agitated, passionate, and insincere character'. Leopold stood guard by the coffin for hours wearing a heavy helmet which injured him. He was advised not to attend the funeral. He went, walking behind the coffin bareheaded in

extreme cold and wind. He died on 10 Jan. Bismarck: 'His end reminded one of the way in which the followers of the old Germanic princes chose to die with them.'

Jan Holstein arrived at the Russian Embassy and first met Bismarck and later (in his Memoirs, after switching from admirer to embittered enemy) recalled his impression: 'Tall, erect, unsmiling... A man who allows no one to know him intimately... Never gay even when telling amusing anecdotes... Total impression one of a dissatisfied man, partly a hypochondriac... His every utterance revealed that for him action and existence were one and the same thing... Bismarck's whole person was calculated to impress and he knew it... Bismarck's attitude to the diplomatic corps was one of indifference... **When he was at the height of his intellectual powers one received the impression that he was always striving towards some goal and putting behind him all past achievements...** I was amazed at the amount Bismarck could eat and still more at what he could drink... Bismarck possessed a prodigious memory... Bismarck displayed considerable nobility of character in the way he bore his wife's inept behaviour, which was at times appalling. He never winced at it but would on occasions gently admonish her. Even though he did not move much in society it seems hardly credible that he can have failed to notice his wife's blunders. It was most probably the conviction that he could never bring his wife to mend her ways, coupled with **his disdain for mankind**, which determined him to let well alone. And it was part of Bismarck's strength of character to remain true to that decision... She was entirely devoid of feminine charm, attached no importance to dress, and only lived for her family. She exercised her quite considerable musical talent merely for her own enjoyment, though Bismarck liked to listen when she played classical music such as Beethoven. In society her speech and behaviour were not always appropriate but she moved with a calm assurance, which prevented her from ever appearing ill at ease or unsure of herself. Her husband let her go her own way. I never once saw him take her to task.'

18 Jan The finance minister von Patow had given verbal assurances (May 1860) that those parts of the general plan re military reform to which Parliament objected would not be put into effect. Manteuffel did not feel bound by Patow's assurances to Parliament and urged Wilhelm to ignore this promise and form new regiments regardless of their legality (cf. 29/5/60). Wilhelm did not think he had authorised Patow's promise and agreed. **On 18th regiments of the militia were separated from the army and replaced by new regular regiments whose standards were dedicated over the tomb of Frederick the Great.. GC: it was a royal *fait accompli* that was a decisive moment in the conflict.** Liberals were outraged but held back from all out conflict. (GC, p152)

Steinberg writes that on 18 January 1861 Wilhelm:

- a) transferred the Section for Personnel Affairs under Edwin von Manteuffel from the control of the Ministry of War to the personal headquarters of the king and
- b) issued a cabinet order to the effect that army orders concerning personnel, service details or matters of command would not require ministerial countersignature, and the Chief of the Military Cabinet 'became solely responsible to the King for making suggestions for the assignment of officers of all ranks to their posts'.
- c) 'The Militärkabinet grew steadily in power and authority until finally on 8 March 1883 the Emperor removed the institution from the rank list of the Ministry' (JS).
- d) According to Steinberg, 'the efficiency that Moltke achieved in 1866 and 1870 never occurred again and that was Manteuffel's legacy'.
- e) JS's account does not make sense. The great 'efficiency' of 1866 and 1870 supposedly developed **AFTER** this supposed change in 1861 which he blames for undermining the 'efficiency'. *JS has confused the change of Jan 1861 and the change of 1883.*

Pflanze describes it differently. The chief of the military cabinet was *already* (pre-1848) a post that reported directly to the King and had a right of immediate access (which the Chief of the General Staff then did not, but did later). The personnel division of the War Ministry worked for the chief and the King. In 1848 there was an attempt to abolish the position of chief of the military cabinet.

The military cabinet was reintegrated into the Ministry of War but an informal camarilla of military advisers continued, under Leopold Gerlach. Manteuffel — chief of the military cabinet and head of the personnel division of the War Ministry — was determined to rebuild the military cabinet at the expense of the Ministry of War to undermine the constitution. This ultimately brought him into conflict with Roon, who became War Minister (1859), but the two agreed on a lot including keeping the army out of the grip of the constitution. In Jan 1861, *Manteuffel got Wilhelm's approval of a cabinet order that removed from the signature of the war minister all military orders except those dealing with purely administrative matters and those requiring legislation or dealing with the budget.* NB. If one accepts Craig and Pflanze, then Steinberg has confused changes made in 1883 with the change in 1861. Further, Steinberg's narrative is confused because he describes (*wrongly*) changes made in Jan 1861 as influential on Manteuffel intensifying the constitutional conflict by doing things Steinberg describes as happening in 1860, i.e before 18/1/61. Cf. JS, p.162-4. And see 1883 for the changes made then.

26 Feb Austria got its first Parliament. Some trappings of constitutional government but Crown, Army and bureaucracy kept real power. On 28th (Clark) at a council of ministers, FJ told them that he would make no further concessions and he asked them to sign a document to the effect that they would support him in going no further. They all signed. (This episode remained secret.) Deak remained intransigent, no Hungarians took their seats. Schmerling: '*Wir können warten*' (*We can wait*). Von Plener undertook financial reform hampered by the twin pressures: 1) FJ didn't want army cuts, b) the aristocracy didn't want tax rises. By 1864 the 94 million florin deficit was down to 45m.

March Stahl gave a lecture on FW4 praising him for fighting the spirit of the age — 'revolution, technical civilisation, rationalism, liberalism, or the ideas of 1789'. Barclay: Wilhelm II was taught in the late 1870s that FW4 had been a failure. (Check p284-5)

March: A new constitutional monarchy of Italy proclaimed: 17/3 Parliament proclaimed Victor Emmanuel King of Italy, 27/3 Rome was declared Capital. Piedmontese institutions extended to the rest of Italy.

Tsar and Prussian aristocracy outraged by developments in Italy. **Bismarck's attitude was, 'We would have had to invent the Kingdom of Italy had it not come into existence on its own.'** From Prussia's perspective, it could be a useful ally against France and Austria. As long as Austria had Venice, the new state was bound to be an enemy of Austria.

In this Bismarck was out of line with fellow conservatives who admired Francis II of Sicily for trying to resist the tide. Wilhelm would continue see Victor Emmanuel as a usurper and tried to avoid a personal relationship. Francis wrote letters from besieged Gaeta to conservatives across Europe portraying his resistance as a defence of European monarchy. Sixty years later in November 1918, his widow heard shooting in the streets of Munich and bullets hit her house: 'That reminds me of Gaeta', she said as monarchies tumbled (Hamerow, p188).

April The US Civil War starts. Big distraction from Europe for Britain. NB. Gladstone and Russell favoured the South. Palmerston's instinct was similar because his distaste for democracy outweighed his distaste for slavery and he initially thought, like many, the South would win.

20/10/61: 'It is in the highest degree likely that the North will not be able to subdue the South and it is no doubt certain that if the Southern Union is established as an independent state it would afford a valuable and extensive market for British manufactures but the operations of the war have as yet been too indecisive to warrant an acknowledgement of the Southern Union.' Hostility peaked early 1862 (Brown p451-2). Disraeli also wanted and expected the South to win but thought it unwise to take sides publicly.

April In a pamphlet Twesten (a judge) attacked Edwin Manteuffel personally and the institution of the military cabinet and asked what crisis could 'remove this unwholesome man from an unwholesome institution'. In May, EM challenged Twesten to a duel (27th). Twesten missed, EM offered to withdraw the challenge if Twesten would retract, Twesten refused, EM shot him in the arm, when he offered to shake hands Twesten apologised for offering his left arm. EM was briefly imprisoned. Wilhelm wrote that being without EM was 'a triumph for the democracy which

managed to chase him out of my presence; the excitement that the affair must cause in my immediate family circle, these are things that look set to rob me of my sanity.'

Craig: Manteuffel believed and persuaded Wilhelm that Twesten was the leader of a secret revolutionary party plotting to overthrow the state. Wilhelm believed this — far from being outraged he 'wrung his hands in despair at the thought that he might be expected to punish Manteuffel for his courage' (GC).

13 May The first convention of the German Commercial Association, University of Heidelberg with a black, red, gold flag. Hamerow (p352): Its resolutions showed the inevitable connections between economic and political reform, with calls for uniform weights and measures, coinage reform, a commercial code. Its executive committee repeatedly conferred with Bismarck.

5 June (Gall) Wilhelm closed the session of the Diet remarking that he would 'overlook' the provisional nature of the army funding 'which does not affect the central principle of this major measure'. This was 'the last straw' (Gall) for many liberals, prompting the split the next day.

6 June Cavour died aged 51.

6 June 1861 The German Progressive Party founded, Twesten one of them. It was liberal and national. Its creation was sparked by disappointment with and mistrust of the 'New Era' cabinet (OP). Its founding program stated: 'the existence and the greatness of Prussia depend on a firm unification of Germany, which cannot be conceived without a strong central authority in the hands of Prussia and without a common German popular representation.' It wanted: judicial independence, ministerial responsibility, local self-government, religious equality, popular education, civil marriage, freer markets, reform of the upper house.

The democrats wanted to represent artisans, shopkeepers and others of modest means in the lower *Mittelstand*. Their emphasis was equality. The moderate liberals wanted to represent the merchants, industrialists and educated of the upper *Mittelstand*. Their emphasis was national unity and *laissez-faire*. They were divided over suffrage with the democrats wanting universal male suffrage and the liberals wanting a wealth-based suffrage. The founding program dodged the issue to preserve unity. (OP p165)

Hamerow (p311): the PP changed party politics including in its appeals to the lower classes, which liberals had avoided in the 1850s. The conservatives felt the need to respond. Characters like Wagener tried to organise in response.

6 June Cavour died.

10 June OP (p288): Statute completed transition from government direction to inspection over the mining industry, abolished all local regulatory agencies and limited provincial agencies mainly to safety. In 1865 a statute established a mining code that incorporated all remaining regulation. Wages, hours, conditions were now contractual. The code 'marked the final triumph of the free enterprise system in the mining industry and was also a milestone in the development of class consciousness among Ruhr miners' (OP p289).

27 June (28th Steinberg) Roon wrote to Bismarck re the 'homage' question and the crisis. It was a question of whether one saw 'the traditional hereditary homage as an assault on the constitution', as the liberal ministers did, or whether such a view was 'a piece of doctrinaire humbug, a product of political commitment and party-political posturing'. 'The King cannot give away without ruining the crown forever' nor could the ministers. 'They would be slitting open their immoral stomachs, destroying themselves politically.' They had to 'convince the King that without proclaiming a change of system he can find the kind of ministry he needs'. If he gives in now, as his closest relatives (including wife and son) are advising, 'we should be heading under full sail into the mire of parliamentary government'. He urged Bismarck to 'start your planned holiday without delay... *Periculum in mora* [see Roon's famous repeat of this phrase 9/62]'. Roon and Manteuffel were trying to use the crisis to drive liberals out of the cabinet. By the time Bismarck arrived in Berlin the King had given in (Pflanze p152). JS: when he arrived in Berlin Schleinitz sent him to Baden and he missed Roon.

2 July (3rd Steinberg) Bismarck to Roon, disagreeing on the *homage* issue: 'As to the *homage* question, I scarcely understand how it can have become so important for both sides... If anyone

denies my sovereign a right which he is willing and able to exercise, I feel myself bound to assert it, even though I am not convinced of the practical importance of this exercise... **My impression is that the chief fault of our policy hitherto has been this: it has been liberal in Prussia and conservative in foreign parts; we have esteemed the rights of our king too cheaply and those of foreign princess too highly...** Only through a change in our "external" attitude can the position of the Crown at home be relieved of the pressure that otherwise it will not in fact withstand in the long run... Political unripeness has a good deal to do with this stumbling over threads. **During the last fourteen years we have been teaching the nation a taste for politics without satisfying its appetite, and it has to seek its nourishment in the sewers [gutters?].** We are almost as vain as the French; if we can talk ourselves into the belief that we are respected outside our country we are ready to put up with a good deal at home... [Similar line re vanity in his 1857 Gerlach correspondence.] **My loyalty to my sovereign is of Vendean completeness but as regards all others [royal houses], not in one drop of my blood do I feel a trace of an obligation to lift a finger on their behalf.** I fear that this attitude of mine is so far removed from that of our most gracious master that he will scarcely consider me a suitable advisor to the crown. Therefore if he employs me at all he will prefer to use me in internal affairs. But according to my view that makes no difference, for I do not believe that the collective government will produce any satisfactory results unless our attitude in foreign affairs becomes stronger and less dependent on dynastic sympathies. Our want of self-confidence causes us to seek in them a support which they cannot give us and which we do not require. It is a pity on account of the elections that the split has taken just this form: **the loyal and monarchical mass of electors will not understand a quarrel about homage and the democrats will distort it. It would have been better to hold out firmly on the military question, to break with the chamber, dissolve it, and thus show the nation what is the King's position towards the people.'**

10 July (Gall) He arrived in Berlin on 10th, officially *en route* for summer leave. Wilhelm had already conceded and gone to take the waters at Baden-Baden. There he spoke with Bismarck who advised rejecting the plan for reform of the Bund, as suggested by Roggenbach and the Grand Duke Frederick. Bismarck was asked (by Wilhelm or Schleinitz?) to write a memo. The result was '**the Baden-Baden memo**', of which there were two versions, July for the King and September for the conservative leaders. The earlier is 'more radical' (Pflanze). (Gall (p164) the second version, 'the Reinfeld Memorial', was October. KL also says October, p42.)

The confederation could not satisfy Germany unity. **Prussia should support a national assembly for the German people with members chosen by state legislatures** (guaranteeing a conservative outlook). This is the 'only unifying force that can supply an adequate counterweight to the tendency of the dynasties to adopt separate and divergent policies.' It would probably 'at the same time mean with some certainty that the regrettable tendency of most German Diets to devote themselves primarily to minor tiffs with their own governments was provided with a healthy diversion along broader lines of greater service to the community, and the petty squabbles of the assembly halls of the estates gave way to a more statesmanlike discussion of the interests of Germany as a whole'. It could hardly be expected though that the majority of national governments would accept such a plan, it was a question of mobilising the public. **Prussia should therefore also pursue a Zollverein parliament**, which could then develop a common military paid for by common taxes and tariffs. In the September version, he rejected the idea of conservative solidarity in foreign affairs. The main task of the monarchy was 'the protection of Prussia' and they should **abandon 'the whole unhistorical, godless and lawless sovereignty swindle of the German princes'** and use nationalism to overcome liberals. He also planned an upper chamber of state representatives voting in secret to counterbalance centripetal and centrifugal forces.

The 'need to see the developing strength of the German people more tightly and more uniformly integrated [was] emerging with daily increasing decisiveness. **The upsurge in national feeling, part of the whole trend of the time, is pushing us, as is the demand for protection against**

attacks from abroad, towards the objective of closer German unification, at least in the fields of defence and material interests' (July version).

Gall: In 1859 Wilhelm had said to the Duke of Coburg, one of the liberal princes, of Bismarck, 'That's all we need, for a man to take over the ministry who is going to turn everything upside down.' The Baden-Baden memorandum probably did not make him revise that verdict, and Bismarck probably revised his approach to dealing with Wilhelm to avoid discussion of principles (p167).

EF: The Grand Duke of Baden, Wilhelm's son-in-law, had appointed liberals and was making Baden the most liberal state in Germany. He denounced Bismarck as, 'An unprincipled Junker who wants to make a career through political villainy'. (Gall attributes this line to Roggenbach, not the Duke.)

14 July In Baden-Baden an attempted assassination of Wilhelm. A fanatic fired shots at Wilhelm complaining he had not 'done enough for German unity'. Mild injuries. (The assassin fired at his head from behind at a very short range but missed with both shots, with one just grazing the neck.) When a reactionary suggested a clampdown, Wilhelm replied that a wiser path was satisfying the just demands of the German people. Liberals around the court in Baden presented to Wilhelm a plan for a small German federal union with a parliament, with a constitutional guarantee of the entire Habsburg Empire to sweeten the pill for Vienna.

Summer Prussian constitutional conflict deepening. Roon feared government tottering towards collapse, King 'more than ever under the orders of the Queen and her accomplices', and 'I can recognise only one organism with any power of resistance and that is the army. To maintain this untainted is the problem which I regard as still soluble but certainly only for a short time. It too will become plague stricken if it does not get to action'.

Showalter: Manteuffel and similar were planning to end the constitution and put down street protests with artillery and firing squads. By the end of 1861 Wilhelm approved a modified version of the plan. Army exercises in 1861 showed poor performance, noted by French and Austrian observers.

7 Sep At Ostende Wilhelm and Bernstorff conferred and agreed in general the Baden plan for confederate reform (cf. 14/7).

18 Sep He wrote to von Below-Hohendorf on similar themes: 'The system of solidarity of the conservative interests of all countries is a dangerous fiction... [If we stick to this idea...] We shall arrive at a point where we make the whole unhistorical, godless and lawless sovereignty swindle of the German princes, who use the circumstances of the Bund as a pedestal from the height of which they play at European power — the bantling of the conservative party in Prussia. Our government is in fact liberal domestically and legitimist in foreign policy. We protect foreign monarchical rights with greater tenacity than our own and wax lyrical about little sovereignties created by Napoleon and sanctioned by Metternich to the point of utter blindness to all the dangers to which Prussia's and Germany's independence is exposed as long as the madness of the present Bund constitution survives, which is after all nothing but a green house and conservatory for dangerous and revolutionary separatist movements... [We should explain what we want in Germany.] We have the double task to bear witness that the existing constitution of the Bund is *not* our ideal, but that we are openly striving for the necessary alterations by legal means, and do not want to go beyond the measure requisite for the safety and prosperity of all. We want a closer consolidation of the German force of defence as much as we require our daily bread; we want a new and plastic arrangement in the department of the customs; and a number of institutions in common, to protect our material interests against the drawbacks which arise from the unnatural configuration of the interior boundaries of Germany. That it is our intention straightforwardly and earnestly to demand these things ought to be placed beyond all doubt.

Moreover I cannot comprehend why we coyly shrink from the idea of a popular assembly, whether at the Federal level or in a Zoll Parliament [customs parliament based on the *Zollverein*]. An institution which operates in every German state and which we conservatives in Prussia cannot do without, can hardly be called a revolutionary innovation.

Until now national aspirations would be easily met by very modest concessions, which would still be considered valuable. One could create a very conservative national assembly and still reap the thanks of the liberals.’ Hamerow: few listened to such advice and ‘the aristocracy generally proved unable to formulate an economic program beyond a die-hard defence of the status quo.’ He also wrote around this time (where?): ‘[A] political party cannot survive with only a feeble defensive position, much less conquer terrain and followers.’

20 Sep Wagener launched in Berlin the Prussian *Volksverein* (*Prussian People’s Association*) to counter the *Nationalverein* and Progressive Party. At the launch speakers attacked red republicans, moneyed capital and usury. An alliance of landowners and artisans to protect what remained of manorialism and the guild system against liberalism, free market economics and factory system. It got ~26,000 members by end of 1862 and ~50,000 by 1863 (high point) — roughly double the *Nationalverein*. In Bismarck’s first few months in power it showered Berlin in ‘loyalty declarations’. Even Marx, usually highly critical of everyone, told Engels that Wagener was a serious force ‘among this stable of pygmies’ (with Waldeck on the other side).

Its program was:

‘I. Unity of our German fatherland, yet not in the fashion of the “kingdom of Italy” with fire and sword, but through the union of its princes and peoples, and through adherence to authority and justice. No disavowal of our Prussian fatherland and its glorious history; no descent into the filth of a German republic; no spoliation of crowns and swindle about nationalities.

‘II. No break with the past in the internal affairs of our state; no destruction of the Christian foundation and of the historically proven principles of the constitution; no ... weakening the army; no parliamentary regime and no constitutional responsibility of the ministers; personal kingship by the grace of God and not by the grace of a constitution; church marriage, Christian school, Christian authority; no abetment of the demoralisation which is steadily gaining ground and of the disregard for the divine and the human order.

‘III. Protection and respect for honest labour, for every form of property, right and class; no favouritism and exclusive rule of moneyed capital; no abandonment of the handicrafts and landed property to the false teachings and usurious tricks of our times... the autonomy and self-government of the corporations and communities... No resort to bureaucratic absolutism...; no resort to an imitation of the political and social practices which led France to Caesarism...’

18 Oct Coronation. He complained to his sister about having to change three times a day in cold draughty castles and explained how he wore a thick wig for a two-hour ceremony. Queen more friendly than for ‘many years’. The King avoided talking politics with Bismarck ‘probably’ to avoid being seen by others ‘in a reactionary light’, an anxiety that ‘prevailed with him as late as May 1862 and even September. **He thought me more fanatical than I was.**’

Gall: Antagonism between the king and the liberal majority received a further dramatic boost.

Wilhelm greeted deputies simply as ‘advisers’ to the crown, ‘evidence of a very curious interpretation of the constitution’, and the army delegation to the coronation included the commanding officers of the new regiments that had been created by the government with the aid of funds only provisionally approved.

Oct Bernstorff (Ambassador in London) replaced Schleinitz as foreign minister under Hohenlohe. Schleinitz became minister of the royal household until 1880s, a constant thorn in Bismarck’s side. OP: Bernstorff though conservative was acceptable to the remaining New Era ministers and favoured rapprochement with France and a strong initiative in the German question. Cf. 7/9.

OP (p161) In October Wilhelm made a state visit to Compiègne.

27 Oct Palmerston-Russell: Prussia ‘sets public opinion in England against her by her aggressive policy against Denmark, by her anti-English policy all over the world’ and by a general rude official attitude.

Clarendon wrote around then: ‘All my political sympathies are for Prussia, the greatest Protestant Power in Germany.’ The experience of the coronation was worrying. Wilhelm ‘a man of perfect honour, has no idea of the Duties of a Constitutional Sovereign’ and doesn’t ‘possess a single

statesman... All Prussian officials overrate themselves and are self-conceited... I am beginning to think that Constitutional Government in Prussia is impossible.' The King and government have no notion 'of the volcano seething beneath their feet'. Mosse: Clarendon's attitude at this time was 'representative of educated British opinion'.

Nov Returns to St P for another winter.

Nov A Union vessel stopped the British ship, the *Trent*, and forcibly arrested two Confederate envoys *en route* to London. Diplomatic incident. In 1/62 Lincoln backed down.

6 Dec Palmerston-Russell, re America: '... nations and especially republican nations or nations in which the masses influence or direct the destinies of the country are swayed much more by passion than by interest'.

6 Dec Elections.

OP: Progressives were the biggest party with 109 and 'with other oppositional groups they controlled 161' seats; conservatives and the old liberals 164.

Gall: PP had 106; together with old liberals and left centre they had 260/325 = 80%. Gall: 'A crucial trial of strength was now virtually inevitable, with both sides arming for a decisive encounter. For the liberal majority this meant the full implementation of parliamentary rights with regard to the budget and on top of that a commitment on the part of the government to respect the will of the Parliamentary majority. For the Conservatives around Roon it meant the rejection of any kind of cooperation and if necessary a military coup to preserve the traditional distribution of power' (Gall, p170). Manteuffel et al increasingly planning a coup.

So Pflanze lumps the 'old liberals' in with the conservatives, Gall lumps them with the Progressives. Hamerow: liberals 256, conservatives 15.

Steinberg: 104 PP, 48 other liberals, 91 'constitutionals' (moderate liberals supporting the government) — '69 percent ... belonged to the liberal persuasion' and conservatives shrank from 47 to 14. (JS jumps in less than half a page from the October 1861 election to the May 1862 election.)

Lerman: PP 109.

EF: PP got 104, various liberal factions got 'about 250 out of 352' [was it 325 or 352, who has misprinted??]

Showalter: PP had 109, other 'more moderate liberal factions' had 141, 54 Catholics, 14 conservatives.

Overall it seems: PP got 100-110; conservatives got ~15; overall 'liberals' got ~260.

(Pflanze, Gall, Steinberg, Lerman, EF all give different figures for this election. Gall/Pflanze say 325 total, others say 352. I assume someone has made a typo and others have copied?)

GC: The victory for PP caused 'consternation' among Wilhelm's military advisers. Roon's mood had been dark all year and he now started talking of the need to remove Parliament. Over Christmas and January there was talk in military circles of telegrams being laid between the castle and garrisons in Berlin and other preparations for a revolt. Also in Jan, Wilhelm accepted a contingency plan for a revolt worked out by Manteuffel after discussion at the Military Cabinet. Manteuffel's influence was never greater than the first few months of 1862.

20 December Beust (Saxony) had submitted a plan — a tripartite reorganisation of the Bund under Austria, Prussia and the lesser states. **Bernstorff rejected it and proposed a barely disguised version of the Radowitz plan:** a small north German federation within the existing great-German confederation. Small-Germans celebrated but there were angry protests from minor states and Austria was 'shocked' (Pflanze) despite the mild language and rallied opposition. Bernstorff didn't have the ability or support to push it through, it soon seemed dead. Friedjung: it was rejected by Austria and others 2/2/62.

1862

Les Misérables, Victor Hugo. It explored, wrote Hugo, 'the degradation of man by poverty, the ruin of women by starvation, and the dwarfing of childhood by physical and spiritual night'.

Fathers and Sons, Turgenev. Explored emerging nihilist intellectuals and activists.

January A secret Austrian envoy toured German capitals proposing a new plan. Von Schmerling (interior minister) and von Biegeleben (official) pressured Rechberg towards confederate reform on the basis of splitting the non-German part of Austria away for some purposes (Czechs and Magyars) and consolidating the confederation on a Great-German basis. Their plan was based on Beust's. Add a chamber of delegates drawn from parliaments of member states, an executive committee representing their governments, and a high court to interpret confederate law.

OP: with some reservations the middle states agreed to help the Austrian plan and even agreed to form a new organisation if the Bund fell apart in struggle. But they dragged their feet on action, did not meet until July to draft details, as usual reluctant to destroy relations with Berlin by taking the first step. See July and August. (Pflanze, p157)

Jan Bismarck to Bernstorff: 'France and Austria are, each in their own way, destined as a rule to be opponents of Prussia, not through the arbitrary will of their momentary rulers but by the weight of enduring historical circumstances.'

17 Jan To sister Malwine: 'Since my illness I have become mentally so tired that I have not the energy for troubled conditions. [Gall: My mind has become so dull since my illness that I have lost all my resilience in hectic situations.] Three years ago I would still have made a useful minister but now, when I think about it, I feel like a sick trick rider asked to perform his leaps.'

Feb Loftus was ordered to get at least an agreement to a MFN clause with Britain. Prussia dodged by saying it only had a mandate to negotiate with France. After the Franco-Prussian deal, the Board of Trade started explicitly accepting the drawbacks of non-reciprocal deals. By now the BoT, chambers of commerce, and commercial classes a) were much more aware of the importance of the *Zollverein*, b) were shifting on unilateralism/reciprocalism.

March 1862 (Hamerow: initialed 29/3, signed 2/8) Prussia and France agreed a free trade treaty. This was overwhelmingly supported by Parliament in March (264-12, Lerman). Gave Austria a big problem. Since the 1853 renewal of the *Zollverein* for 12 years, she had been planning a big push. Vienna had hoped in 1853 that the gap with Prussia would narrow and by 1860 Austrian businesses would be able to cope with low tariffs. But economic developments in the 1850s made things harder. The boom of mid-1850s and depression 1857-60 widened gap between Austria/German economies. In Prussia commercial interests wanted lower tariffs. In Austria coal, iron and textile producers wanted higher tariffs. Crimea and Italian wars pushed Habsburg finances into a bad state and discouraged lower tariffs that might lower revenues.

The Franco-Prussian deal, giving France MFN status, gave Austria a big problem: copying Prussia and lowering tariffs would mean tougher foreign competition, so Prussia's move made it harder to contemplate trying to join the *Zollverein*.

Zollverein rules were that Prussia had to get unanimous agreement to change its tariffs. Most of the *Zollverein* states were 'incensed' (OP) at the Franco-Prussian agreement and its political implications. Southern landowners and textile manufacturers were pro-Austrian. But the *Zollverein* had become increasingly important and had increased economic interdependence, driven further by railways, industrialisation and the flow of goods and capital in the 1850s. *Laissez-faire* was the dominant idea. Austrian industrialists realised that the Empire needed to change path and they supported Rechberg in reviving the old Bruck plan in July. In his Memoirs, Delbruck wrote that, 'We knew very well that a treaty with France would ... create insurmountable obstacles to the [equalisation] of the tariff schedules... we wanted no German-Austrian customs union; ... we wanted ... only a limited development of the February treaty' [i.e 1853]... The more the political

significance of the question [free trade] emerged, the more it led supporters of the small German policy toward us, even from the protectionist camp.' See July... (OP p156ff)
(Cf. Hamerow, vol 2, CH 3 for details.)

March (OP but others say MAY) **Bismarck summoned to Berlin.** OP: minister without portfolio discussed, Roon was urging Wilhelm but King couldn't face making him minister yet.

6 March Parliament passed a Bill requiring the itemisation of the military budget for 1862, which would have made it impossible for the government to shift funds to purposes not authorised by Parliament.

7 March To sister Malwine, re rumours of him being appointed Foreign Minister: 'I do not believe it is true but would turn it down if it were. All political differences aside, I don't feel well enough for so much excitement in vexation.

11 March **Wilhelm dissolved Parliament**, ordered fresh elections, and replaced remaining liberal ministers with conservatives. (Pflanze p173) GC: Manteuffel's advice was behind the dissolution and sackings.

12 March **Prince Karl Anton of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen resigned as minister president, succeeded by Prince Adolf zu Hohenlohe-Ingelfingen who formed a very conservative (and largely unknown) cabinet.** 'Physically, however, and perhaps also intellectually he was not equal to the post and when I saw him in May 1862 he tried purposely to strengthen this impression of mine by conjuring me to deliver him from his martyrdom by immediately taking over the post which was breaking him down' (Memoirs). Twisten welcomed the change: 'I think it's a good sign in fact. They want a ministry to slap the country and parliament in the face... Next time they'll have to choose an NCO and a police sergeant.'

14 March Grand Duke of Baden, King's son-in-law, urged him against a coup and to accept that a Parliament was a necessary and legitimate institution. Queen to King: 'But for God's sake not Bismarck for minister. It is a complete miscalculation to believe that a man like this can serve our country, **he will certainly stop at nothing and is the terror of everyone because he has no principles.**'

17 March Patow (finance minister) and other liberals resigned. Von der Heydt took over as finance minister.

23 March Roon and Bernhardt spoke: Roon said he was 'determined' on a coup by June if the next elections were bad. GC: if a small riot had broken out in the spring, then Manteuffel might have had a chance to launch his coup and lead the new government. He had detailed plans for conquering Berlin street by street. In reactionary circles around the Gerlachs and Kleist-Retzow there was talk of making him Minister-President. *But over these crucial weeks both Wilhelm and Roon started to doubt Manteuffel's advice.* And (OP) not even the democratic liberals had any serious thoughts about revolution.

April 1862 A board of fifteen generals (including Moltke) appointed by Wilhelm to study the problem concluded that two-and-a half years would be fine and even two years in some circumstances.

'Easter' (OP) *Nationalverein* agreed to promote periodic meetings of nationalist deputies from diets and parliaments.

3 April EM to Roon (who was starting to think about compromise, GC): 'How can the three-year service be given up during his reign without bringing shame to the personal position of the All-Highest?... The Army will not understand it, its confidence in the King will be shaken... [If the elections are not favourable to the royal cause then] we shall see bloody heads and *then* good election results will come.' In early April, Wilhelm suggested that he was confronted with a choice between concessions and abdication. EM was horrified and pleaded that he must stand firm: as he put it later, 'the question was whether he would act like Charles I and Louis XVI and allow power to be wrested from his hands before it came to an open fight' and if he gave way at the expense of the army it would 'only shake the army's confidence in his firmness' and still fail to appease his

enemies. Wrangel told Wilhelm 'that abdication would be desertion in the face of the enemy and threatened him with the mutiny of the whole army' (GC, unmentioned elsewhere?).

15 April Bismarck reported that he thought Russia would not oppose an eventual partition of Schleswig along an ethnographic boundary, that Russia would be less rigid than 1848-51, and that Alexander II would try to avoid a conflict with Prussia.

May 1862 A ship had been secretly built for the Confederacy in Liverpool. In May it was launched then headed off. It was named the *Alabama*. The North claimed it was a breach of British neutrality. The affair rumbled on for years. Even at the end of 1862 Palmerston thought the South would separate but he also feared the North would look for compensation possibly by annexing part of Canada, possibly by helping Irish nationalists.

6/18 May 1862 elections: conservatives reduced to 10, Progressives up to 135, 'opposition' 223, despite 'severe bureaucratic pressure on the voters' (Pflanze). (Given others, seems 10 is a misprint for 11.)

Gall: 11 Cons; old liberals dropped 'from some 90 seats to around 50', and this bloc then split into pro/anti compromise blocs; PP up 29 to 135; overall opposition now ~250. In 8/10 provinces not a single conservative elected.

Steinberg: PP up 29 to 133 and 'left liberals now controlled 65% of the seats'. Turnout for class III voters was 'always low, usually well under 20 percent' and the hotly contested elections of the conflict period 'attracted only the voters in Classes I and II'. The PP represented the bourgeoisie not the masses. This was *not* the moment when history 'could have turned'.

Lerman: Cons 11.

EF: PP 133, Cons 11, parties opposed to the government on army reform had 'about 230 out of 352 seats'.

Hamerow: this was the high water mark for liberals with 285 vs 11 conservatives.

In this parliament only 42/285 were noble (relative to 75% in 1854); largest occupational category was the civil service. After 1871 too 'the great majority of liberal politicians belonged by descent as well as occupation to the middle class.' Hamerow (p375) stresses that the fluctuation of results through the 1850s and up to 1866 was based on the swing of 'a few hundred thousand voters out of more than three million eligibles'. Only 1863 has detailed records analysing party preferences.

May (April, Steinberg, EF; March OP!?) **Bismarck recalled to Berlin, arrived from St P on 10th** (Gall). EF: he arrived in Berlin 'a week after these elections', he'd been recalled 'a few weeks' earlier. (Grumpy about the sudden move: having to sell his Russian possessions 'at short notice quite unnecessarily, a certain way to lose a great deal of money'.) Discussions with Roon and Wilhelm but Wilhelm still not ready to take the plunge and many opposed including his wife. Bismarck felt depressed on his return: he did not have confidence that Wilhelm would fight, he worried about all the influences on the King and the intrigues, he disliked 'lying at anchor in a Berlin hotel' amid frenetic discussions and he 'begged Count Bernstorff to procure me either an office or my dismissal' and he got agreement on his appointment to Paris. JS: Roon's notes show Bismarck had multiple long conversations with Wilhelm and other ministers and '*the initiated believed that his appointment to the Ministry must be expected directly.*' (I'm not aware of a detailed account of the ins and outs of these intrigues in 1862, what diaries still exist etc.)

KL: In 1862 from St P, Johanna wrote to a friend: 'I become more and more an old woman, grey-haired, wrinkled, crooked and barren — and live with my interests only in the family and in the friendships of past times.'

18 May Roon: 'We lack a mere trifle at this stage and that is the *brains* of the ministry.'

21 May Bismarck asked for 'an office or my dismissal' — Bernstorff suggested Paris to the King who agreed, but King made clear to Bismarck this could be temporary (Gall).

21 May Roon's friend Perthes wrote of Bismarck: '[He] has great moral courage. A decisive spirit expresses itself in the energetic tone of his voice in all his speeches. He can sweep people along with him. He has no previous political training and lacks a thorough political education... He has a series of contradictions in his character... [He] inclines to a determined Lutheranism too but is irresponsible. There is an absent-mindedness in him and he can easily be stirred by sympathies and

antipathies... He is thoroughly honest and straight but his politics can be immoral. By nature he has an unforgiving, vengeful tendency, which his religious sensibility and nobility of character keep under control.'

22 May Bismarck appointed ambassador to France. OP: Wilhelm told him in their last audience to remain *au qui vive* (*alert*) and he may soon be needed back in Berlin.

25 May He describes the move to his wife as 'more an escape attempt than a new residence I am taking up.'

30 May He arrived in Paris (Steinberg).

June In the spring, Disraeli had attacked the government for spending too much on defence. This roused internal disagreements among Tory MPs and Derby disagreed with him. Over the previous winter there had been rumours that Palmerston was finally about to run out of health but by now he had bounced back. Disraeli retreated from the Commons for two years. Derby's health collapsed again in September, so the Tories had an ill leader and a semi-withdrawn Commons leader. Derby also organised charity for the relief of workers impoverished by the Cotton Famine (caused by the Civil War) and contributed unprecedented cash himself.

1 June To his wife: 'In eight to ten days I shall probably receive a telegram summoning me to Berlin and then the whole song and dance will be over. If my enemies only knew what a relief their victory would be for me and how sincerely I wish them it!... You cannot dislike the Willhelmstr[asse] more than I do and if I am not convinced it has to be, I won't go. I consider it cowardice and disloyalty to leave the King in the lurch on the pretext of health reasons.' Gall — this was 'immediately after' his first meeting with Napoleon.

2 June Bismarck writes to Roon that he has arrived and 'living here like a rat in an empty barn'.

4 June Roon writes that the King has 'the old inclination towards you along with the old indecision'.

5 June (OP) Bismarck dined with Napoleon in Tuileries Palace, 'three weeks later' (OP) they met again at Fontainebleau.

EF: met Napoleon on 6th and 27th.

26 June (Gall) He wrote to the Foreign Minister that Napoleon was 'an enthusiastic supporter of German unification plans, that to say Lesser German ones, certainly not including Austria'. 'The next day' (Gall), Bismarck and Napoleon met again at Fontainebleau at which they had the alliance discussion described in Memoirs below. (I.e Gall says there were two meetings on 26th and 27th.) In his Memoirs, he records his meeting on 26 June, a long walk with Napoleon at Fontainebleau. Napoleon asked if Wilhelm was interested in alliance. Bismarck — the King is very friendly but with what object? Napoleon — no particular object but to develop an 'intimate and durable entente'. Then he said that Austria has been making great overtures and Metternich has been given unprecedented powers to negotiate: 'You could never imagine what overtures were made to me by Austria a few days ago.' Bismarck's view reported to Wilhelm — *we could not count on Austria to stick with the Confederation nor hope for Austria's free consent to the improvement of Prussia's position in Germany.* OP: in his report he stressed Austrian perfidy, and was careful to stress that he did not advise a treaty with France. Wilhelm nevertheless told Bernstorff, 'Tell him that I shall never consent to an alliance with France.' (p162).

Gall (p179): Bismarck commented on the discussion that while Napoleon may be exaggerating regarding Metternich, it 'cannot be a complete fabrication... Vienna will sacrifice Venetia and the left bank of the Rhine if they gain in exchange, on the *right* bank, a federal constitution with Austrian supremacy assured. Sentimental Germanity [*Deutschtum*] has never in centuries been the guiding principle of Vienna's Hofburg, and talk of Germany is only tolerated there as long as it serves as a leading-rein for ourselves and the Würzburgers.' A Franco-Austrian alliance has not happened since 1852, *not* because of Austrian reluctance, but because of Napoleon's 'lack of confidence in the future of Austria, which is not in a position to sail with the currently powerful wind of its [subject] nationalities'. This does not mean we should pursue a French alliance but 'we must pursue no policy that would involve our depending upon the loyal federal partnership of Austria against France and we must not let ourselves be guided by the hopes that Austria will ever *voluntarily* agree to an improvement of our position in Germany.'

'Even in Frankfurt I became convinced that Austria's policy under certain circumstances would shrink from no combination and would sacrifice Venetia or the left bank of the Rhine if by these means they could purchase a Confederacy on the right bank securing the preponderance of Austria over Prussia'. If there was no Franco-Austrian alliance now it was not because of affection from Napoleon for Prussia but because of 'his doubts whether Austria would be in a position to sail with the nationality breeze then blowing strong'. (Memoirs, p284)

Late June / early July (Gall) '6 day' (Gall) trip to England 'until 4 July' (Steinberg), met Palmerston, Russell. He reported that Palmerston thought it 'an unavoidable necessity that Your Majesty should choose a ministry from among the oppositional majority... He did not know the Prussian constitution in detail but derived the necessity for always choosing the Crown's advisors from the Parliamentary majority from the nature of representative constitutions in general... [Palmerston] and, to an only slightly lesser degree, Lord Russell too were in a state of complete ignorance about the direction pursued in the field of foreign policy by the Party in Prussia from which, in the opinion of British ministers, a new Prussian Cabinet ought to be formed.' Palmerston wanted peace between Prussia and Austria and did not realise that the group he wanted to form the next cabinet would soon be in conflict with Austria if they had their way. When Bismarck pointed out to Palmerston (8 July) that the King's domestic problems would disappear if he used the army for the purposes of the *Nationalverein*, Palmerston 'considered it a falsification of the fact, which, in his opinion, I had permitted myself in the interests of my reactionary party views'. He wrote to his wife (5 July) that 'the British Ministers know less about Prussia than about Japan and Mongolia' (Gall).

In London, Bismarck met with Disraeli, the Russian Ambassador (Brunnow), and the Austrian Ambassador (Vitzthum) and Disraeli later recounted the famous scene in which Bismarck told him: 'I shall soon be compelled to undertake the conduct of the Prussian government. My first care will be to reorganize the army, with or without the help of the Landtag... As soon as the army shall have been brought into such a condition as to inspire respect, I shall seize the first best pretext to declare war against Austria, dissolve the German Diet, subdue the minor states and give national unity to Germany under Prussian leadership. I have come here to say this to the Queen's ministers' (Monypenny & Buckle, *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli* (6 vols, 1910–20), iv, p339). Disraeli apparently said to Count Vitzthum on the way home afterwards, "Take care of that man, he means what he says.'

AJPT suggests this story was 'manufactured later' by Disraeli. Gall says that a version of this appears in a note by the Saxon envoy, Count Vitzthum and Pflanze and Steinberg assume it is roughly right but embellished. Gall: Bismarck left Britain sure that Britain would stay out of continental conflicts unless forced, reluctantly, to join from fear for the balance of power; she was concerned with domestic and imperial problems far from the calculations of central Europe. Napoleon is supposed to have said of reports from London, '*Ce n'est pas un home serieux*'.

July Augusta wrote a note: 'As the envoy [in Frankfurt] Herr v. B always filled those *governments friendly to Prussia* with mistrust and affected those houses *hostile to Prussia* with political views which did not correspond to the position of Prussia in Germany but to its status as a threatening great power.' (Emphasis in original)

July In response to the March developments (cf. March for background), Rechberg revived the Bruck plan and proposed that the Zollverein and Habsburg Empire unite in a common market in 1865, with equalisation of tariffs by 1877; and a new representative body for the Confederation made up of delegates from the parliaments of member states. Austria was ready to make 'sacrifices' to stop a 'wall' being built between itself and Germany, he said. Prussia rejected the offer, on 21 July recognised Italy, and pushed for ratification of the French deal with the Zollverein 2/8. Cf. 21/7.

July The 'most dramatic occurrence of the year' in Frankfurt (Pflanze): a gigantic hunting festival in which 10,000 men armed with hunting rifles paraded before the confederate diet. Small-German sentiment dominated such events but Great-Germanists kept pushing too,

encouraged by Vienna's apparent shifts towards constitutional government as Prussia sank into reaction. Gall: majority opinion outside Prussia wanted a solution involving Austria.

4 July Left London, 5 July back in Paris (Steinberg).

15 July Bismarck wrote to Roon that Bernstorff has written that the King has not decided what to do with him, whether to appoint him to government or not. Bismarck therefore requested leave so he could recover his health away from 'this confounded lounging bachelor's life' in Paris as 'a political dilettante'. He wrote that the Government should draw out the argument over the budget as the public gets more bored and tempt the opposition into fighting over trifles — when they are tiring and losing confidence, then is the time to appoint Bismarck along with 'a good deal of clatter about granting charters and *coups d'état*, my old reputation for light-hearted violence will come in useful and they will think "Now for it!" Then all the Centre and the "halfs" will be ready for negotiation.' But maybe the King won't appoint me if he hasn't already. 'How have we Germans come by our reputation for retiring modesty? There is not one of us who does not think that he knows better about everything, from managing a war to picking fleas from a dog, than all the learned specialists; while in other countries there are many people who admit they know less about some things than other people, and are therefore ready to give in and keep silence.' In July, Roon was studying the history of Charles and Strafford.

15 July Bismarck writes to Bernstorff. 'The longer Parliament sits and talks the better things stand for the Crown in the eyes of public opinion... Patient and persistent attempts to reach agreement simply lead us into the passage between the Scylla of conditions at home resembling those in the Electorate of Hesse and the Charybdis of Parliamentary rule.'

17 July Leave granted. He headed for south of France, via Bordeaux to Biarritz by 4th (Steinberg). Catherine Orlov (a very grand Princess Trubetskoy, married to Russia's ambassador to Brussels), aged 22, beautiful, arrived in Biarritz 8 August. As tension mounted in Berlin, they wandered in the Pyrenees from 1/9 (gall) where they stayed a night in a shepherd's hut on a mountain to see the dawn, climbed the Col de Venasque and gazed on Spain. Here he enjoyed what he later referred to in English as 'a Paradise Lost' with the princess. He carried an onyx medallion that she gave him on his watch-chain for the rest of his life. While he travelled with her, his mail was forwarded to him according to a pre-planned system. 20/8 He wrote to his sister: 'I live with them [Orlovs] as if we were alone in the country and I have somewhat fallen in love with the dear little princess. You know how that occasionally happens to me without doing any damage to Joanna.'

(In September 1863, he wrote to her, 'I console myself by opening my cigar case, where I always find by one of your big hairpins a small yellow flower plucked at Superbagnères, moss from Port de Venasque and a twig of olive tree from the terraces of Avignon. German sentimentality you will say. No matter. One day I will have the satisfaction of showing you these souvenirs of happy times to which I think back as [in English] a paradise lost.' October 1864, using a meeting with Napoleon as an excuse, he met with Cathy again. June 1871 he wrote to her reminding her of this trip. After her premature death in 1875 he wrote to her husband, 'The memory of that time, when I discovered this magic, has accompanied me through the political storms and tribulations like the last reflection of a beautiful day that is no more.' Their correspondence was edited by her grandson and is partly lost.)

21 July (EF/OP) Prussian government recognised the new Italian kingdom (against Wilhelm's wishes) as part of counter-offensive against Austria. This was a mix of 'glove in the face and knee in the groin' (Showalter).

2 August (OP/EF/Showalter) The trade deal with France, agreed in March, was officially signed and Prussia sought the votes of Zollverein to ratify. (Showalter confused: critical point in row over Zollverein seems to have happened in Dec 1863, see below??) Karolyi told Bernstorff that Austria's existence was at stake, 'Likewise for Prussia' was Bernstorff's reply and if Austria persisted the result would be a 'struggle of life and death' (OP implies (p160) this was soon after 2/8 but possibly around 14th).

August Austria, Bavaria, Württemberg and others proposed the Austrian plan (touted since Jan, see above) including a representative body made up of delegates from parliaments of the states. On

14th, the Frankfurt Diet discussed a motion to refer the Austrian proposal to committee. Usedom, Prussia's delegate, denounced it vehemently, attacked the idea of confederate reform by majority vote, and challenged the delegates to support Prussia in creating instead a strong executive and a national parliament. Austria won the argument for committee discussion by a big majority. 14-18 August The Government let it be known in the press that it regarded the constitution as having a gap: it did not say what to do in such a crisis over the budget so the government could govern as it saw fit. This provoked a serious backlash ('a storm of protest' Gall).

Sep-Oct In London Palmerston was under growing pressure to recognise the South. Some liberals were campaigning for it. The South had won victories in the summer, Washington was vulnerable to occupation. There were discussions between London and Paris of a diplomatic intervention for mediation. Russell was pushing. But in September the North's success in the battle of Antietam (still the bloodiest day in American history) gave Lincoln space and days later he published his Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, coming into force on 1 January 1863. Palmerston pulled the Cabinet back to neutrality.

7 Sep Wilhelm told Roon Bismarck was impossible because of his views on a French alliance. ('He thought me more fanatical than I was.' Memoirs.)

9 Sep In August 1862 while he was with Kathy Orlov the government had spun the 'gap theory' to the press, infuriating the liberals. On 9/9 the Cabinet agreed unanimously that if the budget were rejected then 'the constitutional foundation of the administration [was] removed', and the government could not allow this to continue 'without wholly abandoning the constitution'. Gall: the Cabinet 'explicitly repudiated' the gap theory and this was in effect a suggestion to Wilhelm to compromise, given the hopelessness of more elections. Wilhelm refused to accept the need for compromise. Cf. 17/9.

10 Sep (Gall, EF) He arrived in Toulouse in the evening. Received Roon's letter from 31 Aug... Roon: You will have to take over as minister president but without portfolio. 'There must and will be fighting. Concessions and compromises are not to be thought off; least of all is the king disposed towards them. We may therefore look with certainty to dangerous catastrophes quite independently of the complications of our foreign policy which already exhibits some very interesting entanglements. I can imagine that you, my old friend, are greatly disgusted... You must have certainty and I will do my part to procure you this certainty before long... I am therefore pretending that I have your consent in advising your appointment, *for the present*, to the presidency without portfolio, which I have hitherto avoided doing; it cannot be managed in any other way!.. The internal catastrophe in my opinion will not take place now, but early in the spring, and then you must necessarily be present.'

12 Sep (OP) Wilhelm dismissed the idea of Bismarck in the Cabinet, 'Bismarck is pressing for an alliance with France, which I will never accept.'

12 Sep Bismarck to Roon from Toulouse: complained that he's been on holiday but still no decision. 'My belongings are still at St Petersburg and will be snowed up there. My carriages are at Stettin, my horses in the country near Berlin, my family in Pomerania, and I myself on high road.' (Hasn't seen family since 8 May.) He will write to Bernstorff looking for clarity: he would be happy to stay in Paris but it must be a permanent post, no more back and forth, and would be happy to become Minister President *without portfolio* if commanded, though he thinks it an error. His trip has improved his health to its best state for a decade. Procure any certainty for me 'and I will paint angels' wings on your photograph'. EF: He told Bernstorff he wanted to speak to the King but did not mention this in his Memoirs or later tales of his appointment.

16 Sep Wilhelm allowed Bernstorff to summon Bismarck to Berlin (Pflanze). Gall: Bernstorff telegraphed: 'The King consents to your coming here now. And I advise you to come immediately since His Majesty will soon be leaving again.' Gall: Bismarck had made plans months earlier to come to Berlin in September, his account in his Memoirs is false. Roon had suggested compromise which was *not* Bismarck's view, and a compromise would have meant no opportunity for takeover by Bismarck.

17 Sep Roon suggested in Parliament he was willing to concede a two-year service in return for funds necessary for military reforms — ‘an almost total victory for the government’ (Gall). But Crown Council on 17th: Wilhelm says NO compromise, tells ministers he will abdicate if unsupported and is summoning the Crown Prince (which conservatives dreaded).

Gall: Wilhelm drafted a deed of abdication that evening.

GC: there were two meetings between Wilhelm and advisers on 17th at which he rejected compromise and said if he could not rule in accordance with his conscience he would abdicate. Roon was horrified and abandoned his attempt at compromise which infuriated Heydt and others. Showalter: Roon did not consult Wilhelm before his words in Parliament. As soon as Wilhelm mentioned abdication, Roon abandoned the compromise.

Fischer: Roon was actually playing a subtle game with complex ‘concessions’ that amounted to a win — but Wilhelm didn’t want such schemes so Roon dropped them.

18 Sep Roon sent telegram to Paris: ‘Periculum in mora. Depechez vouz. L’oncle de Maurice, Henning’. The code had been agreed in advance.

Early morning of 19 Sep (OP) Bismarck boarded the train to Berlin.

19 Sep Heydt, Bernstorff and Holzbrinck resigned. OP: this left Wilhelm with ‘no other choice’ than Bismarck but he still hesitated. (Lerman says the Landtag rejected the budget for army reorganisation on 19th but nobody else says this, cf. below 23/9.)

19-20 Discussions between Wilhelm and the Crown Prince re abdication at Babelsberg (near Potsdam). CP urged his father not to abdicate — he would then be seriously hampered in his own exercise of royal authority. Gall: Unclear what Wilhelm and his son said to each other about Bismarck 19-20 and whether Wilhelm repeated that he would not appoint him.

Saturday 20 Sep Bismarck arrived in Berlin in the morning. Gall: he spoke to Roon briefly.

EF: he arrived in Berlin in the evening and was ‘immediately’ called to see the CP.

OP: The Crown Prince left Berlin on 20th to rejoin family in Thuringia believing Bismarck’s appointment was NOT imminent and was shocked to discover on 23 Sep that he had been misled — but Pflanze also says that Bismarck spoke to Crown Prince ‘immediately on arriving from Paris’ which was 20th (OP p175) and others also say they met on 20th including in Memoirs. Logical implication of Pflanze: they met but somehow the CP did not connect the dots and realise Bismarck might be in play as PM.

Gall (p193): The CP sent for Bismarck on the evening of the 20th. Bismarck tried to keep their discussion brief and formal to avoid compromising himself with Wilhelm. EF has a similar take. (So Pflanze says the CP/Bismarck spoke earlier on 20th then the CP left Berlin, Gall says they spoke in the evening of 20th.)

Bismarck said in his Memoirs (p.294ff) that he had not said much to CP as he had not seen the German papers and did not want to give his views before seeing the King. Wilhelm heard that Bismarck had already seen his son and told Roon on Sunday 21st, when they discussed a meeting with Bismarck the next day: ‘He’s no good either, he has already been to see my son.’ Roon told Bismarck this.

Sun 21 Sep EF: After church at Potsdam, Roon persuaded Wilhelm to see Bismarck. There seem to be almost no accounts of this meeting, and most don’t mention it, with all the historic drama being the next day. (Is EF confused?)

Mon 22 Sep Bismarck and Wilhelm met at ‘the Gothic summer palace at Babelsberg for the fateful interview’ (OP). EF: The only account we have is Bismarck’s.

Wilhelm pointed to the draft of his abdication and explained the situation. He told Bismarck that he could no longer reign unless he could find ministers who would ‘conduct my government without subjecting me to the will of the parliamentary majority’.

Bismarck wrote in Memoirs that the King had an abdication document on his table. Bismarck offered to serve and said that Roon and others would too. Wilhelm asked if he would push through army reform against Parliament.

Bismarck: Yes.

Wilhelm: Then it is my duty, with your help, to try to continue the battle, and I shall not abdicate.

Memoirs: 'I do not know whether he destroyed the document, which was lying on the table, or whether he preserved it *in rei memoriam*.' (Did it survive?)

They walked in the garden. The King gave him an 8 page document to read.

Bismarck: it isn't a question of liberal or conservative government, it's a question of parliamentary or monarchical rule — and it must be the latter even if it means 'a period of dictatorship... In this situation I shall be quite open in giving you my opinion, if your Majesty should request of me things that I do not consider right, but if you insist on your own judgement I would rather perish with the King than desert your Majesty in the contest against parliamentary government.'

Wilhelm tore up the document and made to throw it in a ditch but Bismarck told him it may fall into the wrong hands. His appointment as 'minister and interim chairman of the ministry' was made public the next day, nomination as President was kept in reserve until he'd corresponded with Prince von Hohenzollern who still occupied the post constitutionally (?? p. 297). (All books report appointment as President on 23rd.) Delay in appointing him foreign minister until 8/10.

The Crown Prince wrote in his diary: 'People will immediately smell reaction, mistrust is bound to arise on all sides, and poor papa will cause myself many a difficult hour through this false character!... The party of the *Kreuzzeitung* will not cease and desist from its hypocritical web of intrigue to regain all the influence it lost until now! Did it have to come to that, after the regency was established in November 1858 with such brilliant prospects? Poor mama, how bitterly she will feel this appointment of her mortal enemy!'

*

The landscape Bismarck faced...

'[T]he designation of Bismarck was received by the bourgeois with resounding laughter. The fellows were in general extraordinarily confident and to some extent rash.' Engels-Marx, after a trip to Germany.

'[T]he Bismarck ministry, moreover, is absolutely nothing but the realised pious wish of the Small German members of the Progressive Party. They were enthusiastic about the 'man of progress' Louis Bonaparte. Now they see what a 'Bonapartist' ministry in Prussia means. Bismarck has indeed been appointed by Bonaparte (and Russia), as it were.' Marx.

Bismarck moved into the Foreign Ministry at Wilhelmstrasse 76, 'the least pretentious building' on the street (Pflanze). (Gall: he took over 74 and 76, the Presidential Chancellery and the Foreign Ministry.) His offices and living quarters were on the second floor. From then until he left office in 1890, he maintained no fancy porters, no flunkies. Everything was so simple and modest that visitors would comment on it. His office was plain, not grand, and Pflanze writes that 'no provincial prefect in France' would have been content with it. Grand aristocrats would often be astonished at the state of Bismarck's office and his estates that he bought later — he put his cash into buying land and forests, which he loved, not houses and art. He soon ordered that papers be written in German, not French.

Prussia's position by 1862 was 'exceedingly advantageous' and Austria was 'a paralytic if not a corpse, had not a friend in Europe' (Mosse). This seems true to us because we can see how Bismarck took advantage of the dynamics. It was not so obvious to contemporaries.

Lerman judges that 'there was a fundamental continuity' in policy before and after Bismarck, such as Bernstorff's pushing for a small German policy in December 1861 and Prussian officials constantly excluding Austria from the *Zollverein*, and 'the direction those [Prussian] interests dictated in Germany was clear' (p44). I think this is ahistorical and wrong. Of course Bismarck did not represent an entirely clean break and there were policies he continued, notably the exclusion of Austria from the *Zollverein*. But in no sense was the direction in which Prussian interests

directed 'clear'. It was extremely murky to contemporaries and Bismarck's path was strongly opposed by both the majority of liberals, who thought Prussia must liberalise in order to lead in Germany, and the Prussian aristocracy, who thought that Prussia's default should be alliance with Austria against Napoleon and liberalism. Wilhelm and other conventional conservatives wanted nothing to do with a policy of exploiting possibilities with Napoleon in order to pressure Austria.

Pflanze writes (p164) that the outlines of his plan to exploit German nationalism had been conceived 1858-9 when Wilhelm wanted to reconcile the Crown with its subjects, politically conscious Germans were enthusiastic about the 'New Era' cabinet, and the *Nationalverein* seemed supportive. These conditions had passed by October, when the *Nationalverein* called for the constitution of 1849.

Bismarck did not have the support of a single part of Parliament, not even the conservative ultras. He did not have control of the ministers. All ministers were appointed by the king. The King could summon meetings with anybody, Bismarck could not exclude rivals like Goltz. In Memoirs he writes that the very difficult European situation was made worse by '**dynastic sentimentality and courtier-like Byzantinism**', personified by the Queen, Schleinitz, princely influences, family correspondence, hostile elements at court, Jesuit organs, 'intriguers and capable rivals, such as Goltz and Harry Arnim, or incapable ones', such as former ministers and parliamentarians.

Goltz was 'a man of unusual competence and energy ... ambitious and capable... he had less vanity and more patriotism and character [than Arnim but also] more bitterness and temper in his disposition'. Although he promoted Arnim and Goltz, 'I experienced at the hands of these what Yglano experiences from Anselmo in Chamisso's poem.' 1p101. He would sometimes tell a story about Goltz coming to visit him in his Frankfurt days. Goltz was so unpleasant about everyone that, when he left and was barked at by Bismarck's dog, Bismarck called out to him from the window, 'Goltz, don't bite my dog.'

He wrote of officials: 'The majority of these highly expert officials were at heart with the opposition against the [government], which they regarded as a brief episode in the progressive liberalisation of the bureaucratic machine, and though the most able of them were too conscientious to hamper the action of the government, yet when their official sense of duty permitted, **they offered a passive resistance which was considerable**. This state of things produced a strange situation: von Bodelschwingh, who in respect of his personal convictions constituted the extreme Right of the Ministry commonly gave his vote on the extreme Left.' In general he regarded his fellow ministers as mostly unfit with only Roon, his boyhood friend, a staunch ally. Only with Roon did he discuss his plans and 'he was unequalled in the loyalty, staunchness, and resourcefulness with which he helped to surmount the crisis'.

Gall (p199): When he took power 'his appraisal of the circumstances was well wide of reality', he 'completely and utterly misjudged the situation' and his initial reactions to the situation were 'in every respect inappropriate ... from the standpoint of a man thinking purely in terms of success'. He thought he would be able to pressure the middle classes by mobilising the lower classes. But the boom and rapid industrialisation of the 1850s strengthened the middle classes politically as well as economically. Antagonisms between the propertied middle class and the petty bourgeois strata of the craft trades and small-scale commerce were greatly diminished compared to 1848-50. His success came *not* from playing off the middle-classes and lower classes against each other, but instead from the insight 'painfully acquired after a whole series of setbacks' that he must ally with at least some sections of the middle-classes and share power with them.

Outside the *Kreuzzeitung* network, his appointment was universally greeted with disapproval. Many thought it was the prelude to a military coup against the constitution and possibly war. It was seen

as a desperate last throw of the reactionaries' dice and most assumed he would not last long. Rumours started immediately of his imminent dismissal.

Gall argues that Bismarck was pushed towards a 'white' revolutionary foreign policy by the internal struggle. But his views on Austria and foreign policy *predated* the constitutional conflict and he would have 'sneered' at the idea he was forced into his foreign policy by the liberals (Pflanze — surely right). I think Gall is wrong to think of foreign policy as produced by domestic struggle — there is vast evidence suggesting the opposite, that Bismarck had clear views on the right foreign path that he stuck to despite massive pressure. An example is the way he stood alone from November 1863 in rejecting the alliance with Augustenburg. If Gall were right, then he would have done as almost everyone urged and sided with Augustenburg and with the nationalist liberals.

Lerman: He 'inherited' his foreign policy. No. Before him, Wilhelm had stopped ministers making friendly overtures towards France. Wilhelm had no desire for a high stakes attempt to force Austria out of influence in north Germany.

His liberal opponents thought:

1. Stand firm on army funding and Bismarck will fall, the king will concede.
2. Only a liberal Prussia can unite Germany.
3. The monarchy cannot tap vital economic, intellectual, popular forces.

His goals in winter 1862

- A. Protect the independence of the Prussian monarchy and the army against the growing liberal forces and civil service sympathies for the liberals.
- B. Expand Prussian power in North Germany, undermine the Bund's constraints, push Austria out of North Germany. If possible do this without war, increase pressure and use circumstances as they arise to do so, if necessary war but only in the right circumstances when Austria is isolated. E.g to Karolyi, 4/12/62: 'Our relations must become either better or worse than they now are... If Austria persists in her present direction and restricts our action and the air we breathe, then you will conjure up catastrophes which in the last analysis must end in a fight.'
- C. Expand his own freedom of manoeuvre, evade all constraints from all parties, break alliances between enemies. He did not control his Cabinet or King. He was surrounded by people who despised him and wanted to replace him.

Some aspects of his approach:

- He looked for ways to a) compromise with the liberals, b) to divide them, while also c) hinting about a black reactionary alternative he could explore. He was held back by Wilhelm's intransigence (encouraged by Manteuffel).
- He looked for ways to expand Prussian power by mobilising the desire of Prussia's liberal/commercial classes for economic liberalism and German nationalism.
- He looked for ways to use the negotiations over the renewal of the *Zollverein* in 1865 and combine with ideas about a *Zollverein* parliament to: a) divide liberals and b) divide Austria from German states. E.g 7/61 and Christmas Day 1862 to Wilhelm: The *Zollverein* is 'the most effectual basis for the common handling of the economic and eventually of the political interests of the German states.' Jan 1863 to Diet: 'The German nation can find a competent organ through which to influence the course of common affairs only in a representative body chosen directly by the people of each confederate state according to its population.'
- Threaten all Powers with the possibility of alliance with their main opponents to nudge them into closer relations with Prussia and disconnect them from other alliances. Only Russia was

pretty secure in 1862 and caused few problems 1862-6 but this was partly because of the Alvensleben Convention in early 1863, his first test (and which most thought he was wrong about).

- With Austria, he said repeatedly: either a) a deal (Austria lets Prussia dominate north Germany, Prussia supporting her against France and Italy) or b) conflict (diplomatic and ultimately if necessary military). Use *Zollverein* and nationalism against Austria. Scuppered Austria's Bund reform plans in 1863.
- Disconnect liberals from popular support. Most liberals regarded it as axiomatic that German unification would have to be based on liberal principles and required the liberalisation of Prussia. Bismarck thought they had little popular support, did not understand the realities of power politics, and Prussia could expand without move toward the British system with government responsible to parliament.
- Grip the civil service and stop officials attacking the government.
- Use the media and campaign groups.

*

23 September The *Landtag* passed the 1862 budget but struck out all funds for military reorganisation by 308-11 and rejected by 273-68 the army reform. (Some confusion over numbers in different accounts is because of conflation of two different votes.) Wilhelm used this fact in a letter (evening of 23rd) to his wife to justify his appointment of Bismarck. 'Faced with such conduct I could not hesitate nor would my conscience and my sense of duty any longer allow me to hesitate to set against this unflinching resolve one equally unflinching.' Parliament's decision would 'decree the ruin of the army and the country'.

OP: It was now expected that the government would have to either accept 2 years or restore the army to its status of 1859. Now the conflict changed from 'the army question' to 'constitutional conflict'.

Steinberg writes (p178) that this vote was on 22nd (Sunday), Wilhelm asked what he should do, and Roon said 'Your Majesty, summon Bismarck.' This cannot be right.

24 Sep (Gall) The official press announced his appointment in the evening.

24 Sep (EF) He wrote to Joanna: 'It's not a cheerful prospect and I feel frightened every morning when I wake up. But it must be... Accept what God has sent us, it is not an easy matter for me.'

24 Sep Bleichröder to James Rothschild (Paris): we'll get an 'entirely reactionary ministry', the market for Prussian bonds is down. At this time, Bleichröder did not see Bismarck much but this changed over the next 3 months and by Christmas his letters to Paris were better informed.

(Stern, p28)

24 Sep Russell overthrew British policy by advising Denmark to cede Holstein to the German Confederation. Derby: 'What on earth does [Russell] mean by turning round on Denmark, and taking up all at once the Prussian view about the Duchies? And how can Palmerston stand it, the original author of the Protocol which was the basis of the treaty of 1852?' Derby and Malmesbury were furious. On 30/11 under pressure from Palmerston, Russell recanted his Danish despatch.

28 September (29th, Gall & EF) He withdrew the 1863 budget Bill and promised to reintroduce it along with a new Bill on military organisation in the next session.

30 September Meeting of the budget committee where he gave his first speech as Minister President and probably his most famous, for the memorable line about 'iron and blood' (often written 'blood and iron' in English books). There are no minutes and reports vary on details. No English book I've seen simply prints the whole speech or the different versions for it. [A useful exercise: collect all contemporary records of the speech that secondary sources refer to, publish originals and translations. I'll pay someone £500 to do this!]

This is my attempt at reconstruction:

'It is not to Prussia's liberalism that Germany looks but to its power. Bavaria, Wurttemberg and Baden may indulge in liberalism, no one will expect them to take Prussia's role. Prussia must gather and keep its strength for the right moment, which has been missed several times already. Prussia's frontiers as laid down by the Vienna treaties are not favourable for the healthy existence of the state. The great questions of the day will not be settled by speeches and majority decisions – that was the great mistake of 1848 and 1849 – but by iron and blood. The previous year's allocation [of military funds] was agreed, for what reasons does not matter... If no budget can be agreed, then it is *tabula rasa*; there is no way out under the constitution, it would be one interpretation against another...' EF writes that one account paraphrases him '... he was sincerely seeking the path of accommodation.'

At one point he waved the olive twig he kept in his cigar case (from his trip with Cathy Orlov) as a gesture of his willingness to compromise, for the sake of unity against foreigners.

OP (p202): He argued that under the constitution, the King, Chamber of Deputies and House of Lords have equal voices in the passage of legislation but all rights not reserved in the constitution were reserved to the Crown. If the three entities cannot agree a budget, then the Crown must follow 'the law of necessity' and allocate expenditures as it sees fit. **'The question of law easily becomes a question of power.'** This was the infamous *Lucketheorie* (the 'gap theory') whereby the ambiguity or silence of the constitution was deemed to allow the king's government to proceed with government as it wished, 'since the life of the nation cannot stand still even for a

second' (Bismarck). It was a 'crude attempt' (Pflanze) to dangle the promise of foreign success before Parliament to pull apart the opposition. OP: the 'gap'/loophole had been intended by the constitution's authors. (Oddly Pflanze does not quote these words in his account of this speech but only out of context a few pages later. Cf. p.180-1 and 202) NB. He had referred to this gap in a speech on 24 Feb 1851.

Gall (p204): He was 'clearly at pains, not least through the relaxed and courteous manner in which he spoke, to defuse the tension, to play down the antagonisms'. He clearly wanted to diffuse tension and focus attention on the aim of army reform — strengthening Prussia as a prerequisite to progress on the German question. He stressed that antagonisms had been dramatised out of proportion by an irresponsible media and by 'a host of Catalinish characters who have a major interest in upheavals'. Gall: 'He even hinted that he was open to suggestions on the question of the two-year period of service.' He was looking for the liberals to give way on the budget issue in return for genuine cooperation with the government on the German issue including appointments to the Cabinet. When he was attacked by Virchow (eminent pathologist) for pursuing war to solve domestic problems, he replied: 'To seek conflicts abroad in order to get over difficulties at home, there he must protest; that would be frivolous; he was not looking for deals; he was talking about conflicts that we would not be able to avoid, without our having sought them' (*Berliner Allgemeine Zeitung*).

Gall: Virchow's argument had 'more than the whiff of hypocrisy' given the Progressive Party's official policy was to support war if needed for progress towards a Lesser Germany (!) but the argument was nevertheless effective with liberal opinion and all those who saw Bismarck as a dangerous pirate.

This speech caused him serious problems. The historian Treitschke: 'When I hear so shallow a country squire as this Bismarck bragging about the "iron and blood" with which he intends to subdue Germany, the meanness of it seems to me to be exceeded only by the absurdity.' Even Roon (who walked home with him after the meeting) was irritated by his 'witty sallies'.

He was looking for ways to split the liberal opposition. **He argued to liberals that a compromise was needed and the conflict was undermining foreign policy: according to GC, he said at the time (to whom?) that the continuation of the conflict was 'an essential and grave obstacle' to successful action abroad.** He suggested Wilhelm could be brought round to 2 years but it would need time. Seems Wilhelm did not hear about some of his risky discussions around this time.

At this time most liberals regarded it as 'axiomatic' (OP) that German unification would have to be based on liberal principles and required the liberalisation of Prussia, hence they thought Bismarck's Napoleonic tendencies were doomed. It's unclear how many at this time really wanted a shift to the British system of proper parliamentary government. When Bismarck accused them of seeking this, many shouted their denials. In 1862, they were mostly fighting to stop the reactionaries upsetting the constitution. They wanted to force the resignation of Bismarck and see the monarchy back down but not a big change and they opposed a democratic franchise. Further, its leaders never had confidence that the public really supported them. (Hoverbeck said astutely a bit later, 'I am very much afraid that this entire notion about our moral success is only an illusion. All our deliberations have no influence on the great bulk of the population, on the third and partly the second class of voters... A general suffrage would possibly bring us naked absolutism once again. We who work for the freedom of the people do not therefore stand on a solid foundation and we cannot therefore count on sweeping successes.') Nor was the conflict about economics. The Government and liberal opposition continued to cooperate on many economic issues. Many of the liberal deputies were aristocratic landowners who were supporting what they saw as political modernisation, the *Rechtsstaat*, the constitution.

Lerman: in his first months, Bismarck had to deal with all sorts of craziness including rumours that Wilhelm had multiple mistresses. Bismarck tried to make himself indispensable in matters large and small. In Jan 1864 he was getting half a dozen letters a day from Wilhelm which he replied to in his own hand.

Oct At Coburg the *Nationalverein* demanded the Frankfurt constitution of 1849.

Oct (EF) *Deutscher Handelstag*, an organisation of chambers of commerce, voted in favour of the Franco-Prussian trade deal, a blow to Austria.

Oct Moritz von Blanckenburg set up *Die Patriotische Vereinigung*.

Oct Meeting of the German Commercial Association in Munich. Hamerow: since the summer Vienna had been urging the Austrian chambers of commerce to send delegates to defend their interests. The effort had been hindered by the refusal of many non-German businessmen in the Empire to participate. Berlin had encouraged the Prussian chambers of commerce to attend. The meeting resolved 102-93 that 'the prompt execution of the commercial treaty should not be called in question'. Even 8/33 Bavarian votes supported the trade agreement. 95-51 of the *Zollverein* delegates supported it. The business/commercial classes across Germany were moving behind the Prussian policy and supporting the *Zollverein* despite Austria's counter-offensive.

1 Oct He met Twesten. At first he argued that the Crown and Upper Chamber could reject the amendments made to the budget in the lower chamber, and the expenditure *not* agreed by the elected deputies could then still be spent — the business of the state could not stand still. When Twesten argued he said he did not want to make a stand on this principle. Re the army reforms, he was prepared to concede on two years but Wilhelm 'was like a horse shying from a new object, that would get even more recalcitrant if force was used, but might gradually get accustomed. For the moment it was impossible ... but by the winter he hoped to change the king's mind, by persuasion, and through the influence of people in whom he trusted, also through the advice given by generals and conferences with them'. A few days later he told Unruh that he had wanted a compromise but been disappointed (EF, p85). OP: Twesten and Unruh wanted compromise and dreaded the prospect of fruitless conflict with extremes on each side empowered. Waldeck, a judge on the democratic left, had the support of ~40.

But Hamerow (Vol 2, p167): Twesten supported force. 'The revolution is in my eyes now only a question of expediency. As soon as it has prospect of success, it must be dared. I want no end of the crisis without a humiliating, disgraceful abdication. Kingship by the grace of God needs a salutary and terribly severe chastisement.' On the other side, Sybel said that 'You would find no man in all of Prussia who would not consider a step involving open violence a folly and a crime, since it would be sure to encounter immediate suppression.'

Hamerow quotes in this context a speech by Twesten (but books give dates in 1861 and 1862 for this and it looks from google as though it was probably given before Bismarck took over): 'I believe that many people perceive therein [Cavour/Italy] a model for that which we desire for our own fatherland... If some day a Prussian minister would step forward in the same way and say ... "I have moved boundary markers, violated international law, and torn up treaties, as Count Cavour has done", gentlemen, I believe that we will then not condemn him. And if an inexorable fate should carry him off in the midst of his brilliant career, as happened to the former, before he achieved his high goal to its full extent, then we will erect a monument to him, as the history of Italy will erect one to Count Cavour, and I believe that even a soaring ambition will be content with such a monument.'

3 Oct Bismarck, worried about Wilhelm's reaction to his 'iron and blood' speech, wrote a long letter blaming false reporting of his speech for the tumult. The King was in Baden for his wife's birthday, therefore amid many enemies of Bismarck.

3 Oct Evening (OP): He had dinner with Schlözer who recorded: 'We drank a lot of champagne which loosened even more his naturally loose tongue. He exulted about pulling the wool over everyone's eyes. Partly by himself and partly through others he is seeking to get the king to concede the two-year service period. In the House of Lords he paints the reaction he plans in colours so black that ... the lords are becoming anxious... [In the Landtag] he appears at one moment very unbending but in the next hints at his desire to mediate. Finally, he intends to make the German cabinets believe that the king is hard put to restrain the Cavourism of his new prime minister.' (Steinberg says this was 'two days later' after his meeting with the King, but a) OP says 3rd and OP is much more reliable, b) the date JS gives in a footnote is not 'two days' after the 4th

but the 3rd. JS adds: Schlözer made one indiscreet comment too many in Berlin about his chats with Bismarck and found himself transferred to Rome, on which he commented: 'Tannhauser, end of Act II. Otto sings, "To Rome, thou sinner."'")

4 Oct He went to meet Wilhelm's train 50 miles south of Berlin. The station (Jüterbog) was being built and he sat on an upturned wheelbarrow left by the workers waiting for the train to arrive. He found the King travelling alone in a carriage, depressed. A famous scene...

'[I] waited for him in the still unfinished railway station filled with third-class travellers, seated in the dark on an overturned wheelbarrow... My object in going to meet him was to counteract the probable effect press criticisms... The after-effects of his discussions with his wife was an obvious depression, and when I begged permission to narrate the events which had occurred during his absence, he interrupted me with the words: "I can perfectly well see where all this will end. Over there in front of the Opera house under my window, they will cut off your head, and mine a little while afterwards."

'I guessed, and it was afterwards confirmed by witnesses, that during his week's stay at Baden his mind had been worked upon with variations on the theme of Polignac, Strafford, and Louis XVI. When he was silent I answered with the short remark, "*Et après, sire.*" "*Après* indeed: we shall all be dead," answered the king. "Yes, then we shall be dead, but we must all die sooner or later, and can we perish more honourably? I fighting for my King's cause, and your Majesty sealing with your own blood your rights as King by the grace of God... Your Majesty is bound to fight, you cannot capitulate, you must, even at the risk of bodily danger, go forth to meet any attempt at coercion." 'As I continued to speak in this sense, the King grew more and more animated and began to assume the part of the the officer fighting for kingdom and fatherland. In presence of external and personal danger he possessed a rare and absolutely natural fearlessness, whether on the field of battle or in the face of attempts on his life his attitude in any external danger was elevating and inspiring... He felt as though he had been touched in his military honour and was in the position of an officer who has orders to hold a certain position to the death no matter whether he perishes in the task or not. This set him on a course of thought which was quite familiar to him and in a few minutes he was restored to the confidence which he had lost at Baden and even recovered his cheerfulness. To give up his life for King and fatherland was the duty of an officer, still more that of the King... As soon as he regarded his position from the point of view of military honour, it had no more terror for him than the command to defend what might prove a desperate position would have for any ordinary Prussian officer. This raised him above the anxiety about the criticism which public opinion, history, and his wife might pass on his political tactics.... The King, who I found weary, depressed, and discouraged had, even before we arrived in Berlin, developed a cheerful, I might almost say joyous and combative disposition, which was plainly evident to the ministers and officials who received him on his arrival.' (Memoirs, p314ff).

Steinberg says (p.182) that at Baden Wilhelm agreed to remove Bismarck but Gall says the opposite (p206) — that Wilhelm forbade discussion of the subject with the Grand Duke who wrote grumpy letters about it. Pflanze says (p182) discussions at Baden ignored the Prussia crisis but when the liberals' demand for the 1849 constitution was raised, Wilhelm shouted so loudly at his son-in-law he could be heard in the street. (How good are the sources on this story?!). EF implies it is wrong (p86).

10 Oct Roon tried to get Wilhelm to agree a compromise: e.g let middle classes buy their children out of the third year, which would also give the government revenue and divide the opposition. Wilhelm rejected, urged by Manteuffel. He scribbled marginalia like 'ruin of the troops... death warrant of army'. Bismarck had stayed on the sidelines but (OP) Roon acted with his approval. He wrote to Bernstorff: 'For the infantry two years, with volunteers, would be satisfactory. But if the King insisted on ten years I would not refuse obedience in such matters. In my opinion there are more important questions than that of purchasing momentary peace with the present parliament by this concession. Peace with such people would not be lasting. As far as I'm concerned, therefore, no surrender.'

He now had to look for other paths. He thought that a combination of renewing the *Zollverein* in 1865 and some sort of assembly based on it was Prussia's main chance, plus warning Austria to get out of Germany or else.

GC: Bismarck and Roon drafted for submission to Parliament a Bill that would have fixed the army at a percentage of the population and set out a distinction between conscripts who would serve 2 years and long-term volunteers who would serve longer, with a scheme of taxes for their support that seemed to suggest middle classes could buy their sons out of service. It was a clever move: 'it seems likely that if it had not won the opposition it might have split it' (GC) but EM sabotaged it with the King. After this Bismarck stopped pushing for a compromise (p162).

JS: Roon presented a compromise proposal: allow those with means to purchase release from the 3rd year and set army at 1% of population. Wilhelm and Manteuffel opposed. Landtag voted against by 150-17. Bismarck withdrew compromise proposals and shifted attention to the civil service. (His reference to a vote is not in GC or Pflanze??)

'Early October' (Pflanze), 13th (Gall, EF) Parliament was prorogued until 14 January. After the House of Lords rejected the amended budget bill for 1862 and 'exceeded its authority' (OP) by accepting the original bill proposed by the government, there was uproar over the powers of the Lords. Bismarck walked to the rostrum and **prorogued Parliament.**

Gall: there was a 'speech from the throne' on the occasion of this adjournment in which Bismarck had the King speak as if he still wanted an agreement. Also span a story to the *Norddeutscher Allgemeine Zeitung* (controlled by Bismarck's 'Literary Bureau' in the FO) to similar effect.

(*Norddeutscher Allgemeine Zeitung* was a liberal Austro-ophile paper which converted to support Bismarck. Still only had circulation of 2,000 in 1863, 4,500 in 1864. Hamerow: overall conservative circulation of ~40,000 versus liberal 250,000. The biggest circulation periodical was *Gartenlaube* which was quite apolitical.)

13 Oct Bismarck wrote to Crown Prince about the need for a campaign to intimidate the civil service into obedience.

15 Oct Napoleon replaced Thouvenel as Foreign Minister, quite friendly to Prussia, with Drouyn de Lhuys, more friendly to Austria: 'the most disastrous step in the history of the Second Empire' (AJPT). Also Clarendon and Cowley thought him a liar which made cooperation with Britain very hard.

15 Oct Bismarck discussed ideas for a *Zollverein* parliament with a Hessian liberal, Oetker — cf. note to Wilhelm, Christmas Day 1862.

16 Oct Bismarck's first discussion with Buchanan on Schleswig-Holstein (Steeffel, 1932). He suggested he was happy with the British approach but warned the issue aroused passions in Germany that would have to be managed. (But numerous sources give 28/10 as date Buchanan became ambassador — was this discussion unofficial, was he 'acting'?)

28 Oct The German Reformverein was established in Frankfurt by Great-Germanists to counter the Nationalverein. Hamerow: among the 500 participants were conservatives, clericals, liberals, even democrats; the social distinction of the gathering was impressive. Prussian supporters mostly stayed away for fear of losing influence in Berlin. Its goals: reform of the Bund including a vigorous federal executive authority with national representation, inclusion of all Germany, reform by agreement, admission of Austria to *Zollverein*.

In November, Austria and her allies agreed to press the Diet to accept the new Austrian reform plans and most of the states opposed Prussia's trade deal with France, though businessmen increasingly supported it.

28 Oct Buchanan became Ambassador in Berlin until 15 Sep 1864.

End of October Bismarck went to Paris. Napoleon assured him that France would remain neutral in a conflict between Prussia and Austria. In Paris, he told Austria's Ambassador, Prince Metternich, that he intended to make Prussia dominant in north Germany. He preferred to do this 'through understanding and close union with Austria' but if opposed would use 'every means ... without special scruple'.

29 Oct To Wilhelm: I dined with Napoleon at St. Cloud on 28th, will see him again in a few days. Napoleon said that Drouyn de Lhuys' appointment 'is without any bias for Austria or against Prussia and has significance only for Italian relations. The Emperor's utterances with respect to us are more friendly than ever... Coolness towards England noticeable on the part of the Emperor and of the minister.'

Nov Bismarck threatened violence in Hesse over the constitutional conflict, he forced the Elector to do a deal with his parliament. EF: a deliberate signal to Prussian liberals he was not what they assumed, it's possible he hoped that his deliberately humiliating behaviour would lead to resistance and an excuse to send in troops (plausible!).

11 November Bismarck spoke to Ludwig Gerlach. Gerlach recorded that Bismarck said, '**One can accomplish a great deal even under a constitution by such ordinary means as fear, enticement, and the like. If nothing avails, one can still resort to a *coup d'état*.**' On 23/11, he wrote to Prince Henry VII of Reuss that 'we are going to carry out a sharp raid on the civil servants ... [I] am intent on bringing the civil service back into discipline at any price.' (OP: Ritter says that Bismarck had 'nothing in common with the *Staatsreich* plans of the military cabinet' but this is clearly not the case. His view was that his own conscience and loyalty to the Crown overruled any duties to the constitution.)

19 November Lassalle proposed in his 'What Now?' speech that the deputies go on strike and refuse to meet until Bismarck restored their constitutional powers (Steinberg). OP: this shocked the liberals who totally opposed it (p.222). Lassalle's immediate reaction to Bismarck was: 'He remains a thoroughly reactionary fellow and Junker from whom only reactionary experiments are to be expected. The only thing which distinguishes him from the ordinary party of the *Kreuzzeitung* is that he does not have its doctrinaire consistency but is baroque! He is a baroque man of the *Kreuzzeitung*... He will either only begin an obligato sabre-rattling in order to squeeze out the money for the army by pretending there will be a war, although people are already firmly resolved not to snap at this bait, or he will really try to bring about some sort of "tasteless pastry" of reactionary unity.'

28 Nov (Barry) Roon asked Moltke to work on possible operations against Denmark. Moltke replied with a first draft 6 December and more detailed work later in December.

29 Nov Bismarck 'The Eastern question is an area in which we can help our friends and harm our enemies without being inhibited to any great extent by direct interests of our own.'

December Eulenburg replaced Jagow as Interior Minister. Made it easier for Bismarck to attack liberal officials. (Pflanze: 40% of 1862 chamber were political officials.) Eulenburg's first act was to instruct officials their primary duty was to support the King 'unconditionally'.

4 [AJPT 5th; Memoirs says 4th] December Bismarck had a revealing discussion with Count Karolyi, Austria's Ambassador in Berlin: he said that Austria should cease looking for hegemony in Germany and shift its centre of gravity to Hungary, in return for which Prussia would regard Austria's interests in Italy and the East as vital and would help protect them. The alternative would be war. '**Our relations must become either better or worse than they now are.** I am prepared for a joint attempt to improve them. If it fails through your refusal, do not reckon on our allowing ourselves to be bound by the friendly phrases of the Diet. You will have to deal with us as one of the great powers of Europe.' Austria deliberately leaked the exchange to damage Bismarck and many indeed thought he was mad (Gall). To Karolyi: '**If Austria persists in her present direction and restricts our action and the air we breathe, then you will conjure up catastrophes which in the last analysis must end in a fight.**'

'If you are willing to take a direction similar to that of Metternich's policy, you will find us ready to conclude a hard and fast alliance with you ... and you won't find any other Prussian statesmen so indifferent to public opinion and so willing to follow a genuine Cabinet policy ... as I!' (Clark)

In his Memoirs, Bismarck writes that if Austria had taken seriously what he'd said and 'sought an understanding with Prussia instead of trying to coerce her by means of majorities and other

influences, we should probably have seen, or at any rate made trial of, a period of dualistic policy in Germany. It is certainly very doubtful if, without the clearing effect of the experiences of 1866 and 1870, such a system could have developed peacefully in a sense acceptable to German national sentiment, and with permanent avoidance of internal dissensions. The belief in the military superiority of Austria was too strong, both at Vienna and at the courts of the middle states, for a *modus vivendi* on the footing of equality with Prussia. The proof that this was the case at Vienna lay in the proclamations that were found in the knapsacks of the Austrian soldiers together with the new uniforms ordered for the entry into Berlin. The contents of those documents betrayed the certainty with which the Austrians had counted on the victorious occupation of the Prussian provinces. The refusal to entertain the latest Prussian proposals for peace ... demonstrates the certainty with which a victory in this was reckoned on.' (p373)

Friedjung (p33): while in Paris in the summer he had met some of the Hungarian nationalist exiles such as Count von Seherr-Toss and told them that he wanted to unify Germany under Prussia, this needed Hungarian help: 'If we win, Hungary too will get her freedom.' As soon as he was Minister President he met them again and stayed in touch. (Cf. Seherr-Toss *Memoirs*, p140)

5 Dec Manteuffel to Roon — no compromise, 'the game must be played to the end'.

10 Dec Eulenburg issued orders to the civil service that they must 'support the constitutional rights of the Crown... [T]he distinction which your position lends you is not to be misused to promote political movements which run counter to the views and the will of the government'.

22 Dec Letter from Bismarck to Prussian envoy in Karlsruhe, Count Fleming (JS says 'unknown correspondent' but Gall names him): 'I am certain that the whole Danish business can be settled in a way desirable for us only by war. The occasion for such a war can be found at any moment that we find favourable for waging it... The disadvantage of having signed the London Protocol we share with Austria and cannot free ourselves from the consequences of that signature without war. It cannot be foreseen what development of the German Federal relations is destined for the future. As long, however, as they remain about the same as in the past, I cannot regard it as in the interest of Prussia to wage a war in order, as the most favourable result, to install in [SH] a new Grand Duke [i.e. Augustenburg], who in fear of Prussian lust for annexation, will vote against us in the Diet and whose government, in spite of the gratitude due to Prussia for its installation, will be a ready object of Austrian intrigues.'

22 Dec Morier had been travelling around Germany gathering intelligence on German views on the *Zollverein*, Franco-Prussian treaty, Austrian policy. He reported back to London that Rechberg was not able to make progress with an Anglo-Austrian deal. Rechberg stated that the Austrian parliament does not care for a liberal commercial policy for its own sake but only as a means to a closer union with the *Zollverein*. Austria is opposing the French treaty for political, not commercial reasons.

Christmas Day Bismarck to the King: We must aim for 'liberation from the web of federal treaties'. He suggested the introduction of the majority principle into the *Zollverein* and a directly elected *Zollverein* parliament to represent the people of the various states, not the states. The *Zollverein* is 'the most effectual basis for the common handling of the economic and eventually of the political interests of the German states'. Until the end of 1865 and the expiry of the *Zollverein* agreements, he counselled caution 'if possible ensuring the realisation of our intentions for the period from 1 January 1866 without allowing ourselves to be distracted by concern for bogus successes in the intervening period. That intervening period will in any case be filled with diplomatic battles over the shape of the future after the year 1865.' He also stressed the advantages of the free trade treaty with France.

Gall (p217): Bismarck saw the future lay with the programme of Lesser German liberalism and 'therefore, power-politician that he was, made it his own, as it were taking the political wind out of his opponents' sails... *Ipse faciam* [I will do it myself] — that was the watchword and the extent of the secret... His much-invoked juggling encountered precisely defined limits in the realities of the given balance of power and interests.' To this program and these forces he 'surrendered almost

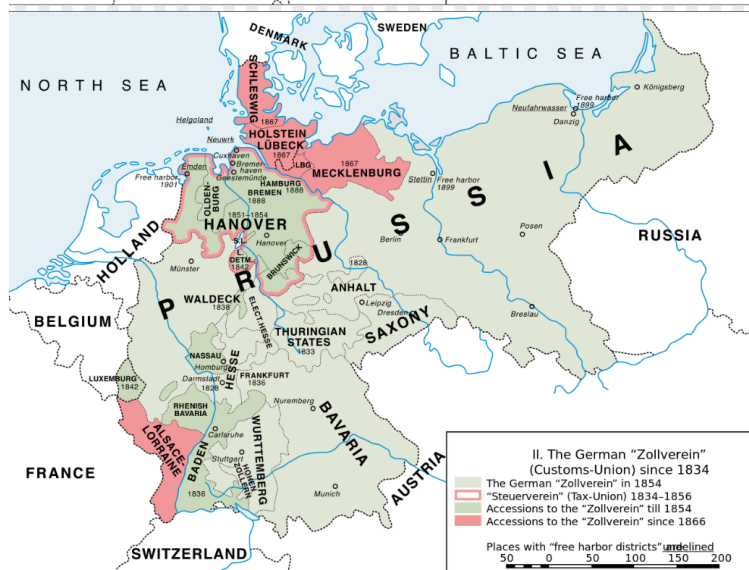
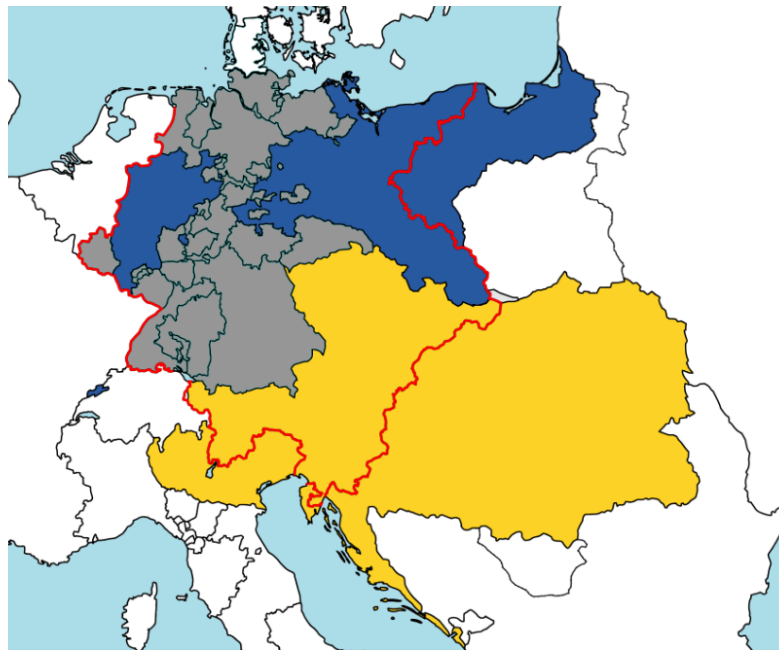
without reserve and at the sacrifice of convictions and objectives of his own that ran in a different direction'. No, this is overstated. Yes to a considerable extent he went along with the liberal program regarding the economy, free trade, regulation, banking and so on. But the program of Lesser German liberalism wanted the liberalisation of the Prussian state (not its continued control by the monarchy, Junkers and military), not the triumph of the old Prussian state on the battlefield, not universal suffrage, not alliance with Austria against Augustenburg. Yes he clearly would have preferred it if the liberal opposition had crumbled earlier and part of it had joined him in propagandising in Germany, but he stuck to his guns and in the end the liberals split and quarrelled under the pressure he applied. Lesser German liberalism was united in supporting Augustenburg in the Schleswig-Holstein affair but he opposed this very strong wave in opinion, even though the King himself supported it — he did not 'surrender' to it.

26 December He spoke again to Karolyi (Gall). If Austria persists in seeking hegemony, '*Nous croiserons les bajonettes*' [we'll cross bayonets].

30 December France told Bismarck it will not agree his proposal whereby France would not offer free trade deals to other *Zollverein* states. (OP: He hoped that if France did this, then after the *Zollverein* expired in 1865 he would be able to push the lesser states to accept majority vote and a parliament, which Prussia would dominate.) This unwelcome development, says Pflanze, meant he now did a characteristic shift. He now drew away from France and made offers to Austria, hoping to spook the French into a rethink. He had to draw closer to Austria and scare Napoleon while also scuppering Austria's reform plan for good. In his talks with Karolyi and Thun in early 1863, he sometimes talked of an 'offensive-defensive alliance', sometimes of Prussian self-sufficiency. He spoke of the dangers of revolution *and* the potential for exploiting it. He denied wanting to divide Germany into two spheres and discussed plans for doing so. He suggested the two powers 'abstract' the European from the German situation, cooperating in the former while disagreeing on the latter. OP: he deployed 'appeasement, threat, enticement and diversion in rapid succession'. Karolyi found it 'truly astonishing with what rapidity Herr von Bismarck goes from one extreme to another diametrically opposed'.

Late December Bleichröder to Rothschild: Bismarck does not expect the conflict with parliament to be resolved in the next session.

Blue: Prussia 1834; Grey: areas included in Zollverein until 1866; Yellow: Austrian possessions outside the Zollverein; Red: borders of German Confederation



Salon des Refusés.

What Is To Be Done?, Chernyshevsky. Written as a response to *Fathers and Sons*. Advocated a society based on socialist ideas, using producer cooperatives based on the peasant commune. Dostoyevsky mocked and attacked the ideas in *Notes from the Underground* and *The Devils*.

Jan He made clear threats to the lesser states not to support Austria's plan, saying that if Prussia lost the vote Prussia would declare herself no longer bound by the Confederation constitution.

1 Jan Lincoln issued the Emancipation Declaration. Made it easier for Palmerston to shift to support for the North.

3 Jan Buchanan-Russell, re what Bismarck had said in discussion about war with Austria: 'at all events Prussia will not provoke war but it was impossible that Austria and Prussia could long remain at peace when their conflicting interests could no longer be treated judicially in the Diet and that war within a year or two might be considered certain.' Russell wanted Austria to make concessions to Prussia and develop a compromise for Bund reform.

5 Jan In a conversation with Count Thun who he had known since Frankfurt and was now Austrian ambassador in Russia (passing through Berlin, called for a chat). He said, 'I am impervious to this kind of sentimental policy-making, I have no feeling for German nationality, for me a war against the king of Bavaria ... is exactly the same as a war against France... Austria and Prussia are states which are too great to be bound by the text of a treaty. They can be guided only by their interests and their convenience. If any treaty should be in the way of these interests and convenience that treaty must be broken.' Rechberg made two big exclamation marks in the margin of Thun's report 'but that was all he did' (Eyck, p66).

EF: 'The last thing Austria could do' was surrender its position in Germany regardless of compensation in Italy or the Balkans. Bismarck 'cannot really have thought a division of Germany between Austria and Prussia roughly along the River Main was likely... No one could expect the Austrians to retreat from Germany without a fight.' (I disagree. If Austria had accurately assessed her own strength and internal discussion had been forced to focus on choosing priorities, this could have happened. But FJ remained determined to avoid choosing until too late. Stranger things have happened, one never knows when ministers will be changed, people will die etc. I think Bismarck was suggesting something he thought a rational Vienna could accept, even if he thought it unlikely to happen.)

Jan Joanna wrote to Keudell that Bismarck hardly spoke to the family over breakfast while reading papers, worked all day, had working dinners, finished at around 1am, slept badly, day after day: 'we never see him at all'.

14 Jan Russell-Bloomfield: Austria should let Prussia have a higher position in the Bund and abandon her recent scheme. Russell tried to encourage Berlin and Vienna to compromise.

18 Jan Bleichröder to Rothschild: many rumours about the end of Bismarck and Wilhelm withdrawing from affairs of state. His letters from this period show how well-connected contemporaries could not see how Bismarck or anybody could break out of the impasse.

21 Jan (OP) A revolt breaks out in Poland. (Memoirs — I/1.) Prussian Poland was not affected but Berlin rushed troops to the area and proclaimed the equivalent of martial law. Alvensleben was sent to St P. Bismarck feared an independent Poland would strive for the frontiers of 1772 including Posen and West Prussia. It would be a natural ally of France. He was worried that the reform party led by Gorchakov might withdraw troops and dominoes might fall.

As OP says, his brutal comments about the Poles were unmatched by comments about any other racial group, though his views were political rather than racial/cultural. (Although he never pursued anything like a policy of extermination, and we must beware looking at such comments in the light of Nazi history, he did write things like: 'Strike the Poles in such a way that they will despair of their lives. I have every sympathy for their plight but if we are to exist we can do nothing other than exterminate them. The wolf too is not responsible for being what God has made it but we kill it,

nevertheless, if we can' (to sister, 2/1861) and 'we cannot carry on the struggle against this element according to the rules of civil justice, but only according to those of war' (to Bernstorff). In May (Gall) he wrote, 'Restoring the kingdom of Poland in any shape or form is tantamount to creating an ally for any enemy that chooses to attack us.' And cf. unpublished letter 20/4/48)

22 Jan The Austrian reform plan was defeated in the Bund by 9-7. **The Prussian envoy issued a shocking statement to the Bund:** 'The German nation can find a competent organ through which to influence the course of common affairs only in a **representative body chosen directly by the people of each confederate state** according to its population.' He sprang the idea on a startled German public to prevent King Wilhelm from going to a congress of princes called by the Emperor of Austria. (NB. Pflanze says that he only 'hinted' at universal suffrage now and September, but others write he promised it!?) Showalter: his victory over the Austrian plan was 'purchased at the price of most of Prussia's remaining moral influence in Germany'. (Overstated.)

27 Jan Virchow (a famous surgeon and a liberal antagonist of Bismarck for many years) moved an uncompromising reply to the Address from the throne and declared the government's behaviour unconstitutional. **Bismarck's speech in reply went into the details of the constitutional conflict, rejected the liberals' arguments, and provoked the liberals to great anger.** (Bits of this speech are often quoted on different days in January.)

'Less than a year ago the assertion that the parliament and the Crown were disputing for control of Prussia was energetically disclaimed, but when you have adopted the Address as it is submitted, you will no longer be able to maintain this disclaimer... If, gentlemen, you had the unilateral right to determine the budget and its items definitively; if you had the right to demand of His Majesty the King the dismissal of those ministers in whom you have no confidence; if you had the right, by means of budgetary resolutions, to determine the size and organisation of the army; if you had the right which, under the constitution you do not have but to which you lay claim in your Address, to exercise ultimate control over the relations between the executive power of the government and its officials – then you would indeed possess full governmental power in this country. Your Address is based on these claims if it has any basis at all. I believe, therefore, that I can describe its practical import very simply: this Address claims to deprive the royal house of Hohenzollern of its constitutional rights and to transfer them to the majority of this House.

'You advance this demand in the form of a declaration that the constitution is violated to the extent that the Crown and the House of Peers do not submit to your will; you level the accusation of violating the constitution at the ministry, and not at the Crown, whose loyalty to the constitution, you do not call into question. I have already rejected this distinction in the sessions of the committee. You know as well as anyone in Prussia that the ministry acts in the name and on the command of His Majesty the King... An English ministry, whatever it may call itself, is a parliamentary one, a ministry of the majority in parliament; but we are ministers of the King...

'You find a violation of the constitution specifically with respect to Article 99... But Article 99 continues: "the latter (i.e. the budget) is determined annually by a law". Article 62 lays down with incontrovertible clarity how a law comes into being. It says that for the completion of every law, including therefore the budget law, the agreement of the Crown and both chambers is necessary...

'Each of these three concurrent rights is in theory unlimited, one as strong as the other. If agreement among the three forces is not reached, the constitution contains no statement whatever as to which of them must yield...

'If compromise is made impossible because one of the powers involved wishes to enforce its own will with doctrinaire absolutism, then the series of compromises is broken and is replaced by conflicts. **Since the life of the state cannot stand still, conflicts become a question of power. Whoever holds the power proceeds according to his will, for the life of the state cannot remain still even for a second...** [He recounts how the Crown and ministry had tried to compromise but been rejected.] It is no new discovery that there is a gap in the constitution here... I am content with the necessity of the state's existence and that it cannot pass its time in pessimistic reflections on what would happen if the flow of money dries up. Necessity alone is

decisive, we have taken account of this necessity... The rights granted to you by the constitution you shall enjoy in full measure; what you demand beyond this we shall refuse, and we shall untiringly defend the rights of the Crown against your claims...

'The Prussian monarchy has not yet fulfilled its mission, it is not yet ready to form a mere ornamental decoration in your constitutional edifice, or to become a dead cog in the machinery of parliamentary government.'

One of the deputies, a liberal landowner (and former minister), rejected his argument and replied: "Might before right" ... is not in my view a proposition that is capable of sustaining the dynasty in Prussia in the long run... "*Right before might: justitia fundamentum regnorum*". That is the device of the Prussian kings and will ever remain so.'

29 Jan To Parliament: 'The pathway a Prussian ministry is able to take is never very wide. The man from the far Left, when he becomes a minister, will have to move to his right, and the man from the far Right, when he becomes a minister, will have to move to his left, and there is no room on this narrow trail that the government of any large country is able to tread for the kind of sweeping divagations of doctrine that a man may unfold as an orator or as a member of Parliament.' Gall says in a speech 'at the end of January' (29th?) he again responded to the accusation that he was looking for chances to exploit foreign affairs for domestic purposes: 'the means would be worse than the evil itself, and I have already on previous occasions, when I was likewise accused of pursuing it, described such a policy as frivolous'.

1 Feb Directive to Alvensleben: 'In our view the position of both courts with regard to the Polish revolution is essentially that of two allies threatened by a common enemy.' On 2 Feb he wrote a letter to Gorchakov for Alvensleben to take with him: 'We should like, with regard to any Polish *insurrection* as with regard to any danger from abroad, for that fine remark to be proved true that your Emperor made to Goltz in Moscow, namely that Russia and Prussia act against joint dangers in solidarity as if they were *one* country.'

3 Feb To Wilhelm: reiterated that S-H could only be solved by war. (Cf. 22/12/62)

8 February Alvensleben Convention: agreement between Russia and Prussia on dealing with the Polish revolt. Bismarck refused to answer questions about it in the Landtag and the only source of information was the foreign press. Cf. 26/2.

Most historians conclude it was a mistake, including Pflanze ('little doubt that [it] was a bad mistake' p195), Gall, Feuchtwanger and Showalter ('an equally serious miscalculation' to his January alienation of the Bund).

OP: it gave Napoleon a way to attack Prussia, rally support in France. (True but this was short-term. Long-term it worsened French relations with Russia which was more important.)

Gall: it helped forestall France and Russia becoming closer but the price was 'exceptionally high': it alienated liberals in Germany even more, and worsened relations with France, Britain and Austria. (This contradicts Gall's argument (cf. 25/12/62) that domestic pressures drove his foreign policy — in fact, the Convention was evidence that he managed diplomacy in its own terms, *not* to fit with domestic pressures. And Bismarck was proved right that the immediate *rapprochement* between France and Britain did not matter and would not last.) Gall: he would not have agreed with Lassalle that the liberals were arguing over abstract principles because they did not have confidence in mass support [BUT that's exactly what he had argued for years before now and subsequently!].

Lerman: his diplomacy was 'clumsy' and his moves were widely seen as a mistake at the time, including by the Tsar, but this may have conned his competitors into underestimating him.

GC is one of the few who does not treat it as an error (p168).

Eyck: it was not a 'master-stroke', his claims for it were false, it even caused problems with Gorchakov — but Eyck nevertheless writes that 'it is true that the Polish insurrection caused a regrouping of the European powers which facilitated Bismarck's task considerably.'

EF: it was a mistake and his position was 'never weaker' than in the weeks and months after it. He always rejected criticisms of this move and defended it in his Memoirs. His relations with Russia strengthened, relations between France and Russia weakened because Napoleon supported the

Poles, and Austro-Russian relations weakened. Also Anglo-French relations worsened because of diplomatic wrangling over the incident.

Moscow: Gorchakov opposed it as unnecessary and undignified but the Tsar overruled him.

Gorchakov tried to stop it coming into force. Bismarck to Buchanan on 14/3: Gorchakov 'endeavoured to render it unpopular and succeeded in rendering it inoperative so far as the principle of the frontier being crossed by the troops of either Government was in question.' Although the details were unknown, the fact of some sort of deal was soon known. Within a fortnight Cowley was reporting from Paris that feeling for Poland was running very high.

Memoirs — his attitude on taking over was that... A powerful force in Russia wanted liberalisation and this group also wanted concessions in Poland while conservatives opposed both. He had seen these debates when in St P. If Russia had been pro-Polish, it could have revived Russo-French sympathies which was bad. 'It was our interest to oppose the party in the Russian cabinet which had Polish proclivities'. Alexander II did not have confidence in Russian administration of Poland. Austria and Russia were hostile. France would probably not be friendly in the long run but Napoleon's 'transitory and miscalculated support' might be exploited.

'With Russia we stood on the same footing as with England insofar as with neither had we diverging interests of capital importance, and with both were united by an ancient amity. From England we might expect platonic goodwill, with letters and newspaper articles full of good advice, but hardly more. The support of the Tsar, on the other hand, meant in certain circumstances more than mere benevolent neutrality.'

He was therefore determined to foster every sympathy. The Convention's significance was 'diplomatic rather than military'. It signalled 'victory in the Russian cabinet of Prussian over Polish policy' and a defeat for Gorchakov. It was decided by the Tsar against his ministers. It therefore 'amply accomplished its purpose' and 'said "checkmate" in the game which anti-Polish monarchism was then playing against philo-Polish Pan-Slavism within the Russian cabinet... It was assumed that liberal concessions, if granted to the Poles, could not be withheld from the Russians. Russian constitutionalists were therefore philo-Polish.' (Memoirs p345ff)

11 Feb Bismarck told the British Ambassador that if Russia folded, he would occupy Poland himself. Buchanan: 'Europe will never stand for this.'

Bismarck: 'Who is Europe?'

Buchanan: 'Several great nations.'

Bismarck asked 'whether those nations were at one amongst themselves in this respect'. (*The Spectator* denounced Bismarck as Lord Tyrconnel, a henchman of James II.) Russell had encouraged the Poles and spoke publicly with moral indignation but could do nothing. Derby and Disraeli were scathing. Disraeli: 'the Polish question is a diplomatic Frankenstein created out of cadaverous elements by the mystic blundering of Lord Russell.'

17 Feb House of Deputies declared that ministers were responsible with their persons and fortunes for unconstitutional expenditure. Bismarck (Memoirs): I was advised to make over my estate to my brother but declined.

20 Feb To Wilhelm: 'Seeing how matters seem to be shaping themselves in Poland we shall hardly be called upon for active cooperation there and the convention thus gives us the advantage of having secured cheaply for the future the gratitude of the Tsar Alexander and the Russian sympathy.'

21 Feb Napoleon proposed identical notes from Paris, London and Vienna censuring Prussian intervention in Poland. British Cabinet met: Russell supported 'a policy of intervention in conjunction with France' but Palmerston was more cautious and warned of 'ulterior plans of aggrandizement'. Victoria was alarmed at some of Russell's ideas which she thought might get Britain into a war with Germany and she wanted milder language used in any admonition of Prussia. Over the next few weeks there were all sorts of discussions in London but essentially the fears of France starting a war dominated thinking and acted to limit Anglo-French cooperation, despite great sympathy for the Poles. Grey warned the Queen (24th) that joining with France diplomatically could increase the chances of a war which would be embarrassing — France would

claim it was to support the freedom of nations, like with Italy. The Queen pushed Granville (President of the Council) to restrain Palmerston (cf. Mosse p110ff).

21 Feb Bleichröder thought the crisis over Alvensleben would lead to the fall of the government within days and set out a code to inform Rothschild of Bismarck's successor. If Bismarck went, the markets would rise, predicted Bleichröder.

22 Feb Tsar wrote on a report from Berlin 'our dear Bismarck is a terrible blunderer'. Gorchakov referred (28th) to his 'despair over the humiliation of our friend Bismarck' and his correspondence around this time with the Russian ambassador at Berlin was full of sarcasm and criticism of Bismarck's rashness, mendacity, indiscretions etc (Lord, p42).

24 Feb Rumours in Berlin that Bismarck had offered resignation or shortly would. Cowley reported that Goltz was nervous about joint Anglo-French action.

25 Feb British Cabinet met, agreed not to act aggressively with France. On 26th Austria declined Napoleon's invitation.

26 Feb He accused deputies of siding with the Poles. Attacked Unruh. When he was called to order by the speaker, he contemptuously denied ministers were subject to his discipline.

26 Feb Palmerston to Russell: We should focus on Russia 'the real culprit, rather than to Prussia, an incidental accomplice... public opinion in this country as well as France is getting strong upon this subject, and we shall not stand well if we do not do something.'

27 Feb Bismarck claimed to Buchanan that the military cabinet had arranged the Alvensleben convention without his knowledge and it was unlikely to come into force.

27 Feb Commons debate — Commons was 'unanimously Polish' (Palmerston-Russell). Russell therefore worked on a despatch to Russia.

28 Feb Russell confirmed to Paris that Britain would not join a remonstrance in Berlin. 1 March Cowley: Napoleon and ministers are 'bitterly disappointed at your declining the combined note'.

At the end of February Bismarck tried to prorogue the Landtag again but only Roon supported him in Cabinet and Wilhelm would not do it.

March Napoleon offered Austria an alliance based on a major (fantastical!) shuffling of territories (described by Empress Eugénie to Metternich): Austria to surrender Galicia to an independent Poland and Venetia to Italy but be compensated in Germany and Balkans, France to get the Rhine, Prussia to get Saxony, Hanover and other territory in the north, Russia to get Asiatic Turkey, with dispossessed princes being sent to 'civilise and monarchise' the Americas on the Mexican model! Austria declined. Clark: Metternich wanted to do it but Vienna thought a French alliance was only a last resort to forestall a Franco-Prussian alliance, very unlikely in the immediate future given the Polish affair. Cf. 23/3. (Rechberg wrote to Drouyn on 11 March.) OP: Metternich thought Napoleon shared the 'phantasmagoria' of his wife, 'his language recalls the great epochs of his reign' preceding the Crimean and Italian wars.

Bismarck talked down the Convention in London and Vienna. To Russia and Austria he talked the language of the Holy Alliance. Pressure on Bismarck declined. Napoleon ran out of steam and Russia was increasingly pro-Prussian. Original issue fizzled out quite quickly. (Pflanze describes the effects of the row over the Alvensleben Convention as basically a win for Bismarck but he still concludes it was 'a bad mistake'.)

March Bismarck asked Eulenburg to look into the possibility of state supervised pension funds. Nothing came back.

During March there was toing and froing between London-Paris-Vienna about ideas for joint notes. Austria was not opposed but finding languages that all could agree and which actually pressured Russia was impossible. Cf. Palmerston 7/4.

Spring According to Bismarck, in 1881 after Wilhelm recounted to him a dream he'd had, Bismarck told him: 'Your Majesty's story encourages me to describe a dream which I had in the spring of 1863 when there seemed no way out of our difficulties. I dreamt I was riding along a narrow mountain path with a precipice on my right and on the left sheer rock. Gradually the path narrowed until my horse refused to go on and there was no room to turn round or dismount. Then I struck the rocks with my whip and called on God. The rock-face fell like a piece of stage-

property and revealed a broad road leading down to the Bohemian plain, and everywhere there were Prussian troops and colours. I awoke strengthened and joyful.' (!)

1 March (Pflanze) Lassalle issued the manifesto that led to the **German Workers Association** (founded 23 May). Demanded universal, direct and equal suffrage.

2 March A despatch from Russell to Napier called on Russia to have 'an immediate and unconditional amnesty to his revolted Polish subjects'.

3 March Gorchakov told Napier, British Ambassador at St Petersburg, that the Convention had never been ratified and could be considered 'a dead letter'. 4/3 Bismarck told Buchanan that no practical effect had been given to it.

4 March (Lerman) To Gerlach: **Officials are resisting his opposition to promotion by seniority, desire to open up civil service to talent etc**, and Eulenburg, though better than Lippe (minister of justice), is not much use. (In 1865 Lippe threatened resignation, other ministers complained to the King over civil service reform to Bismarck's disgust.) To Gerlach (19/3): he wanted to go on a hunt where all the game were Oberpräsidenten (over-presidents) and Geheimräte (privy counsellors). Cf. Pflanze 207-8.

10 March At Windsor Castle the Prince of Wales married Princess Alexandra of Denmark.

14 March Bismarck told Britain that he could not support measures tending to support Polish independence, that would help France and weaken Prussia.

17 March (OP) Bismarck tried to organise a demonstration of public support for the army and king, on an anniversary, but fell flat. A small crowd cheered the CP but let the King pass in silence.

23 March Rechberg drafted a memo to guide Metternich (cf. above). An alliance with France is not impossible but is 'very remote from practical politics'. To cede Venetia, we'd have to get compensation in Germany and the Balkans 'by launching into an adventurous policy contrary to Austria's traditions' — it would mean 'the annihilation of Prussia' and Austria having to defend German nationality and territory. Ceding Galicia would also require compensation from France. Rechberg wasn't totally ruling out ceding Venetia but was making clear how complex and unlikely a deal seemed.

30 March Danish King issued the 'March Patent' which suggested Denmark would incorporate Schleswig under the authority of the Danish legislature. Carr: 'Strictly speaking the March patent was an attempt to buy off Holstein, not to annex Schleswig ... but contemporaries could hardly be blamed for assuming that annexation was the government's objective after the huge popular gathering in Copenhagen's Casino theatre on 28 March had rejected all but dynastic links with German Holstein.' (Cf. Carr for a summary of the centuries of history of the S-H conflict.)

Steefel (p55): it was an attempt to deal with the constant interference of the Bund in Danish affairs and the impossibility of reaching agreement with the Holstein Estates. The Patent established a constitution for the affairs of Holstein that meant while no law went into force in Holstein without agreement of its Estates, their opposition could not stop the law going into effect in Denmark and Schleswig. Even the British agreed it contravened Denmark's agreement with Austria and Prussia in 1851-2.

31 March After weeks of tension many thought Napoleon might start a war. Metternich said there was 'no other issue to the Polish question than war' (31/3 Cowley-Russell).

April When deputies shouted that parliament would not support the government in a war with Denmark over S-H, he replied, 'I can assure you and I can assure the world that **if we find it necessary to carry on a war, we shall do so with or without your consent.**' As the deputies seethed, he wrote a letter to his old friend Motley: 'Looked at individually these people [parliamentary representatives] are in part very shrewd, mostly educated, regular German university culture ... as soon as they assemble *in corpore*, they are dumb in the mass, though individually intelligent... I hate politics... The babblers cannot rule Prussia... They have too little wit and too much complacency, *dumm und dreist [stupid and brazen]*'

In April, the cabinet ordered provincial governors to report on political conduct and sympathies of their officials as a first step to disciplinary action. In 1862 142/325 deputies (40%) were officials on active service. Landowners were 24%. In general, Bismarck tried to persecute officials as hard as he could, but was held back by other ministers. Pflanze estimates that 20 deputies including 9 judges suffered reprisals for political opinions.

April The military committee of the Chamber of Deputies recommended limitation of the jurisdiction of military courts, liquidation of cadet schools, selection and promotion on merit etc.

4 April Baron Budberg (Russian ambassador in Paris) sent alarming reports of likely war — Napoleon very hard line, demanding independence of Poland.

5 April Russian army put on war-footing — reserves called up, officers' leave cancelled, forts at Kronstadt were put on alert.

7 April Palmerston to Russell: '... Antwerp is as much in his [Napoleon's] Thoughts as Brussels and his real Object and that which lies at the Bottom of his Heart, as well as that of Every Frenchman, is the humbling of England, the Traditional Rival of France, and the main obstacle to French superiority in Europe and all over the world. The Emperor would wish to bring us upon our Marrow bones in the most friendly manner if we would let him do so and it is our Business by making ourselves strong, to render it hopeless for him to attempt doing so in any other way.'

Also on 7/4 between the same two: 'The French hint threats which we are not prepared to make and we appeal to the Treaty of Vienna which the French would wish to tear to Tatters.' (On 8/2/61 Palmerston had written to Russell: 'The real Truth of the Relations of England to France is that the whole Drift of our Policy is to prevent France from realising her vast schemes of Extension and aggression in a great Number of Questions, and of Course our Success in doing so must necessarily be the Cause of perpetual displeasure to her Government and People.' We should avoid 'open Collision' and instead restrain 'by the Shackles of Diplomatic Trammels.' On 21/1/61 Palmerston-Russell: 'It may be doubtful whether Prussia is not falling into a Trap about her Quarrel with Denmark and whether France may not be lying in wait for a Rupture between those Parties to side with Denmark and threaten Rhenish Prussia.' In 1859 he had written to Cowley, 'If [Austria] were dismembered, France and Russia would shake hands across Germany and the independence of Europe would be gone.')

10-12 April Three different notes circulated to St Petersburg — different language, they couldn't agree on a common goal. Gorchakov thought war was probably coming. Metternich around now also thought war very likely. 14 April Cowley-Russell: Napoleon says he hasn't slept for four nights because of 'the wrongs of Poland'. Rumours of Napoleonic schemes for Poland swept Paris.

17 April Gorchakov having received the notes from the three Powers thought war likely: France is 'determined on war unless she is prevented by England, and we do not feel confident England will do so' he said, (Napier-Russell — Mosse says 'Buchanan' but is it a misprint?). Napier: Russian government and public are 'of one heart' and won't be pushed into further concessions.

24 April Buchanan asked Bismarck what he would do if Russia asked for military assistance. He said it would depend on circumstances but suggested he would support Russia.

26 April Palmerston-Buchanan: A French attack on the Baltic coast is practicable and given British sympathy for Poland he would not be able to oppose it.

May Secret talks with Lassalle, extending over next 10 months. According to Gall, there is no record of those talks, though there are fragments in letters here and there. Bismarck said to Keudell that Lassalle was 'a visionary... He is the best speaker who has ever been heard... His opposition to the Progressive Party would be politically welcome. We can therefore let his agitation continue for a while, with the proviso that at the right moment we will intervene.' In summer 1878 during the row over the anti-Socialist Law, Bismarck was challenged about these talks by Bebel. Bismarck admitted to having met him 'three or four times'. 'There was never the possibility of our talks taking the form of political negotiations. What could Lassalle have offered me? The poor devil had nothing behind him... He attracted me as an individual. He was one of the most clever and attractive men with whom I have ever talked... He was ambitious, on a large scale,

and there is perhaps room for doubt as to whether, in his eyes, the German Empire ultimately entailed the Hohenzollern or the Lassalle dynasty... Our conversations went on for hours and I was always sorry when they ended... [I would have been] happy to have a man of his gifts and intellectual sophistication as a neighbour on the next estate'. (A good example of Bismarck's character, he could see the strengths even of those he totally disagreed with.)

Lassalle made clear he was happy to help Bismarck alter the franchise and argued that the masses would support the monarchy if it abandoned the liberal middle classes for the proletariat. 'The working class is instinctively inclined towards dictatorship' but must be convinced 'power will be exercised in its own interest'. The proletariat would accept a 'social dictatorship' by the Crown if the Crown would 'strike out in a truly revolutionary and national direction and transform itself from a monarchy of the privileged classes into a social and revolutionary people's monarchy'. He even explained to Bismarck a legal dodge whereby the king's scruples about his oath could be overcome (the 3-class system had been introduced by decree and could be removed the same way, which would automatically reboot the system to the 1848 law — universal *and equal* suffrage, OP p232). They did not settle on a definite agreement. Lassalle got into problems with the police. He appealed to Bismarck for help but didn't get it. He was killed in a duel in August 1864.

Bismarck approached the issue of universal suffrage cynically, with ideas such as introducing a provision providing for abstentions to be automatically counted for the government. Lassalle's colleague, Bucher, converted to the Bismarck cause in 1864 and was used by Bismarck as a spin doctor for the nationalist cause and as a personal envoy, much to the amazement of conservative friends. Cf. Wagener and Napoleon below.

In March Lassalle said, 'An association such as I have described ... including 1 million workers in Germany with 150,000 talers annually for purposes of agitation and led with energy, that would be a power!' In May he promised, 'Give me 500,000 German workers entering my association and our reaction will be no more!' In a letter to William Rüstow, he said, 'I only want a minority, that is natural. Everything that has happened in the world has been done with minorities. But it must be a respectable minority. I cannot create a political party ... with a hundred workers. A sect for a later age could be founded with that number, not a party. In that case I was wrong, in that case I came too soon. If my labour association does not have 10,000 workers within the space of a year, then of course I will consider whether I should not give up politics altogether, since all sacrifice would then be useless.' By late summer, he wrote to a deputy, 'So there are about 1,000 members in our entire association! Those are for the present the fruits of our labour! Those are the successes I have won by writing my fingers off and talking my lungs out! Don't you agree, this apathy of the masses could drive a man to despair! Such apathy toward a movement which exists only for them, only in their interest; such apathy despite the intellectually enormous means of agitation which have already been employed and which would already have produced tremendous results among people like the French! **When will this unfeeling people finally shake off its lethargy!**' When he died the next year membership stood at 4,600; it then fell, 2,500 May 1867 and remained 'a sect for a later age'; grew to 12,000 by March 1869; fell again, 8-9,000 Jan 1870.

1 May Bleichröder: Bismarck says that the Danish affair could 'lead to serious complications later' but not for 3 months because of the need for preparations.

6 May Britain invited Austria and France to join her in inviting Russia to suspend hostilities for a year.

6 May He told Oubril (Russian Ambassador in Berlin): 'Our hesitation could only come from Austria if it took a hostile attitude towards us and of such a nature as to paralyse us. But my opinion is that it could not do it and that the interests of Germany, as well as the present state of Galicia and of Poland, would prevent our abstention. Force of circumstances would oblige us to take part in such a fight... Anyway, for my part I will advise the King to march, because we could not tolerate on our borders the establishment of an independent state which would tend to make for us an impossible situation.' Mosse says he'd made clear 'he was unwilling to commit himself in advance', had 'learnt the lesson of the Alvensleben Convention' and was pursuing a policy 'similar to that which Prussia had adopted with success in the Crimean War.' (This seems wrong: a) he was

making pretty clear he was on Russia's side and only a hostile Austria could create hesitations; b) the policy in the Crimean War had been hesitant, confused and noncommittal — here Bismarck was clearly determined to secure Russian friendship, oppose Polish independence and fight if France started a war.)

15 May Debate in House of Lords on Denmark, Derby criticised Russell's blunders (cf. 24/9/62) and said Britain must support Denmark.

17 May Bleichröder: business is suffering 'terribly' by the impasse. 24 May — most are hostile to the government but 'a great many prudent people think the Diet is going too far'.

17 May Oubril-Gorchakov: Bismarck thinks war may be coming.

19 May Council of Ministers in Vienna. Rechberg: our internal problems demand peace, we should not make demands of Russia that might be refused and give France an excuse to attack. FJ: we should stay neutral but try to get closer to Prussia. Vienna rejected British pressure to support an armistice.

22 May Parliament passed (239-61) a resolution: '... between the Crown's advisers and the country there exists a gulf that cannot otherwise be filled than by a change of personnel and further more a change in the system.' Gall: Wilhelm refused to accept the deputation handing him the message. He supported Bismarck, who had wanted to prorogue Parliament again in Feb. The King's reply (4 days later, Gall) accused them of seeking 'an unconstitutional dictatorship of the Landtag... I repudiate this demand. My ministers enjoy my confidence, their official acts are performed with my approval and I am grateful to them for making it their business to oppose the unconstitutional aspirations of the Landtag for an extension of its power.' **Parliament was prorogued [not dissolved] on 26 May [Gall & Stern 27th].** No action had been taken on the military or budget bills. Years later, Bismarck said: 'In the palace the king heard from every side insinuations to the effect that I was a democrat in disguise. I could gain his complete trust only by showing him that I was not afraid of the chamber.'

Summer 63 Growing feelings that a coup might be imminent/desirable. Bismarck talked of a coup (including with Lassalle) as did Wilhelm, but Bismarck did not want pure absolutism and reliance on just the army. His attitude was: try other things first, keep that as a last resort. He was interested in ideas to change the electoral law and the voting system. It was *universal but very unequal suffrage*. There were 3 voting classes: Class I contained the top ~5 per cent of taxpayers, Class II the next ~15 percent, and Class III the remaining ~80 percent. Class I and II paid two-thirds of taxes and chose two-thirds of electors after 1849 but it shifted in the 1850s as industrialisation shifted wealth. By 1861 class I contained 159,000, class II 454,000 and class III 2,750,000 voters. *65% of those eligible to vote in 1862 and 70% in 1863 did not vote: i.e turnout just 30-35%.* In 1863, 43% of I, 56% of II and 73% of Class 3 did not vote and in some cities the rate was 90%. They knew their vote was worth ~1/17 of a wealthy vote. Voting was indirect and by voice not ballot, so risky for poor people dependent financially on richer and more powerful people. (OP p224ff)

Back in Frankfurt, Bismarck had observed the old guilds were inefficient and factories would dominate the future and this got him thinking about how to use the political desires of this new working class against the liberals. (In Frankfurt he'd written to Wagener about the guilds, handicraftsmen, factories: the guild system here means 'exorbitant cost, indifference toward customers and therefore careless work, long waiting for delivery, starting late, stopping early, long lunch hours ..., lack of choice..., backwardness in technical training'. And the handicraftsmen are not proving so loyal — 'they read to their journeymen the writings of red democracy' driven by 'the envious feeling of equality which drives the well-to-do handicraftsmen to compete with the men of education...'. He wasn't sure what to conclude but 'I cannot deny that these manifestations have disconcerted me'; Hamerow, Vol 2, p201.)

The liberals *opposed* an equal franchise.

Even Waldeck, leader of the extreme democratic faction, thought the time had not come for equal suffrage. Liberals were repelled by the recent lesson of Napoleon exploiting equal suffrage. The *Nationalverein* would not lower dues to allow proletarian membership. Most liberals told themselves that interference in labour markets was bad for everybody, justifying a lack of support

for workers, and confined themselves to supporting education and the argument that only after education had spread could the proletariat be considered for voting. Conservatives also largely ignored the new working class. The Lutheran Church focused on the spread of faith, not social welfare, and Christian morality was seen as a matter of inner piety, not social service. Wagener advised Bismarck on communication and political strategy. Wagener thought that divine right and aristocratic support were no longer sufficient foundations for the monarchy. The monarchy must establish itself as the protector of the masses and promote 'the moral and material interests of the masses... This is the secret of the popularity of Bonapartism.' He thought conservatives should defend the masses against finance capital: 'what threatens the monarchical principle is not the broad mass of the population, which is always monarchical out of need and instinct, but the oligarchs of moneyed capital as well as the 'Catalinarian creatures' [i.e like Cataline] whom they have on their leash, namely, men of letters and enlightened notables of bureaucratism favourable to change.'

Bismarck was also thinking about Napoleon's combination of nationalism, democracy and state socialism which provided food for thought over ideas such as public works, health insurance, selling bonds to the poor, public housing.

Bismarck asked Itzenplitz to consider private old-age pension funds in March 1863. In May 1863 he asked him to consider drafting legislation on legalising trade unions but nothing much happened. Cf. 12/64 and talks with Lassalle in May.

Hamerow: After Itzenplitz replaced Heydt (9/62) policy shifted in a more free trade direction. He was less keen on financing railways. In the 1860s the mileage of private railways in Prussia increased twice as much as state-owned lines. A lot of these companies then collapsed in the 1870s depression. Total value of *Zollverein* imports and exports doubled 1850 to 1860 and more than doubled again by 1870. Even on a per capita basis trade more than tripled.

Lerman: emphasis on weakness of liberals is 'misleading', there is 'no question' Bismarck saw an alliance with the liberals as more important than alliance with the lower classes, theories that Bismarck tried to play middle and lower classes against each other 'overestimate the importance of the working class' in the 1860s and 1870s (p88) (Cf. OP p227ff) (Lerman is overstating — Bismarck brought in universal direct suffrage in the new New North German Confederation unambiguously to pressure the liberals from below and provide new reinforcements for the Crown/aristocracy.) June/July Moltke working on operations against Denmark, discussions with Roon.

1 June A new press law that allowed publications to be banned after two warnings for a 'general attitude' considered 'dangerous to the public welfare', with appeals to the cabinet, not to a judicial body. It was introduced under A63 of the constitution allowing the king to issue decrees when a) the *Landtag* was not in session and b) conditions were 'urgent' for 'the preservation of public safety or the settlement of an unusual emergency'. Many lawyers condemned it as unconstitutional (Bismarck had assured William that it was constitutional). Bismarck used the new law vigorously. Despite outrage, to avoid suppression and financial loss most publishers and journalists did not fight and 'bowed to the inevitable' (OP). 4 June the Berlin city government sent a delegation to the king protesting arbitrary acts by government, Eulenburg issued an order forbidding such activity and threatened mayors and municipal officials if they disobeyed.

In 1862 'the conservative press was hopelessly outclassed': of 300,000 papers sold in Prussia daily, 5/6 backed the opposition. One of his first acts had been to end government support for a newspaper. He 'secretly bought the services' (OP) of *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, a leftwing paper edited by a revolutionary of 1848 (!) — Liebknecht resigned when he learned of it — and often wrote pieces in it himself anonymously (it had originally been a mouthpiece for Austrian interests but under Bismarck it became a mouthpiece for the government via the Literary Bureau of the Ministry of the Interior). Taxpayers' money was used to influence other papers and to set up a new government information system, with all official information channelled into the official *Staatsanzeiger* from November 1862. Legations in Paris and Frankfurt were used to pay journalists in France and south Germany. From September 1862, Bismarck used the 1851 press law to clamp

down on opposition papers. However, the results disappointed him. He considered a 'corrections' system in which papers would have been forced to correct inaccuracies but didn't do it.

Gall: The press law was 'almost universally regarded as the prelude to a dictatorship by decree'.

Pflanze: city councils started to protest, on 6 June Eulenburg told them to keep out of national politics or suffer disciplinary action. Pressure on civil service to support the King, Bismarck used all sorts of tactics to weed out hostile officials (he also opposed promotion by seniority).

1 June Alexander II wrote to Wilhelm: War is likely in August, hostilities may start in the Baltic on the Vistula and spread to Rhine. In what circumstances can Russia count on Prussia? 'I know I can count on you — but in what eventualities and to what extent will your interests make you active? It is not a diplomatic opening that I am addressing to you, it is an appeal that I am making to your loyal friendship.'

3 June Clarendon (London) to Cowley (Paris): Apponyi thinks Palmerston's diplomatic campaign was a prelude to war. Rechberg feared the same.

4 June Crown Prince wrote to Wilhelm complaining about the press law.

5 June Crown Prince publicly disowned the press law at a dinner in Danzig — 'I have had no part in the deliberations'. (Crown Prince wrote in diary that he spoke out to make himself 'publicly known as an opponent of Bismarck and his evil theories'.) Wilhelm was furious and talked of arresting him.

On 7 June Crown Prince rebuked by Wilhelm. He replied offering apology and resignation from all offices. (Steinberg: if he had fought he may have won and Wilhelm abdicated. Really?! Sounds delusional.) 10 June Bismarck and Wilhelm discussed it (in French so the carriage servants couldn't understand) and Bismarck claimed (Memoirs) that he advised reconciliation and makeup so there would be unity against parliament, do not make Crown Prince a martyr in your wrath etc. (Crown Prince suspected some generals were conspiring to replace him as heir with his reactionary uncle, Prince Friedrich Karl. Pflanze, p. 175. Letters show Bismarck was right to claim that the Crown Prince's wife was writing to Victoria providing information about family rows over the press law.) Pflanze (p218): it was a big sensation in *European* papers but no Prussian paper dared cover it and those who knew heard from leaflets and rumours. 'Outside Prussia leaders of the *Nationalverein* were highly disturbed by the feeble reaction to the edict', including among the Progressive Party, and 'at no time during the constitutional conflict did the liberals question that the army ... would stand behind the crown'. (In Feb, General Wrangel had increased the number of battalions in Berlin from 50 to 80). They also did not think they had support for a taxpayers' strike which would have been unconstitutional. So the money kept coming in and was spent by the Government as it wanted. Liberals also rejected Lassalle's idea of a parliamentary strike: under modern conditions no monarchy could rule indefinitely without a parliament, he argued — 'A government that has its hands continually in everyone's pocket must assume at least the appearance of having everyone's consent.' (Liberals attacked him, the one deputy who supported it suffered such a backlash he resigned.) They were neither prepared to take responsibility for governing themselves nor did they dare make alliance with the working classes. They suffered 'crippling uncertainty of popular support' (OP p221ff).

8 June Steefel: Napoleon 'seems to have been ready to restore confidential relations with Prussia' as early as 8 June. Cf. Prince Henry VII of Reuss's notes of his conversation with Napoleon at Fontainebleau on 8 June.

16 June Bismarck opposed other ministers in a Crown Council who wanted to dissolve the Landtag and have another election. He thought this an admission of weakness that the government felt it needed a parliamentary majority. The King was not obliged to call parliament until January 1864. He wanted to rule without Parliament sitting. Others objected Parliament needed to pass a budget. (Some time in 1863 he complained to the Crown Prince that Wilhelm took his oath to uphold the constitution too seriously. Cf. August.)

17 June Wilhelm replied ???: He warned that he had to be careful about Bund legalities, he would try to keep Austria neutral until he could persuade the other German states 'of my own conviction'.

20 June Drouyn again suggested a joint demonstration to Britain and Austria.

23 June Cowley-Russell: Napoleon means to drag us into war. Further discussions in mid-June about joint demands to Russia but the three still couldn't agree. Russell made clear to Paris that Britain would not join a war against Russia. (At the end of June the Cabinet was 'dispersed on holiday' (Mosse), the timetable was different to now.)

27 June Palmerston note: 'Bismarck might be privately told that if the King's Life is in Danger, Bismarck and the unwise and unconstitutional system he is persuading the King to adopt were the true Causes of that Danger.' Palmerston to Russell: 'This is highly probable and indeed more than probable and the gentlemen in Frankfurt and the crazy minister at Berlin should have this impressed upon them. Any aggressive Measure of Germany [against] Denmark would most likely lead to an aggressive move by France [against] Germany, and especially [against] Prussia, the main instigator of that aggression. **The Prussian Provinces would at once be occupied by France and in the present state of the Prussian army, its system of drill Formation and movements, the first Serious Encounter between it and the French would be little less disastrous to Prussia than the Battle of Jena [Napoleon's famous victory].**' On 26 December Palmerston repeated to Russell his view that 'the French would walk over' the Prussian army. (Good example of how hard it is to judge the dynamics of state power — scarcely would Palmerston have believed that a mere seven years later the Prussian army would have crushed Austria and France.)

30 June Crown Prince wrote to Bismarck attacking his whole policy and saying he did not want to take part in any further discussions with this ministry. There had been a leak from the Crown Prince's circle about the correspondence with the King. Bismarck wrote in his Memoirs that the incident was part of the general problem of Crown Prince's wife and the quarter century of mistaken discussion in Prussia about adopting the British constitution: 'What wonder then that the Crown Princess and her mother overlooked that peculiar character of the Prussian state which renders its administration by means of shifting parliamentary groups a sheer impossibility? What wonder then that this error bred the further mistake of anticipating for the Prussia of the 19th century a repetition of the civil broils and catastrophes of the England of the 17th-century unless the system by which they were terminated were introduced among us?' The progressives anticipated victory and were using the media to, among other things, try to influence 'female minds'. In August at Gastein, 'less under the sway of English influences', the Crown Prince asked Bismarck for forgiveness. (Memoirs, p352ff)

1-3 July Battle of Gettysburg.

5 July Cowley made clear to Drouyn that regardless of pro-Polish sympathies Britain would not go to war with Russia over it. London was still worried re the chance of a French strike. Drouyn made clear that he did not think France could go to war with Russia without Austrian support.

The diplomatic wrangling sparked by the February action over Poland petered out at the end of June/July. NB. France still diverted by Mexico, Britain by the US Civil War. Both Britain and Russia feared Napoleon more than Germany and feared that a weaker Germany threatened their interests — the Low Countries (Britain) and Poland (Russia).

9 July The Confederation decided to summon the Danish King to revoke within six weeks the March Patent and preparations were made to occupy Holstein, a federal execution.

23 July Palmerston speech to Commons: 'I am satisfied with all reasonable men in Europe, including those in France and Russia, in desiring that the independence, the integrity and the rights of Denmark may be maintained. We are convinced — I am convinced at least — that if any violent attempt were made to overthrow those rights and interfere with that independence, those who made the attempt, would find in the result, that **it would not be Denmark alone with which they would have to contend.**' This strengthened feeling in Denmark that they could play hardball. Russell, however, did not conceal in diplomatic circles he disapproved of Palmerston's words. Steefel: the threat got little attention in England or Germany but did in Scandinavia. Hall took comfort from the words and did not bring forward conciliatory proposals.

Palmerston also told the Commons that 'what is at the bottom of the German design, and the desire of connecting Schleswig with Holstein, is the dream of a German fleet, and the wish to get Kiel as a German seaport. That may be a good reason why they should wish it; but it is no reason

why they should violate the rights and independence of Denmark for an object which, even if accomplished, would not realise the expectation of those who aim at it.'

2 days later Palmerston wrote a memo: 'war begun about a petty quarrel concerning the institutions of Holstein would in all probability not end where it began, but might draw after it consequences which all the parties who began it would have been exceedingly sorry to have caused.'

24 July (JS) Bismarck arrived at Bad Gastein.

29 July Russell warns Vienna that an invasion of Schleswig might provoke war not just with Denmark but with Sweden and France, and provoke a general European intervention.

2 August FJ arrived at Bad Gastein. Bismarck was sitting under the fir trees in the Schwarzenberg gardens by the gorge of the Ache.

Memoirs: 'Above me was a nest of titmice and watch in hand I counted the number of times in the minute the bird brought her nestlings a caterpillar or other insect. While I was observing the useful activity of these little creatures, I saw King William sitting alone on a bench on the Schillerplatz on the opposite side of the gorge. When the hour drew near to dress for dinner with the King, I went to my lodgings and there found a note from his Majesty informing me that he would await me on the Schillerplatz in order to speak to me about the meeting with the Emperor. I made all possible haste, but before I reached the King's apartments an interview had taken place between the two sovereigns. **If I had spent less time over my observations of nature, and had seen the King sooner, the first impression made on him by the Emperor's communications might have been other than it was.** He did not instantly feel the slight implied by this sudden attack, by this invitation... He probably favoured the Austrian proposal because it contained an element of royal solidarity in the struggle against parliamentary liberalism.' (p375) (EF implies this happened on or after 3rd.)

Eyck: after this first discussion, FJ telegraphed to Vienna: 'King not yet decided but seems favourable. I think he will come to Frankfurt.'

OP (p214): At Gastein Wilhelm said to the Crown Prince (their first meeting since the Danzig episode) that he foresaw a series of dissolutions and elections. 'Above all obedience must be reestablished in the country.' Bismarck said a 'constitutional regime' was 'untenable' and under parliamentary government the monarchy would fall apart. The Crown Prince replied that this was 'peculiar talk' for a Minister President, if that was his attitude why did he govern under the constitution at all? Bismarck replied that he would observe existing laws as long as he could, but the time would come when it would be 'otherwise'. Cf. 2/9.

3 August Franz Joseph summoned the German princes to a meeting in Frankfurt on 16th to consider a new constitutional agreement. It included: a new 5-man executive including the Austrian Emperor and the King of Prussia, a new assembly of delegates appointed by the national parliaments, a federal court etc. It did not mention the *Zollverein* but was clearly intended to disrupt Prussian plans for it.

Mosse: the Austrian plan was Schmerling's (and it resembled Schwarzenberg's before Olmütz), who thought Prussian internal problems provided an opportunity. Rechberg opposed it and unsuccessfully offered his resignation. Clark: Schmerling and Biegeleben had worked on it behind the back of Rechberg and got FJ to agree. The goal was Schwarzenberg's before Olmütz: maintain Austrian dominance in the Bund and bring *all* her possessions within mutual defence of German states.

Friedjung (p36): the idea of FJ inviting the German princes came from Julius Fröbel, a democrat who had been condemned to death for his part in the revolution in Vienna in 1848 but was pardoned, emigrated to America, returned to try to influence the German question. He wrote a memo proposing that FJ invite the German princes to a meeting in Frankfurt to reform the Bund and the memo found its way to FJ (outside normal channels). Friedjung says that FJ worked out the plan with Biegeleben and left Rechberg out, and Schmerling found out what was going on from Fröbel(!). Friedjung: 'The origin of the plan was thus almost more remarkable than the plan itself' and Biegeleben was hoping to use the coup to grab control of German policy. FJ brought the

ministers in when the moment seemed right: Schmerling was pro, Rechberg strongly anti. Rechberg argued that changes to the Bund required unanimity, trying to force such changes through would lead to war. He offered his resignation, rejected. Rechberg insisted that he, not Schmerling, attended Frankfurt with FJ. FJ agreed. Rechberg acted at Frankfurt 'without energy or enthusiasm' (Friedjung). Schmerling complained to FJ about being left behind and claimed to Fröbel that FJ had replied, 'If I take you, what room will there be for me!' Fröbel wrote later that Schmerling complained to him, 'Where are we to find the strength and goodwill to carry through any big measure? In Austria everyone works against everyone else.' (These details seem to be absent all later books I've read. NB. Friedjung interviewed many of the participants himself including Bismarck.)

It was a huge threat to Bismarck's plans: it potentially would consolidate Austria's position in Germany and channel national energy into new institutions. Bismarck called it in his Memoirs 'Schwarzenberg policy in the posthumous form of the Congress of Princes'. Austria put great pressure on Wilhelm. On the drive from Wildbad to Baden, talking in French so the servants could not understand, Bismarck sought to persuade him not to go to Frankfurt and thought he had succeeded. (Eyck: Bismarck rightly followed him to Baden knowing he should not leave him alone and further pressure would come.)

In Baden a dramatic, crucial scene played out. The King of Saxony, acting for Austria and on the half of all the princess, renewed the invitation to Frankfurt (19th, Memoirs). 'My master did not find it easy to resist that move. He reflected over and over again: "Thirty reigning princes and a king to take their messages!" Not until midnight did I succeed in obtaining the King's signature to a refusal to the King of Saxony. When I left my master, both he and I were ill and exhausted by the nervous tension of the situation and my subsequent verbal communication with the Saxon minister, von Beust, bore the stamp of this agitation. But the crisis was overcome and the King of Saxony departed without, as I had feared, visiting my master again.' (As he left the King's room, he smashed up the washbasin in the antechamber in rage.)

In Busch's book (Vol I, p131/175 depending on edition), he told Busch in 1870: after the King of Saxony had visited, 'his Majesty lay on the sofa and had an attack of hysterical weeping; and when at last I had succeeded in wringing from him the letter of refusal, I was myself so weak and exhausted that I could hardly stand. Indeed, I actually reeled as I left the room and was so nervous and unhinged that in closing the outer door I tore off the handle... I told Beust that I would have the regiment stationed at Rastatt brought over to guard the house and to prevent anybody else having access to the King in order to put fresh pressure on him.' (Showalter's description of this as demonstrating a relationship between the two aristocrats akin to that in *The Odd Couple* seems completely anachronistic and false.)

JS: winning the battle with Wilhelm not to go to Frankfurt was '*the most important achievement of his entire career*', if he had failed then as he said to the Dowager Queen Elizabeth he could not have remained as minister, and this was an example of 'Germany's fate' decided by Bismarck and if he had failed then 'the history of Germany and the world would have run a different course'.

(*While 'most important achievement of his entire career' is an exaggeration, it's fair to argue that this event could have propelled the world down a very different track. If he had lost this argument and resigned, Bismarck would now be dismissed as an out-of-his-depth loser in history's footnotes and Prussia/Germany would undoubtedly have evolved very differently. Even if some sort of expanded Prussia had happened (who knows) it would not have had the distinctive constitution that he crafted. If he had resigned perhaps Wilhelm would have ended up abdicating after all and Frederick would have ruled for 20 years before dying of cancer in the 1880s. Given how hard it was for Bismarck to push Wilhelm to challenge Austria it must be doubted whether anyone else could have done so.)

Gall (p232): the princes were only told the detailed proposals, such as the five-man committee, on the 16th the day before the opening of the Council of Princes in Frankfurt on 17th.

Friedjung: FJ arrived in Frankfurt on 16th.

It was crucial that the princes at Frankfurt would not accept Austria's proposals to push on without Prussia but stated that there should be fresh negotiations with Prussia. Bismarck delayed responses for weeks and played for time, **replying formally on 22 (OP) September (15th, JS)** demanding: a veto over declaration of war, parity in control of the Bund, and 'a true national assembly which emerges from the direct participation of the entire nation'. The congress was the last attempt at something like the Schwarzenberg policy — a union of all German powers on the basis of a dual government but with Austria top dog and Prussia 'reduced to the rank of a middle state'.

The entente between France and Britain encouraged FJ to make the push against Prussia at the Congress of Princes — he didn't realise NIII was 'weary of the Polish affair and anxious to find a decent pretext for retreat' (Memoirs, p344). Gall: it was proposed to be on 16th but opened on 17th, Prussia was invited again, the King of Saxony was deployed to deliver the request in person at Baden-Baden.

While at Gastein, the Tsar informed William of his intention to fight over Poland and wanted a Prussian alliance. In Memoirs (2,p70ff) he describes this episode again. Tsar sent a long handwritten letter to William: he wanted to break out of the manoeuvres of Austria and the western powers and wanted Prussia's help in war. Bismarck wrote a long memo about the idea: a war with Russia against Austria and German states would harm our position in Germany, which required independence from Russia; that Russia would suffer less than Prussia which would have to fight hard against France; that even if victorious Russia would end up dictating peace. In his Memoirs he added that a soft peace with Austria would also have been very hard to pull off, as it was in 1866. Eyck gives a completely different account (p.71-2), says that Bismarck's account in his Memoirs is lies, and the Tsar was actually asking for an alliance against Napoleon. (I can't tell what is true about all this.)

12 August Letter Wilhelm-Alexander: There is still a chance for Prussia and Russia to work together to avert war and restore the Austrian alliance. However, Austria's initiative with the German princes was very threatening.

27 August Clarendon had been sent by Russell to observe events at Frankfurt, reported back: in Frankfurt they have 'harnessed together a team of 30 horses — two great dray horses ... who are always kicking and biting at each other — then a lot of half-bred shambling vicious beasts of different sizes, and a dozen Shetland ponies of the smallest dimensions — and how such a team is to be made to look well, or draw evenly, and to have its due share of work assigned to each, with a lumbering coach in a heavy road — is likely to puzzle the raw German Coachmen and Helpers who have undertaken the job.'

29 August To Joanna: complained that he would love someone else to take over so he could 'turn my back on this uninterrupted stream of ink and withdraw to the quiet of the country. This restless life is unbearable. For ten weeks I have been doing nothing but secretarial service in a coaching inn.'

Late August Mosse: Wilhelm and Bismarck made a brief visit to see Queen Victoria at Coburg. Victoria promised to urge on FJ 'complete parity' for Prussia in German affairs. Wilhelm stressed their interests as 'the two great Protestant powers'. Bismarck stressed to Granville the probability of war as a result of Austria's actions. According to Granville, he spoke of honour, pride and the German proverb 'better an end to terror than terror without end' (Granville memo, 31/8). 3 days later Victoria met FJ who rejected the idea of sharing the Presidency with Prussia and abandoning a hereditary prerogative.

31 August Goltz-Bismarck: Napoleon is friendly.

2 September Parliament dissolved again.

3 September Crown Prince recounted in his diary a conversation with his father.

CP: I didn't want to express my doubts yesterday in front of the ministers. But what about the future?

W: Repeated dissolutions, one after the other.

CP: But to what end shall these measures finally lead?

W: Obedience in the country, scaffold, possibly a rupture of the constitution by barricades in the streets and then naturally suspension of the same.

CP: In Gastein Bismarck spoke of the untenability of the constitution and of the coming necessity of its abandonment.

W: The Kaiser of Austria and I are both convinced that in twenty years there will be no more constitutions.

CP: What then?

W: I don't know. I won't be alive then. But this abominable constitutional system can't continue, it will only bring about the destruction of royal authority and the introduction of a republic with a president as in England [sic]. Scoundrels of the opposition ... have to be shown who is king of Prussia.

Pflanze: This exchange sparked another crisis in relations. Encouraged by wife and mother, FW refused to attend further sessions of the cabinet but did attend Crown Councils. Wilhelm feared he intended to break publicly with the regime but it didn't happen.

The Crown Prince wrote to Bismarck that he had told the king of his opposition and 'I am the determined foe of the Ministry.'

OP: smashing the constitution was only one possibility for Bismarck and he had *not* decided on this then. In October Wilhelm wrote to FW: 'You always come back to Minister von Bismarck's utterance that we could reach the point of dispensing with the constitution. In his conversation with you at Gastein he presented this as one possibility, while you make it out to be the goal of his efforts.'

4 September Bismarck: 'Now begins the election swindle'. He used all the weapons he could lay hands on to smash the liberals right down to prosecuting pubs that hosted opposition meetings. Whole apparatus of the Prussian state moved against liberal candidates across the country. Soldiers were forbidden to vote. Officials told it was unpatriotic and against their oath to the king to support liberal parties. Cf. 22-24/9.

6-11 Sep Bismarck absent from Berlin after death of his mother-in-law. At some point around then Wilhelm asked Bismarck to tell the Crown Prince that he could NOT absent himself from government meetings. There was a meeting in which the Crown Prince told Bismarck not to expect to continue under him. 'The refusal [to cooperate] was accompanied by a hostile expression of Olympian disdain which after all these years I have not forgotten... I suppressed my own rising choler, thought of Carlos and Alva (Act 2, sc.5), and answered that my words had been prompted ... in the hope of restoring him to closer relations with his father, in the interest alike of the country and the dynasty...; because ... I wish to preserve harmony within the royal family. I said that I was a loyal servant of his father and desired that on his accession to the throne he might find, to supply my place, servants as loyal to him as I had been to his father. I hoped he would dismiss the idea that I aimed at someday becoming his minister; that I would never be.' FW kept pushing to be allowed not to attend meetings but William insisted. The row ended with a brutal rebuttal from Bismarck to Crown Prince on 7 November. (Memoirs p357)

7 Sep Palmerston-Russell: 'Perhaps all things considered dualism is the only arrangement possible in Germany. Austria & Prussia are like Caesar and Pompey. Prussia like Caesar will not brook a superior, and Austria like Pompey will not endure an equal. Each might be a centre around which the smaller states might range themselves ... and there would be two strong bodies who would unite against a foreign foe.'

15 Sep Oubril-Gorchakov: "Tell the Prince [Gorchakov]", he told me, among other things the day before yesterday, "that you found me cold and calm. Indeed, I rage calmly". His indignation against Austria knows no bounds.' He said that Prussia was determined to avoid another Olmütz and would fight Austria to stop it, even if he had to 'ally with the Devil' ('... *dussions nous nous allier au Diable*') which Oubril interpreted as Napoleon. I am the champion of a Russian alliance but 'I would be the first to give way to a liberal ministry, even in advance, if we were to have the sad experience of being deceived about you' — neutrality isn't possible and it would be a disaster for Russia if Prussia disappears from the map. When Oubril said Russia's German policy was based on fear of French intervention, Bismarck said this didn't worry him as France could be compensated — the line of the Weser was more important than the Rhine (*'la ligne du Weser est plus important pour nous que celle du Rhin'*). 'Besides, a war [with Austria] could only facilitate the internal situation for us. So I would accept it without hesitation and without fear.' Prussia would be united but Russia should

pressure Austrian borders to paralyse the government. 'You are accustomed to a Prussia that lives quietly between Berlin and Sans Souci [the summer palace at Potsdam built by Frederick the Great — *sans souci* means 'carefree'] and goes, if necessary, to Olmütz. The time for that is absolutely past.' (He had talked to Oubril on 3/9 of acting 'like Frederick the Great in 1756' and striking a sudden blow before they realised the danger.)

Oubril thought Bismarck was dangerous but also a true ally of Russia and if he were replaced Russia would struggle to find allies in Prussia over Poland. The Tsar's view was Russia should not get embroiled in the details of the German rows — 'the German dispute only interests us if it resulted in a general conflagration'. But Bismarck's violent language and Oubril's reflections influenced the Tsar and Gorchakov to shift away from neutrality to a more pro-Prussian stance (Mosse, p136).

16 Sep He wrote to Catherine Orlov: 'I console myself by opening my cigar case, where I always find by one of your big hairpins a small yellow flower plucked at Superbagnères, moss from Port de Venasque and a twig of olive tree from the terraces of Avignon. German sentimentality you will say. No matter. One day I will have the satisfaction of showing you these souvenirs of happy times to which I think back as [in English] a paradise lost.'

22 September (OP) Bismarck countered Austria with his plans for a national parliament elected by 'the entire nation' (JS and Gall date this to 15/9).

There were disagreements between Bismarck and king about the nature of the franchise but these remained private (OP says the original draft had a phrase about a 'popular assembly' but this was left out). Outwardly it 'looked like an offer of universal and equal suffrage'. This was a nightmare for Austria because of the potential split of her German and non-German population.

Gall (p233): It was 'an extraordinary turn of events' for Bismarck to support the idea that the Kings could not solve the German question without the people and without a directly elected parliament. This aligned the Prussian government with the liberal position and 'opened up entirely new and far-reaching perspectives for everyone concerned' but 'the overwhelming majority of liberal contemporaries saw it as a purely tactical move'.

OP: most liberals tried to ignore the move and focus on domestic issues but they were greatly hampered by Bismarck's press law and other repression. On 22/9 officials serving as deputies were assessed the cost of substitutes appointed by the government and a directive on 24/9 from Eulenburg informed them that if elected they were bound by oath to follow the 'constitutional way' as determined by the crown. Wilhelm told the country that 'an inimical attitude toward my government is incompatible with loyalty to my person' thereby branding liberals as unpatriotic and even treasonable. Teachers, professors, mayors were warned to support the government, pastors preached voting with the king. Renters of public property were told to support the king or suffer. Bismarck had suspended a group of railway workers who failed to prevent a hostile demonstration against himself at a Pomeranian station.

23 Sep Alexander-Wilhelm: He sympathised with Prussia over Austria's recent action and would nudge Austria accordingly, but there was no promise of support in a war. Alexander's view was that a Prussian-Austrian war then would be a disaster — Russia needed peace to sort out Poland and internal problems. He stressed similar thoughts to Prussia's military *attaché*. The letter produced on Bismarck 'the depressing effect to be expected' (Oubril-Gorchakov 23/9).

30 Sep To Wilhelm: expects to be back in Berlin in a week then proceed to Baden. He suggests that the king should pardon a locally-influential peasant under attack from local liberal/legal forces who are trying to persuade the peasants that they have more power than the king over local issues — a pardon would make the point forcefully that the king could influence local battles. (Interesting example of the sort of small battle, which doesn't make it into history books (it's recounted in a letter), that someone like Bismarck is constantly engaged with.)

Oct He complained that the Foreign Ministry was in 'a deplorable state of decay'. One of his officials wrote that he was 'not completely of sound mind' and from time to time demanded completely impracticable things'. Blanckenburg wrote to Gerlach on 3/10 that Bismarck is 'writing everything on his own, no one can do it right for him, ... he is losing contact, speaks to few people'.

Gerlach advised him to bring in outsiders to help. He complained to Keudell that he had aged 15 years in a year and 'the people are much stupider than I thought'.

Oct (Clark) There was a conference of German state foreign ministers at Nuremberg. Rechberg tried to get them to agree on the August plan without Prussia. The other states did not want to alienate Prussia. Rechberg said to the Saxon minister, 'Very well, if you wish it that way we too can make friends with Prussia.' When he returned to Vienna, he decided that, although Bismarck wanted to push Austria out of Germany, in the short-term he should look for a deal to buy time while Austria recovered from recent disasters. Bismarck would also help against the democratic tide while the minor German sovereigns were bending like reeds in a storm. FJ was disheartened by the failure of the Schmerling/Biegeleben plan and was willing to listen — although he preferred Schwarzenberg's approach to Metternich's, his disposition was to temporise and swerve around. Influential people around FJ disliked Bismarck's style and aggression but they also feared that if he fell he would be replaced by a liberal and this limited action against him in 1862-4.

1 October (Gall) The Bund approved a 'federal execution' order against Holstein and charged Prussia and Austria with Saxony and Hanover to enforce it. Bleichröder: the market is depressed with fears of conflict (Stern).

7 Oct Bismarck spoke to Buchanan: suggested he was happy at the idea of a conference but he urged Britain not to act until after the Execution. He repeatedly portrayed himself to Buchanan as softening demands from Austria and other German states.

8 Oct (Clark) Metternich wrote to Rechberg re latest French ideas for an alliance — this time Venetia was unmentioned, Austria would not have to cede Galicia (only Russia and Prussia would lose in Poland) and Napoleon renounced the Rhineland. Rechberg remained opposed and it went nowhere.

8 Oct To Bernstorff: 'It is not the German governments but the German people that overwhelmingly shares the same interests as ourselves. Prussia needs a counterweight to the dynastic policy of the governments and will be able to find it only in a national representative body.'

17 Oct Buchanan-Russell: Bismarck says that he prefers the Danish king in the Duchies to a new Duke.

20/28 October 1863 elections (Pflanze refers to September elections p208 but 20/10 p216): conservatives recovered a bit from 10 [wrong, 11] to 36, liberals had 258/350.

Steinberg: PP 135>>141; other liberals 96>>106; conservatives 11>>35; 'Constitutionals' disappeared completely.

EF: cons 11>35, PP 133>140 (historian Mommsen elected), liberals ~70%, turnout down from 34% to 31%.

Wilhelm was so worried by the October 1863 election results that he apparently said, looking out of a window onto Palace Square, 'Down there is where they will put up a guillotine for me' (Clark). Deputies soon rejected the three-year military reform again and cut the budget accordingly.

OP: the results were roughly as Bismarck expected, the only good news was some better conservatives elected, such as Wagener and Blanckenburg.

Hamerow: the liberals got 536k votes (49%) and 258 (down from 285) seats (same seats as OP) vs conservatives 336k votes (31%) and 36 seats (same seats as OP). PP up from 141 to 143. They had roughly the same advantage in each of the three classes. Turnout down from 34% to 31%. (Only 1863 has detailed electoral records.)

Seems 258-36 is the right result.

22 Oct Bismarck wrote to Gerlach complaining that Crown Prince was an 'impudent nonentity' and 'cretin'.

26 October Bismarck to Schleinitz: 'The Prussian monarchy and our present constitution are irreconcilable.' The chief obstacle in the way of the 'complete and unconditional' elimination of the constitution was the king. (In autumn (Hamerow) Roon wrote from Pomerania (autumn): 'I live here in the midst of so-called Junkerdom, but my hopes for the future are not thereby strengthened. Supineness, laziness, pusillanimity, these are the chief characteristics of the so-called

conservative monarchist majority of the people, which endures everything but also expects everything from the government. Only the rule of the sabre can save us!

30 Oct Russell-Queen: 'Prussia is becoming more friendly to England than she has been for many years.'

November Disraeli-Earle: 'Prussia, without nationality, the principle of the day, is clearly the subject for partition.'

November Bismarck creates more conservative peers for the House of Lords, which had an important veto.

1 Nov Austrian Council of Ministers met — what to do if France continued to push on Poland?

Mosse: Rechberg feared Napoleon and wanted closer relations with Prussia.

5 November Napoleon declares that the 1815 treaties had 'ceased to exist' and demands a European Congress. (Mosse — invitation to Congress on 4th, denounced 1815 on 5th.) Cowley reported to London that in Paris the message of Napoleon's speech was seen as 'A Congress or war'.

Bismarck replied in a friendly tone without commitment, assuming Britain would veto. Austria and Russia didn't want it but wanted Britain to torpedo. Russell's first reaction was not hostile but he thought it required serious thought, not immediate response. Rechberg expressed the fear it would lead to a general war (Bloomfield, 8/11). Gorchakov wanted to weaken further the Britain-France relationship.

6 Nov His friend Hans von Kleist wrote to him quoting Revelations 2.27 (... And he that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations and he shall rule them with a rod of iron...), Bismarck scribbled 'O Hans, always wrathful with God's thunderbolt'.

7 Nov Karolyi-Rechberg: Bismarck isn't being friendly towards the idea of closer relations, claims Austria threatening him with a French alliance. Over the next fortnight Bismarck and Karolyi talked more. Karolyi reported that closer relations with Prussia required clearly abandoning the Schmerling plans for Bund reform.

7 Nov Bismarck-Redern re Napoleon's invitation: 'Bernstorff telegraphs, "I learn from a certain and very confidential source that the Queen finds the approach very impertinent.' Werther telegraphs: "Rechberg fears the Congress, of which he disapproves in principle, hoping that the project will fail from a refusal of England.'

8 Nov Goltz-Bismarck: Drouyn says the Congress could 'facilitate your escape from the difficulties against which you are struggling in the interior and in Germany... You will recall that several times I have expressed the desire of doing something with you: perhaps the moment has arrived'. Bismarck immediately replied in friendly spirit.

9 November Wilhelm opened new session with 'intransigent' speech from the throne (JS). JS writes, oddly, that the government lifted the June press edict but at the same time insisted it was 'urgently necessary and absolutely constitutional'. OP writes more convincingly that the liberals voted down the press edict 'which thereby became inoperative (p.222).

10 Nov British Cabinet decided to inquire in Paris about the agenda and powers of a congress.

13 Nov Wilhelm received Napoleon's invitation to the Congress from the Ambassador. Reply was presented by Goltz on 22nd.

13 November Denmark adopted a new constitution. It put into effect the concept from the March Patent. The Danish Council President, Hall, went to get it signed by the King but found him ill. **Two days later on 15 November the Danish king died, he had no direct heir. He was succeeded by Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein-Sönderburg-Glücksberg as King Christian IX (proclaimed 18th). The new King signed the new constitution (20th)** under great pressure from politicians and even the police (who said they could not guarantee law and order unless he signed). (Gorchakov tried to stop Christian signing the new constitution.)

This kicked off the Schleswig-Holstein affair. Schleswig and Holstein were possessions of the Danish crown. Holstein was part of the German Confederation but Schleswig was not. Denmark had promised not to incorporate either duchy in 1852.

Steefel: the new constitution did not incorporate Schleswig but it was reasonable to argue that it was a step toward its incorporation, and Denmark had expressly promised not to do this. It is generally now agreed that Denmark was violating its promises of 1851-2.

16 Nov (19th JS) Duke Christian Augustenburg had accepted 1852 but not given up his rights for ever in favour of his son. Frederik proclaimed himself 'Friedrik VIII, Duke of Schleswig-Holstein' and soon his sovereignty was recognised by most lesser German states and his case was taken up by liberal Germany. There was 'almost unanimous support of the German public' (Gall) for him. His wife was a niece of Queen Victoria which added to Bismarck's problems.

Bismarck was intimately familiar with the details of the famously complex SH question. He had been involved in 1851 in Frankfurt talks and over the years advised the government on how to handle it. He always looked at it from the perspective of *how it could help the Prussian monarchy*, as he defined its interests. **He had consistently told diplomats that he preferred to see the Duchies under the Danish King than a new Grand Duke who would oppose Prussia in the Bund.** Openly he agreed with Rechberg in August and September that the Danish policy was unsatisfactory and the legal procedure should run its course but secretly Oct/Nov he was working with Britain to try to avert the Execution by securing concessions from Denmark. He presented himself to London as a moderating influence on Austria and the south German states. He also secretly encouraged Denmark into a more aggressive posture that he would later use to justify his action against her. NB. He was explicit 22 December 1862 (to Count von Fleming): 'I am certain that **the whole Danish business can be settled in a way desirable for us only by war.** The occasion for such a war can be found at any moment that we find favourable for waging it.' He was determined to undermine the Bund and happy to do so by using the supposed sanctity of international treaties he thought were untenable and undesirable — everything in good time.

OP: Almost every force in Europe was opposed to Prussian annexation: the Great Powers, his own King and his family, his own Parliament, the German lesser states, many of his own officials in the Foreign Office, the media. As Pflanze writes, his achievement over SH was 'one of the amazing feats in the history of politics'. He did it by constantly diverting the pressure from different forces against each other, keeping them all divided, expanding his own possibilities.

He later told Bucher: 'The Schleswig-Holstein question was a nut on which we might well have broken our teeth. Denmark didn't worry me. I counted on her making blunders and it was only a question of creating a favourable situation. Austria had to be brought to see that she would dissipate all sympathy in Germany if she didn't go with us. Russia had to be reminded of the services we rendered when Austria wanted to mobilise Germany against her. **England had to be isolated so that she would confine herself to threats, as she always does when no-one will pull her chestnuts out of the fire for her. The individual actions were trifles in themselves; to see that they connected was the difficulty.**'

16 Nov Russell asked Prussia and Austria to delay the Execution to give the new king time to consider the situation. Two days later he offered British mediation on the duchies. After the news of Augustenburg's proclamation he switched tactics and pushed for a rapid Execution as it would imply recognition by the Diet of Christian as Duke of Holstein (Bernstorff-Bismarck, 22/11). Then he reversed again and told Prussia and Austria that Britain expected Christian's right of accession to all territories to be acknowledged and warned against the use of Execution to enforce international obligations.

18 November The *Nationalverein* issued an inflammatory appeal calling for Germany to reclaim the two duchies and supporting Augustenburg, with much talk of 'common fatherland' and warnings against 'betrayal to foreigners'. The *Reformverein* joined them. **Both summoned the deputies of all German parliaments to Frankfurt on 21 December.** Wilhelm and the Crown Prince supported Augustenburg.

OP (p268): 'Moderate' liberals such as Virchow feared that Bismarck would take up Augustenburg's cause and put them on the defensive. They urged Wilhelm to support Augustenburg. Waldeck and his democratic faction of 35 opposed them. Waldeck actually supported Prussian annexation and the development of German naval power but did not want Parliament to support the Crown and Bismarck, thus dissipating energy from the constitutional conflict. Some prioritised freedom at home, others prioritised progress on unification. Waldeck feared war would strengthen Bismarck, others confidently predicted the government could not survive such a crisis. When debate ended, the resolution urging support for Augustenburg passed with a large majority. Cf. 9/12. (Blackburn: Pflanze underestimated the importance of the *Nationalverein* in general, referred to a 'few thousand' members but it had 25,000. True?)

18 Nov Frederick left Gotha for Berlin to seek Prussian support.

18 Nov Bismarck to Talleyrand: 'For Prussia I prefer the King of Denmark in Kiel and Altona to a Duke of Holstein who out of fear will feel obliged, like so many other Princes, to oppose us at Frankfurt.'

19 Nov Lincoln's Gettysburg address.

19 Nov British Cabinet discussed Napoleon's offer and agreed to decline. Palmerston wanted to stay friendly with France to contain Russia in the East but did not want a Congress that he thought would exacerbate disagreements. Russell's despatch declining the Congress was sent on evening of 25/11, reached Paris on 26th, but not presented to Drouyn until 28th, meanwhile the full text had appeared in the *London Gazette* on 27th. **Napoleon was furious about it and made clear the Anglo-French alliance was over and he would be looking for new combinations.** Cowley reported he'd never seen Napoleon so angry. It seems the Cabinet did not appreciate the way in which they turned this down would have the effects it did.

Mosse (p141-2) describes this event as 'a landmark in the history of European diplomacy'. Arguably this is an overstatement but a) the tale does not appear in the standard Bismarck books and b) it really does seem important. The implication is it was briefed deliberately to the *Gazette*, but the details aren't clear — perhaps lost to history like many a media briefing?! Interestingly Clarendon wrote to Cowley (14/12) of this incident saying that 'Palmerston's pen is always dipped in gall and the Earl's vision is always obscured by the blue books [a reference to the Colonial Office's Blue Books?] that stand before him, while the others [in Cabinet] are indifferent because they are not personally responsible.'

OP: In 1848, the Frankfurt Parliament had asked Prussia to intervene on behalf of the Germans in SH, Prussia had been forced to back down — the failure had 'presaged the failure of the German revolution'. From November, Napoleon encouraged Bismarck to push for annexation of SH and the 'crowd of small states' hemming Prussia in (p. 244). 'If you now have something to whisper into our ears we shall listen attentively' (Drouyn to Goltz). OP: by encouraging Prussia to destroy the Bund, Napoleon hoped to kill the 1815 settlement. Bismarck told Goltz that the 'favourable disposition' of Napoleon was a good 'means of pressure on England' hence repeated dangling of possibilities for Napoleon on the Rhineland, without ever making specific commitments.

19 Nov Bleichröder: stock market 'swept by a great panic concerning the Schleswig-Holstein affair' and stocks lost 3.5%. Over winter, Bleichröder said little to Rothschild about Bismarck's policy viz S-H perhaps because he did not know what it was amid the extreme complexity and different rumours. By 1864 according to Keudell, Bleichröder, 'a man of unusual abilities', was one of Bismarck's closer confidantes and had told Keudell to keep Bleichröder briefed on non-secret matters. This was partly in the knowledge that information would flow to Rothschild and thereby to Napoleon. In November 1863 Bleichröder first suggested to Bismarck that Prussia could sell its rich coal mines in the Saar. Businessmen wanted them privatised. Bismarck knew Napoleon coveted them and had raised them in their Oct 1862 meeting. Wilhelm hated rumours in the press that he might sell them to Napoleon. The story returned in 1866. (Stern, p37)

21 Nov Buchanan-Russell: Bismarck said that Wilhelm is disposed to favour Augustenburg and it was 'only after a very animated discussion which lasted two hours and a half, and during which he threatened his own resignation that he succeeded in convincing His majesty that he must abide for

the present by the provision of the Treaty of 1852.' The Queen and the Duke of Saxe Coburg were working with Schleinitz to push Wilhelm to support Augustenburg. Bismarck had angrily confronted Schleinitz about his interference. He now stood 'almost alone'. (Buchanan wisely had some doubts about the veracity of all his claims.)

21 Nov Napier-Russell: Gorchakov keeps stressing how he wants the other four Powers to work together against Napoleon.

21 Nov First meeting of Bund since Danish King died. Austria and Prussia had the accession question referred to the Committee for Holstein and Lauenburg (agreed by Bismarck and Karolyi the night before, Steefel, p99).

22 Nov Goltz-Drouyn: France has the least interest in maintaining 1852, she has a chance to show her support for the national issue, and the plan for a Scandinavian union required first the separation of the duchies from Denmark. Drouyn didn't bite but stressed how France would be helpful at the Congress. Later that day, at Compiègne, Goltz presented Wilhelm's reply. Napoleon said to Goltz that he wished an *entente*: 'Prussia is surrounded by a crowd of small states which hamper its action without adding to its strength. I had hoped that the meeting of the Sovereigns would give the opportunity of establishing an understanding between us on this as well as on the other great questions.' (Steffel: Sybel and others wrongly place this discussion on 23rd, p117.)

23 Nov Goltz and Drouyn spoke again about the division of the duchies. Drouyn floated the possibility of Prussia annexing territory.

24 Nov After dinner Goltz had another chat with Napoleon who said that while his sympathies were on the side of nationalities he would remain neutral, but the conflict showed the need for a Congress. He was grateful for Wilhelm's reply but thought the other Powers' attitude meant there was little hope of important results. He was pondering new alliances and wished one with Prussia. He also agreed with Goltz that a) France could not ally with Austria and b) Austria's existence being based on treaties meant she could not tolerate a policy based on the principle of nationality. Wilhelm scribbled on Goltz's despatch: 'What does it mean — that Goltz always speaks of a possible Franco-Prussian alliance? He has never been authorised by me to do this!' [... *nie autorisirt worden!*]

25 Nov Around 24-5, Gorchakov proposed to London, Vienna and Berlin (and slightly later Paris) the idea of a London conference on SH. He wanted the Danes to ditch the new constitution and provide a way out for Germany without a crisis and Prussia renouncing 1852 etc. The Cabinet agreed the plan, the Queen was delighted. Over the next few weeks there was tension between Palmerston and the Queen about the balance of pressure to be applied in Copenhagen and Berlin/Vienna.

27 Nov Britain's refusal published in the *London Gazette* on 27th, presented formally on 28th (see above 19th).

28 November The majority of the Bund Committee: the vote of Holstein-Lauenburg should be suspended pending settlement of the succession question. The minority, Prussia and Austria, read a declaration that they saw themselves bound by the 1852 Treaty— i.e they did not support Augustenburg. Bismarck and Karolyi/Rechberg had agreed on this approach. The details are more complex than related in almost any of the books except Steefel — Austria had wanted just to refer to the 1852 treaty but Bismarck insisted that Denmark also had obligations from 1851-2 connected to the Treaty — 'No fulfilment of the Danish obligations of 1851-2, no Treaty of London' he said (Karolyi-Rechberg, 23/11). This distinction provided him with future wriggle room. On 28th they also made clear that the Execution should proceed swiftly on the basis already agreed — it should not change, as some states wanted (because the original was a tacit recognition of Christian as Duke of Holstein). The issue was referred to the Committee. Prussia and Austria told the Bund states that if they tried to change the Execution they would forestall the Bund by occupying Holstein themselves. **The lesser states were enraged but enough buckled to allow the vote to pass by one vote on 7 December.** (Cf. Steefel p. 99ff.)

When Austria, which had for years led an anti-Prussian majority, suddenly adopted the Prussian line that the Diet could not outvote the Great Powers there was an outcry. This was disastrous for

Austria's reputation with the Confederation. Her envoy in Frankfurt reported it had been catastrophic for Austria's prestige: 'So they put a knife to our throats' shouted the Bavarian minister president. Austria feared she could not support Augustenburg and a national movement without causing itself internal problems. Clark: Rechberg said around then, 'Never could Austria be expected to submit to a pack of little states.' He wrote to Prince Alexander of Hesse: 'The demand for the conquest of Schleswig for Germany, which is now so prevalent that it seems even to be catching hold of governments otherwise prudent, differs in no way from the striving of the French people for the Rhine frontier.'

29 Nov Goltz-Bismarck: Drouyn keen on alliance, said 'If you have something to whisper in our ears, we shall listen to you attentively.'

30 Nov Budberg presented the Russian reply to Napoleon, who spoke of new alliances and possibilities with Prussia and Russia. Budberg left the meeting convinced Napoleon would launch a war in the spring probably against Austria. (Steeffl, p119)

End Nov/early Dec Moltke in Frankfurt talking to Austrians and others about military plans and reporting back. He thinks possible to get Austrian agreement on a Prussian commander.

December Crown Council — DATE?? JS says 'early December'.

Dec Napoleon-Nigra: 'We will bring it to pass that Prussia and Austria turn their cannon on each other.'

Dec (Pflanze) Prussia, supported on this by Landtag, told the lesser states that unless they accepted the French free trade deal the Zollverein would expire in 1865. They buckled.

1 Dec Wilhelm asked Bismarck not to tell people that 'an independent Holstein does not commend itself to you, as this is not my opinion.' Bismarck replied the same day threatening to resign. (This isn't mentioned in any of the books I've read except Gall but is in the correspondence (#52, 1/12/63). Any reply from Wilhelm is not included.) On 3rd, Wilhelm wrote to Bismarck re police reports about subversives and asked whether they ought to increase defensive measures (also not mentioned in the books but an interesting reminder that the king was genuinely worried about revolutionary violence at this time).

1 Dec Goltz wrote to Bismarck outlining his own policy — Prussia should align with German nationalism against Austria and lead 'the moderate elements in its own land in a sounder direction'.

Bismarck completely disagreed, cf. 20 Dec.

4 Dec Buchanan-Russell: Bismarck is keen that Britain counteracts 'the daily influences' on Wilhelm by insisting on Prussia observing 1852.

5 Dec Buchanan-Russell: Bismarck says that while he and Austria are counteracting the smaller states 'acting under the influence of Democratic Societies', 'the Danish government should emancipate itself from the control of the mob at Copenhagen'. (Bismarck's conduct of diplomacy is evidence regarding the proposition that 'democracies are more inclined to peace': a subtext of much discussion was that *democratic influences made policy more emotional and inclined to risk war*, with governments wanting to retain power inclined to let themselves be influenced by the forces around them.)

6 Dec Grey had two meetings with Wodehouse, stressing the importance of pressuring Denmark. Grey thought Wodehouse was influenced by the strong pro-Danish public opinion which 'exists in utter ignorance of the merits of the question' (Grey-Queen). The Queen tried to push Russell to push Wodehouse in a tougher direction viz Denmark. 3-5/12 Palmerston and Victoria had exchanged letters with Victoria stressing Denmark's obligations of 1851-2.

7 Dec Bund vote (see above).

8 Dec Drouyn proposed a Paris Congress without Britain. Bismarck again was friendly, even though he didn't want it, to pull Napoleon towards him (cheaply) and pressure others.

9 Dec Government asked Landtag for a loan of 12m thaler for military expenses against Denmark. They didn't need it but Bismarck brought it to a vote to cause trouble. Waldeck opposed. Leading nationalists argued for acceptance. Liberals argued for days and brought a motion stating the readiness of Parliament to support the government if it adopted a 'national policy'. (OP, p269).

Bleichröder thought it would be turned down. Cf. 22/1/64.

9 Dec Tsar made clear to the Danes that he would not fight to defend her nor to defend 1852. He also politely pointed out the Danes were being overly aggressive towards Germany — ‘you have been drawing the cord too tight... If unhappily war should break out between you and Germany I cannot take part in it; you know our situation, you ought to understand... I don’t want to say anything painful to you, we are merely consistent; we have often warned you...’

11 Dec Talleyrand-Drouyn: Bismarck says he said to Wilhelm: ‘I do not wish to throw down the gauntlet into darkness and without knowing who will pick it up. I cannot expose myself at one blow to the polite observations of France, to the violent recriminations of England, to the paternal admonitions of Russia, and, finally, to be coolly abandoned by Austria, who may well be tempted to show herself moderate at our expense. I shall not, then, take a step without her and without her sharing our risks and perils.’

12 Dec Buchanan-Russell. At the end of a long note (cf. Steefel p288) Buchanan observed: various things may flow from the Execution and ‘I shall be surprised if M. de Bismarck does not endeavour to obtain more solid advantages for Prussia in return for the losses and sacrifices which the country will have to suffer in the event of war, than the honour of having placed a Prince of Augustenburg upon the Ducal throne of a Sleswig-Holstein state.’

(Amid all the lies and trickery, one of the things Bismarck was honest about to Buchanan (and others) was his opposition from the start to Augustenburg. Should London have wised up earlier to the question: *given there’s so much evidence Bismarck opposes Augustenburg, and given his character, what if his real goal here is a war to detach the duchies, using 1852 as a pretext, in order to then grab them for Prussia later, and if so shouldn’t we pressure the Danes into rapid concessions to forestall this possibility?* Of course, such a policy would have been strongly attacked by Disraeli and the Tories. Even if this had happened Bismarck would have continued to look for chances to push Austria out of north Germany — his long-term true goal. The deeper problem viz British policy is: given the greater fear was Napoleon, not a united north Germany, Britain was never going to fight to block Bismarck provided he pursued his goals in such a way as to keep Austria-France-Russia unable to unite against him.)

12 Dec Bismarck made clear to Wodehouse (envoy sent by Russell to Denmark via Berlin — NB. interesting that Palmerston, Russell and the Queen all had wanted another candidate but were overruled by the Cabinet, something inconceivable in the past 20 years at least, Mosse p156) that unless the new Danish constitution was declared inapplicable to Schleswig before 1 Jan, the German powers would see themselves as released from 1852. Wodehouse spoke to Wilhelm and Karolyi in Berlin too but got the same answer. Bismarck would not explore quite what it was Prussia *would* accept as a solution. He told the French Ambassador he’d told Wodehouse, ‘You are too distinguished a man of affairs to expect an answer from me. If I had to sell you a two hundred louis horse, I would not tell you that I would end up giving it to you for a hundred because you would only offer me eighty.’ (cf. Wodehouse-Russell, 13/12). Wodehouse spoke to the Russian envoy to Copenhagen (Ewers) in Berlin and reported to Russell (13th) he thought Russia would ‘go very far on the German side’.

15 Dec Buchanan telegraphed Russell discussing the possibility of Bismarck’s fall. The Queen inquired about contingency plans.

15 Dec Wodehouse told Hall that Britain hoped for a conciliatory attitude.

16 Dec Hall (day after first talk with Wodehouse) advised the King that a peaceful solution was unlikely. Anglo-French relations made mediation hard and German feeling was pushing Austria and Prussia. Denmark could not yield to the demand to suspend/amend the new Constitution — it would not appease Germany and it would cause terrible internal problems. If they did as demanded what security did they have the Powers would then guarantee their security? (When a report of this argument from Hall came to Bismarck on 31/12, he scribbled on the margin ‘None’.) Steefel, p.147ff: It seems that the Danish ministers were also misled (wanted to be misled) about the chances of support by a) promises from Sweden, b) bad intelligence that France would fight for her against Germany in the spring, c) hopes that the British government would be pushed by opinion and the Tories to step forward and defend her. After their discussions on 20th Wodehouse

telegraphed Russell: 'I cannot help suspecting that the Danes still count upon support from France in the spring.' It also seems that although the English were clear that Fleury was telling them that France would *not* fight for Denmark, members of the Danish government and the Swedish representative (Count Hamilton) got conflicting impressions.

19 Dec Mosse: Denmark decided to withdraw all forces from Holstein.

20 Dec Bismarck to Goltz (see below).

20 Dec Wodehouse and Ewers met Hall. Wodehouse took the lead: the Constitution violated 1852 and Denmark's promise not to incorporate Schleswig and should be modified. Fleury separately met Hall who took a similar line and proposed a conference. Hall rejected the advice as he was under huge domestic pressure not to renounce the constitution. The King was much more cautious but the ministers would not yield. On 21st Danish ministers 'burned the bridges behind them' by dissolving the Danish parliament. On 23rd the King said he wanted parliament recalled to discuss the issue. Complex negotiations between King and political leaders — King fed up with Hall. On 28th he accepted resignation of Hall government and 31st appointed Bishop Monrad as President of the Council and Finance Minister.

21 December The deputies summoned to Frankfurt created a committee and voted to promote Augustenburg. Prussia and Austria declared this new committee 'revolutionary' and called upon states of the Bund to suppress it.

21 Dec Buchanan-Russell: 'He [Bismarck] would not be surprised if Austria and Prussia were called upon ere long to contend with a new Confederation of the Rhine established under the protection of the Emperor of the French, and he asked what support Austria and Prussia might expect from England in such an eventuality, adding that it might be necessary soon that they should know upon what assistance they could calculate, for if Prussia did not see her way clearly in her resistance to the democratic influences which were now driving the country towards war with Denmark, she might be carried away by the stream and the King might yield to the entreaties of those who wish him to place himself at the head of the popular movement of the day.' A few days earlier he had telegraphed to his Ambassador in London: 'Reports from Paris give rise to the fear that with the complete failure of the congress idea, Napoleon is preparing a revolutionary war for next spring, to begin by a rising in Galicia.' He suggested that a conference in Paris on the Danish issue only and without England is 'little adapted to assure peace and is contrary to our [good] relations with England'. I.e he'd supported the idea to Napoleon and was undermining it in London.

22 Dec Talleyrand-Drouyn: Bismarck criticised Goltz to me — 'He [Goltz] gets heated' and 'I was obliged to write him a special letter, where I gave him to understand that it would be impossible for the Minister of Foreign Affairs to keep in Paris an ambassador who does not identify with his foreign policy.'

22 Dec Carr: Bismarck told the British Ambassador that 'a few cannon shots would settle the affair'. (Meaning what exactly?)

23 Dec Napier-Russell: 'It is thought here of the highest importance to support Bismarck in every way. He is considered the only bulwark against war with Denmark and revolutionary agitation.'

24 Dec (Pflanze) Napoleon sent General Fleury on a mission in December — ostensibly to congratulate King Christian on his accession, but in reality secretly to discuss alliance options with Prussia and Russia. Bismarck told him on 24th that a Congress should be limited to the duchies, he would not discuss Poland — 'Rather die than permit discussion of our possessions in Poland. I would rather cede our Rhenish provinces.' He was also more open to him about the possibilities of an alliance than he was via Goltz (cf. 22/12).

24 Dec Letter from Bismarck to Goltz, see below.

24 December Saxon and Hanoverian troops entered Holstein and Lauenburg. Danish troops withdrew on advice from Britain and Russia. (EF says this was 23rd.)

25 Dec Russell-Buchanan: ask Bismarck on what basis the Diet has the right to decide the Duke of Holstein?

26 Dec British ambassador at Frankfurt warned that England, France, Russia and Sweden had recognised Christian IX as king of all the components of the Danish monarchy and warned of

'serious complications' if the Diet were to breach the Treaty, but there should be a conference in London and the Diet should be represented.

26 Dec Buchanan-Russell: Bismarck suggests that in Germany people think Britain won't intervene, therefore Britain 'should use the strongest language compatible with diplomatic forms, to convince [the German people] and more particularly the people of the Northern Sea-board that they are following a course which may expose their coasts to a blockade by a British Fleet... [Britain] should let the people of Germany know the risk they are incurring'. NB. Bismarck also pointed out to Buchanan that Britain should **not** let it be known that he, Bismarck, was urging such action or else he would have to act publicly in such a way to contradict any British leaks.

(This is a nice example of the deep, subtle, and dishonest moves he made. He was 1) trying indirectly to get the Danes to resist, by using British threats to mislead them as to their true situation, 2) while fooling London about his true goals (pretending he just wanted the issue to go away and was respecting international law) and 3) using aggressive British language to manipulate both his own King and the other Powers. NB. the leak to the press of 1 January 1864 (a week later) and his comments to Beust in August 1865 about his indirect manipulation of Denmark.)

28 Dec The Austrian and Prussian envoys proposed to the Bund that Schleswig also be temporarily occupied as a guarantee of the Danes fulfilling legal obligations but soon clear would not get a majority. Voted down on 14 Jan.

30 Dec Napier-Russell: Gorchakov says 'France allied with the revolutionary forces in Europe is a constant source of anxiety and disturbance'; monarchies 'may at any moment be laid in ruins'; England and Russia should support Austria and Prussia 'to resist the elements of internal dissolution and the menace of foreign aggression'; he proposes the four Powers 'avow to each other the formation of a sort of moral coalition against revolutionary conspiracy, Ultra-Democracy, exaggerated nationalism and Military Bonapartist France.' (But Britain wanted the liberal forces to win in Prussia and for Austria to move out of Italy. This sort of appeal to a conservative 'moral coalition' could hardly work with a liberal British government (or even a Conservative one!))

30 December Friedrich arrived in Kiel and set up his court, which was illegal. Wilhelm had asked him not to but he feared seeming feeble so risked offence.

31 Dec Among his family Bismarck said: 'The "old inseparables" [i.e. the duchies] must some day be Prussian. That is the goal toward which I am steering; whether I reach it rests in God's hands. But I could not take the responsibility for letting Prussian blood be shed just to create a new 'middle state' which would always vote with the others against us in the Diet' (von Keudell, old family friend and secretary, p140). It's surprising how little historians refer to this given debate about when he was pursuing annexation. EF mentions it and EF quotes another line: 'How long it will later hang together I don't know but the beginning is good and the **obstinacy of the Danes will probably give us what we need, a reason for war.**' But EF wrongly dates it to a year later, New Year's Eve 1864 (so does Carr, p87)! EF also says that a month earlier Keudell had angered Bismarck by suggesting that he put himself at the head of national feeling, an interesting sign that Bismarck's inner circle also did not necessarily appreciate at the start how he would approach the crisis.

31 Dec After a lot of discussion since 5/11, Russell told Napier to give Gorchakov an assurance of British goodwill in the event of 'hazards to which the peace of Europe and the Balance of Power may be exposed'. It was not a specific promise of action, but was still 'a significant change in the direction of British policy' (Mosse).

31 Dec Britain formally proposed a conference.

What did Bismarck really think about Schleswig Holstein?

'[I]t was a startling achievement to conjure a treaty [of 1852] out of existence within twelve years of its signature by all the Powers, the first of many achievements which were to make Bismarck the undisputed master of the diplomatic art.' AJPT

So what was Bismarck thinking from the autumn 1863 as this crises emerged and played out?

1. Allying with the national liberal movement for Augustenburg would be damaging and pointless. There's no point creating another independent state that will oppose us.

To Goltz (20 December): 'Seeing the impulses which motivate [public opinion in Germany], the possibility of aligning Prussian policy with them appears to me remote and improbable... The more sensible and moderate elements form a constantly diminishing minority in the movement which is sweeping through Germany. To attain even a temporary community of action with the real leaders of it [the national movement] I regard as impossible, for it would be incompatible with the maintenance of ordered conditions in Prussia. I therefore believe that we must attach more weight to our relations with the other Great Powers than on agreement with the present direction of public opinion and I believe rather in directing our policy toward open conflict than toward open alliance with the incipient national and revolutionary movement...'

'[U]ntil we can forecast more clearly the form which the relations of the Great Powers to each other will take as a result of the conflict with Denmark, it will be necessary for us to keep the Congress question in flux, to cultivate our relations with France on that basis and to employ the favourable dispositions of the Emperor Napoleon as a means of pressure on England and its attitude towards Danish affairs.'

'It is in this sense that your Excellency will understand the proposal which we have directed to London, Petersburg and Vienna concerning a conference on Danish affairs. In spite of the detailed responses which we have received from Vienna, Petersburg and London, it is not at all probable that a definite declaration of willingness to attend will follow quickly; it does not seem to me certain that it will follow at all. **If it should, we would admit to negotiation only the international side of the German-Danish question, not the federal one of Holstein, and would thus retain the final conclusion in our own hands...** Should the conference come to pass, I should look upon it less as a means of solving the Danish question than as the terrain on which the alliances for the presumably impending European war would form themselves. That would not exclude our striving at the same time to secure the arrangement of the Danish question that would be most favourable to the interests of Prussia.' In the margin of Goltz's letter of 1/12, he scribbled there is no reason to trust Napoleon — it was safer not to antagonise the other three powers by open alliance with Napoleon, and still by diplomacy keep him friendly.

2. Our priority is not public opinion but Great Power calculations.

There is a question for Prussia which 'simple in itself is obscured by the dust arising from the Danish business and the mirage attaching thereto.'

He wrote to Goltz, on 24 December (I've pieced this together from a dozen different sources, some of which put passages in different orders — it's so important I'd pay someone to track the original and do a definitive translation): **'The question is whether we are a Great Power or simply a German federal state and whether, in the first case, we are to be governed monarchically or, as would be permissible in the second case, by professors, circuit judges**

and small town gossips. The chase after the phantom “popularity in Germany” which we have carried on since the 1840s has cost us our position in Germany and Europe and we shall not win this back by allowing ourselves to drift in the stream and persuading ourselves we are directing its course, but only by standing firmly on our feet and being **first of all a Great Power and a German federal state second.** This is something that Austria has to our cost always recognised and she will not allow her European alliances, if indeed she has any, to be destroyed by the playacting which she is conducting with German sympathies... The twenty percent Germans in Austria are not in the last resort a factor which would compel Austria to allow herself to be diverted from her own interests...

‘Our policy, which was so briskly opposed by you in the spring, has been verified in the Polish question while the Schmerling policy has borne bitter fruit for her [Austria]. Is it not the most signal victory we could win that Austria, two months after the reform attempt, should be glad when nothing more is said about it, should be writing identical notes with us to her former friends, and joining in our threats towards her pet, the majority in the Federal Diet...?’

‘**Never before has there been a time when Viennese policy was so largely dictated by Berlin both in outline and detail.** Add to this that we are sought after by France... our voice has, in London and St Petersburg, the weight it had lost for twenty years. And all this eight months after you prophesied to me the most dangerous isolation as a result of our Polish policy. **If we were now to turn our back on the Great Powers in order to throw ourselves into the arms of the small states caught in the net of democratic clubbery, it would be the most wretched state into which one could deliver the monarchy at home and abroad. We would be pushed instead of pushing; we would lean for support on elements which we do not control, which are necessarily hostile to us, but to which we would have to submit for better or worse.** You believe there is some hidden virtue in ‘German public opinion’, Chambers, newspapers and such like, which might support or help us in a ‘Union’ or ‘Hegemony’ policy. I consider that a radical error, a fantasy. **Our strength cannot come from parliamentary and press politics but only from Great Power politics backed by arms, and we have not sufficient force and vigour to squander it on a bogus front and on empty words and Augustenburg.** You attach a great deal too much importance to the whole Danish question and you allow yourself to be deluded by the general uproar among the democrats who control the media of press and assembly and who are agitating this question, which in itself is of no great importance. Twelve months ago the question was that of two years’ service; eight months ago it was Poland; and now it is Schleswig-Holstein...

‘For the moment, I regard it as the right policy to have Austria on our side; whether the moment for separation arrives, and on whose part, we shall see... I am prepared for war and revolution combined... Nor am I the slightest bit afraid of war, on the contrary; I am also indifferent to the labels “revolutionary” or “conservative”, as I am to all mere phrases; you will perhaps soon convince yourself that war is a part of my program as well... If the barroom enthusiasm in London and Paris makes any impression, I shall be glad of it; it is part of our stock-in-trade, but it has not impressed me so far and in the case of a fight it furnishes little money and no powder. You may call the convention of London revolutionary if you like. The Vienna treaties were ten times more so and ten times more unjust to many princes, estates and countries. It is only by European treaties that European law is established. **If, however, you want to apply the standard of morality and justice to these latter they must well-nigh all be abolished...**

‘I can only say, “*La critique est aisée [criticism is easy].*” It is not difficult amid the applause of the mob to find fault with the government, especially a government which has been obliged to

lay hold of several wasps nests into the bargain... If the government makes a fiasco over things which are in general beyond the control of human will and foresight, you have the glory of having prophesied at the right time that the government was on the “woodman’s road” [i.e to nowhere].’

If they backed Augustenburg, he wrote, the best that would happen is ‘one Grand Duke more in Germany who in his anxiety to preserve his sovereignty would vote against Prussia in the Bund’.

He ended this striking letter by saying to Goltz that he knew about his intrigues in the court and would not tolerate Goltz pushing his alternative policy to the king any more.

‘The friction in our state machine, already excessive, cannot be intensified. I will tolerate opposition if it emanates from a competent source such as yourself, but the advising of the King in this matter I will share officially with no one, and if H.M. were to demand that of me, I should resign from my post. I told H.M. that when reading him one of your latest reports. H.M. found my point of view a natural one and I can only adhere to it. No one expects reports which reflect only ministerial views but yours are no longer reports in the usual sense, but assume the nature of ministerial presentations [*Vortrage*] which recommend to the king a completely contradictory policy to the one which he himself decided on and in council with the whole ministry and has pursued for the last four weeks. Criticism of this resolution, which I will call sharp if not downright hostile, does not constitute an ambassadorial report, but a quite different ministerial program. Such conflicting viewpoints can only do harm and no good, for they can arouse hesitation and indecision, and I consider any policy is better than a vacillating one...

‘The friction which everyone in my position has to overcome — with ministers and councillors at Court, with occult influences, with the Chambers, the press, and foreign courts — must not be aggravated by the substitution for the discipline of my department, of a rivalry between the minister and the ambassador, and by my having to restore the indispensable homogeneity of the service by a discussion through the post. I can seldom write at such length as I can today, Christmas Eve, when all the officials are on leave, and I would not write the fourth part of this to anyone but you. I do so because I cannot bring myself to write to you officially and through the clerks in the same autocratic tone in which your reports to hand have been couched. I have no hope of convincing you, but I have sufficient confidence in your own official experience and impartiality to make me believe that you will grant me that only one policy can be carried out at a time, and that it must be the policy upon which the ministry and the King are one. If you want to try to overthrow that and the ministry along with it, you must do it here in the Chamber and in the press, at the head of the Opposition, but not from your present position. In that case I should equally have to abide by your maximum that, in case of a conflict between patriotism and friendship, the former must decide. I can assure you that my patriotism is of so pure and strong a nature that a friendship which has to give way to it may nevertheless be very cordial.’

31/12 Goltz replied: ‘You are not a parliamentary government but neither are you a monarchical one, yours is the dictatorship of the minister for foreign affairs.’

3. He wanted to annex S-H.

In his Memoirs, he referred to discussion at a December Crown Council in which he raised this. All of Wilhelm’s predecessors had added to Prussian territory, he said. His view was not recorded in the protocol of the meeting because the King seemed to think ‘that I had spoken under the Bacchic influences of a lunch [!] and would be glad to hear no more about it. I insisted, however, upon the words being put in and they were. **While I was speaking, the Crown Prince raised his hands to heaven as if he doubted my sanity.** My colleagues remained silent.’ Wilhelm objected that he had no ‘right’ to the Duchies.

Lerman says there is 'scant evidence' (p.99) that Bismarck was set on annexation before February. Wrong. Carr: It is 'doubtful' that annexation was primary objective until Feb 1864. Wrong. GC: 3/2/64 'seems to have been the first occasion on which Bismarck suggested to the king that Prussia should annex the duchies'. Wrong.

While Bismarck dated his comment on annexation to December, Keudell thought it referred to meetings on 2 and 3 January. Steefel, who inspected the original documents, says 'it is difficult to maintain this date as against the clear evidence of the protocols' re 3 Feb. BUT Bismarck states the Crown Prince was present and the CP left for army HQ on 31 Jan and was not present on 3 Feb. He was present at a meeting on 29 Jan 'of which that of February was a continuation' so perhaps this is what Bismarck was referring to in his Memoirs.

My conclusion... He always held annexation as his primary goal and certainly was thinking this before February 1864, before November 1863 and even *before 1863*.

- a) Look at his letter of 22/12/62 to Count Flemming: 'I am certain that the whole Danish business can be settled in a way desirable for us only by war. The occasion for such a war can be found at any moment that we find favourable for waging it... The disadvantage of having signed the London Protocol we share with Austria and cannot free ourselves from the consequences of that signature without war. It cannot be foreseen what development of the German Federal relations is destined for the future. As long, however, as they remain about the same as in the past, I cannot regard it as in the interest of Prussia to wage a war in order, as the most favourable result, to install in [SH] a new Grand Duke [i.e. Augustenburg], who in fear of Prussian lust for annexation, will vote against us in the Diet and whose government, in spite of the gratitude due to Prussia for its installation, will be a ready object of Austrian intrigues.'
- b) Look at his correspondence with Wilhelm on 1/12/63.
- c) Look at his New Year's Eve comment recorded by Keudell.

Assume historians are right that his dating of his comments to the December Council was wrong and they belong to a meeting on 29 Jan or 3 Feb (cf. Steefel, p108-9) — this does *not* mean he first thought of annexation 2/64.

In his Memoirs:

'From the very beginning I kept annexation steadily before my eyes, without losing sight of the other gradations.' The course which 'absolutely must be avoided' was 'war for the erection of a new Grand Duchy, at the head of the newspapers, the clubs, the volunteers and the states of the Bund (Austria excepted)... I should have regarded as a fool and a traitor any minister who had fallen back upon the erroneous policy of 1848, 1849 and 1850 which must have prepared a new Olmütz for us.' In his Memoirs he speculates that William might never have been persuaded to go for the course they took were it not for the failures and problems of the New Era. 'Even in 1864 it certainly cost us much trouble to loosen the threads by which the King, with the co-operation of the liberalising influence of his consort, remained attached to that camp.' William stuck to the line that he had no right to Holstein. Bismarck took the view that the law was very complicated and could be forced to yield some sort of justification for what he wanted. (2, p12-13). 'My respect for so-called public opinion — or in other words, the clamour of orators and newspapers — has never been very great but was still further lowered as regards foreign policy [by the SH crisis]'

In Busch's book (1p130/174 depending on edition), he told Busch: '**What I am proudest of, however, is our success in the Schleswig-Holstein affair...** It was difficult to carry my idea into execution. Everything was against it — Austria, the English, the small [German] states — both Liberal and anti-Liberal, the Opposition in the Diet, influential personages at Court, and the majority of the press... There was some hard fighting, the hardest being with the Court, and it demanded stronger nerves than mine.'

4. Publicly we stand for 'international law'. This makes it harder for Powers to attack, particularly Britain as Britain favours Denmark but is embarrassed when she's breaking international law.

5. We hitch Austria to our cause to block pro-Augustenburg intrigues and discredit the Confederation. In 1864 he was discussing the situation with the Italian Ambassador at a ball who commented on his alliance with FJ to which he replied, 'Oh, we've only hired him [Austria].' 'For nothing?' 'It is *travailler pour le roi de Prusse* [i.e. 'hard work for little gain' to Austria].'

Rechberg thought it was a chance to discredit the German national movement. He also had to worry that Napoleon was supporting Bismarck in annexing the duchies and grabbing other parts of north Germany. Rechberg knew about this because Bismarck passed on some of Napoleon's suggestions to Rechberg, to pressure the latter to move in the desired direction. Bismarck kept dropping hints to Napoleon re possible compensation in Italy or the Rhine.

He had dealt with Rechberg at the Diet in Frankfurt. At one point Rechberg challenged him to a duel though it was quickly smoothed over. On another occasion, Rechberg gave him the wrong document to read — a very sensitive one. Bismarck handed it back, pointed out the error, and never used the information. 'Thenceforth he placed in me every confidence' (Memoirs, p366).

Throughout the crisis Bismarck played the Powers off against each other.

First a stocktake:

Napoleon had now annoyed and seemed to threaten Russia (in Poland), Austria (in Italy), Prussia (on the Rhine) and Britain (in Belgium). Paris was furious with London and estranged from St Petersburg. Napoleon thought he could gain from disruption: perhaps he could grab Venetia, perhaps he could improve France's northern frontier. This gave Bismarck leverage.

Vienna, worried by Napoleon and the failure of her German initiatives, now wanted to cooperate with Prussia. This gave Bismarck leverage.

Vienna wanted British cooperation in keeping Napoleon calm and the financial help of London's banks. There was no direct clash of interests. Palmerston had said in 1859, 'If [Austria] were dismembered, France and Russia would shake hands across Germany and the independence of Europe would be gone.' But London also favoured Venetia going to Italy and assumed it inevitable. Metternich wanted an alliance with Napoleon. The collapse of the August initiative undermined Schmerling somewhat. Everybody in official circles was contemptuous of Italy but although FJ had sometimes said he would retake Lombardy, Schmerling and others opposed this. FJ and Rechberg going for an alliance with Prussia was unpopular in most of the court circles (Clark).

Russia occupied Poland and had an army within 200 miles of Berlin and Vienna. The growth of nationalism threatened her position in Poland. And in 1863 Russia was absorbed in its internal problems, the recent emancipation of the serfs etc.

Gorchakov sought closer relations with Britain summer-December and 1863 ended, having started with the row over Poland, with the Cabinet assuring Russia of 'their most friendly feelings' (Russell-Napier, 31/12). The Polish rebellion was not yet crushed and Napoleon may return to action in spring 1864. Russia wanted France isolated and the space to focus on internal reorganisation. Polish operations were expensive — in 1863 the deficit rose from ~35 million roubles to 40m then in 1865 it was 55m before starting to fall. Russia saw liberalism on the march in Germany, a democratic national movement attacking the government in Denmark, growing revolutionary ideas in Paris, revolutionary tides in Hungary, and the people of Venetia wanting union with the new kingdom of Italy. In this context, Russia did not want Bismarck resigning and a liberal government taking over in Berlin. Regarding Denmark, Russia neither wanted a new Scandinavian union, ruled by the anti-Russian Swedish king, nor Bismarck's diplomatic defeat and fall. Russia and Austria rubbed against each other in the Balkans where Austria wanted Turkey to stay stable (unless Vienna could grab something) while Russia wanted to weaken Turkey and Pan Slavist propaganda was aimed at Vienna. Overall the Tsar was personally and politically closer to Wilhelm than FJ. Austria's flirtation with Paris and London over Poland had knocked back relations again.

Bismarck could exploit Gorchakov's fears and desires, including by dropping hints of how he may be forced to resign or seek closer relations with Napoleon. Mosse: he made 'frequent and skilful use' of these two trump cards.

Britain had conflicting attitudes towards Germany. She didn't want a major war. But the Bund guaranteed Germany was relatively weak and therefore less effective in constraining France, Britain's perpetual fear.

In London, it was clear that preserving Danish independence was a national interest. Palmerston thought it best achieved by pressuring Germany and was determined to uphold the 1852 Treaty. The Queen and most of the Cabinet preferred pressure on Denmark and were ready to jettison 1852. Russell got caught between Palmerston/Cabinet and pressure on Copenhagen/Germany. The wrangling over Poland in 1863 was a very poor prelude to cooperation in Europe over Denmark from November 1863. (Mosse).

As the crisis unfolded, Russia regarded Bismarck's fall as a disaster and was prepared to act to help him. Britain regarded it, and the liberal Prussia it assumed would follow, as great news. Mosse: Britain and Russia had lower prestige than the days of Olmütz and Don Pacifico in 1850, while Austria and Prussia, working together, were stronger than they had been in 1848-9.

There were six possible 2-way alliances among the 4 other powers. They all struggled to coordinate:

- Russia/Austria: Crimea created antipathy in Russia for Austria.
- Russia/France: Napoleon's attack over Poland in February 1863 then November 1863 on tearing up the 1815 settlement created tension and suspicion.
- Russia/Britain: legacy of Crimea War, Great Game in central Asia made Britain worried about India, competition in Mediterranean made Britain worried about the Middle East. Both Russia and Britain in 1860s wanted Europe quiet while they pursued interests and growth outside Europe.
- Britain/France: huge distrust of Napoleon, Britain opposed Napoleon's intervention in Italy, made worse in November 1863 when Napoleon renounced the 1815 settlement and called for a Congress, UK rightly suspected him making moves on Rhineland and Belgium. As the crisis

developed in 1864 Napoleon used it to undermine support for the 1815 settlement, which deepened tension with Britain which did not want the crisis to spread into a general crisis.

- Britain/Austria: Neither could really help the other much directly or cared about the other's interests. Austria wouldn't give up Italy, British elites favoured liberal nationalism in Italy.
- France/Austria: Franco-Austrian war 1859 and Italian unification made Franco-Austrian cooperation hard and left Austria vulnerable to attack from the south. Austria and France inevitably were in tension over nationalism.

Bismarck exacerbated tension between all these relationships to maximise his own options, particularly to avoid France and Russia coming together to pressure him.

- With Britain he stressed 'international law', his limited goals, and hinted that hostility would force him to do a deal with Napoleon who wanted to tear up 1815. He stressed to Buchanan: Prussia could either a) stick to the London 1815 Treaty and keep Napoleon isolated or b) abandon the Treaty and join with the Bund and possibly Napoleon — I hope, he told Buchanan, that London 'would not give a signal for the start of a steeplechase to Paris.'
- British policy was confused, Palmerston was old, the Cabinet was divided and few wanted to fight over it — especially not alongside Napoleon. [Exercise: how would Bismarck have handled it if he had worked for London?]
- With Austria he stressed conservative solidarity, the dangers of French manoeuvres in Italy, and hinted at the possibility of himself doing a deal with Napoleon. He suggested that N3 was offering help to annex the duchies so Rechberg felt he had to try to keep the madman Bismarck close. He used democracy to undermine Austria — e.g he accepted Britain's suggestion of a referendum knowing Austria could not accept. When Austria asked him for concessions that he could not easily just refuse, he replied that he would be prepared to do so but could not persuade Wilhelm. When Austria backtracked, cheated him, and backed Augustenburg (May), he did not openly oppose -- he went along but imposed such tough conditions such that Augustenburg withdrew: 'I hitched Augustenburg as an ox before the plough'.
- Austria was trapped between a) the triumph of liberal nationalism (a major problem for her viz Hungary and Italy) or b) Prussian annexation. Austria was almost immediately (12/63) discredited in the Bund by going with Prussia against Augustenburg and bullying the Bund. In April 1864 Bismarck remarked to Keudell that it was 'incomprehensible' why Austria had followed Prussia into SH. Austria could neither figure out what Bismarck was up to nor develop a good rationale for why it was getting entangled in SH, in which it had no real interest. [Exercise: how would Bismarck have handled it if he had worked for Vienna?]
- With Napoleon he held out the chance of vindicating the nationality principle in Schleswig. He held out the possibility of gains for France in Italy and hinted he might support a grab in Belgium, while warning that hostility would force him to be more pro-Austrian: 'From the moment that you show us *faccia feroce*, we must put ourselves on good terms with Austria' (to Talleyrand, spring 1863).
- Britain and France could not cooperate. When the Cabinet was considering options in spring 1863 de Lhuys told the British Ambassador in Paris that the Polish affair in 1863 had shown that 'Great Britain could not be relied upon when war was in the distance.' But Napoleon couldn't decide on a goal and win allies for it. He'd annoyed Britain and Russia in November 1863 by denouncing Vienna and by the end of 1864 had not got anything for himself. [Exercise: how would Bismarck have handled it if he had worked for Paris?]
- With Russia he exploited their hostility to Austria and stressed conservative solidarity against revolutionary forces. Carr writes a few times that Bismarck was genuinely worried about the Augustenburg movement leading to revolution. I'm not sure about this. I think it's more accurate to say that he feared his own King, under the influence of his wife, might back Augustenburg and

generally mishandle events such as to encourage revolutionary dynamics, but he also thought that if Wilhelm followed his advice then revolutionary dynamics would fade away.

- He used British opposition to Augustenburg to undermine the latter with Wilhelm (i.e if we push for Augustenburg we might get embroiled in war with Britain) and also waved the spectre of German liberals running amok at Wilhelm to quell his inclinations for Augustenburg. Denmark's intransigence was important. Wilhelm feared that the Danes might compromise and the opportunity to ditch 1852 could be lost, while Bismarck thought that he would always be able to provoke trouble over it and the real danger was backing Augustenburg, not the Danes pulling a diplomatic coup.
- He used the pressure on him in Germany to side with Augustenburg to argue in London that he had to insist on Denmark fulfilling her obligations.
- He secretly encouraged Danish intransigence *which supplied energy to him*.
- He isolated the liberals by using their opposition to funding the army against them.
- His hardest problem was always the King and the influences on him. E.g To Roon, 21 January 1864: 'I have the premonition that the cause of the crown against the revolution is lost, for the heart of the king is in the other camp.'

His main opponent was Austria which suffered many problems:

1. She couldn't decide on priorities between preserving her position in the Bund / North Germany and Italy.
2. Decision-making around FJ was shambolic — politically, militarily, and when the two combined. She stumbled into the S-H crisis without thinking through the hard questions.
3. She suffered severe debt problems.
4. Internal divisions over the *Zollverein* and tariffs.
5. Multi-national empire in an age of growing nationalism.
6. Relied on the 1815 Vienna Treaty in an age when Napoleon was undermining faith in Vienna and 'international law'.
7. She couldn't repair relations with Russia.
8. Britain and France opposed her in Italy.
9. Napoleon thought he could exploit conflict between Austria and Prussia and Vienna couldn't figure out how to cope with this.

Some other things to keep in mind over the next 6 months:

- It was hard for Bismarck to push Wilhelm to adopt annexation as the policy. He had to both keep this as his guiding star while avoiding a rupture with the King over it and gradually converting him.
- The British Cabinet was divided and Palmerston could not get support for a more aggressive policy. Britain often faced the dilemma: perhaps we could make gains 'on the cheap' by making threats, but what if our bluff is called? Here Bismarck correctly calculated he could call Britain's bluff. And when push came to shove Palmerston consistently was more fearful of France. Cf. 8/2/61, 13/2/63, 7/4/63, 13/9/65. Many in London thought that a stronger Germany would be useful to Britain in containing France and Russia.
- When Austria flipped to support Augustenburg, Bismarck's response was amazingly subtle: he did not overtly oppose, he met Augustenburg and manipulated Augustenburg into blowing his own chances up. Cf. his famous comment about hitching Augustenburg like an ox to the plough then dropping him.
- No other Power could develop a coherent approach to *ends, ways and means*. This is normal. It was Bismarck's incredible performance and intricate execution that was highly abnormal.
- His cynicism was boundless. He used both nationalism and democracy as forces to give him energy but he privately described both as a 'swindle'.
- Austria was tricked into thinking it was working with Bismarck on a joint conservative project. He kept annexation hidden from Vienna until Vienna was embroiled in territories far from her core concerns.
- He told Rechberg and Napoleon about the offers from each other to Prussia to keep each suspicious of the other and more inclined to stay closer to him.

- Almost all observers assumed the Austrian army was much stronger than Prussia's. We know what happened in 1866 but it was shocking to almost everybody at the time. The real power of states can quietly change in ways that experts cannot see. The development of the Prussian General Staff and other military reforms were vastly underrated until the shock of Sadowa then *still* underrated until 1870-1.

*

1864

Notes from the Underground, Dostoyevsky.

'British foreign policy during the Schleswig-Holstein crisis of 1863-4 was hardly deserving of the name. It was a curious and incoherent amalgam of Palmerstonian blustering and anti-Palmerstonian pressures emanating from Windsor and amplified within the Cabinet, presided over by Lord John Russell, who had somehow forgotten it was all a bluff' (Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*).

There was 'a divided Cabinet and the confused uncertainty of Parliament' leading to 'an indefinite wavering policy which brought embarrassment and discredit to the Government... British impotence and her reluctance to fight had been bared for all to see.' But 1864 saw no radical change. It was 'the culmination of a long period of British disenchantment with the Continent, which went back at least as far as the end of the Crimean War.' (Millman, p.5).

Ignatiev arrived as Ambassador in Constantinople in [1864 Wikipedia and others, 1867 Otte].

1 Jan In the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (a Prussian newspaper that was often the place for official stories or semi-official leaks) appeared a story that Britain had protested the Austro-Prussian proposal to the Diet for the occupation of Schleswig, and had told the German governments that 'in case German troops crossed the Eider, England would give Denmark the aid desired'. The story was picked up by other papers including in Copenhagen. On 4 Jan Bernstorff posted it out to Bismarck and said he was surprised if it were true as Russell had not given any indication of it. Bismarck replied that such a declaration had not actually been made but some information offered some justification for the statements published(!). He did not tell Bernstorff that he had himself urged Britain to toughen its notes to German states (cf. 26/12). Steefel speculates that this was a subtle move by Bismarck to encourage foolish hopes and further resistance in Copenhagen. This seems to me likely, cf. the comments to Beust in August 1865.

2-3 Jan Church: Meetings of the Crown Council at which Bismarck got Wilhelm to agree — no agreement with Austria for a *permanent* commitment to Denmark's integrity. Cf. 10 Jan.

2 Jan Carr: British Cabinet decided to help Denmark if Augustenburg was established in S-H but without support from France and Russia it would not be military support.

Mosse: British Cabinet despatched a note to Malet in Frankfurt: HMG would regard giving Augustenburg possession of both duchies 'as equivalent to an attack upon Denmark with a view to its dismemberment, and they would feel bound, in that case, to afford assistance to Denmark in opposing so evident an act of aggression.' Britain asked for a delay to allow consideration by the signatories to 1852. This should be communicated to the Diet after a similar note had been agreed by Russia, France and Sweden. Cf 8/1.

3 Jan Cowley-Russell: Drouyn says that French sympathies are with Denmark but 1852 provided no guarantee of action and France only had 'so to say, but a sixth of the responsibility' for the Treaty; France won't fight for Denmark alone and doesn't see much prospect of allies and 'the question of Poland had shown that Great Britain could not be relied upon when war was in the distance'. (JS dates this comment to 'late 1863'. He cites Pflanze for this but Pflanze does not give a date and implies p.248 it was January, which it was.)

Cowley thought this 'lamentable' conduct was caused by: 1) The 'rankling disappointment at the failure of the projected Congress and a desire to justify the project in the eyes of the world by the spectacle of a conflict which might have been avoided'; 2) Anger to HMG re 'their imputed abandonment of France in the Polish question'; 3) 'The possibility that out of the complications something may turn up advantageous to France'.

Mosse: This marked 'an epoch in the history of the nineteenth-century', the age of Palmerston was ending and that of Bismarck began, it 'paved the way for the German advance across the Eider', it 'marked the end of the Palmerstonian age in British foreign policy and the beginning of British isolation'. Napoleon was angry with Britain over Poland, angry with Britain over the Congress

(especially the insulting nature of the briefing), and hopeful that in the chaos of Bismarck pushing for changes something would turn up for France, with little risk.

5 Jan Napier-Russell: 'The leading aims of Prince Gorchakov are to combat the notions of democracy and nationality and to control France'.

6 Jan Granville, who led the pacific majority in Cabinet, told Palmerston he opposed 'plunging this country into a war for the maintenance of the Treaty of 1852'. Palmerston replied that 'there was no question whatever of England going to war'. Palmerston was hoping to get French support to settle the issue without fighting. Steefel: in December (undated) Palmerston had written to Russel to the effect — Holstein is part of the Bund and if Germany grabs Holstein 'we should content ourself with a strong and indignant protest' but 'Schleswig is no part of Germany, and its invasion by German troops would be an act of war against Denmark, which would in my clear opinion entitle Denmark to our active military and naval support. But you and I could not announce such a determination without the concurrence of the Cabinet and the agreement of the Queen.'

6 Jan Buchanan-Russell: 'I am convinced that [Bismarck] intends to conquer Schleswig for Germany.' Mosse: This prompted Russell to warn Bernstorff that Britain would not allow Denmark 'to perish without aiding her in her defence'. Various reported to London around then that the German states, large and small, did not believe Britain would act, so Buchanan, Bloomfield and Napier all suggested tougher language from London.

6 Jan Drouyn reminded Goltz of their November discussions including the possible annexation of the duchies. Goltz got the impression in January that Drouyn assumed a general war was coming.

7 Jan Buchanan-Russell: Bismarck isn't pushing for a division of Schleswig which would 'cause a useless difficulty, if the integrity of the Danish Monarchy is to be maintained', his main condition is 'the complete security of the German population against Danish rule', and he is 'still disposed to prevent invasion of Schleswig, if the new Constitution is abrogated'.

8 Jan Russell showed the Queen draft telegrams in line with the Cabinet of 2nd. She severely criticised the tone. Russell sent her notes from Buchanan and Bloomfield suggesting stronger language in Berlin and Vienna would help peace. On 12th, after days of wrangling, the Cabinet insisted on no reference to what might happen if Schleswig were invaded and softer language — a 'defeat' (Mosse) for Palmerston and Russell.

10 Jan Church: After the failure of the August 1863 German plan, Rechberg wanted to get closer to Prussia. Russia was even more hostile after Austria's behaviour during the Polish affair. Italy was waiting to pounce on Venetia. Napoleon was more hostile than at any time since 1859. Britain was not hostile but a) thought Vienna should cede Venetia and b) couldn't be relied on to provide much material support. Rechberg was shocked at the rapid growth of the pro-Augustenburg, pro-nationalist movement in Germany in late 1863 and how even the monarchies in the small German states were pulled towards denouncing the 1852 treaty — while Austria depended more than any Power on upholding 1815 and opposing nationalist movements trying to overthrow 'international law'. He had tried to persuade Denmark to delay and moderate. He even favoured France calling for a conference. In January he wanted to bind Prussia to Austria, partly in case Bismarck were replaced by a ministry favourable to Augustenburg, so favoured a written deal. He knew Wilhelm was pro-Augustenburg. With Biegeleben he drafted a deal. Rechberg's own goal was amalgamation of S-H and a 'personal union' of the new state with Denmark under the guarantee of the Powers, with 1852 and international law seen as having been buttressed.

On 10 Jan, Rechberg and Biegeleben submitted their draft agreement with Prussia to the cabinet and FJ. Their draft Article 5 stipulated: Austria and Prussia would *in no circumstances* give up the integrity of Denmark nor the recognition of Christian. Rechberg stressed that he wanted to avoid a European war and this deal would bind Prussia including in the event of Bismarck being replaced by a liberal. If the Bund tried to occupy Schleswig and set up Augustenburg, then dominoes would tumble: foreign powers would intervene, France would use the chance to attack in both Germany and Italy. FJ stressed that the key was swift action to occupy Schleswig without the smaller states. They agreed they would publish the agreement once it was concluded but when article 5 was

amended this idea was dropped. One minister, Lasser (able but apparently corrupt), predicted that as the conflict unfolded the principle of Denmark's integrity might be abandoned, in which case what was Austria's real objective? Rechberg impatiently replied that they couldn't take account of all possibilities without delaying an agreement. Schmerling supported the plan. Essentially Vienna wanted to checkmate the Bund and nip Prussian scheming in the bud.

12 Jan Karolyi presented Rechberg's draft to Bismarck. He stressed the importance of Article 5. Bismarck was very friendly — 'You are preaching to a convert', he said, but the King is very hostile to this, it will be hard to get his agreement(!). Karolyi stressed that Vienna put great weight on A5 and suggested that without it everything might collapse.

13 January Lassalle wrote asking for a meeting to discuss 'election techniques'. He wrote further over the next few days stressing the urgent need for a meeting and claiming he had a 'magic recipe with most comprehensive effects'. As the S-H conflict grew he also argued publicly against fighting for Augustenburg

14 Jan Bund rejected Austria-Prussia proposal to invade Schleswig by 11-5. Prussia and Austria: we'll act alone.

14 January Bismarck meets Karolyi again: as I feared the King won't accept A5, we need a less restrictive drafting 'to help the King over the mountain'. The two hashed out drafts of an alternative and Karolyi sent an agreed one back to Vienna — the two Powers would promise to settle the future status by mutual agreement. (Cf. Church p60-3) Bismarck also mentioned that annexation was being discussed but he had 'firmly' rejected it!

15 Jan Russell-Queen: Napoleon seems to be 'encouraging Denmark and Germany by turns to bring on a war by which France may profit'.

15 Jan To Landtag: he wanted to use legally appropriated funds for the Danish war but if not forthcoming he would take them 'wherever he could find them'.

15 Jan Told Oubril that Prussia and Austria would occupy Schleswig as a pledge for the withdrawal of the Danish constitution.

16 Jan Bismarck and Karolyi/Rechberg had been negotiating over previous weeks. Now, under time pressure, FJ and Rechberg accepted Bismarck's demand for a change to Article 5. On 16th the deal was agreed though it was not signed until shortly after noon on 17th in Berlin because Bismarck demanded an important tweak. Rechberg agreed the document would be dated 16th so (Church) that it would coincide with the ultimatum (below). This nuance explains why so many books give different dates for the treaty and some wrongly say it was signed in Vienna.

They agreed that in the event of hostilities with Denmark, the future relations of the duchies and the issue of succession would be *agreed only by mutual agreement*. Austria wanted the issue of denouncing 1852 to be included in this 'mutual consent' clause — Bismarck refused, as so often claiming he couldn't get Wilhelm to agree. Wilhelm's desire to ditch 1852 was useful in that Bismarck could portray himself to Rechberg as struggling to bring the king around to a conservative alliance with Vienna. (Steeffel, p102-3)

16 January Prussia and Austria jointly sent a note (agreed by Bismarck and Karolyi in Berlin) to the Danes saying that their moves had broken the 1852 Treaty and they had 48 hours to withdraw the November Constitution or the two Powers would act to restore the status quo; they were free to act without agreement of the Bund. They also agreed that if war breaks out over Schleswig and existing treaty relations become invalid, then 'Prussia and Austria reserve the right to determine the future circumstances of the duchies purely by joint consent'. Danes refused. Prussia and Austria troops moved in to Holstein, ignoring the Federal force, and moved up to the Schleswig frontier by 31 Jan. Bismarck ordered various units to mobilise to spook different German states — there were concerns, for example, Hanover might try to block Prussian troops and Moltke took steps to plan an attack on them.

Austria wanted an agreement that Christian's succession would never be questioned. Bismarck objected that Wilhelm wouldn't allow a reference to the hated treaty of 1852. For week after week he had told Karolyi and Rechberg about his struggles with the pro-Augustenburg faction such that Karolyi believed him. He said the most he could get out of Wilhelm was an agreement that in the

event of war with the Danes and the 1852 Treaty collapsing they would proceed 'through mutual agreement'. This was the technical cause of war in 1866 when Austria asked the Diet to decide the fate of the Duchies and therefore broke the agreement. It was a standard Bismarck tactic to blame the King for things so he could seem more reasonable and confuse enemy diplomats.

Years later Rechberg discussed whether he had made a fatal error over this and whether he could/should have tried to get agreement on the future disposition of the duchies. In 1890 he said: 'It is true that before the campaign we did not agree with Prussia with sufficient certainty what would happen to the Duchy after the conquest. That was because things were developing faster than I wished.' Clark thinks it 'possible' that Austria could have successfully insisted on something like a clause to the effect that neither power could take any territory for itself alone. Rechberg explained years later that his decision had been influenced by Bismarck's threat to free the duchies alone. But 'Rechberg's memory deceived him' (Clark) as these threats were made later and in January Bismarck was stressing to Karolyi how Wilhelm was devoted to an Austrian alliance. On 14th he told Karolyi that 'a turnaround' in which the king renounces the London treaty to make common cause with the German-national movement, perhaps with France, 'is now and never to be feared'. Clark: FJ and Rechberg were too 'paralysed with fear of a French intervention to perceive that Bismarck needed them at this time more than they needed him, and that they might have stolen the King away from [Bismarck's] policy'. Despite the enthusiasm in Nov-Dec, opinion in Vienna moved against Rechberg's policy — people preferred cooperation with the Bund to alliance with reactionary Bismarck.

(I think it's clear objectively Vienna could have played this better but it's hard to imagine Bismarck letting himself be boxed in on this in January given his whole conduct. If Rechberg had played hardball, surely Bismarck would have done what he often did — reverse ferreted, threatened Vienna with unilateral action etc. Of course, it's possible Wilhelm could have overruled him in this parallel universe. But overall it's hard to think that if Vienna had avoided one error in January then the future would have been substantially different. I think Bismarck would probably have forced that parallel world back to something like what we observe. The only way for this to be significantly different is if Vienna had made a number of significantly different decisions.)

OP: In London Palmerston and Russell were very unhappy about Bismarck's approach but neither the Queen nor Cabinet wanted war plus war required an ally and they didn't have one.

16 Jan (evening) Against Bismarck's opposition, Wilhelm went to the Crown Prince's palace to receive a letter from Prince Frederick and talked to Samwer, who had brought it, 'in a tone quite different from the formal and cold reply drafted by Bismarck and actually sent to Kiel' (Steefel, p160). This was the sort of thing that drove him to distraction.

17 Jan Roon to Perthes: 'The first shot from a cannon tears up all treaties without our having to break them explicitly.'

18 Jan Russell asked all signatories of 1852 to 'concert and cooperate' with England to maintain the Treaty and uphold the integrity of the Danish monarchy.

19 Jan Gorchakov-Oubril: Britain won't accept the idea of advising Denmark to accept the occupation of Schleswig in return for rejecting Augustenburg in Holstein, because London does not trust German motives. Berlin and Vienna should therefore publicly clarify their commitment to 1852. This message crossed with one from Oubril (20th) saying Bismarck was worried that if he did not stay friendly with Napoleon the latter was looking for trouble and would swiftly turn against Prussia.

20 Jan The Danish ambassador in London listened to Russell read a letter from Palmerston saying Denmark 'mustn't imagine that for its sake England will wage war with all of Germany'. This happened while in London newspapers close to Palmerston (such as the *Morning Post*) thundered threats.

20 Jan Steinberg: Field Marshall Wrangel entered Holstein. Steefel: Wrangel took command of all federal forces on 20th, on 21st their forces entered Holstein.

20 Jan (Barry, p89) Meeting called by Wilhelm: 'an immediate and violent dispute between Bismarck and the generals'. Bismarck objected to the plan to occupy all Jutland which he thought would frighten the

Austrians into dropping the adventure. Roon and Wilhelm supported Moltke's plan and Roon was happy to pressure the Austrians. Bismarck threatened to resign, Roon looked for a compromise. (This meeting seems to be nowhere in OP, Gall, JS, Wawro. GC discusses p183: Roon disagreed with Bismarck but when he realised the latter would resign he urgently sought and found a compromise with instructions on Jutland removed from orders to Wrangel.)

21 January, to Roon: 'I have the premonition that the cause of the Crown against the revolution is lost, for the heart of the king is in the other camp and his confidence rests more with his opponents than with his servants... I have not slept a wink this night and feel miserable, and don't really know what to tell these people, who will for sure refuse to vote credits, when it as good as clear that HM, in spite of the danger of breaking with Europe and to suffer a worse Olmütz, will give way to democracy and the Wurzbürger [the medium states] in order to establish Augustenburg and create a new medium state.' (He could see the right path but also how easy for it go wrong. He also had to worry about the generals who he could not control.)

22 Jan Parliament rejected a bill authorising money for Prussia's action supporting the confederate execution against Denmark 275-51. Many had mocked Bismarck during the debates in January saying he did not understand what he was doing and was doomed. **'Politics is not an exact science... I really believe, gentlemen, that without exaggeration I understand these matters better'**, he said: we will get the money somehow and 'I believe you too are no longer stranger to the feeling that it will turn out this way.' The deputies laughed. He attacked them for never supporting Prussian nationalism: 'An open profession of the Prussian interest, of Prussian nationalism is not to be found on your side... You reject the glorious traditions of our past for you disavow the ... Great Power position of Prussia acquired through heavy sacrifice in the people's blood and property.' He lectured them on international relations. When one criticised him for giving precedence to the 'European' over the 'German' aspect of the problem, he replied, 'As long as we live in Europe we must place ourselves on the European standpoint.' The deputies' real goal was Parliamentary government: you are trying 'to establish the dictatorship of this House ... This is a battle for the control of Prussia between the [monarchy] and the Landtag.' If the government were to go along with your wishes then 'We should be *your* ministers — and that is something I hope to God we never come to!'

OP (p269) is confusing, suggesting some of this happened in December, and that there was another vote before 22/1. Cf. 9/12.

23 Jan Oubril-Gorchakov: Bismarck says we have been very quiet, unappreciative of his support for 1852, Russia should be clearer in support and should support us against France if necessary. When Oubril said that Russia was internally focused and could not provide material aid, Bismarck replied that this was Wilhelm's view — that Russia was not a strong ally — but *he* had always sought to counter this claim. In a further conversation on 23rd, Oubril told Bismarck that Russia wanted to help him; Gorchakov favoured the peaceful occupation of Schleswig to force Denmark to concede and a conference held.

23 Jan Napier-Russell: Russian envoys in Vienna and Berlin will join Britain in advising a six week postponement of all action.

Around 23-5 Jan (it's impossible for me to get this straight from the books), there was a sort-of coordinated push by Britain-Russia-France in Berlin and Vienna. Russell urged Austria and Prussia to give Denmark 6 weeks from 1 Feb to withdraw the constitution. There were other similar diplomatic initiatives but none of them gained traction.

25 Jan The Prussian Parliament passed a resolution condemning the expenditure of funds as illegal and it refused to authorise a loan for the war. Virchow attacked Bismarck for no longer attempting 'an energetic foreign policy' and for having given himself to evil. Bismarck replied that: **'I have acted on the principle: *Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.*** I did incidentally when I came here cherish the hope that I should find in others besides myself a willingness, should the need arise, to sacrifice the standpoint of party to the overall interest of the country. I shall not,

lest I offend anyone, go any further into how far and in whom I have been disappointed but disappointed I have been and of course this affects my political position and relations.' **The same day Parliament was prorogued.**

OP (p270): Berlin was 'awash with rumours' of a cabinet crisis, Wilhelm and Bismarck disagreeing over Augustenburg etc. Twesten bombarded Wilhelm with promises the Landtag would support any other minister as liberals tried to drive Bismarck out. BUT the liberals were not confident in public support in Prussia, bemoaned the lack of public interest in Augustenburg, didn't dare try a tax strike, and they rightly feared that a Prussian victory would move opinion behind the government. On 29 Jan Mommsen wrote to Freytag: 'I have completely given up the idea that the nation will interfere with real energy.'

25 Jan Oubril-Gorchakov: Talleyrand says that Bismarck told him that if pressed too hard he would denounce 1852 and side with the Bund.

26 Jan Buchanan-Russell: Bismarck says that although he understands normal diplomatic discussions among the Powers, he hopes Britain will not try to form an alliance with France to pressure him — 'not give a signal for the commencement of a steeple-chase to Paris'. He implied that he had hitherto refused advances from Paris but might not continue to do so 'if the past self-denial of the government is not fairly appreciated'.

27 Jan Cabinet meeting where Russell failed to get agreement for armed assistance for Denmark in the event of German attack.

27 Jan Rumours had reached Paris of Bismarck's discussions with Vienna about possible alliances, including Prussian support in Italy. Drouyn asked Goltz formally if it was true. Bismarck denied it on 27th (lying — he *had* dangled such possibilities many times in Vienna).

28 Jan Oubril-Gorchakov: Bismarck's response to the joint suggestion of a 6 week delay — Oubril didn't expect further developments for a week or so, the King was resisting any declaration, Bismarck's position was dicey and he may be replaced by a liberal government that would seek alliance with France; he wanted to occupy Schleswig 'on conservative principles' and maintain 1852. 28-30 Jan (Friedjung) Debate in the Austrian Parliament on the war against Denmark — fierce attacks on Rechberg's policy. Schindler said, 'Prussia has scarcely digested Silesia and now she is getting her claws into the Duchies, while we are leading her into them with drum and trumpet. But what music will get her out again?' Schmerling spoke out in defence of Rechberg's approach even though he opposed it.

31 Jan Oubril read to Bismarck a despatch from Gorchakov sent on 28th (cf. Mosse p169ff): Britain won't let the Danish monarchy be destroyed, we should look for a solution that she and Germany can agree, don't drive London towards Napoleon, London is hinting at intervention, you should provide a clear and unambiguous commitment to 1852 on condition Denmark meets its obligations, perhaps consider occupying only part of Schleswig. (It's unclear how much Gorchakov believed the possibility of British intervention. Brunnow had written (undated, around then) that he did not believe it — Palmerston won't give France the excuse to cross the Rhine. On 13th Brunnow had reported the Cabinet discussion and concluded: Russell and Cabinet don't want other Powers to act 'to justify their inaction'. Bismarck prevaricated, blamed the King and avoided commitments.

In the last week of Jan, lots of diplomatic exchanges between the powers. Russell pushed for the 1852 signatories to sign a further protocol by which the Danish government agreed to repeal the constitution while Prussia and Austria postponed action in Schleswig. At some point in last week of January Wilhelm rejected it. Bismarck prevaricated and fobbed everyone off, often using Wilhelm as an excuse. To Russia he stressed the conservatism of his policy and the danger of his replacement, to London he stressed his support for 1852.

Feb British Chambers of Commerce protested to Palmerston about the failures of the FO and Board of Trade to advance British commercial interests and 'the division of authority' between the two they blamed for lack of action. Palmerston replied: there are three modes of influence open — persuasion, equivalence, and compulsion. The first is always tried, 'as to the second, we have none to offer, and the last was of course out of the question'. The pressure building led to the instigation

of the Select Committee on Trade with Foreign Nations in mid-1864. Ward, Britain's greatest expert on the *Zollverein*, came over to give evidence. Ward spent time discussing matters with British businessmen and concluded that they did not appreciate the politics of the *Zollverein* and the obstacles to Prussian liberalisation.

Feb Palmerston had been accused of being caught in an adulterous affair. The case collapsed 2/64. Gladstone worried about the effects on the Liberals' reputation, Disraeli suspected it had been a deliberate scheme to enhance Palmerston's popularity(!).

1 Feb Prussian forces move across the Eider into Schleswig, Danish forces soon retreated from fortifications, and by the end of Feb Danes pushed out of Schleswig. (Barry: orders to move into Schleswig issued on 3 Feb, but seems contradicted in his own story.)

The invasion of Schleswig prompted questions:

1. Would the 1852 Treaty survive?
2. Would the Danish monarchy survive?
3. Would Napoleon or England intervene?
4. What did Austria and Prussia truly intend?

3 Feb Redern (Prussian ambassador)-Bismarck: Gorchakov said — 'So this is the general war you want... Russia will never do anything against Prussia but you will have the other three on your hands and you will have brought back the agreement between France and England.' While they were talking the first reports arrived of clashes between Danish and German forces. Gorchakov was '*tief erschüttert*' (deeply shaken), wrote Redern, and repeatedly warned '*c'est la guerre générale*'. But this was a misreading — the British Cabinet opposed intervention and would only have countenanced it in conjunction with at least France, which she did not trust and which she had fallen out with in 1863, while France was enjoying the embarrassment of London and hoping to profit from the action.

OP: When the army marched against Denmark, another 'of nearly equal size' (35,000) remained in the neighbourhood of Berlin as part of the plan to maintain the monarchy in the event of any revolutionary activity. 'At no time during the constitutional conflict did the liberals question that the army, both officers and men, would stand behind the crown'.

Showalter: Moltke wanted to send a single corps under Frederick Charles (on the grounds of having units and officers who knew each other) but was successfully opposed by others including Manteuffel who argued it was too dangerous to strip a province of all its active force. The Austrian army, rejigged after 1859, relied on long-service conscripts and quick victory based on shock. The Prussian approach, of short-service conscripts with breech-loading rifles and cast-steel cannon, supported by intense preparation, was seen in Europe as an experiment. Prussia's rail deployment was effective (thanks to Wartensleben).

2/3 Feb (Steefel) Goltz-Wilhelm: Drouyn at dinner '... in a half-joking manner ... said to me that we should annex Schleswig-Holstein, and some of the other lands nearby. France would gladly be of help to us and would be content with compensation which would amount more to an outward satisfaction for the French nation than a real equivalent to such an increase in the power of Prussia.' (Reported to Berlin on 9/2)

3 Feb Crown Council, Bismarck pushed annexation, Wilhelm resisted. (See above for problems dating this meeting, cf. Pflanze p251, Steefel p.108-9, Gall p244.) Bismarck made clear a) he wanted to annex the duchies, b) they could not say so now, c) they must oppose the Augustenburg option, which would close down annexation and just cause them trouble, d) they should go along with Austria for the moment and bide their time. Wilhelm argued but accepted the proposed note with Austria, and wrote on the margin of the note of the meeting that annexation was not the only aim but merely one of the possibilities. (Steefel, p108) OP: Wilhelm 'added to the protocol that recorded the discussion' that annexation was not the goal but a possible outcome. 'I reminded the King that each of his immediate forebears, except his brother, had won for the state an increase in territory and encouraged him to do the same.' Gall says he felt 'the moment had come' to reveal his support for annexation.

Over the next few months Bismarck encouraged allies to push for annexation in public.

4 Feb Metternich reported that Napoleon wants 'England to intervene in it [the war] and above all that she remain impotent'.

4 Feb British Parliament reassembled, Queen's Speech. The Queen said of Denmark only that the government would 'continue Her efforts in the interests of peace'. (Palmerston had tried to insert a tougher passage but it was vetoed by the Queen, Steefel p172.) Palmerston and Russell tried to defend their policy in Commons and Lords. Palmerston claimed that 'within the last very few hours' he had received an Austro-Prussian assurance that they would declare they would abide by 1852 and maintain integrity of the Danish monarchy, and they would leave Schleswig 'whenever the conditions which they attach to the entrance shall have been complied with'. Steefel: it was clear that the PM's claims were 'hollow'.

Palmerston made clear to Greville at dinner on 6th that he thought 'the fighting was over', and was 'sanguine' that Austria and Prussia would keep their word and restore the dominions to the Danes after the King renounced the Constitution. Disraeli and Derby attacked the policy of 'meddle and muddle', criticised a lack of help for Denmark, but also made clear they wanted peace. 'The hesitant policy of a divided Cabinet was shown to represent fully and faithfully the conflicting emotions of Parliament' (Mosse, p175).

4 Feb Derby in Parliament attacked Russell and Palmerston for their ineffective interference everywhere — 'meddle and muddle': 'Now, my Lords, as to non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries, when I look around me I fail to see what country there is in the internal affairs of which the noble Earl [Russell] and Her Majesty's government have not interfered. *Nihil intactum reliquit, nihil tetigit quod* [He left nothing untouched, nothing he touched that] — I cannot say *non ornavit* [he did not decorate], but *non conturbavit* [he did not disturb]. [So: He left nothing untouched, nothing he touched that he did not disturb.] Or the foreign policy of the noble Earl, as far as the principle of non-intervention is concerned, may be summed up in two short homely but expressive words — 'meddle and muddle'. During the whole course of the noble Earl's diplomatic correspondence, wherever he has interfered — and he has interfered everywhere — he has been lecturing, scolding, blustering, and retreating.' Palmerston had gone to the Lords to listen and watched the Lords strongly support Derby's attack. But the Queen asked Derby not to push attacks too far and force a dissolution and Derby also thought trying to push Palmerston out a mistake.

6 Feb Buchanan warned that as long as Berlin thinks our non-intervention is a 'certainty', 'no one is to be trusted' and this 'illusion' should be corrected. Napier echoed this. Cowley: France will continue to stand aloof and wait to profit.

6 Feb News of the Danish evacuation of fortifications reached Paris in the evening (Steefel). The next morning (7th) Goltz called on Drouyn at home to find him decorating his house for a fancy dress ball — 'You find me surrounded by flowers and you are covered with laurels.' Drouyn again hinted at Prussia annexing the duchies and France altering her 1815 borders and some other alterations. Goltz pushed back against such ideas, probably unaware (Steefel) that Bismarck was secretly encouraging just such ideas in Paris via other routes.

8 Feb Bismarck and Talleyrand spoke (before reports of Goltz's recent chats had arrived in Berlin) — Talleyrand then called in to see Buchanan who sent a report to Russell on 8th, Talleyrand reported it to Paris on 9th.

Talleyrand's report: Bismarck says that the King and Crown Prince support Augustenburg but 'As for me, my ideas on the Danish question have not changed. **Of all the policies we could follow, the most inept would be for Prussia to cooperate to establish a new German Grand Duchy, to create a Prince who, in time of peace will vote against us at Frankfurt and in time of war will compromise us if he does not betray us. Believe me, it is not for a nobody like the Prince of Augustenburg that Prussia is spending the blood of its soldiers and the money of its treasury.**' But he suggested that annexation wasn't practical and therefore he supported 'reconciliation with Denmark' and he still adhered 'to the principle of the integrity of the Danish Monarchy.'

Buchanan's report: Bismarck told Talleyrand that there were three courses he could follow: support Augustenburg, annexation, or maintain the integrity of the Danish monarchy. The first would be

against Prussian interests [for the reasons he repeated many times]. The second would be impossible for even if there were no other objections to it France would want some equivalent gain. The third option was therefore his preferred policy.

10 Feb British Cabinet supported the proposal for an armistice following total evacuation of Schleswig by Danes but this was rejected by Vienna and Berlin on 11th.

10 Feb Palmerston spoke to Klindworth, 'the famous secret agent' (Steeffel), who reported the chat to Apponyi who informed Rechberg on 10th. Palmerston was angry and threatening re Austria, and complained about the Queen who was following 'a policy of her own in espousing the cause of Prussia' and in influencing party leaders in Parliament. He regrets the fallout with Napoleon and intends a rapprochement including the offer of *carte blanche* in Italy in return for help on Denmark. The alliance with Prussia will end in disaster — you will lose Venetia and Galicia, 'so much the better', and Hungary, 'so much the worse'. Gorchakov is supporting Prussia and wants an alliance with Napoleon. (Palmerston knew Klindworth was an Austrian agent and referred to it being 'very useful to remind the Austrians privately of the danger they were running' to Russell a few days later, so it's very likely this was a deliberate back-channel message from Palmerston to Vienna.) Apponyi agreed that Palmerston was cross because he was isolated — he had no ally, his Cabinet was divided and the Queen disagreed with him. (Otto Manteuffel also hired Klindworth around 1853, Barclay p263).

11 Feb The Danes formally asked London for support. This was probably the reason for Palmerston and Russell giving orders that Sir Alfred Horsfold 'prepare the scheme for an English army to be landed on the shore of Denmark'.

By 11 Feb The Danish army had retreated from fortifications, riots in Copenhagen, but Wrangel had blundered. Moltke was sent on 11/2 to inspect situation but had no direct command and was not always even informed of developments. GC: At the start of the Danish war Moltke's influence was 'almost negligible'. If it had not been for his private correspondence with Colonel von Blumenthal, serving as Frederick Charles' *chef*, 'he would have been completely in the dark concerning events in Schleswig' (GC).

11 Feb Oubril again stresses — accept Britain's suggestion of armistice and conference. Bismarck replies: We support the integrity of Danish monarchy per the terms of 1852 (i.e. conditionally), we are released from obligations to Denmark, a conference is OK provided no preconditions, and if a change is needed I prefer Oldenburg to Augustenburg. On 13th Tsar wrote that 'material intervention ... is not to be thought of'.

13 Feb Palmerston-Russell: 'The conduct of Austria and Prussia is incredibly bad, and one or both of them will suffer for it before these matters are settled.' France will 'probably decline' to act with us 'unless tempted' by the prospect of an army on the Rhine. Sending a fleet would take 'many weeks' and wouldn't have 'much effect upon the Germans unless it were understood to be a first step towards something more; and I doubt whether the Cabinet or the country are as yet prepared for active interference.' Fighting Austria and Prussia is a 'huge undertaking' — we have 20,000 men, they have '200,000 or 300,000' and would have German allies. Also, we face a problem in raising for Prussia the spectre of France attacking as 'it might not be advisable nor for our own interest to suggest to France an attack' on the Rhine. 'It would serve Prussia right if such an attack were made; and if Prussia remains in the wrong we could not take part with her against France. **But the conquest [of Rhenish provinces] by France would be an evil for us and would seriously affect the position of Holland and Belgium.**' I.e. Palmerston's view was that traditional British interests were at bottom the Low Countries and containing France and they should not act to contain Germany, in defence of secondary interests, in such a way as to jeopardise these primary interests.

British Cabinet meetings on 13 and 17 Feb confirmed that Cabinet was determined to avoid threatening unilateral intervention. Granville reported to the Queen: Russell clear there is 'no question of our going to war single handed' and Palmerston seems even less keen, but it would 'weaken' our leverage if the Cabinet's position were known. The Queen complained (13th) re

suggestions of threatening Germany with intervention and of Napier's 'wild and violent advice'. On 17th Russell retreated from intervention further.

14 Feb Wrangel: unless explicit orders to contrary, I'll invade Jutland on 17th. GC: by now reports had come from Vienna and from Austria's Ambassador in Berlin that FJ opposed a move to Jutland and Wilhelm realised Bismarck had been right on 21 Jan (or 20th?). With Wilhelm's agreement, Wrangel was telegraphed *explicit orders not to invade Jutland until further orders*. Wilhelm decided to send Manteuffel to Vienna to push for a commitment to a joint occupation of Jutland (some accounts including Showalter's suggest this was Bismarck's idea).

Showalter has a totally different account — he writes (p.124) that Moltke was never told about the importance of *not* moving into Jutland and it was he who pushed Wrangel into the operation, only for them both to be pulled back by Berlin.

'Mid-February' To Gerlach: 'I am a Prussian, not a German.'

18 GC: It was unclear in Berlin whether Wrangel was deliberately disobeying or just neglecting to inform officers — **a unit advanced into Jutland** (a place called Kolding). (Mosse: probably unauthorised.) Bound to cause trouble with Austrians but they could not be ordered back without signalling disagreement between the allies so Bismarck had to try to persuade Vienna that invading Jutland was necessary — in the meantime, he sent a new order on 19th forbidding any further advance. Wrangel provoked serious worries in HQ including with Crown Prince who complained of his 'stubbornness and vanity'. He was extremely rude, drove his staff mad, made the diplomats attached to HQ miserable (he tried to send Holstein on a tour to a place the Danes could have shot him!) and made clear he detested Bismarck. (JS writes p217 that Bismarck 'hoped to use the incursion to raise the military stakes in the war' — but this implies he was happy with it *but he was not*.)

Mosse (p.179): the news of forces moving into Jutland 'created a profound sensation in London and Paris' and together with rumours of Austrian naval forces moving was 'the first great crisis' of the SH affair.

19 Feb Wrangel telegram to Wilhelm, enraged and insulting Bismarck: 'The diplomats may counsel [retreat] but they may be sure that their name will be affixed to the gallows.' He awaited an order to advance, it did not come. In Berlin they focused on Manteuffel's negotiations in Vienna. GC: Manteuffel had his own idea — he thought Vienna would give Prussia a free hand in the duchies after the fighting if Prussia promised to help Vienna recover Lombardy in the next war. 'The great majority' of Prussian officers (GC) thought France was the real enemy and an alliance with Vienna would be needed. Bismarck did not want such a promise made and restricted EM's instructions to the Danish issue. EM accepted this, perhaps surprisingly, and deployed 'a diplomatic skill and personal charm which won the complete admiration of his hosts' (GC, p187). By the first week of March he had persuaded Vienna to drop its objections to operations in Jutland, a deal was signed on 6 March (?one account says 29/2 — was it a leap year?!). Gall: 'the crucial change of policy' came with this repudiation and carrying the war beyond Schleswig into Jutland. This cut off Austria's line of retreat and she really became tied to Bismarck's policy.

19 Feb Augustenburg and his advisers knew Wilhelm was much more friendly to them than Bismarck. Some advisers urged the Duke to offer a deal to Wilhelm to undercut Bismarck's schemes. On 19th he wrote to his friend the Crown Prince suggesting the terms of a deal but asking him to propose the plan as his own idea and to *keep it secret from Bismarck*. The Crown Prince did as he was asked but Wilhelm did not bite.

20 Feb With news not just of Jutland but also rumours of an Austrian fleet on the way through the Channel, Palmerston wrote to the Duke of Somerset, First Lord of the Admiralty, urging the despatch of a squadron to Copenhagen 'as soon as the season will permit ... to prevent any invasion or attack'. Prussia and Austria 'contemplate the occupation of Copenhagen ... and mean to dictate at the Danish capital their own terms of peace. We should be laughed at if we stood by and allowed this to be done.'

News from Cowley after discussion with Drouyn that Napoleon, who just the previous day was against action with Britain and unperturbed at the likely future of the duchies, was reconsidering in

alarm at the news from Jutland. Bismarck is making arrangements with only 'Russian and Prussian' interests in mind, and was plotting to install 'some member of the House of Oldenburg' which would be tantamount to annexation for Prussia.

Evening of 20th: Russell telegraphed to Vienna asking about the rumours of an Austrian fleet to go through the Channel, and to Berlin saying the invasion of Jutland was 'a very serious affair'.

News filtered out 20-22 Feb from London to Paris, Vienna, Berlin and St Petersburg that *Britain was considering sending a squadron to Copenhagen* and Cowley and Napier were asked to invite France and Russia to join the demonstration. (On 20th the head of the House of Rothschild in Paris told Goltz that news from London was of spreading war, England offering the left bank of the Rhine to France in return for support in Denmark.)

21 Feb Wilhelm wrote to FJ urging him to stick with Prussia. By now he agreed with Moltke re the military approach but was concerned to keep Austria captive to his policy. The alternative to invading Jutland was a frontal assault on Düppel and neither Bismarck nor Moltke wanted to do this if they could get it a different way (Barry).

21 Feb afternoon (Steefel, p189ff) Goltz told Drouyn that the move into Jutland had not been ordered by the government but was a local military decision taken because of Danish action. After much toing and froing about the last 2 months, including probing about whether the real purpose was annexation (denied again by Goltz), the conversation ended amicably.

21 Feb Cabinet agreed to order the Channel Squadron home, and the Queen was informed (but she was *not* informed on 21st about the idea of a squadron to Copenhagen or telegrams to Paris and Petersburg). *Russell informed Paris of the plan to send the squadron to Copenhagen* (via telegram to Cowley and discussion with La Tour (French Ambassador in London) reported to Drouyn at 6pm) but after his discussion with La Tour, he had an explanation of the Jutland/Kolding news from the Prussian Ambassador and a denial by Austria of the news about an Austrian fleet (Rechberg told Bloomfield (Bloomfield-Russell 21/2) the story was 'absurd'). Russell therefore told La Tour before midnight about these updates and La Tour sent another telegram to Paris (23:54) explaining these developments and saying they were '*de nature ... à suspendre les résolutions*' to send a squadron. Around 22nd it seems Napoleon changed his mind again and backtracked from joint action possibly because of Russell's change of tune.

The details and reasons are murky, cf. Mosse p181ff and p186, Steefel p186ff. Mosse thinks that the only serious attempt to organise armed intervention failed because of 'Russell's change of language during the course of the critical Sunday [21st]. This added to the pressure from various — including Eugénie, Metternich (who suggested, according to Cowley, that joint action with England would push Austria closer to Prussia, when she was looking for a way to detach) and others — to influence Napoleon against joint action and his reversal on 22nd put paid to 'all serious prospect of mediation even before the Queen and the majority of British Ministers finally killed the proposal'. (I'm unconvinced that the change of language from Russell on 21st made any significant difference to the overall question of whether there would be Anglo-French military intervention. The idea only arose because of a sudden panic about Prussia seizing Copenhagen and Austria sending ships. Once this panic subsided, Palmerston and others hastily dropped the idea. The basic dynamics make it hard to see a counterfactual in which we assume Russell a) did not send the near-midnight telegram pulling back and instead b) over the next few days pushed hard for joint intervention and c) this succeeded. Given the view of the Cabinet, Palmerston, Queen and the overall European situation — Russia's determination to stay out, the distrust between Palmerston and Napoleon etc — I think that in this counterfactual (no second Russell telegram etc), something else would have prevented serious Anglo-French cooperation to thwart Bismarck: e.g Russell would simply have been overruled by the Queen, Cabinet and Palmerston 22-23rd. Even if Napoleon had come back on 22nd (in this counterfactual world) and said 'great let's go', I think this would have prompted discussions that quickly led to the abandonment of the plan.)

Steefel thought now lost-to-the-record suggestions from Bismarck were probably the reason for Napoleon's latest switch (cf. lost telegram 23/1 below); Mosse thought him wrong (p182, footnote).

22 Feb Palmerston-Queen: France is watching for opportunities on the Rhine, Bavaria, Italy — all over. Sending 20,000 troops ('more could not be got together') to fight with the Danes and Swedes is rightly a cause for hesitation. BUT it briefly seemed Austria might send a fleet through the Channel and attack Copenhagen, it would be 'a national disgrace' for Britain to allow such an act and 'makes one's blood boil to think of it' and Britain must stop such action with or without allies. It now seems there is no actual danger of this.

But also on 22nd Russell was discussing with Ambassadors in London and sending telegrams re a joint naval demonstration and told the Queen that 'in the opinion of the Cabinet the Channel fleet ought to be sent to Copenhagen' and instructions will be submitted to her. His telegrams of 22nd did not have the sanction of Queen or Cabinet. She opposed and asked him to tell Napier not to act until further orders, which Russell did but by the time the new message arrived Napier had already spoken to Gorchakov. On 23rd Russell learned Napoleon was backtracking again.

22 Feb (Clark) Bismarck telegraphed to Manteuffel: we need a deal with Austria, 'the chances of separate action by Prussia are not very favourable'. This was apparently not intercepted and decoded in Vienna.

23 Feb Talleyrand-Drouyn: Bismarck says the move into Jutland is a response to Danish naval operations, but everybody is cross — Austria is not consenting to the entry of allied troops to Jutland, Russia is pushing for a conference and armistice, 'England threatens us' and if France opposes us too now we will have 'to call a halt' as we can't 'alienate the four Great Powers at once'. But Talleyrand also sent a separate note about Bismarck to Drouyn that day which has not survived — Drouyn replied 'Let Bismarck take the initiative but try to get him to make his overtures more definite. Don't lay too much stress on the evacuation of Kolding [the Jutland town that the Prussian army had taken]'.
23 Feb Napier spoke to Gorchakov: Maybe we could join a naval demonstration but decisions can't be rushed, we've got to impress on Denmark the need for concessions as they are now too aggressive.

24 Feb British Cabinet met. It was agreed that given the news of an Austrian fleet was false, 'there is no question of sending the Channel Fleet to the Baltic at present, but in case of a danger to Copenhagen the reason would revive' (Russell-Queen). (Steeffel: only Palmerston and the Lord Chancellor supported Russell's communication, the others insisted that no measure be taken without consultation.) Cowley and Napier were informed.

25 Bismarck and Talleyrand talked, reported on 26th. The discussion took on 'an intimate and confidential character'. Bismarck read parts of a telegram from Goltz to Wilhelm (see above, referring to changing French opinion about the war given the news from Jutland etc) and said that while Goltz was easily influenced, still it was hard for him to ally with France when policy 'is based upon prevailing sentiment'. 'Based, no, but certainly influenced.' Talleyrand stressed that he was being encouraged to continue confidential discussions. Bismarck criticised Goltz for being deceived by 'empty rumours or false appearances' and he incurs 'heavy responsibility in echoing them'. Whilst he had told Wilhelm that relations with France were good, he now wasn't so sure. **"For", he added with a smile, "from the moment that you show us *faccia feroce* it is necessary for us to put ourselves on good terms with Austria".**' (Steeffel, p195ff)

25 Feb Napier told Gorchakov that London had decided not to send a squadron, Gorchakov was pleased. Napier was not. (Gorchakov wrote to Brunnow that he thought Napier felt humiliated by the government's inaction and preferred a war to inaction.)

27 Feb Bernstorff notified Russell that Prussia accepted a Conference (Mosse).

28 Feb Karolyi to Rechberg: Manteuffel told the Austrians, on behalf of Bismarck, 'Give us a free hand in Schleswig-Holstein and we will help you reconquer Lombardy in the next war.' But see Gordon Craig above (19/2) — so GC is wrong that Manteuffel obeyed orders, or wrong that Bismarck opposed suggesting such a deal?

2 March (Clark) Austrian ministers met to discuss the deal negotiated with Manteuffel. Austria agreed to push the war into Denmark. Prussia agreed to argue for Personal Union at the

conference. Clark — Bismarck got the substance, Rechberg the shadow. It was another missed chance for Vienna, like the deal in mid-Jan.

6 March Deal signed in Vienna. Agreed that as hostilities had broken out they could no longer negotiate on the basis of 1852 but would propose at the prospective conference the personal union of the duchies with the Danish monarchy.

7 March (Showalter) Prussia and Austria announced publicly their acceptance of the invitation to the London conference.

March Prussia and Austria push into Denmark. There was a rush to score a victory before the conference opened in London on 20 April.

GC: Bismarck wanted an assault on Düppel, Prince Frederick Charles, in charge, didn't want to do it but Wilhelm did and Manteuffel sided with Bismarck and tried to persuade Frederick Charles to push on. On 10 March he wrote to Frederick Charles that it was not primarily a military question but about 'the position of the king in the councils of Europe' and this prize 'is worth streams of blood ... from the highest officer down to the drummer boy'. Roon also agreed with Bismarck and Manteuffel about the importance of Düppel.

Early March Prussia did a secret deal with a bank and a former Rothschilds employee, Erlanger, for a loan. Rothschild was furious with Bleichröder who denied knowledge of it and claimed Bismarck also had not known about it and was 'highly annoyed' with Bodelschwingh. It's impossible to know what Bismarck was up to: perhaps he was playing the bankers as he played the diplomats, egging them on in competition with each other knowing the Rothschilds' hatred for Erlanger. Historians have underestimated the importance of financial worries to Bismarck during the war in 1864.

(Stern, p42)

11 March 'The Crown Prince very much wishes ... that the conference negotiations are dragged on for 14 days or 3 weeks in order to take Düppel beforehand' (where have I got this quote from?).

Bismarck was stringing out the start with the same idea in mind.

12 March Lassalle predicted in court (which was trying him for subversion): 'The greatest games, gentlemen, can be played with the cards on the table! Great diplomacy does not need to conceal its intentions because they rest on iron necessity. And therefore I announce to you that, perhaps before the year is out, **Herr von Bismarck will have played the role of Robert Peel and introduced direct and universal suffrage**'.

12 March France proposed to Britain that they jointly recommend the division of Schleswig according to nationalities. After consideration London rejected this plan as impractical. They thought that although it could be the solution, they should not propose it before the conference. Further, the idea is 'stimulating revolutionary passions all over Germany' and fair elections would be impossible without 'the influence of terror' (Russell 9/4). The plan was communicated to the Danes (27/3) and the other Powers and main German states (29/3). After rejecting it they sent Clarendon, their 'ablest negotiator' (Mosse) to Paris (April).

15 March Sir Robert Morier to Lady Salisbury: 'I think the first fact to be realised is *that England stands outside the circle of organic changes now going on in Europe*.' The organic changes going on 'are very real changes', the 'attacking and defending forces' are 'very much in earnest' and 'it is childish to throw mere words at them and entreat them in God's name to be quiet.' We should side neither with Napoleon nor with a staunch defence of 1815, we should keep out of the struggles. To do anything serious would require backing either the Holy Alliance or Napoleon — and it would be a 'total impossibility' to get British taxpayers to support either course. So 'non-intervention is the true policy of England', 'systematic non-intervention based on a definite *principle*', 'dignified, intelligent non-intervention *versus* undignified, unintelligent non-intervention'. Cf. Disraeli, 4 July.

16 March Roon to Wilhelm: 'Your Majesty must win some sort of substantial success in order not only not to lose the respect gained abroad and at home but also raise it to such an extent that we shall be lifted above many difficulties... In the present state of the war there is no more important objective than the glory of the Prussian army.'

26 March Karolyi-Rechberg: Bismarck thinks that we should propose personal union with the Danish King and a European guarantee against the recurrence of Danish oppression, including the

inclusion of Schleswig in the Bund. There was a question re the Danish north to negotiate over. He also wants some other things including an indemnity and he's got great plans for a canal. If personal union is impossible then separation of the duchies under the Duke of Oldenburg is much to be preferred than Augustenburg.

31 March Goltz was instructed to try to interest France in the project of a Baltic-North Sea canal.

April Robert Cecil (later Lord Salisbury): '[Britain's] pledges and her threats are gone with last year's snow, and she is content to watch with cynical philosophy the destruction of those who trusted to the one, and the triumph of those who were wise enough to spurn the other.'

'In April' (Pflanze) Bismarck remarked to Keudell that it was 'incomprehensible' why Austria had followed Prussia into SH. Eyck: speeches in the Austrian parliament showed that some could see that Rechberg's policy was dangerous and hard to justify.

Around this time but unclear exactly when, there were signs that Napoleon might switch and support Britain. Bismarck warned Talleyrand that hostility would force him to be more pro-Austrian: 'From the moment that you show us *faccia feroce*, we must put ourselves on good terms with Austria'. (OP, p249 — see above, this remark was 25/2).

5 April Napier: Gorchakov opposes the French plan and the idea of consulting the people. Austria also flatly rejected the idea while Bismarck, as usual, was more flexible/opaque and suggested he was prepared to discuss it.

5 April Gorchakov-Brunnow made clear that he could not agree with Napoleon's plan for a plebiscite for all sorts of principles and practical reasons.

9 April Drouyn met Goltz. A better solution would be the separation of Holstein and southern Schleswig from the Danish monarchy. There could be a vote for either a) union with Prussia or b) an independent state under Augustenburg (France would prefer the Prussian option). In return France wanted no territory but the compensation of a frank and firm *entente*. Goltz telegraphed to Berlin that a letter was on its way with 'a very important offer from France'. It did not arrive at Bismarck's office until after noon on 12/4. If he rejected it, Napoleon might do a deal with Britain. If he accepted it, it would break his agreement with Austria to sort out the duchies with her. On 13th, Talleyrand-Drouyn: Bismarck is favourable towards your plan and will discuss it with the King tomorrow. Wilhelm disliked the French offer. He did not understand what France wanted and feared that he would alienate the other Powers and be left with the 'arch enemy and her enigmatic ruler' (Wilhelm-Bismarck, 16/4).

Bismarck worked away on Wilhelm 14-16th. On 17th he telegraphed Goltz that Wilhelm agreed in principle to the French proposal but quibbled over details. He sent to Goltz a detailed reply: **the agreed plan with Austria for personal union of the duchies would be proposed to the conference but 'has no prospect of success'. What will emerge is the idea of the cession of Holstein and part of Schleswig, which even Denmark will prefer, 'especially after we have agreed with Austria to demand in addition to the personal union the entry of Schleswig into the Confederation, ... the canal, and the repayment of the cost of the war. If this falls through at the conference, it offers, in the first place, proof that even in this form the integrity of Schleswig cannot be maintained; in the second place, we gain time during the negotiations to exert influence on the sentiments of the population; in the third place, we have already gone too far in our negotiations with Austria decently to free ourselves from the proposal for the personal union in any other way than through its rejection by the conference.** The latter will be the more easy if, to the opposition of Denmark and her associates, is added that of France. Then it will be necessary to negotiate for new combinations... It will then be inevitable that dynastic separation be discussed, and we will then, quite apart from the question of the dynasty have to try to secure the most favourable possible boundary for Germany... From the political point of view, the Augustenburg possibility is not in opposition to our interests [not what he truly thought]' but is not worth a European war. **'Nevertheless, it is still only natural for the Prussian government to give its preference to the direct acquisition of the duchies by Prussia** is an acceptable prospect is offered. I believe that it may be possible to win the vote of the population for this if we

gain time, but in my opinion it will be probable only if first the programs of personal union and Augustenburg candidacy fail... We have no illusions that we can realise any part of this program without the sincere and complete cooperation of France... **Especially in accordance with the King's wish [annexation] is never to be brought forward through our own initiative but we must wait for its suggestion from the duchies or from France...** I regard a postponement of the definitive solution while we remain in military occupation of the Duchies and of Jutland, as in conformity with our interests.' *I.e he planned to use the conference to ditch his deal with Austria and move on to new ground and once he'd scuppered personal union and Augustenburg he hoped to grab the duchies for Prussia.*

13 April An agent for Augustenburg gave Wilhelm a suggestion on how they could do a deal, similar to the attempt on 19/2 (above). On 16th Wilhelm wrote to the Crown Prince that he was prepared to listen to formal proposals and Augustenburg sent a detailed statement of obligations he would accept including: a naval station for the Prussian fleet, a federal fortress, a military treaty, accession to the Zollverein, a canal.

13 April Gorchakov sent a tetchy despatch to Oubril about the 'unsteady' Prussian policy warning Prussia to be careful or she could find Russia 'no longer at her side'.

16 April The Austrian plenipotentiary to the Conference, Biegeleben, arrived in Berlin and talked to Bismarck at length, once with Karolyi present. There seemed to be agreement, reported Biegeleben to Rechberg, though Bismarck does not seem too bothered about threats to legitimate governments. He portrays the *rapprochement* with Napoleon as a flirtation to help attain the best deal possible. He seems to think that England should be 'kept in good humour by Austria and France by Prussia, which I ventured to declare to be a somewhat doubtful game.' Bismarck would not accept a referendum. For Bismarck's view of the agreed negotiating terms for the conference see Steefel p 220-1. Steefel also says (p233) that Biegeleben 'left him with the impression' that Austria was more likely to accept annexation than Augustenburg (see below 23/5).

13-18 April Clarendon in Paris, sent by Palmerston and Russell as he had a closer relationship with Napoleon than any British minister (he had been the chief plenipotentiary at the Congress of Paris). He spoke to Napoleon on 14 and 15 April. Napoleon, Clarendon reported, believed he had received a '*gross soufflet* with respect to Poland from Russia' and he couldn't afford another from Germany 'as he would have fallen into contempt. He could not therefore join us in strong language to the German Powers, *not being prepared to go to war with them* [stress in original]. The question did not touch the dignity or the interests of France, and caused no excitement here.' Given his support for 'the policy of nationalities', he could not support putting the Holstein population under the Danish king 'which they detested; and, as his great desire was to see Venetia wrested from Austria and restored to Italy, he could not lay himself open to the charge of pursuing one policy on the Eider and a totally different one on the Po.' (This report seems underrated by the later books as an accurate description of Napoleon's position at the time.)

Mosse (p188) — Clarendon's mission was doomed as different goals were desired by the Queen (no deal with France), PM (Anglo-French agreement to defend 1852), and Foreign Secretary (a modified version of Napoleon's proposal redividing Schleswig).

18 April Victory at Düppel. Berlin was illuminated and streets decorated. This victory undermined the liberals' support for Augustenburg. Important figures like Treitschke changed their position. (Treitschke's father, an old legitimist, grumbled, 'Heinrich has become a Jesuit. For him the end, which in my opinion is most reprehensible and pernicious, justifies the means.') Mommsen was pro-annexation. It also made it much harder for the liberals to oppose Wilhelm's military reforms. The liberals sensed the national mood changing. E.g Droysen, a leading liberal deputy, in 1863 found Bismarck and his tactics 'revolting'; after Düppel he wrote 'thank God at last a Hercules has arrived to clean out the Augean stables'! Cf. von Sybel's reply 19/6/64 to such sentiments to see how torn liberals now were between the exhilaration of victory and progress towards national unity *versus* their committed battle lines in the constitutional conflict.

Barry: in the days after, Moltke, though happy with the win, was excluded from discussions, fearful of Wrangel's next moves and worrying about newspaper reports of uncertain insight. Manteuffel,

worried about the disorganisation of HQ, persuaded the King to make Moltke chief of staff of the Allied forces in Schleswig and Jutland and he arrived at the front on 2 May.

(18 April Palmerston suggested to Russell: if France and Russia agree, we could tell Austria that unless they and Prussia agree an immediate armistice this week, we will send the Fleet to the Baltic to protect the Danes' retreat; opinion will be 'shocked' if we let the Danish Army be captured. WHERE HAVE I GOT THIS FROM IS CLEARLY WRONG; does it belong earlier?)

20 April — 25 June Conference in London. (24th, JS; 25th Gall and GC; Mosse & Steefel — the conference formally opened on 20th, was adjourned because the Diet's representative hadn't arrived, the first full meeting was on 25th. Barry: originally planned to start on 12th, Bismarck delayed it to give the soldiers more time at Düppel.)

Prussia, France, Austria (Apponyi) and Russia (Brunnow) were represented by their Ambassadors. Bernstorff was hostile to Denmark and sympathetic to Augustenburg so Bismarck did not give him his full confidence (Steefel p226).

Mosse: Divisions between Queen, PM and Foreign Secretary meant British policy for the conference 'hardly deserves the name'. Palmerston and Russell agreed to recommend that they push for an armistice — if Denmark refused she should be left to her fate; if the Germans refused, then they could try to get Russia and France to agree a joint naval demonstration in the Baltic. The Queen attacked the idea and Clarendon said he would not participate in the conference unless threats to Germany were dropped. Palmerston and Russell dropped the idea (19th) and 'the British representatives entered the discussions without any plan whatsoever... The British government, rent by internal divisions and enfeebled by the absence of any firm control, hesitated between the conflicting principles of nationality and treaty rights' (Mosse).

Attempts to get agreement between Britain-France, Britain-Russia and France-Russia beforehand all had failed.

Prussia no longer recognised the integrity of the Danish monarchy and demanded separation for the duchies. The Danes would not compromise. (EF: this was the only international conference at which the Bund ever had its own representative, Beust.)

Brunnow's instructions from Gorchakov were: seek armistice, use 1852 as starting point and keep it as intact as possible, if 1852 were abrogated then Russian rights must be asserted, seek concessions from Denmark, any settlement accepted by both sides which also preserved the balance of power would be OK for Russia, a plebiscite should be opposed if proposed.

21 April Bismarck and Oubril discussed the situation. Oubril told him of Russia's objections to a referendum. Bismarck said — why are you even thinking of Schleswig returning to the Danes, we've occupied it, we are not bound to 1852 any more than we wish to be. Oubril: you've said repeatedly you'd respect 1852. Bismarck: true but the situation has changed, the King and country must be satisfied.

22 April Goltz spoke to Napoleon who was favourable towards Bismarck's ideas in the note of 17th. Bismarck was happy to spin out such discussions and keep Napoleon hopeful and out of Britain's clutches.

23 April Buchanan to Russell (after a discussion with his Berlin doctor!): Perhaps Bismarck is aiming at a union of the duchies with Prussia.

26 April Oubril-Gorchakov: Bismarck says he must get a good solution or he'll have to resign and the King might abdicate. He says he hasn't decided between Augustenburg, Oldenburg and annexation. He was only going along with the idea of a plebiscite because of British pressure, so he didn't want to alienate Paris. His language convinced Oubril that he was aiming for annexation, which he had kept hidden. In the margins of the report the Tsar scribbled, 'I find Bismarck's language very disquieting' (many such notes were scribbled over the years). Gorchakov replied urging moderation and stressing his desire not to see further escalation at a European level or division among conservative powers.

26 April After the first full day of the conference (25th) Clarendon wrote to the Queen that rupture was more likely than settlement.

May The Arnim-Boitzenburg petition for annexation. Within weeks it had 70,000 signatures.

May Rechberg-FJ: Our current proposals on tariffs appear to those states friendly towards us still insufficient in lowering tariffs. If we don't shift on tariff policy, Prussia's long-term approach with the Zollverein will work and we will be excluded.

May Bismarck persuades Wilhelm to change judges' pay and reward them for political loyalty. When the Minister of Justice objected, **Bismarck replied, 'The government must reward its friends and punish its enemies.'** (The supreme court had a reactionary majority that repeatedly overruled liberal judgements by lower courts.)

2 May (Clark) Russell told Pasolini: 'If you do choose to make war for Venetia, we shall not oppose you.'

4 May Conference reconvened (2nd meeting). Prussia and Austria put forward a proposal for an armistice based on the removal of the blockade in exchange for the withdrawal of their previous demand for money from the Jutland population, plus the restoration of Danish civil power there. Danes: for blockade to be lifted, Allies must leave Jutland. Bernstorff: withdrawal only on basis of complete evacuation of Schleswig islands and return of captured shipping. Danes refused. Russell, irritated, adjourned again until 9 May for consideration of neutral powers offer: armistice on basis of the blockade lifted and Jutland and Schleswig islands evacuated by both sides. Clarendon-Queen (4/5): 'neither Party was more disposed to yield than two parallel lines are to meet'.

6 May A 'unique' battle in naval history between Austrian and Danish fleets — 'the only fleet action between wooden ships under steam and armed with heavy shell guns'. Not much happened, a tactical victory for Denmark but their blockade was raised and Danish navy didn't play a further role so 'a moral victory' for Austria (Barry).

9 May Denmark agrees armistice for 1 month only from 12 May and refused to extend it. Barry: Bismarck was much happier with the terms than Moltke and Roon. (Cf. Barry p125ff for details.)

12 May (Pflanze, p.249, Mosse p194) [Steinberg p.217 says 11 March but then contradicts himself on the next page.] In London, Prussia and Austria informed the conference that they no longer considered themselves bound by the 1852 Treaty, but left open the possibility of 'personal union' between the Duchies and Denmark under King Christian. Denmark rejected the idea of 'personal union', 'to the great distress of the Austrians' (OP). (Danish intransigence again helped him. If the Danes had accepted, Bismarck would have insisted on conditions to try to break the deal.)

Clark: Bismarck had told Bernstorff secretly to *sabotage the personal union plan without getting the blame* — handle it such that 'it will not be accepted but also will not seem to miscarry through our opposition'. He had been dangling ideas of a deal with Rechberg — Austria approves Prussian annexation in return for compensation — but latter had not committed. Bismarck had kept secret from Vienna the discussions with Augustenburg and more radical ideas like a referendum.

13 May British Cabinet met. On 14th Russell told Brunnow of a new policy: nobody is prepared to fight to restore the status quo ante, we must consider separating Holstein and the German parts of Schleswig from Denmark. Brunnow said he would have to consult with Gorchakov. Gorchakov shifted: as Napier said, Russia supported Denmark but her predominant goal was to maintain relations with Austria and Prussia.

15 May Chotek-Rechberg: Bismarck says of the petition for annexation circulating in Prussia that if he were to publicly object to it, it would only encourage more Danish intransigence(!). He is fishing around for a deal to grab the duchies and give us something, he even said 'We would even give you a guarantee of the entire Austrian territory.' Clark: Bismarck needed Austrian support to continue the war and was throwing out inducements to keep Austria on board, but see later in August the situation was different. In Vienna opinion was strongly against the Prussian alliance and in favour of Augustenburg. Schmerling used this to improve his standing with FJ viz Rechberg.

15 May Palmerston: Gladstone says any sane man has a moral right to vote — this goes straight to universal suffrage. 'Moreover if every sane man has that right [to vote] why does it not also belong to every sane woman who is equally affected by legislation & taxation. **The fact is that a vote is not a right but a trust.** All the nation cannot by possibility be brought together to vote and

therefore a selected few are appointed by law to perform this function for the rest and the publicity attached to the performance of this trust is a security that it will be responsibly performed.'

16 May To Arnim: '... it seems to suit our purpose at the conference to let loose against the Danes all the dogs that want to howl... the whole howling pack together has the effect of making it impossible for the foreigners to place the duchies again under Denmark... [F]or me annexation by Prussia is not the highest and most necessary aim but it would be the most agreeable result.' (Some time around then he also wrote to Zedlitz, 'We must let the whole pack howl!')

17 May Clark says 17th was the day that personal union failed at the Conference.

18 May Wrangel replaced by Frederick Charles as Commander-in-chief. (Years later Bismarck said: 'Old Wrangel is a most cultured and intelligent man with a great fund of learning. Yet he acts like a clown and is taken for one. In contrast, Stolberg, who is not very intelligent and is a complete ignoramus, **does know how to handle people** and has in consequence been able to achieve a good position wherever he went.' A good description of how much of the world works.)

19 May Bismarck told a confidant of the Crown Prince, Max Duncker (a publisher), that he thought Austria was more likely to support annexation and a deal than Augustenburg. Duncker reported him as saying: 'I have succeeded in what seemed to most people impossible, in bringing Austria to declare itself no longer bound by the Treaty of London. The independence of the duchies with the material guarantees which we demanded for them has been rejected in the conference by the Danes. The dynastic question thus comes into the foreground. I have nothing against the Augustenburger. It is of no decisive importance to Prussia to possess 200 to 300 square miles more territory with half a million subjects if the advantages which dominion over this territory offers can be won for Prussia in other ways.' He mentioned e.g. the navy, the canal, a military treaty etc mentioned to various people in the preceding months. He said that a crucial issue was 'guarantees of a conservative system of government', Austria would never recognise the Duke without them, and the Duke has proclaimed the 1848 Constitution. 'It is contrary to the honour of the Prussian government to take Schleswig-Holstein away from Denmark only to give the government of the duchies into the hands of men who have incited and encouraged the opposition in Prussia against the government... **Speaking frankly we could carry out the annexation if we wanted it. Austria would rather see the duchies in our hands than in those of Duke Frederick.** [Bavaria and Württemberg will go along.] France admits the annexation in the hope of embroiling us with England and Austria. [England will probably 'yield to the *fait accompli*'.] **I do not act in the Danish question without the agreement of Austria; on that rests our security against France. Russia ... will not act against us... We can annex. We will not provided that the Duke gives us guarantees for a conservative regime.**' (Steefel).

19 May (Clark) Rechberg to Gramont (Ambassador in Vienna): 'I'm still hoping that Danish integrity can be saved but am thinking about the possibility of Oldenburg.'

19 May Apponyi-Rechberg (but Clark says the report was almost certainly written by Biegeleben as almost all from the London conference were; it reached Rechberg's desk on the morning of 22nd): Clarendon blames Austria for the crisis, says we should have either sided with Denmark or German national opinion. Biegeleben said Austria had to resist nationalism and uphold monarchical principles. (An interesting example: London is telling Austria to ditch what Austria regarded as fundamental interests and also ditch 'international law', which Britain repeatedly said it wanted upheld. Seems somewhat hypocritical!) Clarendon then attacked Prussia: 'All England would rather see the left bank of the Rhine, except for Belgium, fall into Napoleon's hands, than Schleswig-Holstein into Prussia's.' (This was not Palmerston's view.) He said they would have to create a new state out of Holstein and part of Schleswig. Biegeleben: we need a new path and the only solution that might preserve peace, since it would have the support of neutrals, is to divide Schleswig and create a new state. It is full of dangers for the future but is probably the best we can do.

21 May Bismarck sent two memos to Vienna: **now that personal union has been rejected, they must insist on total separation from Denmark.** There were three possible rulers:

Augustenburg, Oldenburg, and Prussian annexation which is growing in popularity in Prussia and the duchies. While he would not reject annexation if it were to emerge from the course of events(!), 'The King would never strive for the realisation of such an idea which has recently been brought to his attention, though without our initiative[!], by addresses from many of his subjects, *except in complete agreement with his imperial ally.*' Clark: Bismarck said that Augustenburg would be easiest to achieve. (These telegrams are unmentioned by almost everybody, EF mistakenly refers to just one message, cf. Steefel p230-1.)

22 May (Clark) The news of the collapse of the personal union project in London (17th) and Biegeleben's report of 19th landed on Rechberg's desk in the morning. At noon he conferred with Schmerling then advisers and other ministers 'and presumably' FJ (Clark).

Rechberg and others switched to support Augustenburg. It had obvious advantages: a chance to regain support in Germany, nip Bismarck's emerging plan for annexation in the bud, avoid a referendum etc.

In Vienna, the collapse of the personal union project was bad news — it was their preferred option as it closed the whole mess down with the minimum trouble. Augustenburg was a victory for German nationalism and annexation a victory for Prussia. They were alarmed at the growth of support for annexation since 18 April. Rechberg believed that he and Bismarck were on the same side in pressuring Wilhelm against the idea of annexation: 'the King had been taken with the idea, but M. de Bismarck had valiantly opposed this particular project, and he hoped with a good prospect of success' (Bloomfield-Russell, 12/5). Of course, the truth was the opposite: Bismarck was organising a campaign for annexation and pushing a reluctant King towards it. On 15th, Chotek (where was he working then?) reported to Rechberg that Bismarck had suggested Prussia gaining territory and 'a policy of mutual compensation'.

On 23rd Rechberg told Werther that he agreed with Bismarck's notes of 21st re the conditions for the separation of the duchies but wished to take up the dynastic question in London and said that Augustenburg was now his favoured candidate. (Clark: Around now Rechberg also communicated to Augustenburg who had been pessimistic and resigned to annexation and encouraged him to be tougher in discussions with Bismarck.)

Pflanze thinks Bismarck was 'probably caught by surprise'; Steefel 'he seems not to have expected such a complete change in the Austrian attitude'. Clark: 'the Austrian reply came as an unpleasant surprise... He had misjudged the situation believing Austria's dislike for Augustenburg to be stronger than her dislike for Prussian annexation... He seems to have laid entirely too much weight on certain alleged words of Biegeleben's, while the latter was in Berlin a month before, to the effect that Austria would sooner recognise the claim of a Prussian prince ... than that of Augustenburg.'

He decided to go along with Austria for the moment to keep Austria tied to him, knowing Wilhelm supported Augustenburg, and prepared to scupper it by imposing unacceptable demands. He tried to get Austria to support merely demanding separation of the duchies from Denmark and to leave the dynastic issue for later but he failed. While he had to go along with Austria for the moment, he made clear to Paris quietly that he still agreed with Napoleon re the division of the duchies on the basis of nationality. Clark: He also told Bernstorff to drop Augustenburg if the candidacy met with more opposition than the plan to divide Schleswig. He also pushed Oldenburg harder with Russia.

23 May He wrote to his cousin asking him for his help with buying a property for General Wrangel at a decent price, a job thrown at him by the King (Steinberg p.219; JS right to remind readers that amid the 'great events' people like Bismarck are having to deal with endless small tasks forgotten in the history books, many of which can explode into big problems if not handled right).

24 May Napier-Russell re recent chat with Gorchakov. When the subject of threatening Germany with armed intervention arose, Gorchakov said he 'did not take even into contemplation the contingency of armed intervention from any quarter whatever ... [the possibility was] so improbable and remote, that he did not allow [it] to affect his resolutions.' He doesn't believe Britain will fight in any circumstances and the Germans think the same. The military frontier would

be abandoned as 1852 had been. Gorchakov would not take any risks with Prussia and Austria for Denmark.

25 May Crown Prince to Augustenburg: 'Bismarck himself said to me yesterday that now England and Austria are for you (France has been inclined that way for some time) and that therefore the moment has come to negotiate with you directly. It is a question, first of all (i.e. for Bismarck) to know whether you would place yourself on the 'conservative basis' and would be disposed to give such assurances or guarantees. This last point refers especially to the constitution of 1848... I tell you this in the greatest haste ... because Bismarck added that it would be desirable that you either come here to Berlin or that you meet me somewhere else to reach an agreement on this point.'

28 May Apponyi, in the name of Prussia and Austria, told the London Conference: since Denmark rejected our previous proposal, we now support 'the complete separation of Schleswig and Holstein from Denmark and their union as a single state under [Augustenburg]'. (The document was drafted by Bernstorff.)

Clark: There was a planned compromise offer involving Lauenburg but before Bernstorff could read this out, Brunnow spoke out objecting to Augustenburg and putting forward Oldenburg. The Danes said the new proposal was worse than Personal Union. Contrary to the Austrians' optimism, the Augustenburg plan stalled. The Danes held out — divided in the government, incompetent in London, and foolishly still hopeful of British help. It was a very uncomfortable month for Austria with discussions dominated by nationality.

Pflanze: Europe was 'astonished' by this move.

29 May GC: In response to a recent comment from Bismarck, in response to complaints from the military about concessions in London, that the army should keep quiet about political questions, Roon wrote to Bismarck that the army could not be seen as 'purely a political instrument' and has a right to have its opinions considered. Given the government depends on the army 'the army's view on what the government does and does not do is surely not a matter of indifference'. Roon thought by now that they must annex at least one of the duchies or else the army would feel the government had failed them and 'it will be an inglorious end of the present government'.

31 May Roon to a friend: I fear Bismarck has given away too much in London. GC: The military complaints were overcome and Bismarck's view, that the concessions were not important because the conference would fail in the end, was vindicated and the battle was rejoined.

31 May Napier: Russia has formally abandoned 1852 and the tsar has ceded his rights to Oldenburg — announced 2/6.

1 June Augustenburg arrives in Berlin and met Wilhelm and Crown Prince. Wilhelm was pleased with the turn of events and had told the Duke's mother the day before that he was now sure to obtain the duchies and he wished to be the first to bring her the good news (Karolyi-Rechberg, 1 June). **From 9pm to midnight Bismarck met Augustenburg.** Bismarck imposed such severe conditions on him — such as Kiel being a Prussian naval station, a conservative constitution, territorial compensation for Prussia and so on — that he rejected the offer; then Bismarck blamed him for being unreasonable to Wilhelm. To Beust (autumn 1865, Eyck): '**I hitched the duke of Augustenburg as an ox before the plough. As soon as the plough was in motion, I unhitched the ox.**' (Beust scribbled: *verba ipsissima* ('the very words used').) Bismarck gave Wilhelm a doubtless exaggerated account of the discussions, portraying Augustenburg in a bad light. Augustenburg's account is of course different but he also said that he regarded the consent of the Estates as necessary to an agreement with Prussia and was unwilling to agree any written statement for the time being (Steefel, p239ff).

Bismarck never saw him again until the day after Sedan, when he was wearing the uniform of a Bavarian general, Memoirs 2p32. A few days later in August 1870 as they followed the army, he told Busch the story of this 1864 night. In his billiard room, Bismarck called him 'Highness' for the first time; after disagreeing over Kiel he called him 'Prince'; '**Finally, I told him in Low German that we could wring the necks of the chickens we had hatched.**' He concluded to Busch: 'He's an idiot. He might have secured much better terms. At first I did not want from him more than the

smaller Princes were obliged to concede in 1866. Thanks, however, to Divine Providence and the pettifogging wisdom of Samwer, he would agree to nothing.'

He then leaked an account of the meeting to the media which led to many liberals deserting Augustenburg. *All in all, this episode is a great illustration of Bismarck's skill and how hard he was to beat — the ability to adapt and continually overcome apparent obstacles.*

2 June Bismarck-Bernstorff: 'After a thorough discussion with Augustenburg, it seems to me required in special Prussian interests to further his candidacy no more than has already been done, and as soon as objections to it are expressed, to declare that the dynastic part of our proposal is not the first consideration.'

9 June Drouyn again said to Goltz that he 'would much rather see' [the duchies] in the hands of Prussia ... than in the hands of a petty duke' — the Emperor agrees with me but this view is very unpopular in Paris. Around this time there were also some discussions between Cowley/Russell and Drouyn re possible joint initiatives but the record seems clear that Napoleon I) never seriously considered doing anything that might lead him into a major war with Germany over the duchies, 2) he most wanted to see England intervening then failing, and 3) persisted in thinking that Prussia's disruption would provide him some opportunity (cf. Steefel p247-9, Mosse p196-7).

(Interesting that Cowley was writing to Clarendon about the 'hatred' of Napoleon and Drouyn for Russell [his boss]: 'His appointment to the F.O was certainly most unfortunate — it is his unpopularity which is killing the government. I hear this on all sides.') Rumours of discussions between London and Paris alarmed Russia.

10 June (EF, unmentioned by most) Tsar and Gorchakov arrived in Berlin. Bismarck stressed conservative solidarity.

Mosse: Tsar was at Potsdam en route to the spa at Kissingen. On 10th the Tsar urged Bismarck to be conciliatory, if an armistice could not be renewed he should not push further and possibly provoke British and French intervention. Bismarck said a bad deal was worse than war and he would not concede to spare British embarrassments. He successfully waved the Oldenburg possibility at the Tsar, who liked it but warned against annexation. Bismarck said he would not see a European war over the duchies but could not refuse them if offered. Tsar: who would offer them?

Gorchakov also warned re French intervention on the Rhine which Britain would support [false — Palmerston was much more worried re French gains on the Rhine than anything in Denmark]. He conjured other possibilities of Anglo-French action and said that although a Prussia-Russia war was impossible, if a British squadron arrived in the Baltic then Russia might have to participate.

Wilhelm: 'At least you will not fire on us.'

Gorchakov: 'No, your Majesty, but the mere presence of our flag amongst your enemies would be a regrettable proof that from the political point of view, we cannot support the cause you uphold. It would be utterly inconsistent if we acted otherwise.'

Gorchakov also warned that the democratic forces looking to smash Denmark and grab the duchies would be supported by Britain and France. Is it worth risking disaster for a few more square miles of land? Wilhelm promised to 'weigh carefully' Gorchakov's words. Bismarck hid behind the King — he and his entourage have certain views, my own position is very tenuous, and there could easily be a liberal takeover, a war with Britain wasn't the worst outcome.

Bismarck was confident that Britain would not start a war alone and that France would not intervene imminently over the duchies, cf. 14/6. (Mosse p198-200)

Gorchakov also tried to push Vienna similarly over the next few days — watch out for a revival of an Anglo-French alliance, be moderate etc — but failed there too.

11 June There was a long discussion in British Cabinet. Granville-Queen: Cabinet 'not as compact as it was, on the question of what part England should take in the case of the conference being broken up and the war renewed'. There was also a strong move to the view — if the Danes accept arbitration but Prussia refuses, Britain should give Denmark 'material aid'. The Queen was very unhappy with this and asked that Cabinet reconsider (to Russell, 12th). There were disputes re what Cabinet had actually agreed. Granville told the Queen (13th) that Russell had misrepresented Cabinet.

11 June Russell-Cowley: It would be 'a step back in civilisation to lay down as a principle that a Sovereign could not rule with justice and fairness subjects of a different race and language' — such a principle 'would not suit' any of the Powers.

12 June Armistice renewed for a fortnight.

12 June Crown Council. Bodenschwingh, finance minister, said that they needed to raise more money. Bismarck and Roon: let's raise loans without asking for Parliament's permission.

Bodenschwingh and others objected it would be unconstitutional. No decision taken. (Steinberg)

Stern's account is different. He says there was a ministerial council on 12th and a Crown Council on 13th that continued the discussion in which Bismarck and Roon 'violently opposed'

Bodenschwingh's proposal to ask Parliament for authorisation for a loan. Bismarck argued: if war comes 'the article of the Constitution could not mean that the king in such an eventuality would be compelled either to submit to the conditions of the Diet or to give up the country to the enemy.'

Bodenschwingh argued the Constitution was clear that they could not accept a state loan without authorisation. Stern — the majority 'seems to have supported Bodenschwingh against Bismarck' and 'no decision was reached'. (Cf. 24 March 1865 — how to reconcile? In 1865 the finances were in good shape and Prussia didn't need a loan. Perhaps the situation looked shakier in 1864 and they thought the war with Denmark might be longer, more expensive etc than it turned out.)

14 June In a highly confidential note to Werther in Vienna Bismarck wrote that Britain may be forced to act by public opinion but he thought it likely that a firm stand from Prussia and Austria would see Britain back down. Anti-war opinion was strong and England needed France as an ally. Even if she did act, Prussia should fear this less than a yielding attitude: 'We must not jeopardise the great conservative interests which we are defending for the sake of an immediate good relationship with England.' Together we should not fear her navy and her interference would unite Germany and rob German liberals of many illusions. Napoleon knows that intervening would provoke a powerful German alliance that Russia would sympathise with and he will not start a war.

14 June Bismarck called in the Austrian *chargé d'affaires* Count Chotek and span him a tale of how Prussia was rolling in money, he opposed asking Parliament for a loan, many bankers were offering cash and so on. 'Ah, if one could only get rid of this whole dirty business known as parliamentary constitutionalism.' If we need to change the constitution to raise money, we will do so.

15 June British Cabinet met again (cf. 11/6). No clear decision.

16 June A letter from Napoleon arrived at the British Embassy in Paris suggesting Britain intervene, but Cowley told Russell he did not think this meant there would soon be assistance from Napoleon.

16 June (Clark) Tsar and FJ met at Kissingen. Rechberg spoke to Gorchakov and the Tsar.

17 June Bismarck told Buchanan that if he believed the reports of the media from London he would consider war between the two as inevitable (reported to Russell on 18th). Bernstorff-

Wilhelm (17th): Clarendon told me that 'as surely as we are at this moment here in Buckingham

Palace — England will take part in the war if it begins again.' On 18th Bismarck told Buchanan that he didn't care whether Britain joined the war or not. Steefel (p253): it wasn't until the Congress of Berlin that 'the words of a British statesman again had weight in the councils of Europe'.

18 June Bernstorff proposed the population of Schleswig be consulted, Denmark objected.

Brunnow opposed the Prussian proposal on principle. After arguments meeting postponed to 22nd for envoys to discuss with their bosses.

19 Russell-Queen: Bismarck seems to court rather than avoid war with us.

19-24 June JS: Bismarck at Carlsbad with Wilhelm, met Rechberg and FJ. (Clark: FJ was there 22-24 and conferred on Bismarck the Grand Cross of St Stephen.) Austria had financial problems as well as diplomatic ones and was looking to pull the plug on military action. Bismarck pushed them to keep going for a little longer. (Stern — while this was going on there was another cabinet meeting without Bismarck to discuss finances, but Stern dates this to 6 July. Stern seems confused — refers to this Carlsbad meeting happening in 1864 and 65!?)

20 June (Clark) Augustenburg wrote a conciliatory letter to Wilhelm on 20 June and gave a speech on 22nd in which he expressed his desire to make far-reaching concessions to Prussia. Clark thinks

this had some effect in countering, in the mind of Wilhelm, the effects of Bismarck's manipulation of the 1/6 interview.

20 June Drouyn and Cowley discussed the situation. Drouyn said that an alliance would allow them both to 'govern the world' but that separately France was suffering viz Italy and Britain was suffering viz Denmark: 'Why can't we come to an understanding?' Cowley thought Napoleon wanted to use the situation to push Austria out of Italy and 'get a bit of the Rhine'. To Clarendon, Cowley wrote that 'It is clear, I think, that the French alliance is to be bought, but the price will be perhaps more than it is worth. The [illegible] destruction of Austria is a high price to pay. As to the Rhine, as I do not think Belgium to be asked for, I confess I should not care.' On 21st Cowley and Drouyn had another chat about the possibility of Britain and France uniting to tell Germany and Denmark — here is a fair division, both sides must accept it. (Napoleon is 'getting so sick of the question and so disgusted with the proceedings of the Germans' said Drouyn.)

21 June The Queen spoke to Palmerston who thought the situation extremely dangerous, but was less concerned about Germany united against us than France. 'The greatest danger he saw from France joining us was dragging us into a war, in which she would claim the Rhine, and possibly the whole of Italy. He also entirely agreed ... that it was very doubtful whether we could do anything, for nothing but naval assistance could be given and that only for three months.'

22 June Clarendon told the Queen he feared the war continuing, Denmark's integrity threatened, and the government — or a new government — being forced by 'exasperated public opinion' and 'irresistible public indignation' to throw itself into a war. He therefore thought that 'it would be dangerous to do more than this [sending the fleet for the protection of Copenhagen] but not safe to do less.' Cowley told Russell his hopes of cooperation with Napoleon were strengthened and a decision was needed. (Another example of how ideas about 'public opinion' were much more influential in elite discussions even in this period, pre-universal suffrage, than often assumed.)

22 June Prussia and Austria accepted mediation of a neutral power, Denmark rejected it.

Steeffel: 'the Danes had done Bismarck's work for him' — they had already accepted the division of Schleswig in principle and could have got all the Danish-speaking populations. The Danes remained over-optimistic about the military situation and the prospect of British help. (Carr, p83; Mosse p202.)

24 June (Many books place this on 25th for some reason) British Cabinet discussion.

Palmerston in favour of sending a naval force but Cabinet divided and he accepts he cannot act. There was discussion over whether to send the fleet. Mosse says Cabinet was 'very evenly divided'. Gladstone, Granville and Wood were strongly for peace. The Queen sent Grey to lobby for peace the next day but the decision was already clear. There was discussion over whether they would reconsider the decision if Copenhagen was threatened and they agreed 8-7. No proposal to send the fleet was made. Clarendon thought public opinion was for peace, Russell told the Queen (26th) he thought the Commons and country wanted peace, and that it is better to avoid a war in alliance with Napoleon — he wants a war for Venetia which 'will probably occur before long. But it is not for us to stir the coals.' France was told that after all the discussions that an alliance to retake Schleswig for Denmark was not desired.

25 June Conference ended, armistice expired 26th. Some time this summer Clarendon said: '*Je ne veux plus jamais rien avoir a faire avec cet homme sans foi ni loi qui s'appelle M. de Bismarck, ni celui qui est son nègre M. de Rechberg*' (I never want to have anything to do with this man without faith or law who is called Mr. de Bismarck, nor the one who is his negro [contemporary slang for 'slave?'] M. de Rechberg). This insult spread to the Vienna press (Clark).

Clark (p79): Austria failed to push for Personal Union with Britain and Russia then do a deal with Denmark behind Prussia's back. While Bismarck was lying and cheating and double-dealing behind Vienna's back, FJ told Biegeleben to stick with Prussia. This passed up a chance that was there. Rechberg didn't realise what he was dealing with. (When Prussia was suddenly warm to a referendum in June, Rechberg expressed his 'astonishment' that a monarchy could adopt 'even temporarily ... so disastrous a modern principle' — how would she feel about a referendum in

Poland?) Biegeleben admitted to a friend (12 July): 'A diplomat doesn't willingly admit that he has failed all along the line ... but ... I'm privately admitting the complete collapse of all my ideas.'

27 June Palmerston (Commons) and Russell (Lords) presented their case to Parliament. Bombast from Palmerston — 'if the existence of Denmark as an independent kingdom or the safety of Copenhagen was threatened, a new decision would have to be made.' But also he admitted: 'We had also to consider what really was the matter in dispute for which hostilities were to be begun, and it did not appear to us to be one of very great importance.' Russell: 'we should remain neutral in this war'. Debate in Parliament over four days. French Foreign Minister Drouyn: 'the British do nothing by halves, they are now retreating vigorously'.

27 June Bismarck writes to his sister that 'politically things are going so well that it makes me nervous'.

On night of 28/29 Prussian forces crossed the narrow channel from the mainland to the island of Alsen, this victory 'shattered Danish confidence' (Pflanze); public in Copenhagen 'utterly dismayed' as the stubborn diplomatic resistance in London had been based on belief in the efficacy of Danish naval superiority. GC: The success of the Alsen operation was attributed widely inside the army to Moltke and this 'enormously strengthened' his position with army and king. End of June Hesse-Kassel folded on the *Zollverein* renewal issue rumbling since Christmas. It had an important role between the Prussian frontiers and between Hanover and the south. Bismarck had been pushing the states to accept Prussian terms, including the French free trade treaty, since he took office. Cf. October 1864.

July Rechberg agreed to exclude the Diet from the peace negotiations and to provide in the treaty for the cession of sovereignty over the duchies to the dual powers alone. Prussian forces expelled Hanoverian troops from the fortress of Rendsburg.

1 July Cowley-Clarendon: 'The disappointment at our pacific resolution is very great here, and proves how glad they would have been, had they been able to involve us in difficulties.'

1 July An operation around Lundby showed the effectiveness of the needle gun when deployed properly: ~200 Danes charged 124 Prussians, the Prussians fired in volleys — after 20 minutes the charge collapsed, 88 Danes were dead or wounded, 3 Prussians suffered light wounds.

4 July Disraeli moved a vote of censure in the Commons: '**The position of England in the councils of Europe is essentially that of a moderating and mediatorial power. Her interest and her policy are, when changes are inevitable and necessary, to assist so that these changes, if possible, may be accomplished without war; or, if war occurs, that its duration and its asperity may be lessened...** Within twelve months we have been repulsed at Saint Petersburg. Twice have we supplicated in vain at Paris. We have menaced Austria and Austria has allowed our menaces to pass her like idle wind. We have threatened Prussia, and Prussia has defied us. Our objurgations have rattled over the head of the German Diet, and the German Diet has treated them with contempt... Sir, it is not for any man in this House, on whatever side he sits, to indicate the policy of this country in our foreign relations — it is the duty of no one but the responsible Ministers of the Crown. The most we can do is to tell the noble Lord what is not our policy. **We will not threaten and then refuse to act. We will not lure on our allies with expectations we do not fulfil.** And, Sir, if it ever be the lot of myself or any public men with whom I have the honour to act to carry on important negotiations on behalf of this country, as the noble Lord and his Colleagues have done, I trust that **we at least shall not carry them on in such a manner that it will be our duty to come to Parliament to announce to the country that we have no allies, and then declare that England can never act alone.** Sir, those are words which ought never to have escaped the lips of a British Minister. They are sentiments which ought never to have occurred even to his heart. I repudiate — I reject them. **I remember there was a time when England with not a tithe of her present resources, inspired by a patriotic cause, triumphantly encountered a world in arms.** And, Sir, I believe now, if the occasion were fitting, if her independence or her honour were assailed, or her Empire endangered, I believe that England would rise in the magnificence of her might and struggle triumphantly for those objects for which

men live and nations flourish. But I, for one, will never consent to go to war to extricate Ministers from the consequences of their own mistakes. It is in this spirit that I have drawn up this Address to the Crown. I have drawn it up in the spirit in which the Royal Speech was delivered at the commencement of the Session. I am ready to vindicate the honour of the country whenever it is necessary, but I have drawn up this Address in the interest of Peace. Sir, I beg leave to move the Resolution of which I have given notice.'

Robert Cecil attacked the 'oscillating, vague and fluctuating' policy — '**If we did not intend to carry out by arms our threats and measures, we must abstain from the luxury of indulging in them.** That is the only policy for the future which I believe is involved in the censure of the government for the past.' Cecil observed that foreign policy would have been better had Cobden been Foreign Secretary.

Cobden: '... why do we trouble ourselves with these continental politics? We have no territorial interests on the continent. We gain nothing there by our diplomatic meddling.'

Stanley: 'I believe that a policy of neutrality and non-intervention may be not only a safe but a respectable and an honourable position.'

Palmerston got 'a surprise majority of eighteen' in the Commons but lost in the Lords. The government could continue but it was clearly 'a turning point in British diplomacy' (Mosse). Cecil (then Lord Cranborne) wrote 4 July 1866 to the Danish Ambassador: 'The policy that was pursued in 1864 has undoubtedly had the effect of severing [England] in a great measure from the course of continental politics: & the declared principles of non-intervention, which it was the effect of the policy of that year to establish have necessarily diminished her influence in the decision of Continental questions. The general feeling in this country is in favour of abandoning the position which England held for so many years in the councils of Europe.'

AJPT: This decision 'has usually been regarded as a catastrophic blow to British prestige. But quite apart from the obstinacy of the Danes, which put them technically in the wrong ... , it is difficult to see what other course British policy could have taken. Russian backing could have been bought, if at all, only by giving up the Black Sea clauses in the treaty of 1856... Cooperation with France, even if possible, was too dangerous... Nothing that the British did in 1864 could have checked the industrial expansion of Germany in the last third of the 19th century or their own relative decline; if mistakes were made it was rather in the 20th century than in the last days of Palmerston' (AJPT, *Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, p.154).

(I disagree with AJPT. An alternative approach was 1) *realism about priorities*: was stopping Prussia making gains in S-H worth a general war? Was the priority avoiding France making gains (if so then an alliance to fight Prussia was illogical). 2) If avoiding war was the priority then we should not have encouraged Danish intransigence — we should have said from the start 'do not count on us, cut a deal'. 3) Not crude bluffing. We again tried to make gains 'on the cheap' by bluffing, but this was doomed and counterproductive against Bismarck who was adept at calling players' bluffs. Apart from Bismarck, the only player who had roughly a clear view of their priority and stuck to it was Russia. They were clear from the start that their focus was domestic problems, they would not fight and unlike Britain and France could not be accused of giving Denmark false hope. They stuck to 1852 until all the others abandoned it.)

8 July The cabinet in Denmark gave up and a new one formed, on 12th asked for armistice which started on 20th.

11 July Bismarck to Rechberg re the peace terms to be sought: King Christian must renounce all his rights and assent to whatever disposition we and you decide on for 'the three duchies, and the territory belonging to Jutland, lying inside Schleswig', plus reparations.

14 July Bismarck to his Vienna envoy: 'We regard the Danish conflict as being in essence an episode in the struggle of the monarchical principle against European revolution, and we allow our handling of the duchies question to be guided by our views concerning its repercussions on that greater question of our time.' We should not jeopardise 'the great conservative interests that we are defending' even for the sake of temporary good relations with Britain. In a further directive drafted the same day he wrote that if Paris wanted to start an unprovoked war they could prevent it by

means of 'harmonious collaboration' between the 'three continental great powers together with the rest of Germany', and it would be easy to arrange such collaboration given that in this context 'France's victory would be the victory of revolution'. This seems clearly to have been part of his attempt to keep Austria thinking about the advantages of further cooperation.

17 July Landtag prorogued again (Steinberg).

20 July To his wife, from Carlsbad where he was with the King who had thanked him '... much moved and giving me all the credit for what God's help has done for Prussia. May it please God to continue to lead us in mercy and not leave us to our own blindness. It is a lesson one learns well in this business, that one can be as wise as the wise ones of this world and yet at any point find oneself next moment walking like a child into the darkness' (Gall). 'Don't let's invoke Him gratuitously and let us hope that He will continue his grace and not leave us to our blindness. This trade teaches that one can be as shrewd as the shrewdest in this world and still at any moment go like a child into the dark' (Pflanze). (The Carlsbad visit dates seem confused across the books.)

21 July Just before he left Carlsbad for Vienna, the 'Rendsburg incident': street brawls between Prussian/Hanoverian troops. Bismarck ordered the occupation of Rendsburg, sent 6,000 troops, and hyped up the media. The Bund commander withdrew. This caused an outcry in the Bund.

22 July Clark: Leaving Wilhelm to go to a cure at Gastein, Bismarck went to Vienna on 22 July for 9 days to discuss peace terms with Rechberg and the Danes. (While there he wrote that he was stared at like 'a new hippopotamus in the zoo' which 'is very unpleasant when all one wants is to be allowed to drink one's beer in peace'.) He tempted Rechberg with a deal whereby each of them would nibble some land from the duchies, with some islands going to Austria, but Rechberg declined the bait. FJ and Rechberg brought up the Rendsburg incident (and a row between Bismarck and Hanover over control of the telegraph system) but got nowhere. Bismarck left 'more doubts in the minds of Austrian statesmen than he had allayed' (Clark). They had hammered out an approach to the peace deal but clearly aiming in different directions over Germany. Rechberg was still infuriated with the smaller states but had to try to get closer to them. He made a play to involve the Bund more in the administration of the duchies. Cf. 6/8.

27 July (JS, April) Perthes, a conservative friend who was Professor of Law at Bonn, had written to Roon complaining about Bismarck's contempt for morality, revolutionary agenda, and 'has no scruples about methods': 'It seems to me that [Bismarck] has acted like Esau of old and has sold the great position which fell to him for a mess of pottage. It was to be expected of the government which put an end to the new era that it would bow down before the divine and human order which is given and established... But the diplomatic struggle over both of the questions which preoccupied and preoccupy everyone the most, the struggle over the position of Prussia in Germany and over the position of Prussia toward the duchies, ... does not have conservative feeling and will as its basis, so the word "revolutionary" comes to mind almost involuntarily.'

Roon to Perthes: **'B. is an extraordinary man whom I can certainly help, whom I can support and here and there correct, but never replace. Yes, he would not be in the place he has now without me, that is an historical fact, but even with all that he is himself... To construct the parallelogram of forces correctly and from the diagonal ... then assess the nature and weight of the effective forces, which one cannot know precisely, that is the work of the historic genius who confirms that by combining it all.'**

JS implies he arrived in Vienna in the last week of July for the peace discussions and some time in this week also dined with his old friend Motley and family.

August Lothar Bucher started working for Bismarck. Many conservatives scandalised when they realised. Keudell recorded that Bismarck wasn't worried about his revolutionary past and told Keudell to see if he would switch sides: **'We all cook with water and most of what happens or will happen gets into the press. Take the case that he comes to us as a fanatical democrat, like a worm to bore its way into the state structure and to blow it up, he would soon see that he alone would be destroyed in the attempt. Let that possibility be. Such perfidy I cannot believe of him. Talk to him without asking for his confession of faith. What interests me is whether he will come or**

not.' Bismarck apparently said to him, 'I know your national standpoint only too well but I need it for the conclusion of my policy and I will only give you work to carry out which moves in the spirit of your national efforts.' (Holstein later wrote how Bucher combined an 'abnormally ugly face' and 'a strong interest in the opposite sex' — during the war with France he observed in Bismarck's office Bucher and Wagener sitting next to each other, the revolutionary of 1848 and the founder of the *Kreuzzeitung*, talking in monosyllables. Wagener had in 1848 issued an order for Bucher's arrest which failed because the telegraph broke. Generally we have far too little information on Bismarck's handling of the media and the one book I can identify, *A Study Of The Press And Bismarck In Imperial Germany*, I can't find a copy of.)

1 August Preliminary peace signed with Denmark (made permanent on 30 October): King Christian ceded forever rights in the duchies to Austria and Prussia. Bismarck had succeeded in detaching the duchies from Denmark and Austria was now stuck with troops miles away occupying territory of no value to her.

Steeffel: Denmark's two big errors were 1) not compromising on the constitution in December, thus giving Bismarck the pretext for the war; 2) not accepting mediation in June, which allowed him to grab all Schleswig. Napoleon's error was not in a failure to launch a war against Germany in 1864 but his failure to act after Königgrätz.

Mosse's book is good but his judgement (p212) that 'The Schleswig-Holstein dispute exercised little influence on the evolution of the German question or the Austro-Prussian struggle' is weird. 3 August Keudell reported that in Vienna, Rechberg is attacked on all sides, Austria is depicted as Prussia's vassal, 'Bismarck is envied and praised'.

Clark: Schmerling thought it the right time for a counter-attack, the time would soon come for a revival of his schemes for a Greater Germany and for Vienna to support the Bund. He sent out agents to the south German states to test the water (Beust was doing similar). He mobilised the press. He started to undermine Rechberg at court. And Biegeleben returned from holiday determined on revenge against Prussia. Cunningly, Schmerling did not attack directly on the Prussian alliance — this being FJ's policy too — but he demanded that Rechberg obtain the renewal of Austria's option to join the Zollverein. Cf. October.

4 August Rechberg note to Bismarck re the role of Bund in duchies and pressing his case on the *Zollverein*.

5 August Disraeli walked in the park with Russian Ambassador Baron Brunnow: 'Bismarck has made a good book but, what is most strange, he backed the worst horse of the lot. For Prussia is a country without any bottom and in my opinion could not maintain a real war for six months.' (Steinberg — 'at the same time' as this discussion, Bismarck was in Vienna. Wrong, he went on 20/8.)

6 August Note from Bismarck (part drafted by Abeken?, Clark) to Rechberg pushing back against involvement of Bund in duchies, and strongly urging conservative solidarity for joint action in the spirit of fighting 1848. An alliance between Prussia and Austria is the only path to a 'true German and Conservative policy'. 'If Prussia and Austria are not united, politically Germany does not exist.' We can't be knocked off course by small states with their parliaments and newspapers.

The note was the start of a series of complaints about Austria, in an injured tone that continued to summer 1866 (gap in 9/65). He knew, says Clark, from his recent trip to Vienna that most of the court and military still wanted to stay close to Prussia, on simple conservative grounds. He also got Manteuffel, popular in Vienna, to write in similar vein. Over coming days he pushed back against the Bund but looked for ways to be conciliatory about the *Zollverein*.

14 Aug Rechberg/Biegeleben replied to Bismarck: they stressed that the idea of Bund involvement had been *his* idea and it must happen, unless the Bund agrees some other arrangement based on both Powers promising they 'intend no acquisitions' and await the Bund's decision 'on the sovereignty question, before giving up the Duchies to their future lord'; no more 'Rendsburg tactics'. Clark (p101): This was an attempt to fix the basic Austrian error since January. Rechberg was not playing a straight bat but Bismarck's had been much more crooked: he'd secretly worked with France to undermine Personal Union; worked to scupper Augustenburg in London; he'd

suggested annexation to Napoleon and Alexander; he'd secretly had Wilhelm talking to Augustenburg to extort Prussian control; negotiations with Oldenburg; recent resumption of commercial discussions with Italy (which he thought Rechberg strongly opposed) etc.

14 August Wilhelm wrote to Moltke praising and decorating him for his role.

17 Aug Bismarck left Gastein.

20 August Bismarck went with Wilhelm to Vienna. He wrote to his wife that day to remind her of a previous visit they made to the Schönbrunn palace on their honeymoon: 'It is too strange that I should be living in the rooms on the ground floor, abutting on the private reserved garden where, very nearly seventeen years ago, we intruded in the moonlight. I see through a glass door the dark beech hedge along which we walked, secretly enjoying forbidden fruit looking through the windows, behind which I am now living.' On 17th he said he left Gastein and slept at Radstedt; on 18th on to Aussee, and after a trip across a beautiful lake on to Hallstadt; on 19th they reached the King at Ischl and they all spent the night of 19th at Gmunden. 'Today, by steamer, hither, arriving about six.'

Clark: Biegeleben wanted to scupper annexation by counter-demanding Prussian territory such as land in Silesia and Schmerling agreed with him (but took the month off on holiday and wasn't there). Rechberg focused on trying to get a Prussian guarantee of help if Austria were attacked (which was also close to FJ's heart) and knew he'd have to pay a price for 16 Jan deal. At the first formal meeting in Vienna, FJ wore the uniform of a Prussian colonel, Wilhelm the uniform of an Austrian colonel. They stayed in FJ's 'favourite suburban palace of Maria Theresa' (Clark) where they enjoyed more privacy and were more insulated from Viennese ill-feeling. There were banquets, operas, troop reviews and two hunts — at which Bismarck strengthened his reputation as a great shot by shooting the largest stag, reported the local press. The history of these days is vague — none of the key participants wrote an account at the time that has survived, Bismarck made many dishonest claims about it later. His account of the discussion *à quatre* is false. Bismarck and Rechberg wanted to stress in later years their desire for good relations — Bismarck because of his Triple Alliance policy, Rechberg to defend himself from blame for the 1866 war. Some Rechberg letters were published in 1927 that helps piece together events. (Friedjung interviewed Bismarck and Rechberg in 1889-90.)

Bismarck and Rechberg discussed at Schönbrunn various schemes for Prussia taking duchies and Austria getting compensation in Italy; discussions about an alliance, Bismarck dangling carrots as usual but nothing settled. (He had been dangling such ideas since start of year, see 28/2.)

On 22nd at Schönbrunn, there was a meeting of FJ, Wilhelm, Bismarck and Rechberg. (NB. There was more than one discussion but we can't disentangle them all now given the sources.) In his Memoirs, Bismarck claimed he said to FJ and Rechberg: 'Destined by our history for one political community, we should both do better business if we held together and accepted the leadership of Germany, which we shall not lose, when once we are united.' Bismarck urged Rechberg — 'it would be useful for Austria to act generously and obligingly towards Prussia now' and to consider possible gains from further cooperation. Clark: Bismarck said, 'Our alliance ... is like a hunting party in which each takes home his own share of the spoils. If, later on, we should make war together against France and Italy, and with Prussia's aid Milan should fall again into Austrian hands, Prussia would not ask for a land-equivalent, but would accept a money immunity for war efforts' — the implication was obvious, Prussia will buy the duchies. FJ replied, fencing, suggested a possible trade of land (Duchies/Silesia, per Biegeleben) and asked Wilhelm outright whether he wished to annex. **William replied 'with some hesitation and embarrassment' that he had no right to the duchies and could make no claim to them.** In this answer Bismarck 'perceived the influence of the King's relatives and of the Court liberal party' (Memoirs).

Clark: FJ turned the conversation to other topics and let Bismarck and Rechberg explore details. Clark thinks Venetia was probably *not* discussed between the two kings, *contra* Sybel, and notes that if Bismarck personally told Sybel that it was then it should be remembered that he also told Friedjung that it was *not*! Bismarck had connected the Duchies/Venetia, e.g with Karolyi on 14/1

and Chotek on 14/5, but he did *not* intend a real guarantee — e.g he told Manteuffel 21/2 to offer verbal assurances but no guarantee. Now Wilhelm was still not prepared to buy the duchies. Bismarck to Rechberg (Clark p113): 'A treaty with Austria would be either eventual or definitive; if only eventual, Austria would not gain very much, for it would always depend on Prussia to decide whether the *casus foederis* had arisen or not; on the other hand, if it were a definitive treaty, all the disadvantages would be on Prussia's side, for Austria would only need to cause the questions to arise which the treaty foresaw, in order to bring on the war.' Why not therefore continue double ownership until a new constellation allows an alliance more popular than it is today and provides another way to solve the issue?

Clark: as Biegeleben expressed it, Bismarck was trying to persuade Austria 'with her own hand to undermine her position in Germany merely in order not to lose the uncertain prospect of Prussia's alliance in a future war'. But Rechberg had Biegeleben in FJ's ear and had to try to get something out of the situation. On the last evening there was an attempt to write some sort of understanding. Bismarck and Rechberg haggled while Wilhelm waited upstairs nervously until after midnight. Rechberg urged not an all-inclusive alliance but a limited defensive alliance against France: Napoleon will need a war, together 'we can strike France down'. For Bismarck, such a deal would make an enemy of Napoleon and tie him to Austria — not his style! There then emerged a new idea — whether from Rechberg 'or from Bismarck's more inventive mind may never be known' (Clark): Prussia gets Schleswig, outside the pale of the Bund, Austria gets Holstein and Lauenburg, Prussia makes a partial guarantee of Venetia against France. Austria would have burned bridges with the Bund, Bismarck with Napoleon. There seems to have been a written document that Rechberg referred to in later years but it has not been found. (Clark: Rechberg always gave the impression this plan was his but never explicitly stated so. It was 'probably' Bismarck's idea, it was a step from the July suggestion re the islands and Bismarck was far more resourceful than Rechberg, p115.) Rechberg summoned Biegeleben late at night to help the drafting *but Biegeleben refused* and Rechberg said, 'Then I'll draft it myself.' A version was drafted and shown to Wilhelm who refused to sign. FJ similarly did not agree, influenced by Biegeleben (during the night or early next morning of 25th). Bismarck and Rechberg therefore drafted a short and vague statement, the Kings signed, Wilhelm left and Bismarck stayed to tidy up business and attend a formal dinner that night. After this dinner in the villa of Kettenhof, Bismarck had a long discussion with Gramont. **No final settlement had been reached and for the time being 'oceans of ink would flow' but no blood: 'The one who can give the Rhine provinces to France is the one who possesses them... We can march with France better than anybody else, for as a start we can give her what other Powers can only promise. We do not desire a European conflagration. But if it comes we shall not be among the losers. This perspective does not frighten us'** (Gramont-Drouyn, 28/8). (As Eyck says this is similar to his comment years earlier: '**Great crises are the very weather which stimulates Prussia's growth**, if we turn them to our account fearlessly and, maybe, very recklessly.') Later that evening, at a safe distance from his hosts, Bismarck joked about Austria's position and said she should not 'chase the phantom of supremacy in Germany'. Just before he left the next day, Rechberg spoke to him and stressed the importance *to his personal position* of keeping open the *Zollverein* option.

Pflanze (p254): It would have been 'most unlike him' to make an offer of — alliance against France and Italy for the defence of Venetia and recovery of Lombardy, in return for Prussia annexing the duchies and solidarity against the middle states. He wanted Austria to agree that Prussia get the duchies in return for a vague verbal promise of help in Italy that he could wriggle out of. Rechberg presented on 24th a draft agreement — Prussia gets the duchies if Lombardy is reconquered. Bismarck got rid of it in typical fashion, letting Wilhelm knock it back. When Wilhelm was asked by FJ whether he wanted the duchies, Wilhelm groped for a reply, Bismarck said that he too wanted to hear what the King wanted. Wilhelm said he had no right to the duchies. Bismarck pretended in his Memoirs this was tricky for him but it actually scuppered Rechberg's plan. (Bismarck knew Wilhelm well enough that if this conversation happened, Bismarck surely prompted Wilhelm knowing how

he would answer.) Isn't Pflanze confusing Bismarck's account of the meeting on 22nd with the proposal on 24th?

JS does not go into the details of these meetings and leaves unexplained what was actually agreed. Of all the books I've read, Clark (p103-120) has by far the most details and footnotes on original sources re this Vienna interlude.

Gall (p257): it's 'certain' that 'the substance of and basis for a Prusso-Austrian partnership at this time was so feeble from the very beginning that such a partnership could not possibly have lasted.' It ran 'counter to the spirit of the age', liberal and national, and was incompatible with 'concrete interests'. (Overstated. It implies that there was never a possibility for FJ to have chosen a different path but this is un-historical. If you are asking about counterfactuals you have to be open to such possibilities. Perhaps Napoleon would have become more aggressive over Italy again, perhaps to shore up his domestic position. In such a situation one can easily imagine a desperate Vienna deciding to do a deal on the duchies in return for Prussian support. And so on...)

Friedjung (p58): on 13 June 1890 Bismarck told me the following about the Schönbrunn meeting. 'Rechberg declared that the Duchies could be handed over to Prussia only if Austria received the county of Glatz in order to preserve the balance of power in Germany. This the King would not agree to: the inhabitants had no desire to be transferred to Austria; indeed, petitions and addresses were being sent begging the King not to separate them from Prussia. I put it to the Emperor that it would be in accordance with the spirit of our alliance if Prussia received the Duchies without giving any compensation; our alliance was not a *trading company*, dividing its profits in a fixed percentage, but rather a hunt, in which each party took its own spoils home. If, in continuance of our alliance, we waged war against France and Italy and recovered Milan, Prussia would not demand territorial compensation, but would be content with a contribution towards the cost of the war. This argument had an effect on the Emperor, as was shown by his asking if Prussia then regarded annexation as the most desirable solution of the question of the Duchies. I was very pleased to have the question so directly put in the presence of the King, for I had never been able to get a definite answer from him. I therefore turned to him and said I was not empowered to answer this question. But the King hesitated and replied that he was not exactly thinking of the absorption of Schleswig-Holstein. I therefore had to drop the subject.' This is close to the account in his Memoirs, though Wilhelm's answer is recorded there slightly differently.

24 August (Clark) Russell-Apponyi: 'I regret to see the secondary states lose confidence in Austria little by little. My wish would be to see you at the head of Germany.'

29 August Lassalle shot in a duel over a woman, died on 31st.

3 Sep Tsar to the new Austrian Ambassador in St P, Revertera: Bismarck has been too aggressive and alienated England, hopefully Oldenburg's claims will be accepted, I have no ambitions in the east and want to preserve the Ottoman empire which is 'a sad necessity' (*un triste nécessité*), I'm opposed to Pan Slavism. A few weeks later Gorchakov assured Revertera that past grudges were banished and the three conservative Powers should cooperate.

7 Sep Bleichröder to Rothschild: '... the great intimacy with Austria has reached its term and a chill will follow', Bismarck wants 'an understanding with France', S-H for Prussia, thinks England and Austria will 'remain silent, however unhappy they may be' but 'for time being this ideal is frustrated by [Wilhelm] who, because of the crown princess, is inclined toward the duke of Augustenburg.'

8 Sep To Rechberg: 'You will recognise with me the difficulty of the task we have set ourselves, to relegate years of differences and conflicts to the past. We will only succeed if we maintain for our alliance the fresh life of an active common policy ... which would without doubt bring us to our desired goal, to the unity of Germany against internal and external enemies, to the restoration of the basis for a monarchical regime, to the emasculation of revolution.' Around then he was also floating all sorts of ideas about cooperation on customs etc as part of the tortuous negotiations over the *Zollverein*.

15 Sep Buchanan left Berlin and became Ambassador in St P, Napier took over. (Davis: Napier was appointed in November.) Negotiations over winter between London and Berlin over an Anglo-Prussian trade deal.

15 Sep Napoleon signed deal with Italy agreeing to withdraw his troops from Rome within 2 years in return for Victor Emanuel's promise not to attack the papal city and a secret pledge to move his capital to Florence. News filtered out over coming days. Rechberg, very worried about possible secret elements to the deal, insisted in Paris that the Pope must approve the deal but he did not seek to escalate into a crisis — instead he was conciliatory. The outcome was *improved* relations. 'Late September' (Clark): Clarendon travelled through Vienna *en route* for Italy. He spoke to Rechberg. Along with Austrian recognition of King George of Greece and the opening of commercial negotiations for an Anglo-Austrian deal 'revived the latent friendship' of UK/Austria in autumn 1864.

19 Sep Clark: Bismarck was absent from Berlin at this time because his wife was ill. Rechberg had asked for a delay to the ultimatum to Bavaria and Württemberg regarding the French treaty. In Bismarck's absence Delbruck declined. This increased Rechberg's problems.

29 Sep Rechberg wrote to Bismarck insisting that Article 25 (giving Austria a future right to negotiate entry to the Zollverein) be left open. (Clark: this latter arrived as Bismarck was leaving Berlin to meet Wilhelm at Baden-Baden. Did he see it before he wrote the below about 'fogs?')

Bismarck to Rechberg: The tariff issue is less important than the political alliance between us: 'I believe ... we should be surer of the progress of our common course if we were both to take our stand on the practical ground of Cabinet politics without allowing the situation to be obscured by the fogs that emanate from the doctrines of German political sentimentalists.' (Clark: '... without befogging the situation...')

Rechberg exploded with frustration over how to deal with Bismarck in a note to FJ (3/10 Clark): 'It increases to a more than ordinary degree the difficulties of conducting business when one is dealing with a man who so openly professes political cynicism as to reply to the passage in my letter, where I say that we must make the maintenance of the Confederation and of the legitimately acquired rights of the German princes the foundation of our policy, ... with the outrageous piece of claptrap that we both take our stand on the practical ground of Cabinet politics without allowing the situation to be obscured for us by fog emanating from the doctrines of German political sentimentalism. **This is language worthy of a Cavour. Holding fast to what is lawful is foggy sentimentalism! ... To hold fast to the treaty-basis is a nebulous and sentimental policy!... The task of keeping this gentleman in check and talking him out of his megalomaniac utilitarian politics ... is one that exceeds human powers.**' FJ (away hunting in the mountains for a fortnight with his cousin Prince Albert of Saxony) scribbled in the margin: 'Very true, alas, except that the alliance with Prussia is still the only right one in the circumstances, and we must therefore continue our thankless efforts to keep Prussia on the right lines and within the fold of the law.'

1 Oct Bismarck went to Baden, from thence to Biarritz on 5th for a holiday with the Orlovs. On 9th he wrote to his wife overlooking the bathers playing on the beach at Biarritz: 'I cannot help saying that southern nations possess a peculiar grace of God in their climate... If we were free, I should propose to you to come with child and baggage to this place, and remain here the whole winter as many of the English do'. On 12th he wrote to his sister: '[T]he evil habit of work has rooted itself so deeply in my nature that I feel some disquiet of conscience at my laziness — almost long for the Wilhelmstrasse, at least if my dear ones were there...'

5 Oct Napoleon appointed Benedetti to be Ambassador in Berlin. He had been a senior official at the Quai d'Orsay and the first envoy to Italy. He was pro-Italian and in the group around Thouvenel (former foreign minister), instinctively hostile to Drouyn. He couldn't speak German well. He had much less access to Wilhelm than Goltz enjoyed with Napoleon, so was more dependant on discussion with Bismarck. On 7/10 the French legation in Berlin was upgraded to embassy status. He arrived 22/11.

7 Oct (Clark) A Council in Vienna. Sharp opposition to Rechberg. Biegeleben argued for a sort of ultimatum to Berlin re Article 25 and if this failed then urgent negotiations with France for a commercial treaty. Rechberg argued the timing of an ultimatum was terrible, with Bismarck travelling, and the talks could still yield something. Clark: papers close to Schmerling carried hostile

briefings against Rechberg and his policy. Some advocated a *rapprochement* with France and England. FJ still sided with Rechberg who pressed on trying to negotiate with Prussia. He told Werther in Vienna and Chotek in Berlin — we need an answer on Article 25. To Werther he said he'd have to resign (reported by Werther to Abeken on 8th) and he repeated it 2 days later. From Biarritz, Bismarck, fearing Rechberg's replacement by someone cleverer, sent multiple messages to Wilhelm urging the folly of letting Schmerling get the upper hand when an empty phrase would keep Rechberg in place. Thile, acting for Bismarck, tried to muster reinforcements to speak to Wilhelm who was taking his cure in Baden. Wilhelm did not think it urgent. Delbruck and others in Berlin objected to leaving Austria wriggle room with A25.

10 Oct (Gall) Bismarck wrote to Wilhelm (from Biarritz): 'Should the Schmerling policy gain the upper hand in Vienna we must be prepared not only for a striving for the support of the western powers but also the establishment of close relations between Austria and the medium-sized states. Presumably Austria would then immediately take steps over the Holstein question by bringing motions before the Confederation in the interests of the medium-sized states.'

16 Oct (EF): He wrote to Roon warning that Delbruck was making trouble and the government should do as he had said re the *Zollverein* and not make it look to Rechberg and FJ that 'the break is only a question of time.' EF: Delbruck threatened resignation and this may have influenced Wilhelm.

Friedjung quotes a letter of 16/10, presumably the one to Roon, complaining about Delbruck and Bodelschwingh: 'If they succeed it will be obvious in Vienna that we attach no value to their alliance, they will act accordingly, and first of all in the Danish question, in which, led by Schmerling, they will go over to Beust and Pfordten. But a breach with Austria would be ill-timed from every point of view and I disclaim all responsibility for the effects of such a mistake on our foreign policy.'

Hamerow: around this time Bismarck wrote about keeping alive the possibility of the *Zollverein* for Austria (also the letter to Roon?): 'They would consider it a slap in the face if this prospect should be immediately and categorically cut off... The more certain we are that the force of actual material conditions will not let it be realised, the less we need to object to making it a subject of negotiation also in the future. It is important for us that [the project] miscarry not because of our ill-will but precisely because of these actual conditions.' (This is a good example of his fingertip feel for politics — there is a policy objective, X, but X can be sought in different ways, and one way arouses less unnecessary opposition by letting circumstances dictate the outcome rather than being overtly antagonistic and provoking counter-measures. But a less subtle and cleaner alternative seems preferable to tidy bureaucratic minds. Even brilliant officials like Delbruck who agree X couldn't see the point of the subtlety.)

18 Oct (Clark) Rechberg offered his resignation to FJ. He knew Biegeleben, Schmerling et al were pushing for him to go. Bismarck had not come through with Article 25. He was tired and fed up. FJ felt he could not lose Schmerling. He accepted the resignation and asked that he stay until the peace deal was finalised. (In a 1892 discussion, Rechberg said that Bismarck had been very lucky.)

19 Oct Biegeleben's memo savagely attacked Rechberg's policy. Argued 1) Prussia is a more dangerous enemy than France, and we can't be real friends without giving up our place in Germany which is unthinkable, 2) a reliable *entente* with Napoleon is possible, and Bismarck will also seek it so we must move first. Rechberg thought both false. Biegeleben did not have a convincing answer to how the issue of Venetia could be solved other than fudging it and hoping. Clark thinks he had schemes such as: rally the middle states, beat Prussia, retake Silesia then trade away Venetia. Clark discusses the theoretical options open to Austria p150-6.

20 Oct Chotek told Rechberg that Wilhelm said nothing could be done until Bismarck returned end of October.

24 Oct Bismarck left Biarritz, was in Paris on 25th, 'plenty of politics, audience at St Cloud, a dinner at Drouyn de Lhuys's'.

27 October The peace deal was formally signed and Mensdorff formally replaced Rechberg. (OP says Rechberg resigned on 27th but it seems from Clark that he resigned on 18th but was

replaced on 27th.) Ironically given Bismarck's desire to save Rechberg, Mensdorff was arguably much worse than Rechberg so Bismarck caught a break. He was a general with no diplomatic experience — 'a mediocrity of noble birth and ample means' (Eyck) — and was more dependent on the official Biegeleben who gained in influence.

Clark: he didn't have the skills needed but he was part of the old nobility, he was not a political fanatic, FJ liked and trusted him, and other candidates presented problems. FJ had asked Rechberg whether he could recommend Esterhazy, Rechberg said no and recommended Mensdorff. Clark: Rechberg's fall was a victory for Schmerling and Biegeleben but Mensdorff was a defeat (p145). Mensdorff disliked Schmerling's pseudo-liberal government and Schmerling apparently did not realise it when he was appointed. Contemporaries thought that Esterhazy was the most important influence on FJ 1864-6, they probably over-estimated a bit, it's hard to tell given much of his papers/ letters were destroyed, but he was definitely very influential (p147). He was a minister without portfolio, he lacked definitive duties. He was conservative and wished to bring Austria and Hungary together. He was 'tinged with insanity' and craved the shadows away from the media (Clark). He had a plan for Hungary and Rechberg opposed it so he helped push Rechberg out in October. He thought he could work with Mensdorff to remove Schmerling, shift policy in a more conservative direction and implement his Hungary plan. FJ-Wilhelm: 'The very name of my new minister, Lieutenant Field Marshal Count Mensdorff, will convince you that I am fully determined to make no change in the direction of my policy.'

Mosse writes (p215) that Bismarck 'showed his true temper' by refusing Rechberg's 'modest requests' but it seems Mosse is wrong here and the account in Pflanze and Clark is more reliable.

Mosse writes that 'real control of foreign policy soon fell into the hands of Maurice Esterhazy an ardent opponent of Prussia who hoped to revive the glories of Schwarzenberg.'

By mid-October (Pflanze) the **renewal of the Zollverein, including the new French treaty**, had been accomplished (signed following May, Gall), the medium and smaller states had folded under the pressure. There was opposition to Prussia in the south but the key state was Hesse-Kassel, between the Prussian frontiers and between Hanover and south: it folded in June 1864 and resistance crumbled. The French treaty offered the German states great possibilities. Prussia was determined while Austria seemed hesitant (e.g strong commercial interests opposed opening up lagging companies to German competition).

Gall: Bavaria and its foreign minister Pfordten were the biggest obstacle and had longstanding ideas about a 'third Germany', a new centre of power.

Renewal of the Zollverein was an event of 'major importance in German history' (OP). 'The common market, railways, banks, joint-stock companies, and bourse had begun to produce an interlocking, interdependent economic order throughout the small-German region. The Zollverein had become indispensable for the material prosperity of the entire area' (Pflanze). The French free trade deal was supported by crucial interests. Eastern landowners were grain exporters and consumers of manufactured goods and supported free trade as did merchants who wanted low tariffs and many light industrialists who did not fear competition. The main opposition to the 1862 deal had come from the iron and steel industrialists but they were 'not yet weighty enough to dictate tariff policy' (OP).

The new Zollverein agreement based on the French deal was supported by the Landtag *without a single dissenting vote!* Since 1851 statutes had freed mining companies and given tax advantages culminating in the 1861 statute and the same year also saw the tax on gross income of mining companies fall from 5% to 2%. In 1865 the Landtag approved a statute establishing a mining code that incorporated in a single statute all remaining regulatory acts: wages, hours, conditions previously subject to state control were now left to the market and the code 'marked the final triumph of the free enterprise system in the mining industry and was also a milestone in the development of class consciousness among Ruhr miners' (OP, p288ff).

Traditionally Prussian businessmen were 'pacifist and antimilitary', resented the aristocratic officer corps, preferred a fleet to the army. There were no strong objections from business over the three-year service and *Landwehr* reform. The 1863 press law radicalised some but no appetite for

radical action like a tax strike. 1861-5 was a period of growth and they were in no mood to support radical measures against the Crown. For much of the well-connected finance world the constitutional conflict was 'not a deterrent but an opportunity' to do profitable business with Bismarck. Overall businessmen by 1864-5 'appear to have lost interest in the [constitutional] struggle', they were 'practical men' who 'deplored the tendency' of the lawyers and professors to talk so much about principles, and they increasingly admired Bismarck's successes (OP).

BUT... Prussia's economic advance and victory on the *Zollverein* did not mean the struggle for hegemony in Germany was over — in fact Prussia's growing economic strength made the other German states *more* worried about their own political independence. Austria was determined to resist in Germany. 'Without Bismarck's narcissistic determination, his diplomatic skill, and Prussia's military might this resistance could not have been overcome. Here is one of those moments in the processes of history where a single personality, by his capacity to manipulate the forces within his grasp, influenced the course of history and the lives of millions' (OP p258).

JS writes: 'In the summer of 1864 France opened negotiations to create a free trade zone between the Empire and the [Zollverein]'. But Prussia and France agreed a free trade deal in March 1862. He then says that the Landtag, bureaucracy and smaller states 'opted for the French treaty which undermined Rechberg's entire policy of cooperation with Prussia.' This seriously confuses the story.

30 October Peace with Denmark, Treaty of Vienna: Denmark renounced rights over the Duchies, joint Prussian and Austrian control of them.

28 Oct (Clark) Bismarck stopped at the Krupp factory in Essen, on the way from Paris to Berlin, where he remarked: '**When I consider something right, and possible of attainment, I intend to carry it out, though the shrewdest people hold it impossible.**'

30 Oct Roon wrote to Manteuffel that he was thinking of resigning and suggested the latter take over from him but Manteuffel declined: 'Your Excellency entered the boat with His Majesty and must now help to steer it — I shall gladly continue to row.'

31 Oct FJ set out his own views to his ministers and complained about them briefing the media. We must pursue peace and internal development. We need to stay close to Prussia and improve relations with the smaller German states. Best possible relations with France but no alliance. Better relations with England and Russia but no expectation of material help. No more playing off the German states against Prussia — it has 'proved detrimental by experience and has given them an exaggerated idea of their own importance'. (A blow for Biegeleben.)

Clark: 1) FJ offered no concession to Prussia that might soften its attitude, and 2) he rejected a French alliance. In his hope that a united Germany would thwart France, he ignored the repeated failures of the past few years. This idea needed a) Prussia to return to subservience, b) concessions to Prussia to win her over, or c) imposing Austrian will on Prussia. Bismarck would not allow (a), (b) was not tried. FJ's approach was essentially a passive waiting game based on a miscalculation of the European chessboard, Austria's strength, and the abilities of Bismarck. He was obsessed with law and 'principle' — '**Not all Europe combined will induce me to sacrifice a principle. The Austrian Empire may be sacrificed. I had sooner that than the sacrifice of a principle**' he had told Napoleon at Villafranca. His view of 'honour' meant no concessions or allowing France to be a potential piece on the chessboard (as Bismarck had insisted to Wilhelm). Mensdorff's takeover strengthened Biegeleben's influence a lot — henceforth he drafted almost every word that came from Mensdorff, and if the latter wanted something changed he would not draft it himself but would speak to the former who would redraft himself.

(Fundamentally it seems to me that neither FJ nor his ministers could decide *their core priority*. Was it A) to maintain dominance over Prussia in north Germany (with all that entailed); B) solidify monarchical relations 'against revolution' (therefore be prepared to make concessions to Prussia); C) keep Venetia (with all that entailed); D) overcome the recent past and decisively improve relations with Russia; E) reach out to Napoleon? Bismarck was determined to increase Prussian influence in north Germany and decrease Austria's and the Bund's. He was prepared for a war to achieve this in the right circumstances. He told Austrians repeatedly — *reorient yourselves away from north Germany or else*. This required an equally clear response or good luck or a superior army —

Vienna ended up counting on the last, which was a false hope. Clark: Esterhazy and Mensdorff were happy to do a deal with Prussia — neither loved Augustenburg or the middle states. Metternich urged FJ — no more half-measures, either do a deal with Prussia or take a stand against Prussia. Biegeleben continued to argue the latter. *But FJ could not decide a clearer path and Vienna limped on.*) **By November, liberals very divided, many now supporting annexation over Augustenburg.** 9 November Bennigsen wrote, ‘**The Bismarck course (that is, the worship of military power and diplomatic success) is growing in a shocking way.**’ Mommsen and Twesten (both natives of S-H!) had converted to annexation during 1864. Supporting annexation meant: supporting Bismarck and the principle of ‘might is right’, violating national self-determination (most in the duchies favoured Augustenburg, OP p273). Rejecting it meant: denying Prussia’s glory and reward for military success, increasing the number of small anti-Prussian states, undermining Prussian naval power, possibly slowing German nationalism. Mommsen was more liberal than Treitschke but he thought that self-determination must be limited when considering the overall context of progress on unification. 1 Nov Bismarck spoke to Chotek: I have a scheme to restart commercial discussions, but keep it secret for now while I try to persuade Wilhelm. During November this was achieved and talks restarted in December.

8 November Lincoln re-elected.

12 Nov (Clark p171-4) Karolyi was given instructions after the discussions in Vienna but they were a tangle: part a rejection of a deal, part an offer of one, part a rejection of cash-for-land, part an admission they might sell something. Bismarck rejected territorial compensations but talked about money, stressing the advantages of Oldenburg over Augustenburg. Mensdorff replied (15th) that Karolyi not negotiate further but ‘stand firm’ on the basis of previous instructions, ‘Prussia now knows exactly what we have to offer’ (wrong!) and Karolyi should seek ‘rapid decision’.

14 November (Clark) Bismarck demanded that all Bund troops (Hanover’s and Saxony’s) be withdrawn from the duchies not by a vote of the Bund but by demand of Prussia and Austria. There was back-and-forth over the next fortnight. Beust rallied the King of Saxony to call out his army. To begin with Karolyi thought Bismarck was bluffing. Mensdorff held firm. Bismarck threatened Beust with a ‘second Rendsburg’ and moved some troops to the Saxon border. OP: He argued that Confederate law did not allow for federal troops to remain after a successful execution, only Prussian and Austrian troops could legally stay. (He was happy to use ‘international law’ when it suited him.)

16 Nov Bismarck-Karolyi discussions, Bismarck talked about military and naval interests that must be acquired if annexation is given up. Karolyi reported that ideas of Prussia giving up territory have ‘made a very bad impression on Bismarck, and will make the worst possible impression on the King’. Mensdorff got sucked into broadening discussions re naval bases etc.

19 Nov Revertera-Mensdorff: ‘If the accord of the two German powers should come to grief, Russia will range herself on Prussia’s side and will lend her moral and material aid according to circumstances.’

19 Nov Karolyi saw Wilhelm who was very firm in rejecting territorial exchange but was more conciliatory than Bismarck on other things. But Karolyi realised Bismarck was spinning everything out and avoiding a resolution. On 25th he wrote that unless he got what he wanted (which remained opaque) ‘Bismarck will make every effort to keep the whole matter open as long as possible... The desire to drag out the whole affair, despite assurances to the contrary, is evident on every side.’

22 Nov Metternich reported on his discussion with Napoleon at Compiègne: Napoleon wants to be reasonable on Italy, doesn’t want her to seize Rome. Reassured, Vienna would cut troops in Venetia.

22 Nov Benedetti arrived in Berlin and had his first discussion with Bismarck that evening. Re the controversy over Saxony and Hanover refusing to withdraw their troops, he assured Benedetti that he would ensure the withdrawal. Bismarck visited him the next day at the Hotel Royal. On 27th Benedetti had an audience with Wilhelm, spoke to Bismarck after and spoke to him again on 28th.

Bismarck made clear he was still looking to cooperate with Austria to the exclusion of the rest of the Bund.

End of November, Vienna dropped its demand that both openly support Augustenburg, Bismarck dropped his demand that both powers ignore the Diet, and both agreed on getting the Diet to vote in favour of withdrawing Bund troops and the official end of the federal execution, which it did (9:6) on 5/12. Bismarck had forced the pace and won the substance. **The duchies were now ruled by the two powers with the Bund pushed out.** This showed Vienna that his approach to the alliance would continue to be aggressive. Vienna had also lost leverage with the departure of the Bund troops. Vienna worried increasingly about the affair being dragged out with no clear way to escape humiliation or the risk of war.

Clark (p201ff): Bismarck had treated Schleswig as a Prussian province from the start. Zedlitz (his commissioner) seized the mail and telegraph system, filled important offices with Prussian officials, gained control of the police. Bismarck encouraged Prussian officers to move their families to the Duchies. Over the winter Bismarck advanced his propaganda campaign in the duchies. He used Baron Scheel-Plessen, liaising with von Richthofen (his envoy in Hamburg), to organise petitions, publish pamphlets attacking Augustenburg and calling for annexation, brief the newspapers etc. By April 1865 the Austrian envoy reported that 'the entire press in the Duchies' was in the pay of Prussia. Zedlitz distributed Prussian honours, promised prominent citizens favours, spread false news (e.g. that Austria would swing to Oldenburg). Bismarck used reports from Zedlitz to arouse Wilhelm's anger against Augustenburg and Vienna. In late December, 'the too-conciliatory Baron Lederer' was replaced by Baron Halbhuber to push back against Bismarck's campaign.

30 Nov Napier-Russell recounted how Bismarck had told him: 'We have a very good custom in Germany where we turn the cattle into the fields at the beginning of spring. We let the bulls fight it out without interfering with them. The strongest bull wins and for the rest of the summer there is peace in the herd. That is what I have done. I have fought it out and will have less trouble in future.' **Mensdorff pressed for a deal — either a new principality under Augustenburg or Prussian annexation with Austrian compensation. Bismarck prevaricated and used Wilhelm as an excuse. Meanwhile he was orchestrating an annexation campaign, bribing the press etc.** The Prussian commissioner ruled Schleswig 'as though it were already a Prussian province' (Pflanze). December Moltke returned to Berlin from Jutland after wrapping up affairs over previous months, had meetings before going to Vienna in January.

December A document was submitted to the Bund by the artisan movement, 'the most eloquent expression of the outlook of independent tradesmen threatened by the imminent breakthrough of a new industrial order' which attacked the entire system of liberal economy thought (Hamerow, p128, and cf. 8/60).

December Cabinet discussion of **social policy**. Bismarck had asked Itzenplitz to consider private old-age pension funds in March 1863. In May 1863 he'd asked him to draft legislation on legalising trade unions but nothing much happened. A Bill was presented to Landtag in Feb 1866 but not passed until 1869. OP (p284): Bismarck's retreat on this was partly because of the failure of his model cooperative in Silesia. Also cf. below, 57 page note post-Gastein in 1865.

Dec (WAF) Bismarck sent two notes to Vienna calling for Austrian support against the anticipated interference of the Bund in the duchies. These were published in Vienna and worsened relations. (Deliberately leaked by who??)

2 Dec Revertera reported to Vienna: 'An abyss separates us from Russia, however much we try to cover it with flowers.' (Clark dates this 1864 but maybe 1863?)

4 Dec Freiherr von der Pfordten appointed by King Ludwig Minister President in Bavaria. He was close to Beust who was scheming for an Austro-French alliance to scupper Bismarck. Pfordten was vain, prone to academic theorising and had a weak heart (Clark).

7 December (JS) Victorious Prussian troops marched through Berlin. The liberals were weakening and increasingly feared they did not have public support.

9 Dec Karolyi-Mensdorff: Bismarck will settle for Augustenburg sooner or later. Clark: this view was shared by many diplomats. WRONG.

13 Dec Bismarck sent a note to Vienna: annexation would not harm Austria, Prussia will not give up territory, we will formulate conditions for independent duchies, we will not submit to hostile resolutions of the Bund, influenced by democrats and parliaments. On 14th he referred the sovereignty question to Prussian judges, further delaying resolution for months.

14 Dec Benedetti was trying to figure out whether Prussia would be able to annex, if not then what would she demand, and France was particularly worried re some sort of deal — Prussia gets duchies, agrees to support Austria viz Venetia etc. Before returning to Paris for the Christmas holidays, Benedetti spoke to Bismarck who told him of his next move: that Austria should support Prussia's contention that the Bund had no legal right to dispose of SH. He hinted that he would try to do a deal over annexation but did not expect it to work, at least for a while. When they discussed north Schleswig, Bismarck suggested that he was open to the idea of giving it back but Wilhelm was the block (recent sacrifices, public opinion etc) — a theme that would recur in their discussions. He left for Paris thinking there had not been a deal over the duchies/Venetia. He returned to Berlin in time for the opening of Parliament on Saturday 14 Jan.

21 Dec (WAF) Mensdorff replied to Bismarck's suggestion, drafted by Biegeleben: 'If Prussia expands in Germany, the Imperial Monarchy must expand equally', we can't stop the Bund getting involved, opinion is too strong, we will have to give our views even if it upsets Prussia, we oppose creating 'a vassal state in a Diet of independent sovereigns'.

21-23 Dec Beust and Pfordten met at Bamberg to plot the development of German states cooperating against Prussia, including an all-German parliament, common military arrangements, and forcing Prussia to bring the duchies to the Diet. Beust and Pfordten rallied some support over the next couple of months but also met some resistance to joining a clearly anti-Prussian coalition. Beust foresaw Bismarck's scheme with a German parliament so wanted to forestall it but Mensdorff was hostile and thought it would be 'disastrous' to push it. However, signals also came to Vienna over coming weeks of Pfordten's contradictory attitude and unreliability — he was reported as saying that Austria would have to accommodate Prussia's expansion in the north, and even that if he were a minister in Berlin he would be acting similarly to Bismarck, and he had his own schemes for things like a separate southern German group with its own parliament. Pfordten would later 'drive the Austrian statesmen almost to distraction' (Clark).

29 Dec Bismarck talked to Chotek. Clark: Now he was wanting to soothe Vienna somewhat and keep control of the timing. He 'conjured up anew all the glowing visions with which he had tried to enchant the Emperor and Rechberg four months before (p181) — cash, retaking north Italy, partition of the duchies etc. Chotek turned a deaf ear for the moment. Cf. 18/1.

After the Danish War, Austria faced multiple problems:

1. Bismarck wanted the duchies and Prussian dominance in north Germany.
2. Napoleon wanted Venetia.
3. Britain was most worried about a) Napoleon's adventurism and b) Russia in the East and was useless as an ally for war unless there was a major threat to the balance of power or Belgium.
4. Russia was close to Bismarck and still resentful about the Crimean War.
5. If Austria supported Russia with the Oldenburg candidate in the duchies and over the Principalities (Rumania etc), she would offend liberal Germany and Napoleon.
6. Austria could only get support from France and Britain by abandoning Venetia, but any attempt to gain compensation in the Principalities would provoke Russian enmity.

Like many Powers at many times, *Austria could not prioritise* as Bismarck increased the pressure in 1865-6.

1865

A Dynamical Theory of the Electromagnetic Field, Maxwell. Feynman: 'From the long view of this history of mankind – seen from, say, 10,000 years from now – there can be little doubt that the most significant event of the 19th century will be judged as Maxwell's discovery of the laws of electromagnetism.'

Comte's work became widely known in English with the publication of *A General View of Positivism*.

1865 Napoleon: 'war between Austria and Prussia constitutes one of those un hoped-for eventualities which can bring us more than one advantage!' Through 1865 Napoleon is dealing with the increasingly bad Mexico situation. Russia is worrying about the emancipation of serfs. British opinion is hostile to involvement in European wars. US Civil War ends May 1865 and this puts more pressure on France over Mexico.

Some time in 1865 Bismarck says, 'Bavaria is perhaps the only German country that has succeeded in developing a real, harmonious national sentiment.'

KL: Some time in 1865 he was photographed with a famous opera singer and sent copies to Johanna, then the photographer began to sell unauthorised copies before being compelled to destroy the plates (OP II p62).

2 Jan Palmerston complained of a document from Bismarck re alliances: 'an impudent vainglorious & boastful pamphlet intended to inlist Prussian sympathies in support of a ministry likely to be defeated in Parliament; to coax France by visions of Prussian assistance to promote the ambitious projects of France; to intimidate Austria by representing her as unable to stand alone, and to keep Russia quiet & friendly, and finally to destroy the influence of England on the continent by representing her as incapable of any exertion. The pamphlet is however ably written for its purpose.' (What was this 'pamphlet?')

11 Jan Council of Austrian ministers, Mensdorff complained of the 'miserable inheritance from the Rechberg period'.

14 Jan Opening of Landtag, speech from the throne expressed an 'urgent wish' to come to an agreement. Stern: 'conciliatory in tone but not in substance.'

'About the middle of January' (Clark) there appeared in several leading newspapers excerpts from Austrian official documents. Clark thinks they were 'probably' leaked by Schmerling, in alliance with Metternich but without telling Mensdorff, to improve Austria's standing in Germany. It backfired because, says Clark, the news that Prussia wanted to annex the duchies was less surprising than the news that Austria was prepared to discuss it! Pfordten and Beust knew now, if not before, that Vienna would ditch Augustenburg if Prussia offered enough.

18 Jan (late evening) Bismarck and Chotek talked. Bismarck raised ideas about partition again. He rejected Mensdorff's counter-arguments and stressed his desire to maintain the alliance. Chotek reported this on 20/1. Also in Jan, some senior soldiers went to Vienna including Moltke. FJ and Mensdorff stressed their desire to resolve the issue. Moltke returned and argued for cession of the Hohenzollern Principalities for Austria's share of the duchies.

18 Jan Crown Prince hosted a reception for Benedetti.

20 Jan Chotek-Mensdorff: Bismarck will soon send his conditions, within 7-10 days, and is about to 'climb down' and accept Augustenburg(!). Mensdorff made a 'very rare' marginal note on this telegram (Clark). Karolyi was recalled from his honeymoon to be ready to deal with Bismarck's note. (He had left Berlin in December to get married in Paris.)

24 Jan Eulenburg speech to Landtag made clear government desire for compromise. Bismarck and Roon wanted to settle the conflict before war with Austria and were still willing to look at compromises on 3-year service. They now had the Cabinet with them. However, **Wilhelm was**

cross about Eulenburg's speech and told the Cabinet he remained opposed to any concessions. He was encouraged by Manteuffel and his circle who were still angling for a coup, an 'inner Düppel' or 'Düppel at home'. Gall: this episode made Bismarck more determined to move Manteuffel out the way.

26 Jan Pfordten sent a draft of a resolution to Vienna. Discussions over drafts occupied several weeks. Blome wrote on 19/2 of their gentle handling of him, with frequent and 'flattering expressions' and 'theoretical legal deductions. The former show him that he is respected in Vienna, the latter provides endless delight for his professorial nature.'

26 Jan Bismarck sent a note, rebutted some of Biegeleben's arguments but still *did not give his own plan*, infuriating Vienna.

1 Feb Werther-Bismarck: Mensdorff is very upset at the delay and refusal to put forward a specific proposal. He would give up his job if the alliance 'were no longer the cornerstone of Austrian policy'. We must see a specific plan.

4 Feb Mensdorff sent instructions to Karolyi, drafted by Biegeleben as (almost) always, with menacing hints such as 'a frank declaration in the Diet' and 'publication of our correspondence with Prussia'. Austria cannot 'wait with folded arms' while Prussia waits for 'European complications' and its propaganda campaign in the duchies to bear fruit.

7 Feb Bonar-Russell: Mensdorff says that 'There is only one way of *forcing* a termination ... and that is menace. But we are not going to menace Prussia and have no reason to do so. We must therefore carry on the negotiation and hope that we shall in the end arrive at a satisfactory conclusion.'

8 Feb Karolyi, returned to Berlin, talked to Bismarck on the basis of Biegeleben's instructions of 4th. 'When the Prussian people comprehend that Prussia's just demands are disregarded,' he roared, 'they will claim them with weapons in their hands. The matter had better not be forced to a head, nor the Prussian national feeling aroused with Bavarian resolutions.' (Reported to Vienna 11th) Friedjung reported (p70) what presumably was an earlier comment in the discussion. Karolyi urged a final settlement. 'Why? Why cannot our joint possession be a final settlement? However do not disturb yourself, we shall keep faith and submit our conditions... You see, we stand before the question of the Duchies like two men at a well-spread table – one of them has no appetite and therefore energetically forbids the other, whose mouth is watering, to sit down and eat. Well, we can wait, we are quite comfortable as we are and we shall not move until we are offered satisfactory terms.'

14/15 Feb Benedetti reported discussions with Bismarck over SH. Austria will resist Prussian expansion but does not have the leadership for another Olmütz. Bismarck has persuaded Wilhelm and will pursue annexation but would accept less than this if he can get conditions such as Kiel.

20 Feb Bismarck: 'It will be seen when there is a storm that we can swim better in heavy seas than others can.'

20 Feb Friedjung (p70): Bismarck replied to Goltz re Napoleon's hints of a deal, 'It seems to me better for the time being to stick to the marriage with Austria in spite of a few family quarrels and not to do anything until a divorce becomes necessary, to sever the tie now would invite all the disadvantages of infidelity.'

22 Feb Bismarck finally replies to Vienna's requests to state his intentions with the '**February conditions**': a permanent military alliance; effective absorption of the S-H army and navy by Prussia and an oath to the Prussian King; cession of land to Prussia for coastal forts and bases; complete control of the proposed Baltic-North Sea canal; amalgamation of postal and telegraph system with Prussia; the duchies to join the *Zollverein*.

A shocked Mensdorff called them 'without precedent in all history'. FJ called them 'quite unacceptable' and rejected them.

In his Memoirs, Bismarck says that Augustenburg 'by declining the so-called February conditions had also neglected the favourable moment.' Pflanze: the liberals soon adopted the conditions as the minimum acceptable deal. Around then Bismarck leaked his version of his discussion the previous summer with Augustenburg (who issued no public denial) which further alienated the liberals.

End Feb (Stern) Bleichröder, approved by Bismarck, was looking for some sort of 'compensation formula' by which Prussia could buy the duchies. Bismarck declined to make an offer and simply encouraged Vienna to make an offer.

Clark also discusses how a financial deal was quietly discussed in Vienna — Werther discussed with Austrian ministers how gold could help plug their deficit. Esterhazy was also in favour of a buy-out, still favouring a deal with conservative Prussia that would allow them to fight together in a future war for counter-revolution against the democratic movement in France, Italy and south Germany. Some time in March (undated), Wilhelm wrote that a land trade 'is against my honour, so that it is honour against honour [i.e. F] saying 'honour' prevented a financial deal], and gold is certainly more malleable than the welfare of human beings.'

By March Wilhelm had switched to annexation (OP, p.261). Eyck: it was important that Bismarck fixed the most senior court (the Syndics of the Crown, chaired by the reactionary Lippe) to consider the legality of the SH situation and they ruled that the Danish King had been the only lawful Duke and he had ceded all his rights to the kings of Prussia and Austria in the peace deal so...! (Date of this judgment?)

Some time in March (Clark), Chotek, who understood Bismarck and his relationship with Wilhelm better than Karolyi, suggested to Vienna the idea of an administrative partition of the duchies, months before Blome presented the idea to Bismarck at Gastein (Chotek-Mensdorff, 18/8/65).

2 March (WAF) While dining with Bismarck, Benedetti learned that Austria would not accept Prussian demands.

4 March (WAF) Goltz-Bismarck: Drouyn will accept the borderline Flensburg-Tondern as Prussia's minimum demand if the northern parts of Schleswig are returned to Denmark.

4 March Roon, prompted by Bismarck, asked Moltke for briefing on: the state of the Austrian army and speed of its mobilisation. At this time Moltke still assumed France the most likely enemy and Austria a possible ally (Barry p136). (Friedjung puts this on 27/2.)

5 March (Clark) Vienna formally rejected Prussia's demands, though accepted four: Rendsburg to be a federal fortress; Kiel a federal naval station; Prussia to construct a canal; duchies to join the *Zollverein*. Bismarck was unperturbed: 'Austria will not accept. Very well. *Wir können warten*' [we can wait] he said, paraphrasing Schmerling.

Vienna now shifted: 1) it would support an Augustenburg resolution in the Diet; 2) it would more aggressively resist the Prussianisation of the duchies (see above, November, re propaganda). In a note Mensdorff-Karolyi, Karolyi was told to tell Bismarck: your approach endangers our alliance and peace in Europe; have you thought ahead to how Napoleon will use a crisis in Poland against Prussia; returning to a path of alliance with Austria will bring advantages for Prussia 'though less than they wish' while the annexation policy will lead to disaster.

6 March (WAF) Benedetti told Bismarck that annexation would meet with no objections provided the retrocession of north Schleswig took place. Bismarck said that public opinion would not allow him to give up territory but sidestepped a clear answer (must speak to Austria, the King etc).

Another discussion on 8th.

17 March Karolyi reported to Vienna: Bismarck is suggesting we consider territorial compensation in Silesia. 'Organise a movement for annexation. Stir up demonstrations in favour of joining Austria.' Clark says he added 'I will gladly keep my eye on them', Stern says he said 'I will happily close one eye'. Bismarck persuaded Karolyi that he was in favour of the scheme and was trying to win over a reluctant Wilhelm.

Clark says that it was 'highly improbable' that Bismarck was actually trying to persuade Wilhelm to make territorial concessions. I think it's essentially inconceivable. There is no other evidence to suggest it and much counter-evidence: e.g. when annexation was discussed in the Prussian Crown Council 29/5, Bismarck did *not* propose territorial concessions. This was surely a classic Bismarck trap: encourage Vienna to do something that he could then use to wind up Wilhelm — 'see, I told you, now they're agitating for our territory which is impossible, we must toughen up...' (Similar to his indirect encouragement of Danish intransigence — i.e. *his method of trying to get his enemies to*

provide energy which he could use for his own ends.) Karolyi was repeatedly too ready to believe Bismarck. Cf. below June.

17 March Napier (Berlin) to Russell: 'the true policy of Prussia is now to secure what she has gained, to be satisfied with moderate advantages, to avoid great adventures, and to close an account which at this moment exhibits a satisfactory balance in her favour'.

19 March (Clark) Mensdorff submitted to Berlin his plan for a resolution in the Diet which backed Augustenburg but was barely within the letter of the alliance. Karolyi reported on 23rd that Bismarck was angry at the move and vowed to resist it. Mensdorff sent envoys around Germany to canvass support. 'They had neither originated the Bavarian action nor encouraged it at first. But they had finally, under the provocation of the colossal February demands, seized upon the strongest resolution short of actual recognition, and labored for its success with every power at their command, in order to rally public opinion on behalf of a certain solution of the pending problem. Thus they had in reality used the *Mittelstaaten* against their ally. While correct in the letter [of the alliance], their action was therefore morally questionable; whether it was also politically questionable remained to be seen' (Clark p211).

Biegeleben was pushing for aggression. He argued that Austria should protect the Bund's position and that the duchies were a German issue that should be decided by the Bund. Esterhazy would have preferred a financial deal — Prussia gets the duchies for cash — and possibly Mensdorff too would have taken it around now. But given FJ would not do it, Esterhazy preferred to keep the dual possession going until something turned up that would allow a deal (p213).

(Friedjung (p71): Biegeleben also undermined Mensdorff — e.g after Mensdorff hinted to Augustenburg via the Duke of Coburg that he might be interested in discussing the February demands with Prussia, Biegeleben told Augustenburg's representative that 'The Minister's letters and casual remarks may have a certain significance but the Duke should base his policy only on the public Notes and acts of the Government of Austria'.

24 March Bismarck letter to von Savigny: 'Our financial balance for the last year (1864) shows that we need only 2 (two) million from the state treasury for the Danish War. Everything else is covered by the surpluses for 1863-64. This information, though very gratifying, is to be kept secret because of the legislature. The financiers are pressing loans on us without parliament's approval but we could wage the Danish War twice over without needing one.' (Cf. 12 June 1864 — how to reconcile?)

26 March Benedetti-Drouyn: Bismarck says he's been misled by Austria, the Diet has no competence to dispose of the duchies, Austria has violated their deal, he'd told Karolyi he would oppose the motion.

27 March Stern (unmentioned by others): Landtag rejected 1865 budget by overwhelming majority and concluded that proposed military appropriations should be reduced.

30 March Bloomfield-Russell: 'I am assured that the Emperor is less under the charm of Bismarck and the King than he was, and that he has now received intelligence from Berlin which has profoundly shaken his confidence... Mensdorff, I believe to be sick of the work but the Emperor will not let him slip, and the Countess is so happy in her exalted position, that she will keep him at his work. He would be a great loss, for though not clever, he is an honourable man and I believe can be trusted. He is popular in Austria with all parties and his manners are so courteous towards everybody that he has gained many supporters.'

End March (Reported 1/4) Biegeleben talked to Werther, suggested: the two powers should decide on the sovereign of the duchies, if you let Augustenburg in, then you can make demands of him and we will 'assume a passive stance'. Bismarck probed whether he was speaking for Mensdorff — he had not spoken to Mensdorff about this. When Werther brought it up a few weeks later (reported 27/4) Biegeleben prevaricated, partly because in the meantime Augustenburg had secretly agreed most of the February conditions, to Vienna's anger (Clark p229).

April Roon worn out: 'I can only prophesy for myself Stafford's fate and the onrushing revolution will triumph over the flag... I am at the end not of my strength but of my patience and *sang froid*. And hence I am dispensable and it is time to go.'

4 April 'Palmerston said that the government could not be the ruler in Austria, since the Emperor did nothing but mediate between his own ministers.' (*London, Gastein and Sadowa 1864-66*, by Karl Friedrich graf Vitzthum von Eckstadt)

5 April Roon introduced a Bill authorising government spending on naval purposes including a naval base at Kiel. (Clark: Wilhelm had decided to shift the Prussian naval station from Danzig to Kiel on 24 March but it only became public on 5/4.) It was seen across Europe as an aggressive response to Vienna's move with the Diet.

Vienna protested sharply.

Clark (p221, not mentioned in the main books): Bismarck did not see Roon's speech in advance, it was overly aggressive, and he was 'certainly embarrassed by it' because he was not ready for a crisis. He accepted a 'slight defeat' to get the Kiel fracas out the way and branded the false step a counter-stroke. (Clark references Napier-Russell 15/4, Bismarck-Werther 17/4.)

6 April A resolution passed the Diet (9:6) calling for the dual powers to hand over administration of Holstein to Augustenburg. On 8th (WAF) Bismarck told Benedetti that this seemed to be part of a tougher Austrian attitude, though Bismarck did not seem worried by the move. (Bismarck wrote around then [to whom, when; cf. footnote 63, Pflanze vol 1] that 'We are approaching a bifurcation... Unfortunately our tickets are on diverging lines').

7 April Mensdorff told Austrian ministers that Bismarck would be less aggressive, annexation had suffered 'a blow', Prussia may retreat and they should accept this. The police minister remarked that the situation was unsettled. Mensdorff replied 'with more conviction than he really felt' (Clark p216): 'Unsettled situations are the proper terrain for diplomatic negotiations.'

After the Diet vote Pfordten was keener on an understanding with Bismarck while Beust wanted Austria to lead the Great-German national movement and formally recognise Augustenburg and accredit his representative in the assembly. He could not persuade Pfordten to go along with much of his plans. (There's a lot of detail about Beust's schemes I haven't gone into, and much doubtless lost to history, which must have absorbed Bismarck's time. Some is in Clark but it's largely dropped in the modern history books.)

Bismarck moved to summon the SH Estates (17th) mainly because Paris wanted this. He knew that if Austria accepted it would cause her trouble in Hungary, if she rejected then it undermined her in Germany (Clark). Vienna went along with the idea.

Bismarck responded aggressively telling Karolyi (8th) that 'I can assure you Prussia won't retreat: only a lost war, only an Austrian army of 300,000 men, victoriously entering Berlin, could change our resolve'. Discussions over a cash-for-dukies deal stopped.

9 April Lee surrendered to Grant at Battle of Appomattox.

11 April (Clark) FJ cross, Karolyi told to protest formally the breach of the alliance viz Kiel. To emphasise Austrian rights, two ships were soon sent to Kiel.

13 April Thiers sharply criticised French policy towards Prussia and warned of a change in the balance of power that would threaten France.

14 April Lincoln assassinated.

18 April (Clark) Wilhelm sent FJ a friendly note on the anniversary of Düppel, FJ responded in friendly spirit saying politics shouldn't spoil the alliance.

19 April (WAF) Bismarck assured Benedetti that he was trying to agree with Austria re a representative assembly for SH (the sort of thing Paris had been urging). He suggested now was not the time for Prussia to risk war. Benedetti was trying to figure out Bismarck's true plan and was worried about the possibility of Prussia and Austria reconciling their differences. At a subsequent meeting Bismarck suggested that he was now repairing relations with Vienna and could not risk a war because he'd heard France was considering opposing Prussia and doing a deal with Vienna over Italy. Benedetti reported this to Drouyn on 28/4. Drouyn suspected that the real reason for Bismarck's shift was the more determined policy in Vienna.

25 April Wilhelm to Roon: 'Every concession to Austria is met by a new ingratitude and pretensions.' Karolyi-Mensdorff: Bismarck is edging back viz Kiel and implicitly apologising for the Roon speech. Together with the popularity of Austrian resistance over Kiel in the duchies, this

incident was seen in Europe as a victory for Vienna (Clark p223). There were also discussions between Vienna and Hanover about the future of naval power, and complex trades involving Kiel, Lauenburg etc (p224).

May GC (unmentioned by others): There was a suggestion by a liberal deputy for a compromise involving 'trifling' concessions from the government, Bismarck 'seized upon it, convinced Roon of its workability and submitted it to the king with the approval of the whole ministry' (GC). Bismarck still wanted to end the conflict before war with Austria. He had a two-hour meeting with Manteuffel to persuade him to back the plan but failed. EM et al again persuaded Wilhelm to reject it.

On 2 May, EM wrote to Wilhelm that his ministers 'live only in the atmosphere of the Chamber' and he should not have any discussion but simply 'write to Minister Bismarck saying "Now that I have read the proposal I have decided that the government will not agree to it."' Wilhelm did this. (JS suggests (p.227-8) this note from EM a) concerned compromises over Kiel, not the domestic row, and b) Wilhelm rejected EM's advice. *Is he confused or is Craig (or me)?* JS also says that this period 'has been the subject of more historical debate than any other' in his career, which is nonsensical.) On 28 May, EM wrote to Wilhelm arguing that in the event of Prussia acquiring new territory in a war, the enlargement would render the constitution unworkable and he should use the opportunity to ditch it. After he had wrecked the latest compromise, Bismarck and Roon agreed that they should try to get EM moved out of Berlin. Roon's relations had deteriorated as EM had repeatedly cut him out of the loop on decisions that Roon should have been involved in as War Minister.

Around this time ('spring 1865', Hamerow) Manteuffel wrote: 'All European alliances are broken. The system on which the European balance rested has been violently shaken or has, properly speaking, already collapsed. Revolutionary tendencies have gained power in all states. **The movements against the old Europe and the old dynasties which began with the year 1789 find support in a great part of mankind... These crises must lead to a great European war or to socialist revolutions which will overthrow the present dynasties.**'

First week of May (Clark) Bismarck made a formal request that Austria join him in expelling Augustenburg from the duchies so as not to disturb the calling of the Estates (!). Without waiting for a reply he drew up aggressive notes attacking Austria for failing to act and siding with the Diet and liberal forces. He planned to have Manteuffel take them to Vienna — either Vienna would cave in and give him the February conditions or a duchies-for-cash deal, or Manteuffel would have to explain to the King that Vienna was determined to resist and only war would get him what he now thought he was owed. Wilhelm prevaricated and ended up calling the Council on 29/5.

2 May *Kreuzzeitung*, which had backed Bismarck against Austria, suggested Prussia should compensate Vienna for annexation by admitting all Austrian territory to the Bund. Conservatives in Berlin were discussing various compensation schemes.

6 May (reported next day to Drouyn, WAF) Benedetti asked Bismarck — what do you want and what do you offer? Bismarck: 'We ask you for benevolent neutrality both during the negotiations with Austria and later, should they lead to a rupture.' But did not offer a specific deal. He suggested that he was more interested in getting the February conditions than risking war with annexation, but that if he could not then he might need to do a deal with France — 'we know that we would have to pay the price for the assistance which you would lend us' — but he warned Benedetti, the King won't contemplate discussions re abandoning German populations (i.e Rhineland). Cf. 4/8 — Bismarck thought Benedetti had offered benevolent neutrality 'without compensation'. Benedetti added to Drouyn: '[O]ur abstention, I would say even our indifference, can by itself contribute to the development of the dissensions which separate the two great Germanic powers... Before thinking of making an accord of any kind with Prussia, we must wait until she is fatally condemned to it by her ambition or by her mistakes. I add that the most essential interests of Austria safeguard us against the success of her rival, with whom we would then have to preoccupy ourselves.'

7 May Metternich-Mensdorff: Drouyn says that Bismarck is trying to ascertain what France will do if war comes, France would not allow Prussia to get a war loan in Paris, the press is more

favourable to Austria than Prussia. Clark: Drouyn had been hinting to Metternich about closer relations over previous few months.

9 May End of US Civil War.

16 May Zollverein formally renewed for 12 years. Carr: Austria only got MFN status and lost concessions made in 1853. 30 May Anglo-Prussian trade treaty signed and a treaty of navigation 16/8/65. Britain had drafted an agreement on imports, exports, transit, and an article on patents (an interesting sign of growing Prussian competition). It included a MFN clause 'affirming the principle of equality in the largest sense and including every point which might arise but which might not strictly fall under the categories of import or export duties'. Bismarck and Delbruck resisted the universalist commitments this implied. They pointed out there were specific border issues that Britain could not expect to extend to itself and Prussia suggested a more restrictive replacement. Bismarck countered London's universalism with the reminder that Prussia 'was in a peculiar position at the head of a susceptible complicated commercial organisation with which it was not always easy to deal' and stated that the British approach would 'arouse a multitude of undefined apprehensions and suspicions'. Prussia did not and could not work on the same universalist basis as Britain. A compromise was reached (Davis p167-8). The British approach up to 1866 was dominated by: superiority post-1815 encouraged unilateralism, lack of thinking in London about German dynamics, lack of coordination between the FO and BoT, moralising. London was 'pitifully unaware of developments in the Zollverein until 1866' (Davis). The 1848-66 period was one where unilateralist free trade dominated, unlike before or after, and it was bound up with a clear sense of British commercial superiority. While this was seen as un-political in London, it was seen as intensely political in Germany/Europe. (Cf. Conclusion chapter in *Britain and the German Zollverein 1848-66*, Davis.)

20 May Twisten speech in Landtag denouncing Lippe and the government for using the courts for political intimidation. Cf. 19 June.

22 May Prussia-Belgium trade deal, 30 May Prussia-Britain trade deal, liberalising trade. 30 Dec, a deal between Zollverein and Italy.

23 May Werther reported that Mensdorff was willing to allow annexation of Lauenberg in return for a reduction of Austria's war costs which OP suggests (rightly I think) may have influenced Bismarck in what he said on 29th — i.e it encouraged him to think: *no war if Austria keeps conceding* and we can get most of what we want without war (OP, p.262-3, cf. below 21-23/7). Cf. Clark, p233-5.

27 May (WAF) Benedetti told Drouyn that no deal was at hand. WAF: Also the Manteuffel visit planned for May had been abandoned for the time being which also was interpreted generally as a sign of deteriorating relations.

29 May (28th — Stern) The Crown Council agreed annexation was the goal of Prussian policy, and the King made clear he now supported it. Bismarck stressed that war would come 'sooner or later' and the current situation was favourable, but that if he could get the February conditions — even if they had to drop the two most objectionable conditions, which he said he was prepared to do (the oath and amalgamation of the army) — this would be tantamount to annexation and *he would accept that rather than have war. A war, he argued, should have a 'higher aim' — the 'creation of a constitutional relationship between Prussia and the German small and medium states'*.

Moltke said the army was ready for war if necessary (unmentioned by Pflanze or JS).

Gall: Moltke said that the aim should be annexation and 'to accomplish this objective Prussia must not shrink even from the prospect of war with Austria'. Bismarck said that in the event of war between Prussia and Austria, 'France and Russia would presumably abide by a benevolent neutrality' (Bismarck), with 'Britain clearly not even rating a mention anymore after its conduct in' the S-H affair (Gall, p266).

Steinberg gives a different account to Pflanze. Wilhelm supported annexation and said the 'nation' supports it. Bismarck said that war would come sooner or later but that the best path was to eliminate the two most objectionable conditions and look for a deal. JS does not say that Bismarck

would have accepted the February conditions instead of war and a war required 'a higher aim' etc. 'He offered various courses of action and seemed not to opt for any' (p228). This seems clearly WRONG. JS then says that 'the trouble [for Bismarck] was money' but cf. 24 March above.

Gall: Manteuffel attended this meeting and was now pro-war. JS agrees he attended.

Barry: Moltke made a note of the meeting. Bismarck outlined three options: February conditions, buying the duchies from Austria maybe with some territory thrown in (Wilhelm ruled out), annexation. Apart from the Crown Prince the ministers supported annexation. **Moltke: 'My personal conviction is that annexation is the only beneficial solution for the Duchies, as for Prussia. The gain is such a great one that very considerable sacrifices must be made as well as the chances of a war be tolerated... [The army] is for annexation... [Re war with Austria] I can declare that, besides the excellence of our army, numerical superiority can be attained at a decisive point.'**

Lerman (p72): Wilhelm invited his military advisers to this meeting without consulting Bismarck.

EF: Wilhelm invited Manteuffel and Goltz without consulting Bismarck.

Eyck points out that records of the meeting survive including Moltke's account but there has been a very wide interpretation by historians. Bismarck said that although the international situation was favourable *his advice was 'to try to obtain the moderated February conditions and only if this attempt failed to fix our eyes upon a higher goal'*. All other speakers were in favour of war apart from CP who said it would be 'a German civil war'. Bismarck disagreed: **'If war in alliance with France against Austria is banned then a Prussian policy is no longer possible. But if war is waged against Austria it has to bring about not only the annexation of the Duchies but a new arrangement in the relations of Prussia with the German medium and small states.'**

Clark: Halbhuber's pushback and barbed words (some exaggerated or invented by Bismarck) had annoyed Wilhelm who was under pressure from the army for annexation. (Baron Halbhuber had been appointed by Vienna to push back against Bismarck's campaign in the duchies, see above, end 11/65.) Bismarck exploited Austria's counter-moves to wind up the King. Most ministers supported the February conditions or annexation at the cost of war if necessary.

Clark quotes Bismarck: 'A war with Austria is inevitable. It would be safer now than later. It would not only give Prussia the Duchies, but also settle the German question in Prussia's interest. The King could be sure of the joyful support of his counsellors. Nevertheless only the King could take the responsibility for a war. If he does not wish to do that, an agreement with Austria could be purchased by giving up the military clauses. But the Prussian public would consider this a defeat and war would merely be postponed.'

Clark: Bismarck weighted the arguments for war strongly and on the other side the King was asked to give up the one condition he desired above all, military control of the Duchies. But the King refused to choose. He 'lost his nerve' and 'Bismarck's crisis had to be postponed until he could commit the King more deeply against Augustenburg.' Bismarck was prepared for this and said: 'Should events lead to a war with Austria, then not only the absorption of Schleswig-Holstein into the Prussian monarchy, but also a political [subordination] of the German secondary and small states to Prussia should be considered as the rewards of such a conflict.' (Clark reproduces the official Protocol of the meeting p542ff.)

Moltke wrote on his copy of the 29/5 protocol: 'An important point that has not been discussed is how to do justice to Austria's well-founded claims.' (He was less pro-war than his remarks on 29/5 suggest, cf. letter to brother 24/6 and Manteuffel 2/7. Roon similarly was less keen, cf. letter to Bismarck 29/7.)

JS: Manteuffel wrote to Roon after the meeting: '... keep your eye on Bismarck... I fear this hot-headed approach... This is a game for high stakes and the state is the main thing.'

29 May (WAF) Benedetti-Drouyn: The situation is deteriorating, Bismarck is hinting about possible deals and said, 'France might think about annexing countries which would be easy for her to assimilate like Belgium or the French part of Switzerland' (i.e he was encouraging Paris to focus more on Belgium than the Rhineland). Benedetti replied that he needed instructions from Paris before discussing such ideas further. In June Benedetti went to Corsica for a few weeks via Paris (5

June), returned via Paris on 19 June and spoke to Napoleon, back in Berlin on 22/6. Records do not suggest a change of approach on his return.

30 May Karolyi-Mensdorff: Bismarck seems set on intransigence, he says 'in view of their radically different interests, an accord would hardly be attainable'. He was preparing to treat any declaration by the Estates in the duchies for Augustenburg in autumn as treason and an excuse for martial law. He was helping Italy extend commercial discussions in Germany.

1 June (Clark, unmentioned elsewhere) Belcredi submitted to FJ his conditions for taking over from Schmerling. Esterhazy was plotting to replace Schmerling and didn't want a foreign crisis now. Cf. 26/6.

1 June He gave a speech to Parliament about the navy and Kiel and suggested the Parliament approve the naval budget on condition of Prussia acquiring Kiel. He recalled the German fleet being sold off after 1849 and said it was because 'party passion was more potent than a sense of solidarity... I cannot deny that it makes a painful impression on me when I see that, in view of a great national question which has occupied public opinion for twenty years, that very assembly which passes in Europe as the concentration of the intelligence and patriotism of Prussia can rise to no higher altitude than impotent negativism. That, gentleman, is not the weapon with which to wrest the sceptre from the hand of the monarchy, nor is it the means whereby you will succeed in giving our constitutional system that stability and further development which it needs.' The Budget was rejected.

EF: during this debate Virchow challenged Bismarck's veracity in his account of arguments over the fleet and was threatened with a duel — it was settled without one but worsened relations and alarmed some of Bismarck's supporters. He also said during this debate that 'If we could explain to you the likely course of our policy in the duchies with the same clarity as I can to HM the King, then I believe the vehemence of your opposition to what we are doing would be considerably reduced.' (EF dates this to 2 June but others say the Kiel debate was 1 June. Friedjung dates it to 13/6.)

In his Memoirs, he reflected on party psychology regarding this episode (2, p24, see quotes at the front).

7 June Bismarck inquired of Roon about the state of the army's readiness. 'Austria is supposed to be able to place a hundred and eighty thousand men on our frontier within four weeks. Can we do the same?' Roon answered 2 days later: Within 4 weeks 250,000 could move into Bohemia and another 50,000 ready for operations in north Germany. (Why assumption of 4 weeks possible for Austria given most historians say Austrian mobilisation needed much longer??)

16 June Augustenburg-Wilhelm: a polite but firm refusal to leave Duchies.

17 June Landtag prorogued again after the liberals had voted against Bismarck's naval bill.

He scorned their behaviour in voting against what they had advocated for 20 years. Over the previous few months of fighting over the budget, the liberals had tried to capture some ground by advocating savings from the military go to various projects they thought would win them support from the masses, but they did not know how to do this effectively and Bismarck introduced various economic measures (e.g bank and railway bills) that divided and discredited them.

OP: Divisions growing among liberals: over annexation, over various bills, over the priority of the constitutional fight against progress on the national question, all while the feeling grew that the masses were moving behind the Crown and commercial interests increasingly wanted a resolution, not a fight on principle. Bismarck had been proved right that the government could continue governing without parliamentary support or a legal budget. The 5 July move on the naval budget and the summer operations to secure funding for a war deepened liberals' fears that they were losing. This suspicion grew in the second half of 1865 that they were losing public support.

17 June Bismarck to Max Duncker — if the next session is like the last, we either revise the constitution or 'simply the reestablishment of direct and equal suffrage'.

18 June (Clark) According to a letter of 17 July, Bismarck told the Crown Prince on 18/6 that the February concessions had been designed to make them unacceptable to Augustenburg.

19 June Crown Council discussed finances. (Little mention in most books but Stern has an account p60.) Bismarck said that 'for a long time it had been his conviction that Prussia could not be governed for any length of time with the existing constitution and that a major and far-reaching alteration of it was unavoidable.' The 'blow' must come over the next 18 months. He wanted to avoid elections and let Parliament 'wither away': reconvene Parliament in January 1866 then dissolve at its first misstep and delay elections as long as possible. He suggested 'financial operations to weaken the present inclination of the money market toward an Austrian loan.' He also advocated the prosecution of Twisten for his speech of 20/5, bringing his use of the courts against political enemies into Parliament itself. Wilhelm supported Bismarck's exposition (Stern). Stern says Bleichröder met Bismarck in Carlsbad shortly after to discuss the Cologne-Minden operation (p60ff.)

JS account: the minutes state: '... for a long time it had been his [Bismarck's] conviction that with the existing constitution Prussia could not be governed for any length of time... [he referred to] the opportunities which a complication of the foreign situation could yield and noted that it might be advisable by proper financial operations to weaken the present inclination of the money market toward an Austrian loan.'

22 June Von der Heydt wrote to Bismarck about the financial situation: 'there will be no lack of immediately realisable assets' if the goal is 'making liquid considerable sums of money without actual state loans as a floating debt or through their sale': e.g. substantial holdings of railway shares. (Bismarck was pleased with his ideas and attitude and after the 1866 war he became finance minister.) Bismarck was also discussing many financial plans with Bleichröder.

24 June A mining law passed which liberalised regulations for mine owners. Popular with commercial middle class, chambers of commerce etc.

25 June (WAF) Bismarck left Berlin for Carlsbad. A few days later Benedetti went to Bad Kissingen where he intended to holiday.

26 June Schmerling resigned as Interior Minister, replaced by Count Belcredi who restored the Hungarian constitution of 1848. (Carr & Showalter — 30 July, WRONG. Seems Schmerling resigned 26/6 but stayed in post for a few weeks until Belcredi was appointed in late July, different books give different dates. WAF: the Austrian Cabinet except Mensdorff resigned on 27th.)

EF: this indicated the anti-Prussian group in Vienna was losing ground.

Eyck: Belcredi was 'a member of the of the old Conservative aristocracy ... justly reputed to be an enemy of constitutionalism and certainly no friend of German ascendancy in the monarchy', and this was another 'blow to Austria's position in Germany' (p.104).

Clark: Esterhazy had been secretly plotting Schmerling's replacement for weeks, unknown to his colleagues except Mensdorff.

Schmerling hated politics. He once said, 'I have no real interest in politics. I am a soldier by nature and have got involved in politics against my will. I can't stand this perpetual turmoil. In the evenings I like to read a good book or go to the theatre, but these political fellows live in a state of constant excitement, something has to be happening all the time.'

Friedjung: Mensdorff stayed but the new administration was divided from the start. Esterhazy was deeply influential and highly secretive. Belcredi shared Esterhazy's belief in aristocratic government and wanted to devolve legislation to local assemblies and undermine representative government and the German bureaucracy that alienated Hungary and Slavs. Esterhazy owed 230,000 florins in death duties since 1856 and the the Minister of Finance under Schmerling had finally put in an execution against him; now the interest and 90,000 florins was knocked off and he was given a decade to pay(!). Taxes were amended to help the aristocracy.

30 June Bismarck persuaded Wilhelm to write to FJ asking him to help 'remove' Augustenburg to help 'a quiet evolution in the Duchies'. He then started pushing Oldenburg again and complained that Augustenburg would sway forthcoming elections (while he continued his own propaganda campaign!). Meanwhile he was also negotiating with Oldenburg for the latter, if installed later, to sell his abdication and sovereignty to Prussia(!). Clark: this Machiavellian scheme was a route to annexation that also gave Austria a way to avoid war —

'Otherwise, why would he have drafted an installation-abdication agreement, when the Grand Duke himself really preferred simply to sell his claims?' (Clark p244). Vienna had an inkling of some such deal though Bismarck was evasive when asked by Chotek.

3 July Bismarck told Roon (letter from Carlsbad, JS) that if necessary he would violate the constitution by raising a loan without Parliament's consent but would prefer not to. He resorted to various other schemes of questionable legality instead such as the Cologne-Minden railway deal and actions to manipulate the money markets to drive up interest rates to Austria's detriment. He was studying comments by Austrian officials about how their lack of credit was undermining their Great Power status. He was also warning Roon around this time that Austria's 'conservative position at home will demand a more forceful one abroad, just as with us.'

JS: his letter of 3rd also said, 'Our task remains by means of our own money operations to block those planned by Austria and this to **assure the maintenance of peace.**'

4 July Bismarck wrote to Eulenburg that 'things with Austria stand badly' and military reports from Holstein 'tell the King that the situation of troops has become impossible in the face of the press and social chicanery.'

5 July Cabinet published a budget approved by the King including naval expenditure which had been rejected by Parliament. 'It had the appearance of a royal decree' (OP).

5 July Bismarck wrote to Eulenburg that the King was as convinced of 'the necessity of a money operation as I am. He feels himself free of constitutional reservations. He said to me today his duty to preserve the Monarchy is more binding than his duty to the constitution.' (Rohl found in the late 1960s 62 hitherto unknown letters from Bismarck to Eulenburg including 11 between 27/6 and 18/8.)

6 July Palmerston dissolved Parliament, election

10 July Mensdorff (drafted by Biegeleben)-Werther: Does Prussia *guarantee* to install and maintain Oldenburg? Overall the note was conciliatory but also said they could not expel Augustenburg, though FJ said he would not regret his voluntary departure.

11 July Bismarck sent further messages to Vienna demanding: subjection of press, liberal political clubs, Augustenburg demonstrations, punishment of officials and professors. Briefed friendly media — we will insist on our view, military preparations underway. Mensdorff replied on 19th in conciliatory reasonable spirit, said they would act where reasonable, and urged Berlin not to let the alliance be spoiled by minor things.

Clark: Mensdorff was under a lot of pressure in July as Vienna struggled with the domestic situation and forming the new government. By the ~20th he was prepared to be tougher with Bismarck, he was angry at Bismarck's demands and tone, and Queen Victoria had discretely urged him to resist Prussian pressure. But FJ was keen for reconciliation provided his 'honour' was not touched.

18 July Prussian government agreed to sell its options for **Cologne-Minden railway shares, settled by 13 September with all the money settled by 2 Jan 1866.** (OP: he thus acquired 5.7 million thalers, 3m payable by 1/10/65, rest by 2/1/66, plus negotiable railway shares worth 7.3m thalers and the disposal over 17m thalers held in escrow for interest payments, ~30m total.)

Bleichröder and Oppenheim executed the deal. Bleichröder was the company's banker and a director. In retirement, Bismarck said that Bleichröder 'put at my disposal the necessary money for the war. That was an undertaking which, under the circumstances of those days, when I was almost as close to the gallows as to the throne, compels gratitude.'

20 July (WAF) Wilhelm arrived at Regensburg on his way from Carlsbad to Gastein. He had summoned Goltz who was holidaying at Bad Kissingen where Benedetti was also on holiday.

21 July Cabinet meeting (at Regensburg) at which Wilhelm agreed to various measures including providing finance for a possible army mobilisation.

Eyck: Goltz reported that Bismarck had said to Roon that war with Austria was only a question of time. While at Regensburg, Mensdorff asked him (via Ambassador) whether he would receive an envoy from FJ, Bismarck agreed, Blome was sent. Re Blome, Eyck judged that 'no man more unfit for this work could have been found. [!] He was a strong conservative..., had no sympathy either with the German national movement or with the Prince of Augustenburg. He regarded Bismarck as

a Conservative statesman, nay, as a champion of the common Conservative struggle against the revolution. He fell into the trap of Bismarck's slogans more easily than any other man with whom Bismarck ever had to deal... nobody made things easier for him than Count Blome.'

WAF: When Goltz returned to Kissingen he told Benedetti about the discussion on 21st: the situation was more serious than the public impression given in Berlin in June, if no agreement were reached then Prussia may mobilise and would open discussions with Paris; Goltz had been told to return to Paris by the time Wilhelm met FJ. Benedetti passed back the intelligence but did not abandon his holiday. WAF: his sense of duty in winter and spring makes it 'difficult to comprehend his behaviour' during the critical summer weeks of the crisis — his failure to remain in contact with Bismarck and to keep in touch with the details, staying on holiday — 'his indifference suggests a lack of responsibility and good judgement' at a crucial time.

Clark: At Regensburg Bismarck told Goltz: **'the war with Austria was simply a question of time and he considered the present moment most favourable. Austria was to be put in such a position that she would have to accept a deep humiliation or pick up the gauntlet'** (Goltz). 22 July (Clark) Werther met Bismarck in Salzburg then returned Vienna on 24th.

23 July (OP; 21st Stern) Bismarck telegraphed the Crown Prince: 'The decisions made by His Majesty in the Cabinet meeting at Regensburg [21/7] have made available about 60 million thalers in funds for a complete mobilisation and a one-year military campaign'.

OP: By now Austria was 'nearly bankrupt' with debt about five times GDP. Cf. Roon, 1/8. OP (p262): Prussia's financial situation seems to have been 'better in 1865 than in 1866, when a slump in business activity depressed the stock market, impeded the marketing of Cologne-Minden shares, and made bankers generally wary. By contrast, Austria's position improved in late 1865' thanks to the French loan (below). **'What saved the peace that summer was not lack of money but Austrian concessions. If Vienna continued to yield, war was unnecessary... Yet he would have gone to war in 1865 if the Austrians had held their ground. Again they retreated'** (p262-3). (Cf. Stern 71-80.)

Breuille: 1847-59 Austrian debt increased almost three-fold compared to near-doubling in Prussia. The 1859 war meant Austria was paying ~25% of state revenue to service debt, viz 11% in Prussia. This had implications for army expenditures 1860-65. The superiority of Austria dropped from 3.5:1 in 1850 to 1.5:1 in 1860 and 1.3:1 in 1866, but in 1866 this advantage was overtaken by Italy's involvement plus Prussia spent more per soldier (more training etc).

23 July Word reached Vienna from Pfordten, who had 'come under the magic spell of Bismarck's personality at Salzburg' (Clark) that day, that Vienna should seek to conciliate Wilhelm with real concessions and a humble apology from Augustenburg. Pfordten had an 'intuition, rare at that time, that the Prussian army was superior to the Austrian' and was struck by Bismarck's firmness and preparations for war, and Bismarck 'probably' (Clark) held out the hope of Bavarian hegemony in the south in return for neutrality. Around then Vienna also intercepted Prussian telegrams referring to the financial measures, that military preparations were underway and that Bismarck was talking to Italy re joining a war. E.g Vienna intercepted Usedom to Bismarck 27/29/30 July and Bismarck to Usedom 31/7 which reassured Vienna that Italy was reluctant to support Bismarck.

Austria possessed the cipher in use Berlin-Florence and others so captured 'about two-thirds of all wires sent and received by Bismarck July 23 and August 16'. The outcome was FJ was infuriated and Vienna encouraged by Italy's hesitation. News came of Prussian provocations in the duchies and the Austrian press called for action. The prospects for Blome's mission seemed bleak. (Clark p254). *(Would love to know if there is a definitive study of intelligence, what was successfully intercepted, what was reported to which critical people when etc. Is there such a study? Many Prussian documents were destroyed in WW2.)*

24 July Palmerston increased his majority in UK election. Derby concluded a Conservative majority was impossible until Palmerston died, Gladstone took over and 'alarmed the middle classes'. Disraeli said the shift of London and Scotland to the Liberals was ominous for their long-

term prospects. Fed up of opposition, he offered to give up the leadership in the Commons. Derby refused.

26 July Count Blome took an evening train for Gastein, arrived there the afternoon of 27th.

Blome's biographer writes he 'seriously underestimated' Bismarck who thought him an idiot with an 'outmoded Byzantine-Jesuitical method of negotiating, full of tricks and dodges'. Bismarck told Tiedemann years later that he played cards with Blome at night to scare him with the violence of his play.

Clark: Blome told Werther his plan before he went (!): reject Oldenburg, say nothing re territorial compensations, press for Augustenburg, promise an apology from him if necessary, if all arguments fail then argue for 'a continuation of the *provisorium* under new regulations'. Blome picked up an idea from Hofmann (an official): Austria controlling Holstein, Prussia Schleswig for administrative purposes, while keeping joint ownership. This was to be deployed as a last resort to avoid war. (Implication of Clark p256-7 is that Mensdorff was aware and kept Biegeleben in the dark.) In a last interview with FJ, FJ made it clear that he wanted peace at almost any price. (See 1 Aug)

28 July Usedom (Florence)-Wilhelm: 'The chances have never been so favourable for Prussia and for all the plans she might be making for her military, political and territorial grandeur, because never will one see on the French throne a sovereign more disposed to remain quiet, or who would sell his neutrality at a more modest price to Prussia.'

29 July Reports had come to Vienna over months about Bismarck's overtures to Italy. Drouyn had been friendly to Metternich and suggested France might help relieve pressure viz Italy. Mensdorff-Metternich: 'Try to secure a warning to the Florentine cabinet not to encourage Bismarck's war fancies... Postpone your vacation and await the result of Blome's mission. In case it fails we might have important overtures to address to the French government.' He got a reassuring reply from Metternich, confident France would not encourage Bismarck or Italy.

28-29 July Bismarck and Blome negotiated at Gastein. Blome still championed Augustenburg but got nowhere. Bismarck dragged in Oldenburg, whom Blome refused to consider. Bismarck described his financial and military preparations for a war and explained that General Herwarth had orders to imprison Augustenburg. On 30 July discussion shifted to a temporary compromise: withdrawal of Austrian troops from Prussian command and the *de facto* division of the duchies for administrative purposes while maintaining *joint* sovereignty. Bismarck insisted that since Schleswig was smaller than Holstein, Prussia should also get Lauenburg for free. They agreed on need for strict secrecy. Blome left on 1 August to take the possible deal and a personal letter from Wilhelm to FJ at Ischl.

Blome claimed in his report that 'The thought then [after the failure of the first 2 days] came to me to propose an entirely new solution...' Clark says it is not possible to reconstruct from sources who raised this first. The idea had been knocking around in Berlin and Vienna, it had been discussed at Schönbrunn, Bismarck had suggested it and discussed it in Berlin. The idea was championed by Esterhazy, and both he and Hofmann may have got it from Chotek who might have got it from... Bismarck!

So it definitely was not Blome's idea and it seems clear that a few people independently came up with versions of it. Clark thinks that Bismarck either suggested it to Blome or led him to it and was happy for him to present it in Vienna as his own idea as it was more likely to be accepted. (I think that Bismarck led Vienna into this 'compromise' knowing that a) he could bank some gains and b) it allowed him to reopen the quarrel at will and keep pushing Vienna.) See Clark p254ff for intricate details.

1 August Mensdorff telegraphed to FJ for permission to join him in Ischl, FJ replied 'Come'. Clark: Mensdorff was humiliated by Balcredi's promotion and angry about Bismarck's tactics. Mensdorff was worried Blome had failed and might persuade FJ to accept a diplomatic defeat. Mensdorff was preparing to stand firm even at the cost of war — we should try to meet Prussia with 'a more determined stand'. Instructions for bringing the Duchies issue to the Diet were already drafted. At Ischl, Mensdorff 'heard with dismay' (Clark) Blome's compromise, said Austria should stand firm,

and offered to resign if such a policy failed. FJ had been persuaded but was 'thrown into confusion' by Mensdorff's position so decided to return to Vienna and have a ministerial meeting. Cf. 5/8
I August Roon wrote to von Blanckenburg: **'There is money, enough to give us a free hand in foreign policy and, if necessary, to mobilise the entire army and pay for an entire campaign. That gives our conduct toward Austria the necessary aplomb, so that we may hope the Austrians will yield to our justified demands even without a war, which none of us wishes...** Where does the money come from? [We get it] without any breach of the law, principally through an arrangement with the Cologne-Minden railway'.

I August Bismarck warned Wilhelm: any leak, via the Queen, of the proposal about dividing administration of the duchies could wreck relations with Austria and provoke a war.

August Bismarck also reflected on social policy. A few days after Gastein (OP p284), Bismarck turned to social affairs (cf. 12/64). In May 1864 a delegation of weavers had come to Berlin. Weavers were suffering mass unemployment and destitution from the collapse of the Silesian textile market because of the American Civil War. Bismarck had ensured they were favourably received by the King, against opposition. There was a committee appointed to investigate. But their report was favourable to the factory owners. The ministries of interior and commerce accepted it, largely unchanged. It came to Bismarck summer 1865. A few days after Gastein he took time out of diplomacy to read it and wrote a 57 page critique (OP: sadly the original document was not published in full. Can someone find it and translate it?)

Bismarck savaged the committee as biased, attacked the way it had not investigated the owners' profits, and rejected the idea the Government could not alleviate social distress. He attacked the idea that the state could not act on any specific case because it should not generally alleviate social distress. **'Ought it [the state] therefore to help no one? The state can.'** He had even experimented with an innovative cooperative scheme and defended it in February 1865 saying 'The kings of Prussia have never been exclusively kings of the rich.' 1865-6 'he repeatedly intervened on behalf of cooperative banks and producers' associations threatened with bankruptcy' (OP). He experimented with other ideas including homes for invalided workers and shifting taxes from the lower classes to merchants and manufacturers. His main target was distressed artisans, the working class of the past, who still outnumbered mine and factory workers.

EF: some time around this he encouraged Wilhelm to meet some unemployed Silesian weavers.

Bismarck, in response to criticism, said that, **'The kings of Prussia have never by preference been kings of the rich. Frederick the Great said when he was crown prince: *'Quand je serai roi, je serai un vrai roi des gueux'*, a king of beggars. He intended to protect the poor... Our kings have brought about the emancipation of the serfs and they have created a flourishing peasant class. It is possible that they will also succeed ... in contributing something to the improvement of the position of the workers.'**

Hamerow (2, 213ff): After 1870 he said, 'I don't know whether under the impression of Lassalle's reasoning or under the impression of my own conviction which I gained partly in England during a stay in the year 1862, it seemed to me that in the establishment of producer associations, as they exist in England in a flourishing state, lay the possibility of improving the lot of the worker and of turning over to him a substantial part of the entrepreneur's profit.' An example of his instincts and limits on his power: he suggested to Bodelschwingh that the government subsidise a weaver business, Bodelschwingh wouldn't.

He later wrote: 'It was not my department, I did not have the time for it, warlike conditions came, foreign policy became more active... I for my part ... sought to enlist the most important people and statesmen who wanted to give me their help... **I am a man who believes in authorities and who gladly submits to them in cases where I am not of necessity directed toward my own judgement...** I did not believe that my opinion must prevail in all things which I do not understand... I had to subordinate economic affairs, so far as they entered into consideration at all, to that task [unification under Prussia].'

1 August Bismarck to Eulenberg: 'As long as the King is here and as long as we have not carried out our money operations, I have to let things hang tolerably in mid-air, because the moment we move in Schleswig-Holstein, the ball starts to roll and the stock market sinks.'

3 Aug Bloomfield-Russell: Mensdorff asked: what would England do if the Rhine or Belgium were threatened? Bloomfield dodged. Mensdorff described Bismarck as 'a wild and daring politician [who] seemed blind and deaf to all arguments except those which facilitated the accomplishment of his object in the Duchies.'

4 Aug Bismarck-Goltz: 'Benedetti said to me while I was still in Berlin [6/5?], "The benevolent neutrality of the Emperor is assured to you without any compensation." He had received a telegram from Paris which he read to me, and in which the readiness of France to make an alliance with us and to receive our propositions in that respect was pronounced.' (Bismarck blamed Goltz for providing poor information over this period.)

Pottinger: At this time Napoleon thought that new states in Italy would be satellites and that encouraging nationalism in Germany was consistent with French interests in the balance of power. The main reason for Gastein was Bismarck's worries about Napoleon's views (cf. 16th). On 4th he instructed Goltz to find out all he could about his plans, e.g. whether he would veto Italian cooperation with Prussia.

4 & 6 Aug Goltz reports from Paris warned that agreement with Napoleon would be endangered by imprisoning Augustenburg. Clark: these reports made Wilhelm nervous. Pottinger: Goltz stressed on 4th that Napoleon wanted the duchies settled in accord with the principle of nationalities, i.e. north Schleswig to return to Denmark.

5 Aug Bismarck-Usedom (from Gastein): 'We are not for war at all costs but must be ready for it according to circumstances.' Clark: Bismarck learned from this crisis that to allay Italian fears he had to offer a treaty, which he did in 1866. He was not determined on war but prepared to raise the stakes to win a diplomatic victory — he left Austria with options: a money deal, Oldenburg, February demands.

5 Aug FJ returned to Vienna in the morning to meet ministers. News he'd broken his holiday caused 'panic' (Clark) on Vienna stock market and the press roused against Bismarck. Only half a dozen ministers attended the meeting with FJ who kept the usual secretary out for added secrecy — no formal minute taken though we have some subsequent accounts and leaks (including via Mensdorff to the Baden envoy). (Clark thinks Esterhazy 'probably' attended.) **Blome convinced the meeting, except Mensdorff, that there was no alternative to partition or war.** They thought Austria would win a war but the army had been shrinking because of financial pressure. They faced a deficit of 80 millions and a foreign loan could only be procured at exorbitant rates. Mobilisation would play havoc with financial plans. War could also upset the delicate situation with Hungary and spread chaos in the Empire. Mensdorff thought Bismarck was cheating them with the partition offer but 'said little in defense of his stand' (Clark). Only he and one other voted for resistance if necessary by war. There were then complex discussions about the form of the partition — Blome's or another. After Belcredi attacked Blome's idea, Blome defended Bismarck — he is a conservative who wants a good understanding with Austria, he argued. A majority supported a temporary over complete partition, it's unclear what Mensdorff said about this. It was a 'counsel of despair' (Clark) hence why Belcredi and Esterhazy could agree: the Bohemian Count Esterhazy was anti-Prussian but wanted a breathing space, the Hungarian Count Blome clung to the 'conservative alliance' and had been suckered by Bismarck's apparitions of a united stand against France. It was agreed to draft a document and Blome would return to Gastein to finalise the deal.

Afterwards the newspapers discussed that Mensdorff had argued to take a stand but had been overruled and Mensdorff did not deny it. This raised his status in Vienna and elsewhere in Germany. Clark: many in Vienna were simply putting off decisions and hoping something would turn up, like Napoleon dying or Bismarck getting ousted. (Cf. Clark p275ff)

7-8 August Documents were drafted. 8th Blome left Vienna on the afternoon train. Vienna was uncertain if a deal would be done. FJ ordered plans to deal with a Prussian surprise attack.

Mensdorff spoke to Gramont and said 'Like Prussia, we look for friends and allies wherever we may find them.' He got reassuring noises from Metternich in Paris.

10 August Bismarck to Eulenberg: We still need time to organise the money and 'secure France', we have 'a stopgap tolerable for us' ... with which for the time being we can live honourably without the war running away with us', and he asked him to tell Bleichröder that 'if any part of my account with him is still invested in securities, which I don't know here, **he should by no means unload these because of some premature fear of war.**'

10 Aug (Clark) Bismarck and Blome agreed their deal — temporary division. Clark thinks this was partly because of the Goltz reports on 4/6 and Wilhelm's reaction (above). (This is not mentioned in any of the other books but maybe true?) Bismarck agreed to pay for Lauenburg and accepted that Kiel would be a federal, rather than Prussian, harbour. He also promised to drop commercial negotiations with Italy. Blome refused to accept a secret article by which 'the present division of population, being disadvantageous to Prussia, should not prejudice a future final total petition, but rather, in that case, a compromise should be reached by adding a corresponding portion of Holstein to Schleswig'. (Clark p288-90)

12 August Mensdorff was informed by Chotek of Bismarck's financial operations: 'These financial operations... can be justified only by an urgent political necessity, not from an economic point of view.... [S]uch an important supply of money as one usually keeps in readiness only in anticipation of a war.'

14 August, noon Bismarck and Blome initialled the Gastein agreement which was then signed formally in Salzburg. Clark: After they'd signed and Blome dried his pen, **Bismarck broke the silence: 'Well, I never should have expected to find an Austrian diplomat who would put his name to that!'** At his request it was kept secret until the two kings could formally sign. Ironically two-thirds of the text was drafted by Biegeleben, the agreement's biggest opponent. (Clark, p290)

15 Aug Usedom-Bismarck: In Paris (in the last few days) Drouyn received Metternich, Goltz, and Nigra: 'The Emperor still believes in the possibility of a peaceful compromise between Prussia and Austria; only with unhappiness would he see a war break out. Should this happen however, the Emperor would find no reason to intervene as long as it was simply a question of a decision by force of weapons over Schleswig-Holstein itself. But should the war assume such a character that greater objects and European-French interests were to be played for, then he must reserve the right to act according to the measure of these interests. Specific comments cannot be made before the event.' Goltz warned (15th) that a pledge of neutrality would require a promise of no action beyond the duchies.

16 August Bismarck to Goltz and Usedom: the choice lay between Austrian concessions and war. Bismarck-Usedom: 'uncertainty over the attitude of France and of Italy influenced the decisions at Gastein'.

Bismarck-Goltz: we now have a choice between maintaining the settlement or using its insufficiencies to spark a new crisis, 'Our position ... however, the goals, which we ... set ourselves, and the whole direction which we ought to give to our policy, will be principally conditioned by the greater or lesser trust which we may place in the attitude of France at any given moment... The consideration of France will provide a fundamental, and in a specific moment perhaps the deciding factor in the decisions of his Majesty'. (NB. *His extreme clarity about 'the goals which we set ourselves' and his causal model of decisions — in these circumstances the French attitude is 'fundamental' and maybe 'the deciding factor'. How rare it is to see politicians expressing such clarity about priorities.*)

Around then Goltz wrote to Bernstorff in London: 'The Gastein Convention puts us permanently on the path of trickery, force, and violation of law'.

Pottinger (p13) — on 16th Bismarck wrote two letters to Goltz explaining the deal and reassuring on north Schleswig, and told Goltz to work for closer relations with the hope France would ultimately support a strong German state north of the Mainz. But Goltz, disapproving of Bismarck's policy, did not inform the French government (!) with the result that the news 'fell on Paris like a

bomb', in Emile Ollivier's phrase, and the reaction of Napoleon, Drouyn, and the Paris public was fury. (Cf. 25/9, when Bismarck learned Goltz probably had not followed instructions.)

16 August Bismarck to Eulenberg: 'In Schleswig therefore from 1 September we will rule alone and as sovereign. Nobody will be able to get us out again and it begins to look as if Austria might be willing to sell us Holstein. That we shall get it one way or the other I no longer have any doubt.'

17 August Bismarck discussion with Beust at Gastein, reported on 20 Sep Dalwigk-Gagern quoting Beust. 'Bismarck ... boasted with the candour peculiar to him of how from the beginning he had conducted the Schleswig affair in accordance with Prussian interests. He had posed conditions to the Danes which he knew they could not possibly have accepted. At the same time, he had by indirect means encouraged them to active resistance. Through his secret agents, he had put before them the certain prospect of English assistance, while he had assured himself in advance that France did not want to go to war and therefore that England too would keep her sword in the scabbard. At the London conference, he had (*verba ipsissima*) hitched the Duke of Augustenburg as an ox before the plough to bring it ahead. As soon as the plough was in motion he had again unhitched the ox. His own aim is the annexation of the duchies; the difficulty is to bring the King to do it. About Austria and the cleverness of its policy, Bismarck merely smiled.'

In his Memoirs, Beust said that one of Bismarck's qualities was one 'for which only the English language has an adequate expression — unscrupulous'. He described how at Gastein in 1865 he had said to Bismarck, 'You forget one thing, and that is what would have happened if the Danes had avoided combat.' Bismarck replied: 'That was all taken care of. I had let it be known in Copenhagen that England, which was not really the case, had threatened us with effective intervention in the case of armed attack [on Schleswig].' A version of this statement appears in Dalwigk's diary of 9/9 (when he was shown a report from Beust dated 17/8 re discussion with Bismarck) and the letter of 20/9.

19 Aug Bismarck was happy to leave Gastein ('a gloomy hole') for Salzburg.

19 Aug (Pottinger) Drouyn talked to Goltz at length. Drouyn assured him that France would be neutral over the duchies, Paris favoured Prussia especially if they would apply the principle of nationalities to the duchies, there was little incentive to help Austria given the only thing they were likely to gain was Italian unification, while more fruitful deals could come via Berlin.

Pottinger: this was odd given Drouyn always took a strongly pro-Austrian line throughout these years, 'the most likely explanation is that he was acting under direct orders from Napoleon', although there is no evidence of a meeting at this time 'it seems inconceivable that Drouyn would not have told Napoleon in person about the news of the conclusion of the Gastein accord as communicated by Metternich on August 14.'

20 August Gastein deal signed at Salzburg on a hot Sunday: Prussia would administer Schleswig and Austria would administer Holstein, but with joint sovereignty theoretically preserved; Lauenburg was sold to Prussia. This gave Prussia rights to interfere in Holstein. Bismarck's trap was set.

Prussia also got some special rights (eg. the Kiel naval base, and permanent communications links between Prussia and Schleswig across Holstein). Both joined the *Zollverein*. Bismarck thought it now certain that he would get his hands on Holstein too one way or another, either peacefully or not. Austria was further weakened in Germany and had accepted Prussian right to interfere in Holstein. In his Memoirs, he wrote that after Gastein, William developed 'a taste for conquest', though he was also happy that his gains had come from a deal with Austria rather than war (2, p20). In the autumn, financial and political pressures increased for Austria. In September, the constitution was suspended. In November French banks gave her a loan to finance her budget deficit, which helped, but the interest rate of 9% was a sign of fragility.

Pflanze: Bismarck was content to avoid war if Austria kept conceding, which it did, but would have fought in 1865 'if the Austrians had held their ground'. Blome 'miscalculated badly' re this deal.

(p263). Gall: this was just 'another temporary halt, the last stage on the road to the great confrontation'.

(It was intended as temporary but NOT necessarily the 'last' — again, this misunderstands how Bismarck worked and it retrospectively imposes a pattern on events the players couldn't see at the time, Bismarck did not know it was the 'last' such deal, it depended on how Austria played it and many other things. NB. Even in summer 1866 he held open possibilities with the Gablenz intrigue.)

EF: Bismarck tried to stop triumphalism viz Austria in the official press, and that people should be reminded that British and French attacks on the Gastein deal were in line with the liberal opposition — i.e they were all on the same side. He also said to Keudell: 'If Mensdorff reverts to [an alliance with lesser German states] we will rub some black-red-gold [i.e colours of the 1848 revolution] under his nose. **The Schleswig-Holstein and the great German question are so closely linked that if there is a break we will have to solve both together. A German parliament would confine the particularist interests of the medium and small states to their proper limit... If there were an Ephialtes among the ministers of the medium-sized states, the great German national movement would crush him and his master.'**

22 Aug (Clark) FJ invited Wilhelm and Bismarck to nearby Ischl for more intimate discussions and summoned actors from Vienna to perform for the two kings. The next day Wilhelm and Bismarck left 'on a triumphal journey to sow dismay among the South German states' (Clark). Clark thinks Esterhazy whispered to the Prussians that they would get the duchies, and continued to favour a financial deal. (Clark says that apart from a 'brief greeting' in 1867 they did not meet again until 1871, two wars later!) The agreement was disclosed to other states on 22nd and became public when disclosed to Bund shortly after. There was a 'storm' in the German press. Beust at first thought it was a check on Bismarck. Pfordten thought there was no better way to handle the situation then but admitted to Blome that 'in half a year a new conflict would be provoked by Herr von Bismarck'. Some Prussian papers complained that annexation had been sidetracked and Goltz attacked the convention in private. After the initial news, the settled view was that Prussia had gained revenge for Olmütz (Clark p297).

(OP, II.62: At Ischl, outside his hotel he bumped into Pauline Lucca, a famous opera singer he knew. She invited him to accompany her to a photography studio. They sat for a portrait. He sent a copy to Johanna. The photographer then started flogging copies to the public. To avoid a scandal the photographer was forced to destroy the plates. Pflanze doesn't recount how this was done.)

24 August Bismarck finally got Manteuffel out the way by having him appointed governor of Schleswig. Roon supported him. Manteuffel had not only encouraged Wilhelm to reject all compromises with parliament but had also used his power as head of the king's military cabinet to withhold information from Roon. Bismarck's problems with Manteuffel extended back to 1857 when the latter had 'in effect ordered him out of Berlin ... in order to keep him from influencing [FW4]' (Pflanze).

Clark (p325): Manteuffel thought that in 3 months he would get Austria to accept the Prussian position, if he failed then he would support Bismarck's plan of 'unpleasant alliances'. In October he told Gablenz that he and Bismarck had the same aim — annexation — but different methods: Bismarck wanted to do it with a French alliance (which he described as '*leidenschaftlich, abenteuerlich, und principienlos*' [passionate, adventurous, and unprincipled]), he wanted to keep the Austrian alliance. But Manteuffel failed in Schleswig and by the end of December was contemplating martial law. It's interesting that a Gablenz-Mensdorff telegram in December described Manteuffel's view that he had arrived in Schleswig 'with the conviction that it would be carried out in a maximum of 10 to 12 weeks.'

27 Aug Palmerston: a goodwill visit to Britain by the French navy would produce 'a most wholesome effect in Yankee land' where it will be taken as an indication of 'a closer union than in fact exists' and thus tend to 'disincline the Yankees from aggression on us'.

28 August (Pottinger) Napoleon held a dinner party at Fontainebleau and had a private word in the garden with Goltz, giving broad assurances of neutrality. This makes the official statement the next day more surprising, the only plausible explanation is that Napoleon was assuring Prussia privately

he wanted a deal while making clear if he didn't get what he wanted he would strike out (Pottinger, p 16). There was suspicion in France, and many rumours, of secret deals accompanying the Gastein deal, e.g a Prussian guarantee of Venetia. On 1/9 Drouyn wrote that Goltz had assured him there were no secret clauses.

29 August Drouyn issued a circular to French embassies attacking the Gastein deal for violating existing treaties, ignoring German opinion and national feeling in the duchies. 'Violence and conquest pervert the notion of law and the conscience of peoples. Substituted for the principles which regulate the life of modern societies, they are an element of trouble and a dissolution and can only upset the old order without establishing solidly any new order.' [Brazen hypocrisy!] Over the next few weeks Paris received reports that the smaller German states were demoralised by the deal and Austria's diplomatic defeat.

29 August Cowley-Russell: Drouyn is cross at the cynicism of Gastein. It was the first time such an arrangement had been done 'without some attempt at justification'. They are putting aside justice and previous commitments, ignoring the people themselves and the voice of Germany.

30 August Bismarck arrived at Baden morning of 30th. Dinner and audience with Wilhelm.

3 Sep Gorchakov wrote a memo for the Tsar on the situation. Napoleon preferred to support nationalism in Poland than keep our friendship. We have a big job in Poland and need years of peace. Any general war will spread to Poland. We have to avoid siding with Austria or Prussia and making the other an enemy. Civil war in Germany opens the door to chaos and Polish disasters. Gastein does not change these calculations. Austria will probably make concessions and abandon her position in north Germany in return for Prussian help in Italy [which Bismarck had often hinted at but would never commit clearly to]. We must continue to make internal reform our priority and subordinate foreign affairs to this goal. We are close to Prussia but her goals and ruthless methods make closer relations impossible. Austria is too wobbly to be reliable — even in the Principalities where our interests are identical we can't easily cooperate. Napoleon seems so hostile and so pro-Polish that a return to alliance seems impossible. England like us wants peace in Europe and the status quo in the East but British ministers prefer to work with Napoleon to influence him and this undermines our ability to work together.

3 Sep Disraeli wrote to Derby that his mole in the Cabinet had told him that Palmerston was seriously ill and may not be able to meet Parliament again. 6 weeks later he was dead.

9 Sep The Queen complained via Grey to Russell that Napier had been too passive dealing with Bismarck's iniquitous conduct over the Gastein deal. We must protest 'without unnecessarily mixing ourselves up in the question' or 'we shall lower ourselves in the opinion of the world'.

12 Sep (Pottinger) Lefebvre reported to Drouyn that Bismarck had said: the Gastein deal was a preliminary to annexing the duchies and the eventual dominance of Germany, it was unclear and impractical at many points because that gave him an excuse for further quarrels with Austria 'the day when the general state of things in Europe would permit Prussia to follow a still more clearly defined policy'. On 14th Bismarck told him that his plans were limited to north of the Main and hinted that France and Italy might simultaneously acquire territories which shared a common 'tongue and race' with them (i.e forget the Rhineland and ponder Belgium). Pottinger: this was a success for Napoleon's strategy [?], he'd got Bismarck to spell out his goals, but this also was alarming for those officials who wanted to maintain Austria's position.

13 Sep Palmerston-Russell: We should record disapproval of the 'selfish and unprincipled conduct which Prussia has pursued and contemplates pursuing' and Austria going along. But it's 'rather late' for Drouyn and the Queen to complain now — what they're doing is 'quite of a piece with what they did in the beginning of that quarrel [SH]', it was 'the wolf and the lamb from the beginning, and no wonder that two wolves were too much for one lamb ... and the two wolves having grabbed what they wanted would hardly be expected to give up their prey out of a mere sense of what may be called posthumous justice.' The Queen didn't mind when the injustice appeared calculated to benefit Germany but now it affects 'petty states like Coburgh [sic]' her 'sense of right and wrong has become wonderfully keen and her mind revolts at the idea of consequences which grow naturally from the proceedings she approved of'.

Palmerston now preferred the duchies to go to Prussia. 'It was dishonest and unjust to deprive Denmark of Schleswig and Holstein. It is another Question how those two Duchies, when separated from Denmark, can be disposed of best for the interests of Europe... [I]t is better that they [the duchies] should go to increase the power of Prussia than that they should form another little state to be added to the cluster of small bodies politic which encumber Germany and render it of less Force than it ought to be in the general Balance of Power in the world. Prussia is too weak as she now is ever to be honest or independent in her action; and, with a view to the future, it is desirable that Germany, in the aggregate, should be strong, in order to control those two ambitious and aggressive powers, France and Russia, that press upon her west and east. As to France, we know how restless and aggressive she is, and how ready to break loose for Belgium, for the Rhine, for anything she would be likely to get without too great an exertion. As to Russia, she will, in time, become a power, almost as great as the old Roman Empire. She can become mistress of all Asia, except British India, whenever she chooses to take it; and when enlightened arrangements shall have made her revenue proportioned to her territory, and railways shall have abridged distances, her command of men will become enormous, her pecuniary means gigantic, and her power of transporting armies over great distances most formidable. Germany ought to be strong in order to resist Russian aggression, and a strong Prussia is essential to German strength. Therefore, though I heartily condemn the whole proceedings of Austria and Prussia about the Duchies, I own that I should rather see them incorporated with Prussia than converted into an additional asteroid in the system of Europe.' Five weeks later he was dead.

14 Sep Gablenz-Mensdorff: Bismarck is hinting at a compensation deal again, Wilhelm says Augustenburg 'could no longer be considered', I told him we must have compensation. (General Gablenz had been put in charge of Holstein as part of the Gastein deal.) Bismarck was also talking to Bleichröder about financial deals and was telling London and Paris he hoped to buy the duchies. (Clark p311) Gablenz was instructed to quell the movement for annexation, treat Augustenburg unofficially and not give binding assurances to him, keep the press quiet, be friendly to Prussia but firm if necessary. Gablenz had not wanted the job and rightly thought it 'nearly insoluble'. Meanwhile in Schleswig, Manteuffel had begun a campaign for annexation, forced officials to swear an oath to Wilhelm, the press was forced to push propaganda. Clark: some accounts say Gablenz changed course in November and this contributed to the growing crisis: FALSE, there were no new instructions given him until the New Year and those amounted to stricter measures in pursuit of the original policy of an equal balance between Augustenburg and Prussia.

Mid-September (Pottinger) The diplomatic cable of 29/8 was published in French papers. 'The result was dramatic. Bismarck naturally was thoroughly puzzled. King William, always dubious about Bismarck's schemes, was still more upset and ordered Bismarck to give up his plan, formulated during the Gastein negotiations, for a stay in Biarritz.' Napoleon later denied responsibility for the action. It probably (Pottinger p20) came from an official who wanted to sabotage the pro-Prussian drift.

16 Sep Wilhelm raised Bismarck to the title 'Count' (15th, Gall).

20 Sep FJ 'suspended' the constitution. This generated criticism from liberals and made it harder for Austria to raise cash. It was an attempt to clear the way for reconciliation with Hungary. In December FJ moved the court to Hungary until March 1866.

Late September (Steinberg), during the military exercises Bismarck had a conversation with the Crown Prince, recorded by Stosch at the time (and written in a letter on 2/10).

CP: Do you want to annex them?
 Bismarck: If possible, yes, but I do not want to start a European war over them.
 CP: And if one threatens?
 Bismarck: Well, then I confine myself to the February demands.
 CP: And if these are not accepted?

Bismarck: Prussia needs fear no war over these, the February demands are our ultimatum.

CP: And what is happening about Duke Frederick?

Bismarck: That depends on how the cards fall.

Stosch added in his letter: At the end the conversation took on a very violent character...

Bismarck's ruthlessness makes him many enemies in the aristocracy and increases the ranks of the opposition. [JS skips from summer 1865 to Feb 1866 in 1-2 pages!]

20 Sep (Pottinger) Napoleon talked to Goltz who told him Berlin was unhappy about the leak of the cable. Napoleon played it all down and ordered Drouyn to write to Berlin to soothe relations. The letter was sent on the 23rd.

25 Sep (Pottinger) Lefebvre reported that he had given Drouyn's letter to Bismarck, Bismarck had given it to Wilhelm while they watched the opera, the king was appeased, the trip could proceed. In their conversation, Bismarck said that he was pained by the French reaction particularly given he had tried to give a fair picture of his plans and he read out his letter to Goltz of 16 August. *Lefebvre said he had not heard that this had been communicated.* (Pottinger doesn't say what Bismarck did viz Goltz.) On 27th Bismarck held out the prospect of France gaining French-speaking territories. On 29th Drouyn issued another circular that very much softened that of 29 August. (So bear in mind Bismarck also had to worry whether Goltz was passing on his messages properly, how much fog and friction may be created in Paris by his 'own side' — the sort of practical problem largely lost to history but which looms large for the players at the time.)

28 Sep Mommsen's open letter (above, September).

30 Sep After the exercises, Bismarck went to Biarritz with his family to meet Catherine Orlov. She never appeared, she'd forgotten and gone to England, and he was hurt (says Steinberg — others say she was avoiding a local typhus outbreak). He made courtesy calls on Drouyn and Rouher in Paris but told Goltz he made them reluctantly and they discussed little.

According to Pottinger, Bismarck did mention compensation in French-speaking territories again and Bismarck reported to Wilhelm (11/10) that Drouyn disclaimed any intention of acquiring German-speaking lands. According to a report by Cowley (3/10), Drouyn said that, viz policy in Germany, 'the tone of Bismarck's remarks indicated an intention of carrying matters as far as he dared'. Goltz wrote a few weeks later that Drouyn had complained that Bismarck wanted 'ready money' while offering in return a note of uncertain maturity which could neither be used nor even shown to deputies and journalists', but generally Drouyn seems to have been positive and friendly with Bismarck. (Nobody gives specific dates for Bismarck's chats with Drouyn but they must have happened between the 1-4/10.)

On 4 & 11 October (Steinberg) Bismarck met Napoleon. EF: he saw Napoleon twice at Biarritz and once at St Cloud. We do not have good records for what was said.

Pottinger: the first chat was over lunch on 4th after which Bismarck said, 'For a sauce like that, I would give twenty banks of the Rhine.' Also on 4th, Goltz discussed a possible French takeover of Belgium with Napoleon. The second meeting was a breakfast meeting on 7 October at which Bismarck apparently (according to Goltz) drank a glass of Madeira, one of sherry, a flask of Yquem, and a glass of cognac! While various subjects were discussed, including the spread of cholera by pilgrims to Mecca, the main subject was the price of French support. According to Pottinger (p32) in 1870 Bismarck remarked that Napoleon had missed a great opportunity and when the Austrian war kicked off he should have marched into Belgium and would probably have successfully called Britain's bluff.

Wawro and Eyck think he offered Napoleon support for grabbing Luxembourg/Belgium in return for neutrality in a war with Austria. Nigra thought a trade like this for Belgium was discussed.

Pflanze (p265): this is unlikely as Bismarck did not make 'commitments so far in advance'. Bismarck reported to Berlin that Napoleon was willing to forget Gastein and 'dance the cotillion with us, without knowing in advance when it will begin or what figures it will include.'

Stern: He suggested to Napoleon that he might buy the duchies and told Baron James Rothschild the same before returning to Berlin.

Barry: after this trip he was in 'no doubt' war would come. (Wrong.)

Eyck: Before going to Biarritz, Bismarck had dropped hints to Benedetti's deputy (Lefebvre) about Napoleon acquiring Belgium or even some German territory. Before he left Biarritz he showed Lefebvre a map of SH with the northern part of Schleswig (Danish speaking) with Denmark, in accord with Napoleon's wishes, and again encouraged Napoleon to expand 'everywhere French is spoken' — i.e. Belgium. On the way home from France, Bismarck talked in Paris to the influential Italian Ambassador, Nigra, whom he told that war was coming and urged him to support an alliance (p. 108-9).

Emile Ollivier wrote that Napoleon said afterwards, 'He [Bismarck] talked a great deal ... but in general and vague terms. I couldn't untangle exactly what he wanted, and he didn't make me any formal proposition. On my side I didn't express to him any personal desire whatsoever.' (This is hardly quoted anywhere.)

He telegraphed Wilhelm from Biarritz a short report: the trip is a success, France is OK with Gastein and would not object to Prussia buying Holstein.

Clark: He got from Napoleon a commitment 'that an understanding between [France] and Austria at [Prussia's] expense, so often sought by Austria, had no prospect of succeeding, because all basis for it was lacking' (Bismarck-Goltz, 6/5/66). Clark thinks this version is probably more accurate than that telegraphed to Wilhelm 'because intended for Napoleon's own ear'. By the end of the year he also finalised the Italy-Zollverein treaty (despite his promise not to) and all German states except Hanover and Nassau therewith recognised the new kingdom south of the Alps — which went down very badly with FJ.

After returning from France he told Thile, the undersecretary in the Foreign Office, his plan was: **'We shall tread on Austria's corns, present her with a categorical "either-or", close an alliance with Italy, castrate the Augustenburger, rape the Bund, and other similar atrocities.'** (My conclusion from the different sources: he was softening French annoyance about Gastein and repairing relations; he was exploring Napoleon's attitude towards a financial deal for Holstein; he was seeking French support for an Italian alliance (crucial to impose a two-front war on Austria if war came); if the subject came up he tried to deflect attention from the Rhineland to elsewhere including Belgium (which he would prefer *not* to happen but if Napoleon were going to grab *something* then better Belgium than the Rhineland, plus he knew that a move on Belgium would isolate Napoleon from Britain); he would have hinted in response to threats that French hostility would lead to Prussia and Austria getting closer; he probed for support in the event of a war and an assurance that a Franco-Austrian deal was off the cards.

I suspect Napoleon sounded friendly towards a financial deal and an Italian treaty against Austria; refused to rule out Rhineland compensation which remained on the table; refused to commit himself in the event of war as he clearly hoped to be the arbiter and issue a big bill at the crucial moment; but was vaguely reassuring about the prospects of a Franco-Austrian deal. Overall relations were improved but no real specifics agreed.

There is an important difference between a) 'a formal offer' (or an 'offer' clearly intended to be formalised) and b) hints, and dropping ideas into conversations with a certain smile or gesture, encouraging people to make inferences. Clearly (a) did not happen but (b) did, without it meaning 'he'd decided on war' or 'he'd decided to ditch Austria' — he was holding out possibilities *and* keeping open the possibility of more Austrian concessions, as usual. He was always throwing out possibilities and helping people believe what he wanted them to *without committing himself* and surely this was reassurance over Gastein plus the usual noncommittal dangling of temptations.)

While at Biarritz, Bismarck got a letter from Bleichröder in which the latter argued a) Austria's financial situation is dreadful, b) Bismarck could use Prussian money to buy the duchies and keep the peace. (Stern: this Biarritz holiday cost him equivalent to \$20,000 in 1974 dollars — which is ~\$80,000 in 2019, but it's unclear from Stern quite what was included in this bill — e.g. anything he claimed back as an expense for official business, like taking secretaries/officials?)

October Lothar Bucher, one of Bismarck's spin doctors, offered Marx employment as a financial columnist for an official Prussian state journal. Marx refused.

1 October Deputies of German parliaments gathered in Frankfurt to protest the illegality of the Gastein deal and a conference of the *Nationalverein* was expected to do the same on 29th. At Bismarck's urging both powers protested to Frankfurt (when?) for allowing such a meeting but were rebuffed. Bismarck sought to get Austrian agreement on severe reprisals for Frankfurt but Vienna refused (when?). Mensdorff 'had finally resolved the concessions must end' (Pflanze). OP (p265-6): Bismarck's reaction was severe, Mensdorff's refusal 'seems to have convinced Bismarck that the usefulness of the Austrian alliance was about over [and] events in the duchies offered further proof'. At Gastein, he had thought Austria might sell Holstein but the French loan (Nov) eased the pressure. But Pflanze (p265-6) telescopes Oct-Dec into a few paras, suggests the 'war to the knife' comment etc happened around early-mid October, rather than the end of Nov, then suddenly skips to Altona in Jan.

Some leading Prussian liberals refused to go to another meeting in Frankfurt to condemn the Gastein agreement on the grounds that it was anti-Prussian. Mommsen and Twisten publicly opposed the meeting of delegates and said that Prussia had to unify Germany.

On 28/9 Mommsen wrote an open letter dissociating himself from the S-H movement: there must be an end to the 'sovereignty swindle' (a phrase often used by Bismarck!) that is 'sapping the marrow of Germany'. It is now 'written in letters of fire that the choice for us is between subordination to a German state [*Grossstaat*] and the ruins of the nation'.

Twisten wrote 28/9: there is no reason 'to place any hope in the middle states'; the conference is directed exclusively against Prussia; 'we would prefer anything as an alternative to a defeat of the Prussian state. We do this in the interests not only of Prussia but also of Germany, since we are strengthened by recent events in the conviction that no other power can do anything for Germany but Prussia.'

The liberal movement had been 'split apart by the Schleswig-Holstein question' (OP, p276).

7 Oct Chotek to Mensdorff: 'the more intelligent majority of the Prussian people' now support Bismarck's policy. 20 Nov: 'in the domestic question Count Bismarck is constantly gaining ground'.

18 October Palmerston died, Russell became PM. Clarendon Foreign Secretary, Gladstone Chancellor and Leader of the Commons.

Clarendon was charming and suave, Russell blunt. Clarendon was 'an aristocrat whose familiarity with the Continent made him at least as cosmopolitan as he was patriotic' (Millman). Clarendon's 'high place in society have made some people forget that his views were seldom original and not seldom diffusely or imprudently expressed' (H Temperley, 1932). Victoria's dislike of Clarendon 'so pronounced in 1868, was evident in 1865' (Millman). In October she wrote to the King of Belgium that 'I don't quite trust him.' In March 1866 she wrote to the Crown Princess of Prussia that he was 'most disagreeable & unmanageable'. The Queen and Russell were 'more disposed to action than Clarendon' but all three were agreed that 'the disgrace of 1864, the opprobrium of promising more than was delivered, should not be repeated' (Millman, p6-7).

When the crisis with Austria flared up in 1866, Russell (PM) and Clarendon (Foreign Secretary) both wanted to see Prussia beaten and thought she would be. They made clear Britain would stay out *even if France wanted to intervene*. Clarendon: we will not 'use the language of menace wh. might entail the necessity of action'.

The FO 'favoured strict non-interference' (Otte). The FO was more worried about French adventurism and Napoleon's untrustworthiness. Hammond called him 'the devil's own child' (5 July 1866) and Cowley said that Napoleon thought 'no promise, however securely made, is binding under altered circumstances' (20 September 1866). However, the FO also assumed that France would continue to be generally supportive of Britain's desire to keep Turkey going given Russia would reap all the rewards of a Turkish collapse. The FO was contemptuous of Austria: 'they are in the haziest of hazes, & it is not in the Austrian character to see the way through the fog' (Hammond, 25 October 1865). Morier and others underestimated Bismarck and overestimated the strength of Prussian liberalism. (Hammond thought in 1864 that the Prussian army was clearly inferior to the French.) **Napier wrote to Russell (14 October 1865) that Bismarck's 'strange and transitory notions and speeches' may be 'heard with amazement'**

but 'will probably leave not a trace behind.' 26 October Cowley wrote to Russell saying Russell had left his post 'with not a question of importance to solve'. (Cf. Otte p.31ff)

Mosse: with Clarendon in post, England and Russia were likely to be passive spectators and 'the ring was cleared for Bismarck, Esterhazy and Napoleon'. (Mosse stresses Esterhazy's role more than others.)

21 Oct Manteuffel had been talking to Austrians including Gablenz about possible deals. On 21/10 he suggested giving Austria some land in return for the duchies and maintaining the conservative alliance.

31 Oct Gablenz-Mensdorff: 'Hardly a day goes by that [Manteuffel] doesn't turn to me with some petty trouble, and though I've so far parried them with the best form, yet I foresee clearly that my position here is not tenable for long.'

Early Nov (Clark) Mensdorff sent Count Wimpffen to London to talk to Russell privately and bring a closer *entente*. Wimpffen reported that 'the bonds which unite England and France are stronger than ever', the path to London lies through Paris. (This is odd as the FO was not pro-French and Clarendon was friendly to Austria. Clark seems to get the dates of Russell/Clarendon taking over wrong.)

Nov Count Malaguzzi, a private citizen, mooted in Vienna the idea of a deal: Austria sells Venetia, a royal marriage, official recognition of Italy. The military hated it. Mensdorff and others thought that Italy would not be properly unifiable — they looked forward to Napoleon's death and taking revenge (cf. 3/8 Bloomfield report). Belcredi and others hated the idea of doing a deal with 'revolution'. FJ thought selling against his 'honour', wife agreed. Discussions went nowhere again. Other ideas re an exchange of Venetia for Danubian Principalities also went nowhere. Bismarck leaked what he heard of such discussions to Russia to discredit Austria.

2 Nov (WAF) Bismarck returned from his holiday through Paris on 2nd. Spoke to Benedetti who had not been invited to Biarritz, unlike Goltz. Benedetti visited him at *Hotel du Douvres* but it seems little was said. Bismarck spoke to Napoleon and Drouyn. Little trace of these discussions too but they added little to Biarritz according to Bismarck. Benedetti left on the morning of Monday 6 November to be in Berlin before Bismarck but an accident disturbed his visit and he ended up with Bismarck and his family on the train which arrived in Berlin on 7th.

Pottinger: Bismarck and Napoleon talked on 3rd, Napoleon said an alliance with Austria was 'an impossibility'. Sudden agricultural problems influenced French opinion towards army cuts in autumn 1865, though the cuts were very minor. (This is unmentioned in other books I've read but *if Napoleon was thinking 'the public wants a quiet life' autumn 1865-spring 1866, then it's important.*)

10 Nov Hohenthal-Beust: 'At the French embassy [in Berlin, Bismarck's] *sojourn* in Paris is summarised with the words: "They have been very polite to Count Bismarck. They played games with him, but he has brought nothing back, and the bad impression of the Gastein convention has not been swept away at all."'

23 Nov For the first time since Gastein, the *Kreuzzeitung* attacked Austria and threatened war. Bismarck also leaked a conversation with Chotek, and admitted it to Chotek, justifying his behaviour as a response to the virulence of the Austrian press. He told Chotek: 'There cannot exist between Austria and Prussia a half-relationship. Either sincere alliance or war to the knife' (report 20/11). On 27/11 Thile recorded Bismarck's instructions: keep up a steady stream of complaints in Vienna, 'exercise a slow gradual pressure against Austria without provocative or final steps' (Clark p324).

27 November A loan to Austria was raised in Paris by French banks after help from Napoleon. It carried a 9% interest rate, 'a sign of the fragility of Austrian credit' (Steinberg). (Showalter: it was 90M florins (roughly a year's military budget) at 18% (my hunch is Showalter is wrong about 18%). Bismarck offered to buy the duchies in November for 60M florins.)

Carr: 1848-1866 Austrian national debt tripled and by now was x5 national income.

Clark: FJ could not raise a loan from the Viennese Baron Rothschild except on conditions FJ would not accept. The French deal was a 'staggeringly high' price and within months the finance minister

was panicking again. But the political effect of help from France and pro-Austrian press in Paris was considerable.

Pottinger: first the Vienna branch of the Rothschilds demanded terms that were too tough, then an attempt to sell bonds to the public failed, then the English Rothschilds refused despite urging from Russell, then the Paris Rothschilds demanded too much. After last minute difficulties they raised the cash from the Habers: 90M gulden for 37 years, but Austria only received only 61.25 gulden per 100. Drouyn was asked to approve it around mid-November so it could be listed on the Paris bourse. The Finance Ministry was under pressure itself but after a Council of Ministers meeting on 17/11 Napoleon decided to support it. The subscription opened on 27th. Both sides made clear they were thinking of the implications for friendly relations. While its economic value was low it was seen as a success for Vienna and a problem for Bismarck.

December (Clark p298-9) FJ moved the court to Hungary until March 1866. FJ made concessions but Deak would not do a deal. On 8 February and a fortnight later, Deak scuppered chances of a deal. The Vienna public were hostile to Deak's demand for a separate Hungarian ministry. 3 March FJ reply closed negotiations for the time being. FJ returned to Vienna without a deal but in a stronger position, they no longer feared a Hungarian revolution in case of war.

In December Vienna also signed a trade deal with UK (taking effect from Jan 1867) that placed UK on same footing as *Zollverein*. Vienna was worried about electoral gains for the party of action in Italy and possible attacks by Garibaldi in Venetia. Mensdorff looked for French reassurances that she would not help.

2 Dec Metternich had returned to Paris after a holiday, spoke to Drouyn before going on to see Napoleon at Compiègne, Drouyn said to him, 'You will find the Emperor very well disposed and such a good boy (*et si sage*) that you will be astonished' (reported 2/12).

Metternich: I urged a deal, he replied — 'That is not impossible, and if one could provoke a war in one corner of Europe without setting fire to the gunpowder elsewhere that would perhaps be the best way of putting an end to the matter. I would prefer, however, that once the hatreds and defiances have been calmed, one could remain one beside the other tranquilly, but we are not there yet...' Pottinger writes of this impenetrable comment that Metternich was bewildered.

2 Dec Gablenz reported Prussian spies had been captured stealing papers from Augustenburg's adviser Samwer.

7 Dec Gramont had dinner with FJ who was friendly and spoke of the commercial and other negotiations, saying he had 'most favourable dispositions toward a reciprocal accord, whose prompt conclusion he ardently desired'.

10 Dec King Leopold I of Belgium died at Laeken. A momentary worry in Berlin that Napoleon may grab it.

14 Dec Bismarck told Benedetti with a smile that he was complaining to Vienna 'twice a week' to alienate Wilhelm step-by-step from Austria.

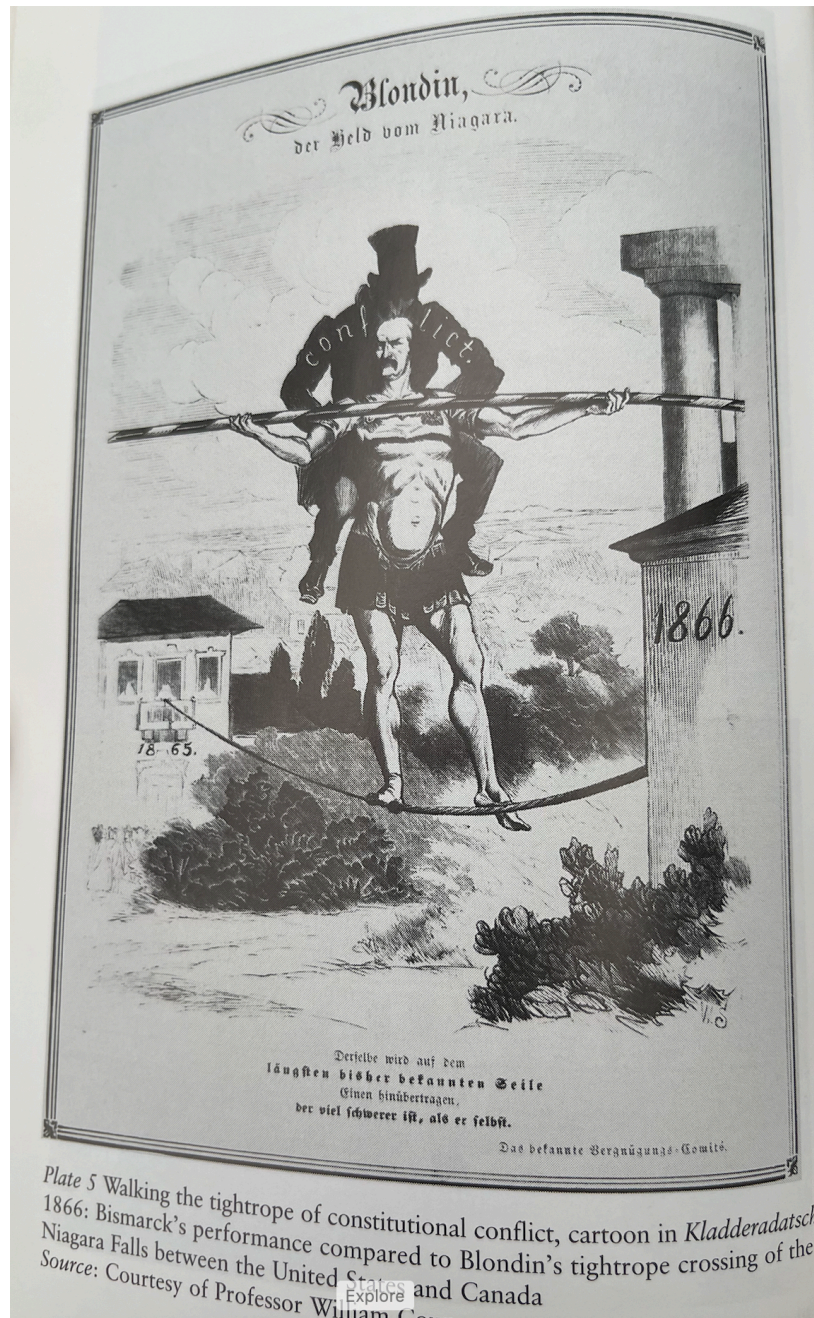
17 Dec Metternich-Mensdorff: Napoleon wants peace, he's happy to see FJ attempting to satisfy Hungary. Drouyn says: Napoleon wants to see Austria restored to former glory; if Italy attacks you will annihilate them, we will let you act freely in Italy: 'I repeated it solemnly, if things were to go worse in Italy and if you were one day attacked in Venetia — not only would we leave you freedom of action, but a complete *entente* can be established between us upon a final solution of the Italian question... We want no new annexations, we have become frankly conservatives — that means we resemble you very much. Those who resemble each other assemble... Events may compel us to seek a power with whom we can combine our forces to make common cause against the danger.' Metternich was hopeful. Mensdorff, however, was cooler — do not get into details of an alliance unless/until it seems war is sure. (Clark p305-6) Pottinger: this was an important difference between Napoleon and Drouyn, with the latter much more anti-Italy, while Napoleon really wanted Italy dealt with before he could imagine closer relations with Austria viz Germany.

21 Dec Bloomfield-Clarendon: Mensdorff is clear they will not sell the duchies.

26 Dec To a friend, Andrae Roman: 'Anyone who calls me an unscrupulous politician is doing me an injustice and should start by trying his own conscience in this particular arena... When I stake my life on a thing, I do so in the faith that I have fortified for myself, in long and bitter struggle but also in sincere and humble prayer to God, and that no word of man, not even that of a friend in the Lord and a servant of his Church, is going to overthrow for me... **As a statesman I am not ruthless enough but rather cowardly in my feelings, and this is so because in the questions that confront me it is not always easy to gain the clarity that engenders faith in God.**' Some place this in 1869 but EF & Gall 26/12/65.

End December The Italo-Zollverein treaty was signed: members recognised the kingdom of Italy.

By the end of December Manteuffel thought he'd failed in Schleswig, 'he now sees himself forced to a standstill in his proceedings' (Gablentz 31/12), and was contemplating martial law (cf. 24/8).



Jan 1866 Napoleon announced the withdrawal of troops from Mexico. He told America he would withdraw between 11/66 and 11/67. Hamerow: the end of the US Civil War and renewal of the Zollverein in 1865 had stimulated the demand for credit at the time when the Paris Bourse was buzzing with news of the Mexican fiasco and several important London firms were declaring bankruptcy. The growing threat of an Austro-Prussian conflict kept money markets disrupted until the war was resolved. Mid-March to end of May the discount rate on the Berlin stock exchange rose from 6 to 9% and Prussian bonds declined ~10% March-June. The political uncertainty kept finance wobbly until the final resolution of the conflict in 1871 after which there was another boom. (Cf. Keudell p412)

Jan Bismarck had Wilhelm present the Black Eagle to the Italian king, as part of his seduction. Clark: Vienna was 'as usual ... too late and too half-hearted' to counter his moves — making even a pretence of contemplating recognition of Italy might have kept La Marmora out of Bismarck's clutches for months.

During Jan (WAF) Bismarck speculated to Goltz that the Mexican affair could embroil France with America and help Prussia, and he forbade Goltz from exercising a restraining influence on the American ambassador in Paris.

3 January Ludwig von Gerlach spoke with Bismarck and concluded that the latter had abandoned Christian morality in his pursuit of political victory.

5 Jan Revertera-Mensdorff: 'In his intimate outpourings, however, Prince Gorchakov does not hide the fascination that Bismarck's enterprising policy exerts on his mind. He confessed to me, not long ago, if he had the means and the opportunity, he would also like to play politics *à la* Bismarck; but as Russia has no more imperial needs than peace, the first rule of her conduct will be to abstain from questions which do not touch the vital interests of her existence.'

5 Jan Napier to Clarendon: 'There never was a period in [which] England was an object of so much dislike to all parties in Germany, as at present... [A]ll join in repugnance to England, in noting her prosperity, & in undervaluing her power... France is hated too. But France is watched with anxiety and respected.'

10 Jan Karolyi returned to Berlin after an extended vacation since July 1865. Clark: his orders were to preserve Gastein, be calm, friendly and firm and prevent Prussia from rushing into annexation.

11 Jan Gablenz-to whom?: 'I would rather attack a battery than stand here morally in the breach ... [which is] endless crossfire', I have asked Manteuffel to 'leave me in peace, as I leave him' but conflict is constant. In December he'd written: 'In all my life I've never served under such frightfully irritating conditions ... the intrigues of the Prussians and the Augustenburgers are ceaseless and not a day goes by in which I have one single peaceful hour'.

13 Jan (EF) To Usedom (ambassador in Italy): He stressed he'd always seen Gastein as provisional, Austria has allowed Augustenburg supporters to agitate and is agitating itself across Germany. We don't have to worry about Russia or France intervening. Prussia might have to call for a German parliament.

14/18 Jan Manteuffel suggested to Bismarck that he demand the expulsion of Augustenburg again but this proved unnecessary because of Altona (below).

15 January The Prussian Landtag opened for another session. Bismarck said the government would not resubmit the military bills. The Landtag appointed a commission to investigate the legality of the railway budget operation. Unruh expressed the frustration of the liberals: 'We are able to unite only in negation or on phrases.' Hoverbeck replied, 'If that were only the case!' (OP implies this was in a meeting, not on the floor of the house.) Liberals were divided over whether to go through the long process of amending the budget or reject it outright without debate. Many of the famous names — Twesten, Lasker, Hoverbeck — were in favour of the extreme option but they were a minority. Waldeck and others did not want to intensify the conflict. When the budget bill was introduced, conservatives, left centrists and Waldeck progressives voted down the extremists and the bill was referred to committee. Cf. 21/2.

21 Jan Bismarck negotiated with Hanover about a royal wedding as part of trying to win an alliance. But it went wrong — in March/April they began mobilising reserves. In his Memoirs, Bismarck said Austria persuaded Hanover to side with her.

Clark: Around this time [I think this must refer to 21/1] Bismarck spoke to Count von Platen, Hanover foreign minister, about Austria's bad situation in a war with 150,000 Italians threatening in the south, Prussia seizing the railroad centre in Moravia, Prussia's superior equipment including the needle gun. Platen concluded that Bismarck wanted war and quickly. (Clark: Bismarck wanted Platen to mediate but Platen committed himself to nothing.) This was passed on to Karolyi who informed Mensdorff on 26/1. (This is one of the few references I've seen to Bismarck discussing military issues in 1866 — I assume this was a much bigger feature of his discussions than we can now see.) He also told Saxony that if Austria refused to eject Augustenburg she'd have to decide 'whether she had more to fear from the Prussian army or the outcry of the liberal press'.

21 Jan Bloomfield-Clarendon: I had dinner with FJ who 'seemed under the impression that in Europe there was no present appearance of any serious complications arising; he trusted the year would pass over quietly and peacefully, and that Austria might be able to devote itself more entirely

to her internal organisation'. Same day, Mensdorff wrote to Duke Ernst of Coburg (cousin): 'In politics there is a lull – but the atmosphere is heavy ... plenty of inflammable stuff is lying about, and on the thrones, little insight and strength.'

22 Jan Napoleon gave his annual Speech from the Throne to *Corps Legislatif* (in the Louvre). 'Abroad, peace seems assured everywhere', he told them. Regarding Germany he said he would keep his policy of neutrality and stay out where 'our interests are not directly engaged'. In Feb-March there was growing heated debate in Paris about this as Thiers stirred opposition.

23 Jan The Austrian governor of Holstein, Gablenz, allowed a demonstration in Altona in favour of Augustenburg. Bismarck sent a very sharp note to Vienna (26th) demanding the suppression of all 'revolutionary' and 'democratic' agitation in Holstein. A 'negative or devious answer' would compel Prussia to consider the alliance ended and to assume 'complete freedom for our entire policy... If Austria continues to provide a haven for the activities of the republican democracy ... then the king will prefer an open breach to this kind of struggle.' Pflanze: 'It had the sound of an ultimatum' and spoke of Austrian 'aggression'.

EF: he told the ambassador in Vienna to complain about Austria allowing 'revolutionary tendencies, inimical to every throne, to spread themselves under the sign of the Austrian double eagle', to ask for assurances that all anti-Prussian agitation in Holstein is suppressed, and to threaten an open breach.

(Gall refers to an 'ultimatum' that sounds similar but on 31 July 1865! — is Gall confused or a misprint referring to something else?)

24 Jan Lerman: Bismarck wrote to Gerlach enraged by the Crown Prince again saying the monarchy appeared finished.

29 Jan Supreme Court ruled (majority of 1) that deputies could be prosecuted for speeches on the floor of the Landtag, after packing the court with two 'relief' judges.

31 Jan A letter to Wilhelm: interesting glimpse into the daily intricacies... Would you attend a confidential *soirée* with Benedetti, I think it would be useful, if Yes then 'the Ambassador would be very grateful if I could let him have a hint as to whether the fact that your Majesty will be present may be intimidated by mentioning "Uniform" on the invitations'...

2 Feb Duke of Cambridge complained to Russell about the lack of spending on the Army. Russell did not support increases in spending and neither did Parliament.

3 Feb Bismarck in Landtag rejected the suspicion that he was using foreign policy for domestic ends: 'Foreign affairs are for me an end in themselves and rank higher with me than the rest. You gentlemen should think the same and if you should give some ground domestically, you could regain it quickly under a liberal ministry, which might come about.' (Gall: '... And you, gentlemen, ought to be thinking on the same lines, because after all any ground you lost at home you could very quickly make up under, say, a liberal ministry, such as might possibly ensue.') EF: the liberals laughed at him, it was the last time in the history of Prussia that distinguished liberals could proclaim liberal principles with equal boldness and confidence.

3 Feb Karolyi-Mensdorff: 'If it comes to war then it is Bismarck's work; if he falls, then collapses the policy of active hostility towards Austria.' The Austrian military *attaché* also reported (3 & 17/2) that there was military activity, Roon has been heard saying Prussia must strike 'before the enemy has time to think about it', Silesia is well prepared with railways and cavalry is moving towards the border.

3 Feb General Gablenz: 'Prejudice, rusty ideas, failure to recognise the needs of the times, postpone everything, never take action, always just waiting – it is this which is so disastrous for us.' On 10 May his brother Anton Gablenz wrote: 'the perplexity and inactivity in Vienna is fearful, and for anyone who tries to get things done it is a desperate situation.'

6 Feb Gala evening at French Embassy. Royal Family attended. Bismarck trying to be friendly to Benedetti (and fix misunderstandings over some court etiquette issues, WAF p45).

7 February Biegeleben drafted a reply about Altona from FJ: it rejected Bismarck's demands, reiterated Austria's right to administer Holstein. Clark: Mensdorff saw Altona had been a mistake and sent a second message accompanying the formal note, quietly telling Bismarck he regretted Gablenz's error, as did Gablenz and FJ. Bismarck had been winding Wilhelm up again for weeks.

OP (p267): Bismarck was now resolved to escalate. For two years he had made progress. 'Constantly aggressive, he invariably depicted himself as on the defensive; always injuring, he continually assumed the role of the injured; ever working for the upset of the *status quo*, he steadily posed as a genuine conservative. For Austria it was a long story of futility and frustration. Her protests were met by declarations of innocence and indignation, her attempts to temporise and delay by the threat that Prussia would act alone, her efforts to halt Prussian encroachments by the charge that they endangered the monarchical cause.'

9 Feb Karolyi-Mensdorff: Bismarck has unleashed the official media against us. There was retaliation.

11 Feb (Pottinger) Benedetti-Drouyn: Bismarck says that if things go badly with Austria, 'We will move quickly ... and perhaps we will move far.' The first step will be bringing back Goltz for discussions.

14 Feb (Clark) Bismarck interview with Benedetti: 'All ties with Austria are now broken and Prussia is free again to act according to her own interests.' He said he was contemplating bringing liberals into his ministry and leading the German national movement, forcing the middle states to follow him to escape revolution. Benedetti reported back to Gramont who read it to Mensdorff who informed FJ on 19/2. He was also briefing the press against Austria.

Pottinger says Benedetti's report of 14/2 suggested the storm may blow over, but this is at odds with other accounts of the 14th. Pottinger implies that Bismarck recalled Goltz before 17/2 and Goltz spoke to Napoleon and Drouyn then reported to Bismarck on 17th before returning to Berlin on 19th. Clark implies (p343) Goltz's recall was at roughly the same time as he closed parliament again, i.e 22/2. Pottinger: Drouyn and Napoleon were friendly — they stressed their neutrality, the impossibility of an alliance with Austria, and suggested a deal was possible over the duchies.

14 Feb He instructed his envoy to talk to Pfordten about Bund reform.

15 Feb (OP, JS says 19th): Loftus arrived on 15th taking over from Napier in Berlin until 1871 then St P (Vienna 1858, Berlin 1860, Munich 1862). He described the atmosphere as 'loaded' and 'smelled of powder'.

17 Feb Bismarck was reticent and calm with Karolyi in contrast to the violence of his words and actions elsewhere — there is an 'ominous stillness' in the Wilhelmstrasse, 'the calm before the storm' reported Karolyi.

21 Feb (OP p317ff) The Landtag committee completed a preliminary report on the budget composed by Virchow. It recited the history of the constitutional conflict and concluded: 'It is clear as day that absolutism has been restored in Prussia and indeed absolutism without the self-imposed limitations of the pre-March [1848] period. There is no longer any control of the finances or any legal budget; the *Staatsanzeiger* has replaced the statute books; the superior accounting office no longer has any function; the treasury and property of the state are at the free disposal of the government. One point alone has not been attacked. This is the one upon which the old absolutism failed and constitutionalism was won in Prussia. Still in effect is the clause in article 103 of the constitution reading: "treasury loans may be raised only through legislation"'. As OP says this point was 'futile' as Bismarck was prepared to violate 103 too. But he did not need to. When war came, Heydt raised the funds from the treasury reserve and the sale of state-owned railway shares through a state bank. The deputies protested the legality but could not stop them.

21 Feb Austrian Council of Ministers presided by FJ (in Budapest): decided to push diplomatically and not make more concessions, but neither developed a new approach to solving the problem nor decided to fight.

Gall: this 'as good as decided to go to war' (p280). (Wrong.)

Carr gives the opposite impression to Gall: 'No one at this meeting wanted war or thought there was any cause for war.'

Barry: FJ said they should 'leave warlike preparations for the time being' and focus on 'diplomatic means'.

Showalter: they decided to start military preparations but they weren't seeking war or thought it imminent.

Clark: 1) FJ had been stung by press criticism of Gastein that he had abdicated Austria's position in Germany. The *Allgemeine Zeitung*, Austria's defender in south Germany, attacked. 2) Bismarck made hostile and insulting comments to everybody and was engaged in endless intrigues — comments such as about Lauenburg ('the honest man buys, but it is the scamp who sells cheap'). He complained about appointments and Austrian breaches of friendship. He encouraged the *Zollverein* to recognise Italy. In Vienna they thought he'd also tried to sabotage Austria's loan in Paris and even that he was talking to Hungarian revolutionaries (he was). 3) Domestically things were improving — finances better, Hungary better. Many important figures were pushing FJ — either do a deal with Prussia or take a stand.

(Clark p337ff has by far the most detailed account of the meeting.) FJ opened the meeting — does 'the honour, dignity and security of Austria call for warlike preparations?'; however lamentable the conflict, the Prussian army is more mobile and their railroads more advantageous than ours while our army has been reduced and needs time to rebuild.

Mensdorff: Prussia has no outward grounds for a quarrel but her precarious internal situation makes her next move uncertain. He stressed diplomacy rather than military preparations.

Esterhazy stressed diplomacy but said 'Austria must show her teeth', show her German allies that there will be no more talk of concessions, and secure the peaceful neutrality of France — though he still said that 'in time the reversion of the Duchies to Prussia cannot be prevented'. (If so, then do a deal don't escalate towards a war you don't want or think is sensible!)

The ministers of finance and commerce strongly advised a peaceful settlement and pointed out the financial consequences of a war.

Belcredi spoke last. He did not try to persuade towards peace or war, he just seconded Esterhazy's suggestion to gain the German middle states and warn them against 'revolution'.

FJ summed up expressing agreement with the general view that 'military preparations [should] be held off for the time being, and that further attempts be made by diplomatic means to preserve the honour and dignity of the country, as well as its interests. **The preparations could all be drawn up on paper, and the necessary orders had already gone to the war ministry.**'

Clark: 'the result of the council was a victory for the peace element in the cabinet' but the diplomatic approach was the same as had failed at Gastein. They put too many chips on the chances of Bismarck falling. And FJ had unjustified confidence in the army despite military advice against fighting Prussia and Italy.

21 Feb Blome reported that Pfordten could not be relied on to bring Bavaria onside until action commenced. Beust was always ready to fight against Prussia but stressed the importance of Vienna going through the Bund. In Berlin, Bismarck threatened Saxony — either neutrality or we'll occupy you. This 'shook Beust to the core' (Clark) and moved him to stress again in Vienna the importance of acting through the Bund and not pushing him to make an anti-Prussian declaration.

22 February Many rows between Bismarck and the liberals over the constitutionality of various issues came to a head, including the report of the commission on the legality of the railway funding deal (obviously it concluded it was illegal) and the prosecution of Twisten. Prosecuting members for speeches made in parliament was a breach of the constitution. The case failed in the first and second court but the supreme court ruled the contrary by a majority of one after it had been packed with two 'relief judges'. (Bleichröder said this created 'the most painful sensation in all responsible circles'.) Three days later Hoverbeck introduced a motion that the Landtag declare the act of the court illegal and invalid. It passed 263-35. There were protests in some cities dispersed by police but the deputies did not have a plan.

It all came to a head on 22/2. Bismarck climbed the rostrum and read a royal decree **proroguing the Landtag again** after its shortest ever sitting. Bismarck had the police seize the deputies' documents as it was closed. It did not meet again before the war with Austria.

EF: it was the last time in the history of Prussia and Germany that an array of distinguished speakers could proclaim liberal principles with 'equal boldness and confidence'.

22 Feb (Barry) Memo by Moltke: Austria could assemble 100,000 in 21 days in Bohemia, 200,000 in 36 days and would need another 8 days to get to the Prussian frontier: i.e 6 weeks to get to the Prussian frontier. So long as there's no large scale horse purchases and regiments in Italy are 'not placed on a war footing [then] we need not believe that there is a serious intention to attack us.'

22 Feb Karolyi-Mensdorff: Bismarck is more entrenched, he is not bluffing but plans 'a great Prussian action in the foreign field'. Clark: Karolyi was trying to avoid meeting Bismarck to avoid giving him a chance to intensify the crisis.

22 Feb Prince Couza of the Romanian Principalities (capital Bucharest) was forced to abdicate (internal reforms had alienated powerful interests, a scandal over a mistress). Some soldiers broke into his palace (11/2) and forced him to sign his abdication then he was escorted out of the country. Italy had had ideas around Austria ceding Venetia and getting Moldavia and Wallachia in return. There were discussions in Paris with Nigra about the idea of pushing Vienna into such a deal by threatening a deal with Prussia.

23 Feb Karolyi-Mensdorff: Bismarck plans to demand the sale of the duchies and if refused he'll send troops into Holstein hoping to spark war.

24 Feb Eyck (unmentioned by (almost?) any others): Usedom telegraphed that Victor Emanuel and his minister were expecting Prussian proposals for an alliance against Austria.

25 Feb Karolyi-Mensdorff: 'Bismarck has determined on extreme measures. He intends to send to Vienna at once a decisive dispatch; it is already discussed and prepared; only the King's signature is lacking... But the King ... waivers and is subject to the opposite influences... Bismarck seems to calculate on winning His Majesty over to decisive measures by arguing (against his own conviction) that Austria will yield at the last moment. **Perhaps the only chance of shaking the King, therefore, would be to pick up the gauntlet with determination, if it is thrown down, and not for a minute allow a suspicion of a retreat to appear.**' On the same day, a letter from Blome arrived with Mensdorff. He had switched and now argued for war — 'the war against Bismarckian Prussia still is better than peace with Bismarck's fall and a "New Era" [and we should] stand firm to the last ditch'.

Clark (p329ff): Mensdorff had opposed Gastein and been prepared to risk war in summer 1865 but he now opposed war. He thought the political situation much worse — with France less friendly and allies in south German less clear — and he thought the Austrian army was not ready to fight a Prussia-Italy alliance. He also preferred to continue cooperating with Austria in Germany — he had been brought up to believe in the unity of the German powers, and he opposed both democratic revolution and autocratic/religious reaction. He preferred to make concessions to Prussia and maintain Venetia. He thought a war would only help France and it would be better to be cautious until Napoleon died. Also like Bismarck he was thinking about linking the Duchies to the bigger question of federal reform.

He discussed with FJ and others over winter 1865-6 ideas about trying to lead the national movement with some sort of representative body, like Schmerling in 1863. Biegeleben, Blume, Beust and others discussed schemes — Beust had been urging Mensdorff to offer a parliament since December 1864.

Mensdorff thought Rechberg had made a mistake in Nov 1863 by closing the deal with Prussia against the Bund instead of leading the outcry for Augustenburg. Now he thought he might be able to pull the princes away from Prussia with 'independence for Schleswig-Holstein' and appeal to the people with 'a German parliament'. He had discussed these ideas with FJ before the February crisis and when he heard rumours of Bismarck's plans he raised them again. Belcredi was hostile to the parliamentary initiative, Esterhazy was sceptical, only Biegeleben supported him and that half-

heartedly as he doubted support in south Germany, even Beust wanted to avoid provoking Prussia. FJ was temperamentally unsuited to such a dramatic move.

26 Feb Lerman (p104, she cites Zimmer, 1996): 'some evidence' for a meeting in the Foreign Office at which Bismarck convinced Wilhelm of 'the necessity of preparing for war', so maybe the meeting on 28th was 'for the purpose of informing' others. (Sounds iffy, and I haven't come across other references to Wilhelm going to the FO for meetings.)

28 Feb CRUCIAL Prussian Crown Council.

Pflanze (p292ff): the diplomatic corps noted the presence of Moltke, Alvensleben, Goltz (recalled from Paris), and Manteuffel (recalled from Schleswig).

Wilhelm opened the meeting complaining of how Austria had undermined Gastein and was blocking Prussia's rise.

Bismarck: war with Austria will come 'sooner or later', better now than to let Austria pick the timing, she is determined to resist Prussia's 'natural and very justified' policy of leading Germany, we must seek 'more definite guarantees' from France.

Eulenburg: War would help deal with domestic problems.

Bismarck: NO, this would be a useful by-product but cannot be the motive for a war.

Moltke: we are ready, Austrian troops are moving into Bohemia but there is no sign of Austria buying horses, an alliance with Italy is crucial.

Only FW spoke for peace.

NB. unmentioned in any of the books I've seen, the letter from Wilhelm to Bismarck on 23 April is also important evidence re this meeting.

There are 3 accounts of the meeting (one by Moltke, one by Muhler). **Some historians have wrongly attributed Eulenburg's remark to Bismarck. Moltke's version quotes Bismarck saying 'the domestic situation does not require a foreign war, although it is an additional reason that makes war appear advantageous'. An account by Muhler reads: 'Bismarck took exception to this assumption [by Eulenburg] that domestic questions can be the motive for war, [although] their solution may be a fruit of it.'**

Gall (p280ff) says Bismarck argued that Austria has 'always jealously opposed Prussia's natural and legitimate strivings in this direction by not allowing pressure to assume control of Germany, although incapable of doing so its self. He returned to his argument at the time that 1848 had been a great missed opportunity: 'Had Prussia then sought to lead and control the movement not from the platform but with the sword, it would probably have succeeded in bringing about a more favourable outcome.' Gall implies the Eulenburg comment was Bismarck and does not record Bismarck's objection.

JS (p.237) is also confused re Eulenburg (he quotes Eyck as his source) and quotes Bismarck saying: 'a forceful appearance abroad and a war undertaken for Prussia's honour would have a beneficial effect on the solution of the internal conflict'. He says that Moltke reported there was no sign of Austrian horse purchases. He devotes just a paragraph to this crucial meeting and does not go into crucial details about the different sources and accounts, including the Moltke and Muhler quotes.

Barry: **Bismarck said — 'A war with Austria must certainly come sooner or later. It is wiser to undertake it now under these most favourable conditions than to leave it to Austria to choose the most auspicious moment for itself.'** (Carr, p127 gives a similar translation of key lines.) Goltz: Napoleon will stay neutral. Moltke: it is vital for Italy to attack and thereby limit Austria's force against Prussia. Bismarck suggested Moltke go to Florence to negotiate and this was agreed (EF: this was agreed after the meeting). Wilhelm: annexation is worth the risk of war but it should not be declared too hastily.

Stern implies that Eulenburg's remark was said by Bismarck and does not explain the details (p.70). EF: Manteuffel was more bellicose than Bismarck. Only FW spoke against war.

Lerman: Goltz said after this that Bismarck succeeded in pushing Wilhelm towards war until 5pm when he dined but then the guests invited by Augusta all argued for peace.

Eyck: after this 'war was indeed inevitable' (p.111) and p126-7 he argues that although Bismarck was not set on war in all circumstances, and would have been happy to attain his ends without war, in practice war was 'unavoidable' because the only alternative was Austria seeking and Prussia granting compensation elsewhere (e.g Italy) which was not a viable path. Eyck gets the attribution to Eulenburg right and makes the point that this fits with Bismarck's often repeated idea that 'foreign policy is an end in itself'. (So JS is doubly wrong!)

OP: Bismarck had not abandoned his approach of keeping alternative paths open and knew France might suddenly throw a spanner in the works, the Italian alliance might not happen etc. (War was not 'inevitable' in Feb-March 1866. He still had to make the Italian alliance and ensure Napoleon would keep out, hence the Gablenz initiative and keeping options open to the last minute. He was determined to push Austria out of north Germany, undermine the Bund, and force a decision with Austria. Many possible events might have pushed things in a different direction. E.g Any of the key players might have been assassinated (and Bismarck nearly was). Italy might have rejected a treaty and wobbled Wilhelm. Austria might have tried better approaches but probably only with different people — it is hard to see how the actual players in Vienna might have played their cards much differently (they might have picked a better commander than Benedek but duffing this decisions seems highly characteristic of FJ).

But given Bismarck's priorities — and assuming the same players, Bismarck keeping sufficient control of Wilhelm and so on — then in summer 1866 *increasing tension and crisis on the brink of war (like summer 1865) was guaranteed* and the only two realistic possibilities were a) an Austrian diplomatic collapse (like 1865) and acceptance of a radically changed setup in North Germany (including the likely collapse of the Bund) or b) war.

It's important to remember how Bismarck thought about how politics works. He knew his grip on Wilhelm was wobbly, he knew there were international intrigues to remove him, he knew that to stay in power he might have to bank some gains but retreat from maximalist goals, he couldn't be sure if Vienna would fight or fold, and so on.

As the crisis developed he was trying to:

- split the liberals further;
- split the Confederation with carrots and sticks;
- keep the other three Powers neutral with carrots and sticks;
- keep Wilhelm and army in line with his policy (with multiple royal intrigues against him);
- face Austria with a two-front war after an alliance with Italy;
- threaten Austria with revolution (via Hungarian revolutionaries etc).

By this time, the liberals were seriously divided: many supported annexation; business supported the government's economic line; many liberals were demoralised and knew the public was not with them; Bismarck was looking for compromise but the King was still not keen.)

OP: In March Goltz returned to Paris with a letter from Wilhelm suggesting a 'more intimate entente'. Over the next 3 months, Napoleon tried to play off Prussia and Austria but could not decide what he wanted and was worried about over-reaching on the Rhine and provoking a hostile coalition. He 'sought to entice from Bismarck a concrete offer without raising a concrete demand' (OP).

End of Feb/early March Austrians began some mobilisation, Prussia began preliminary steps. (NB. Pretty much all the different books use different dates for these steps, and often different definitions, and they are irreconcilable. Someone should be given the job of providing definitive dates with links to the original documents, or their closest links.)

Wawro: Austria 'triggered the mobilisations of 1866' on 28/2 by ordering cavalry regiments to make themselves 'march ready'.

Barry: the 'first steps' taken in Vienna — mobilising some regiments — were 2 March 'in response to news that the Berlin Landwehr had been called out' and on 7/3 the decision was taken to move troops into Bohemia.

Carr: Austria needed 7-8 weeks, Prussia 4 (p128).

Gordon Craig: Austria needed 7 weeks to mobilise (p7), Prussia 'less than half the time required by the Austrians' (p17).

Wawro: Austria required 'at least 12 weeks' for mobilisation, Prussia 'half that'.

Clark: Austria required 7-8 weeks to mobilise (the official historian says 7 weeks, the chief of staff estimated 8 after a week of preparing orders, cf. Henikstein memo 17/3), Prussia 4.

Clark (p577ff): FJ ordered written preparations on 21/2, on 28/2 he approved the plan with minor changes and ordered other preparations including regiments in Transylvania (the most distant province) to be ready to march, cannon and gun carriages bought, and Benedek to report to Vienna from 6 March. 2 March the war office ordered 6 regiments and six batteries in Galicia and Transylvania to be 'ready to march'. Clark: it is 'highly probable' that before or during the meeting on 7 March the struggle began between Mensdorff and the military over troop movements, though there is no record of such discussion on 7th. Austria's recent economising made her more vulnerable. Moving faster was the best move if war was coming, but also made it more likely — holding back made it more likely to win the diplomatic battle and stop war. Now, at the start of March, FJ sided with Mensdorff.

Early March At a lunch, the wife of the Saxon Ambassador asked Bismarck if it was true that he planned to fight Austria and conquer Saxony.

Bismarck: 'Certainly it is true my dear Countess. From the first day of my ministry I have entertained no other thought. Our cannon have been cast already and you shall soon see how much better they are compared to the Austrian military.'

Countess: 'Horrible! But give me some advice since you're talkative. I have two country places, my estate in Bohemia and my castle near Leipzig, in which shall I take refuge?'

Bismarck: 'If you take my advice stay away from Bohemia, for just there, if I am not mistaken, right in the neighbourhood of your estate we shall beat the Austrians. Go quietly to Saxony, ... [your castle there] does not lie on any military road.'

This was reported to her husband who told Beust who told Vienna. When asked about it Bismarck spoke as if he might have been joking. (This was characteristic — was it candour, fake candour, bluff, misdirection? His opponents were always scrambling to figure out what such comments meant and it undermined their resolution.)

1 March Mensdorff-Apponyi, read to Clarendon: Please use your influence for 'moderation and calm' in Berlin and Florence; declaring a strict British neutrality would 'tip the scales' in favour of Prussia; Britain has 'a great interest in not jeopardising the political balance of Germany and Europe'; 'If the English Government still intends to find in the Imperial Cabinet an auxiliary who will assist it in the efforts to maintain the Ottoman Empire, England must help us on its side to ward off dangers whose approach could paralyse our influence in the Orient or give another direction to our policy.'

1 March (Clark) Mensdorff-Karolyi (drafted by Biegeleben as usual): 'We share your opinion unreservedly, that we must not for one moment allow the impression to arise that Austria would retreat before a threatening ultimatum from Prussia... We would consider a war between the German Powers an immeasurable misfortune, a simultaneous war against Prussia and Italy a danger demanding the utmost exertion — but **Austria is not a Power to be deprived of honour, influence and prestige or to be pushed from well-earned positions without drawing the sword...** and if Count Bismarck wishes to appeal to arms to win the Duchies, to which Prussia has no right, or at least no more right than Austria, then there surely must be men in Berlin, who hold this beginning to be a wanton and unrighteous playing with human welfare... We are not writing this to challenge or to attack Bismarck personally. And we know that you will not use our words except to keep the peace, our warmest desire... Everything depends on restraining the Berlin Court from raising possible demands, before which we would not bow.'

Karolyi communicated this at the court. Mensdorff's first consideration in March was building the diplomatic alliance against Prussia and blocking any *casus belli*. Later Vienna switched to an effort to have Bismarck removed.

1 March Mensdorff-Metternich: 'It is essential for us to be on a friendly footing with France' and this is 'so important' now don't worry re our traditional policy in Turkey.

1 March Benedetti reported to Paris Bismarck's account of the 28/2 Council — Bismarck stressed that all agreed on annexation. Goltz would bring a letter to Napoleon about a possible *entente*.

2 March Benedetti was invited to a dinner with Wilhelm and Goltz who was going to Paris the next day. **Goltz took with him a letter from Wilhelm to Napoleon asking him to discuss with Goltz the terms of a deal.** Pottinger: Wilhelm said to Benedetti after dinner, 'We are coming to the moment when we will need to distinguish our true friends.'

3 March (Barry) Bismarck and Moltke meeting to discuss the Florence mission. Ideas drafted, finalised on 12th but as he was about to set off news arrived that General Govone would come to Berlin to discuss an alliance and he arrived on 14th. (This does not fit with Clark saying Austria knew on 8th that La Marmora was sending Govone to Berlin — unless one assumes that Austria could know secret Italian decisions about their dealings with Berlin before Berlin, which is possible and maybe likely?)

Eyck refers to 'his really masterly instructions for Moltke' written on 12 March (p.113). He told Moltke that he wanted an alliance which obliged Italy to fight if he started a war but did not oblige him to follow Italy. He told him to discuss with Italy his goal of a new constitution for north Germany. This mission was dropped because Govone came. GW vol 5 has a document to Moltke in March: 'The goal . . . is the agreement of Austria to the new German constitution we are striving for. Limiting our ambitions to northern Germany also offers the . . . possibility of an understanding with Bavaria'. Is this the document Eyck refers to? (Probably.)

5 March Bismarck revived the idea with Karolyi of Austria asking for compensation, but Karolyi (rightly) half-sensed a rat.

5 March (Pottinger) Although he paid a courtesy call on Drouyn, Goltz said little and spoke to Napoleon on 5th without Drouyn. Goltz-Bismarck 6/3: Napoleon wants time to consider a deal, asks that I don't speak to Drouyn. Goltz told Napoleon that Prussia was seeking an Italian deal for joint action and intended to create a federation north of the Mainz with links to the south: what does France want? Napoleon was supportive but stressed that French opinion demanded compensation, but he was vague about it.

6 March Bismarck-Goltz: make clear, no concession of German territory. Cf. 17/3.

7 March Clarendon replied to Apponyi of 1/3 that Austria had not taken advice two years ago and Britain would 'preserve a strict neutrality' — of course we want peace but 'we know by experience of how little avail such good offices were with the German Governments if we acted singly and had not the support of other Powers.' We will not threaten Prussia but will 'hold the balance as equally as possible between the Belligerents'. Privately he also wrote to Bloomfield: '**[W]e shall be neutral & we shall endeavour to prevent our neutrality being in any way injurious to Austria, but it wd be a departure from the rigid rules of neutrality to menace Prussia in the way indicated in Ct. Mensdorff's despatch, and moreover if we took such a course single handed it wd probably do more harm than good. Our experience of 2 years ago has taught us how little the advice and cautions of England are regarded in Germany... [However] 'if [Austria] cd give the Prussians a licking I am sure that Europe wd be glad'**'. (Hammond also wrote to Bloomfield on 20/3 that 'I confess I should like to see the Prussians well licked'.)

Clarendon also wrote to Loftus on 7th. The letter was informal and stressed that fact — Britain was not making a formal complaint. He told Loftus that in his discussions with Bismarck he should a) make a moral case to Bismarck against war: 'in the name of all that is rational, decent, humane, what can be the justification of war on the part of Prussia? She cannot publicly plead her greed for territorial aggrandizement & she cannot with truth say that the administration of Holstein by Austria has been of a kind to constitute a *cassus belli*... Bernstorff has just told me that the license allowed in Holstein [by Austria] and the hostile articles of newspapers under the inspiration of Austria have produced a state of things intolerable to Prussia'); b) point out to Bismarck that Prussia would be seen as 'an aggressive and unreasonable power' and 'Setting aside family ties, Prussia is the great Protestant Power of Europe, with which we naturally have kindred feelings, and

it would be with deep regret that we should see her regarded as a common enemy, because a wilful disturber of the peace of Europe; and still more if, in the course of events, we found ourselves compelled to take any part against her'; and c) suggest to Bismarck mediation by a third power to resolve the arguments with Austria.

Also on 7th, Clarendon received news from Crowe (stationed at Leipzig) who reported to Clarendon that at the Prussian Cabinet meeting of the 28th February 'most of the members of the Council declared for a breach and a war with Austria'.

7 March (Clark, unmentioned elsewhere) There was a meeting in Vienna with FJ, Benedek and generals to discuss the state of their forces. The meeting was reported and exaggerated in the press. This was 'unwise' (Clark p360).

Showalter: Benedek had been ordered to come from Italy to Vienna by 6 March. On 7 March FJ ordered the completion of preparations for mobilisation.

7 March (Pottinger, p71) There was a French ministerial meeting. Separately there was a meeting with Napoleon, Goltz and Drouyn. Drouyn read to Goltz, in front of Napoleon, a draft of the reply to Wilhelm. It was vague, stressed benevolent neutrality and further consultation. Napoleon was keeping his cards very close.

Pottinger: a) *Napoleon did not tell Drouyn about the Prussian discussions with Italy*, b) *Drouyn did not discover it until the end of March*, when Nigra asked him what he thought about it, at which he was noncommittal and went to Napoleon, who had been encouraging him in March to reassure Metternich about continued cordiality and told Drouyn to remain guarded (much of which it seems Drouyn told Cowley who reported it to London on 2/4) — a very tangled web! NB. Most of the books refer to Govone's arrival in Berlin 14 March as prompting Europe-wide discussions about a Prussia-Italy deal: did Drouyn not notice?!

[Napoleon was lying to everyone.

- He told Vienna he would not encourage Italy but he did encourage them to join Prussia.
- He told Prussia he was friendly but he was really hoping for a stalemate in the war from which he could dictate peace.
- He told Italy he favoured them but he was willing to sell them out (see his comments later).
- He lied to London about wanting peace when he really wanted a stalemate conflict.
- He was lying to Drouyn, his own minister.
- As AJP Taylor said, the widespread 20th Century idea that Bismarck was responsible for a 'moral degradation' of diplomacy is fanciful, the Napoleonic regime was a gangster regime, Napoleon was a perpetual liar, and Bismarck simply outplayed him at his own disreputable game.]

7 March (Pottinger) Paris contacted London re the scheme for compensation in the Danube Principalities. But London was not keen (e.g it would bring Austrian and Russian empires into contact) and thought Austria wouldn't bite, and Russia was extremely hostile. When Napoleon had raised this idea with Metternich during the Polish crisis, it had offended him so deeply that Napoleon had promised never to raise it again (Pottinger p74), see 12/3.

8 March Clarendon-Cowley: The French are talking about a deal in which Italy gets Venetia and Austria gets compensation.

8 March Revertera-Mensdorff: Gorchakov says Russia will not intervene, her neutrality is '*réelle et parfaite*' (real and perfect).

8 March Pfordten sent a memo to several German states: do everything to avoid war, if it comes stay neutral until the issue is decided in the Bund. This was bad news for Vienna. But also cf. 18/3.

8 March (Clark) Austria knew on 8th that La Marmora was sending Govone to Berlin to negotiate. (Clark says some old books think this news arrived in Vienna on 11th but this is wrong, p363.)

10 March (Clark) Metternich-Mensdorff: Napoleon and the Empress suggest that they could not keep Italy from exploiting Prussia's temptations and they encourage us to conciliate Italy. Pottinger adds: ... and Napoleon is holding open the possibility of a Franco-Austrian *entente*. (A sign of how complex all this is — Clark writes that at this time Napoleon was encouraging Italy to do the Prussia deal while Pottinger writes that he was trying to discourage it!)

11 March Loftus spoke to Bismarck regarding the Clarendon message of 7th. Bismarck dodged the mediation suggestion and replied that 'in his opinion there were no means of deciding the difference with Austria but by the sword, and the present was the most favourable opportunity for Prussia, which might not again offer itself for a century'. (Loftus to Clarendon, 17 March). (Mosse refers (p227) to another telegram from Loftus-Clarendon on 11th straight after this discussion, in which Bismarck said that he might accept Oldenburg.) He said on 11th of relations with Austria: 'I might use the words of Richelieu to his discarded mistress: *Nous ne sommes pas ennemis: mais nous ne nous aimons plus*' (we are not enemies: but we no longer love each other) [I can't tell whether this was reported on 11 or 17]. 12 March Russell-Queen: We don't want Prussia humiliated or to grab the duchies, we don't want Austria crippled by a war, the best outcome now is probably for Oldenburg to take SH. I will suggest this to Cabinet. The Queen strongly objected and Russell dropped the plan. In Feb-March, London was focused on a new Reform Bill and the tensions within Cabinet and Parliament, Gladstone's controversial manner. Derby had another bout of ill health and was thought close to death.

11 March Benedetti delivered Napoleon's letter to Wilhelm then called on Bismarck who stressed to him his plan for federal reform. Benedetti described it to Drouyn: 'I call your attention to this combination, and in the mind of Bismarck it is exclusively destined to become a weapon of war, an expedient to sow confusion in all of Germany, but if he were to miscalculate, and if the central authority, chosen by the German people, should succeed in constituting itself despite him, he would have involuntarily laid the bases for the German union. I do not wish to have suspected him of having calculated on this eventuality and having accommodated himself to it in advance, in the conviction that it could not but further the elevation and aggrandisement of his state and realise Prussian hegemony. I must however bring to your attention an attempt whose consequences could touch us in a most regrettable fashion.' Benedetti also politely complained about being kept in the dark and the difficulties it was causing him — it seems Bismarck did *not* believe that Benedetti was being kept *out* of the loop.

11 March Karolyi reported menacing news about possible mobilisation (sent 9th, reached Vienna probably 11th): Bismarck is rousing public opinion to war, he's calling the military levy in Berlin 'in the very manner, speed and schedule, and with the very same strength *as would be the case in regular mobilisation*' — i.e a rehearsal of mobilisation in Berlin. (Clark: 'Bismarck later claimed, probably truly, that this levy was called by the war department unknown to him.') Karolyi learned from English sources that Bismarck was stirring trouble in Belgrade and from Count Hohenthal, the Saxon envoy in Berlin, that he'd been warned that the Prussian general staff were contemplating an invasion of Saxony and the seizure of passes into Bohemia 'at the instant war was decided upon in principle before the mobilisation of the army was complete'. (Clark thinks Hohenthal probably learned this because Bismarck wanted him to.) Karolyi therefore advised immediate military discussions with Saxony. This alarming news was confirmed by reports from Beust who also urged immediate action and criticised Austria for being slow.

12 March Gladstone introduced the new Reform Bill. House unenthusiastic. Thought it would give ~400k the vote. Disraeli was determined to resist.

12 March Eugénie spoke to Metternich (they were close) and urged him to do the deal — this would then solve Venetia then France and Italy could rally to Austria. Metternich listened in horror then complained it would 'cut off our arms and legs'. So cross was he that he then described Napoleon's repeated errors and said he lacked 'diplomatic finesse'! A few days later Eugénie brought it up again, said that she had reported Metternich's words exactly, and that she and her husband 'admitted frankly that they understood nothing of diplomacy and that in effect the Emperor repented of certain mistakes of bad timing committed by him' (Metternich, 22/3). They discussed a variant of the plan in which Austria gained in Bosnia and Herzegovina but this was no more pleasant for Metternich. Cf 22/3.

12 March (Clark) A note circulated in strict confidence to Stuttgart, Dresden, Karlsruhe and Darmstadt, in which Austria promised for the first time — if Prussia fights, we will 'refer all further deliberations in the Duchies question to the Confederation, to recognise its decision and to

support it with our entire strength'. Mensdorff asked in return that the states discuss military issues as Vienna had to know whether to defend Saxony and Mainz. Her friends took heart at this leadership.

13 March Mensdorff-Gablenz: 'It is highly essential that we give Prussia no handle from which to derive a formula for a declaration of war.' He wanted to blame Bismarck for hostilities.

14 March Buchanan-Russell: Gorchakov says we should threaten Prussia with siding with Austria, this would stop her 'attempt to realise her ambitious projects by violence'. Buchanan declined.

14 March FJ was persuaded by the generals, against Mensdorff's advice, to mobilise some regiments for Bohemian defence. (Wawro & Clark: they used a pretext of stopping some pogroms.) The reports were used by Bismarck to frame the coming conflict as one of Austrian aggression and to wind up Wilhelm. According to Wawro, Bismarck and Moltke wanted to treat this as a *casus belli* and declare war but Wilhelm would not.

Clark: There were two military conferences on 14th in Vienna: a) they decided to move regiments to the Bohemian border; b) troops were sent to guard passes from Saxony, and a few other battalions were ordered to move gradually over coming weeks; c) arrangements were made to receive the retreating Saxon army. Dealing with pogroms was a pretext as the moves couldn't be kept secret, though the press was ordered not to report the troop news.

Why did FJ do this and give Bismarck the pretext he wanted? Memories of Frederick the Great were powerful. They were anxiously awaiting Bismarck's bomb of federal reform which hung 'like the sword of Damocles over Austria's head' (as Karolyi put it to Mensdorff 21/3). They knew Govone was coming to Berlin.

14 March General Govone arrived in Berlin. Suspicious negotiations with Bismarck at the Italian legation. Govone was looking for a deal in which, as he put it, 'the adder bites the snake-charmer' (Eyck: 'the viper will have bitten the charlatan', *Et la vipère aura mordu le charlatan*). His presence was noted by the diplomatic corps and Karolyi reported back to Vienna on what he heard. OP: Karolyi watched the comings and goings from his window across the street! The negotiations dragged on for a few weeks partly because Italy wanted a time-limited deal but Bismarck wanted an open-ended one, fearing Italy would take a deal to Vienna and use it to coerce Vienna into concessions than leave Bismarck in the lurch. Similarly Italy feared that an open-ended deal would allow Bismarck to use it to pressure Vienna into getting what he wanted then leave Italy in the lurch.

(WAF) That evening Benedetti spoke to him briefly at a party given by Bismarck but little was said. In mid-March, Prussia's envoy in Florence, Count Usedom, had initiated secret contacts with Hungarian revolutionaries. Bismarck had been in touch with Hungarian revolutionaries since 1862. He met some revolutionary Hungarians himself, despite his denials (Feuchtwanger). Gall: this was Usedom's idea, first proposed to Bismarck in mid-May and his response was 'a notable lack of enthusiasm'. (Nobody else I've seen takes this line.)

Friedjung (p110): Govone at first did not want to do a deal with Bismarck but was gradually persuaded. Bismarck said to him one day, 'I hope to drag the King to war but I can't absolutely promise it.' Govone also told Marmora (22/3) that if Bismarck fell he would be replaced by pro-Austrians.

15 March Manteuffel in Schleswig went after the Augustenburgers with new laws punishing agitators with hard labour. Gablenz warned Vienna he could not suppress the inevitable polemics which would in turn be used by Bismarck. This news 'aroused resentment in Vienna to a terrific pitch' (Clark) and was accompanied by Beust in Dresden urging Austria to declare publicly that in all circumstances she would abide by Article 11 of the Confederation pact and expected others to do the same — All gave a threatened state the right to demand from the others protection against attack. Beust urged that Vienna act before Prussian mobilisation intimidated her neighbours.

15 March Bismarck instructed Goltz: prevaricate in the conference over the Danubian principalities so that Austria will have to keep some troops on the Rumanian border as long as possible. (An example of how he used every bit of leverage he could.)

16 March Rumours in Berlin that Bismarck was trying to sell the Saar coalfields.

16 March (Clark p366ff) With tensions very high in Vienna, Mensdorff ‘dashed off’ a telegram to Karolyi in his own hand: News of military preparations is alarming, ‘We can therefore no longer postpone a demand for the certain elucidation of Prussia’s intentions. You will therefore at once interpellate [Bismarck] as to whether Prussia harbours the object of tearing up the Gastein Convention with forcible hands. Point out that only a completely precise and unambiguous answer can reassure us. See that [Wilhelm] is informed of your step, the basis of which is the urgent desire to try to uphold the peace in Germany. Report by telegraph at the earliest possible moment.’ Without waiting for an answer, the 7 main German courts were informed of the demand, and if no ‘satisfactory answer’ is given, Austria will place the Duchies in the hands of the Bund and appeal against Prussia under Articles 11 & 19. ‘Thus the interpellation was widely announced even before Karolyi had made it!’ (Clark). Vienna added another dispatch to the effect that she would propose mobilising non-Prussian federal forces and their union with Austria’s army. Mensdorff insisted on an extremely pacific passage added at the end.

Karolyi went to speak to Bismarck. Clark: Bismarck wanted to keep the situation tense but not spark the war now. He answered Austria’s question with a laconic ‘No’ but with a cynical smile added, ‘**But, my dear Count, you don’t really think I should have answered any differently if I did intend war, do you?...** If a power intended the next morning to march across its frontiers, it would also reply with a ‘no’ the evening before.’ Karolyi reported the exchange at 21:00, received Vienna 23:00. Karolyi was unaware of the communication to the German courts and reported that Bismarck had given a precise answer to the question.

(It is very odd how little the events of 16/3 feature in almost all books.)

17 March (Clark) Bismarck realised he’d made a mistake with his cynical joke and downplayed his comment. Karolyi reported that he’d been invited back and told that, contrary to his comment, if he really were intending to cross the frontier he would have given ‘an evasive reply or none at all’ and he denied any warlike purpose behind the trial mobilisation (‘it was called by Prince Friedrich Carl without his knowledge for purely technical reasons’), Prussia had done nothing to give cause for fear while Austria was beginning to arm. When Karolyi said that all Europe knew that Austria would never fire the first shot, **Bismarck replied that the Austrian public would drive the Emperor to attack Prussia.**

Beust regretted Vienna’s mishandling — you can’t catch a man like Bismarck with a telegraphic and oral question, he complained. Clark — FJ and Mensdorff had again acted ‘without visualising clearly enough the outcome’, it had not pinned Bismarck down or created tension between him/Wilhelm. Broadcasting the news was a ‘greater mistake’. The act worried the scared states (e.g Hanover, Bavaria) and the failure worried the more zealous! Ironically, the failure of the plan was beneficial as the threat to place the matter finally in the hands of the Bund would have been seen in Berlin as an act of war. On 18th Mensdorff told German states that Prussia had denied aggressive intentions so Austria would not make the declaration.

17 March A few days after his discussion with Bismarck on 11th (but before 17th), Loftus met Wilhelm and told him the gist of Clarendon’s message. Loftus reported that Wilhelm was ‘well-disposed to accept the good offices of England’. Bismarck made a vague suggestion to Loftus that he would inform Bernstorff of the King’s view. **Then Bismarck was blindsided by Wilhelm asking the Crown Prince to write to Victoria asking her to mediate, which he did on 17th.** Bismarck, enraged, when he found out told Bernstorff (20th) to regard it as unofficial. (The Crown Princess was writing to Victoria in March that ‘Fritz’ was ‘completely against’ the King’s/Bismarck’s policy.) Clarendon did not want to seize the bull by the horns and commit himself particularly as he kept changing his mind about the likelihood of war — on 13th he thought ‘the fear of war has rather abated’, so did not want to back Oldenburg as a possible compromise.

17 March Mensdorff’s sister-in-law wrote: ‘There is unanimity here that Bismarck is simply mad and has so jammed himself up in domestic and foreign affairs that he has lost his head and wants war *a tout prix*, to get himself out of the affair and maintain his position.’

17 March (Stern — haven't seen reference to this meeting elsewhere) Ministers met, told (by who) Austria won't take money for the duchies, the Cologne-Minden share deal is in trouble.

17 March The Austrian Chief of Staff submitted his estimate re mobilisation timetable: two weeks notice for the railway authorities, one more week to write the orders for them, mobilising troops before then would just create chaos. Henikstein: railway orders are almost equivalent to open mobilisation and we should not counter-order once they're given.

17 March Goltz-Bismarck: Napoleon 'talked with me in a manner which does not directly encourage the initiation of [war with Austria], but does not discourage it either.'

18 March (Clark) Mensdorff telegraphed the German states: Prussia has denied aggressive intentions so Austria will not make the proposed declaration. Over the next ten days he tried to get Pfordten to bring the matter before the Bund. He argued that it would make it harder for Bismarck to create a war, raise the status of the Bund, and mobilise European opinion against Bismarck. Pfordten was not keen on jumping into Bismarck's crosshairs. Cf. 26/3

Clark (p390ff): Dalwigk (minister of Hesse) had offered Austria an alliance on 4 March.

Württemberg seemed solid (Queen Olga pushed her father, the Tsar, to intervene against Bismarck, which Wilhelm reminded her of after the war). Saxony and Beust were obviously onside. Mensdorff therefore used these 3 to try to corral Bavaria and Baden. On 17th Beust began to take military preparations, on 19th the reserves were called six weeks early, 'thus Saxony was the first of the secondary states to take the same steps that Austria was so soon to regret' (p393). Bismarck remained optimistic about persuading Pfordten to keep Bavaria neutral, against the prediction of his envoy there. (Clark: Bismarck handled Pfordten much better than Biegeleben did, speaking to him honestly, inflating his ego, disclosing confidences, and offered him the chance to be a partner in presenting the plan for epoch-making reform. I suspect the dramatic and tyrannical stories about Bismarck — e.g the cynical joke to Karolyi above — were kept alive more than the flattering and charming stories.)

Vienna was more accurate in predicting Bavaria would ultimately support her. Pfordten had told Vienna on 2/3 that Bavaria would support her if she were attacked but he wanted to watch the negotiations before making his stance public. Bavaria's three leading military men thought Prussia was better prepared and were cool towards Vienna. Blome urged Mensdorff to send secret agents to run a propaganda campaign to fight Prussia's, it's unclear if this happened.

20 March Hammond to Bloomfield: 'I confess I should like to see the Prussians well licked'.

20 March Crown Princess-Victoria: Bismarck, the 'wicked man', was 'frantic that the K. [king] shd have desired F. [Fritz] to write to you' and would now do all he could 'to pin the K. to his politics and paralyse any intervention from elsewhere'.

20 March (Mosse) Bismarck-Bernstorff: The Crown Prince had written to Victoria without his knowledge. Bernstorff should ignore communication on the matter until receipt of a private letter. On 22 March he got 'an enormous long letter' from Bismarck.

20 March Zerber (unmentioned by almost all): Moltke briefed Bismarck on the war plan.

Moltke planned a speedy attack on Dresden with the 1st Army and the centre of mass of Prussian forces would be near Gorlitz. Bismarck knew what the deal with Italy meant and what Moltke planned but he 'double-crossed' the Italians and Moltke (p112).

20 March (Pottinger) Moltke told Bismarck that Italy could put ~200k in the field (and was exaggerating numbers) and the effectiveness was dubious. But he had also stressed, e.g 28/2 Council, that the *fact* of Italy creating a two-front war and requiring a large Austrian presence in the south was 'indispensable' (28/2) to Prussian success. Bismarck had said 28/2 that he doubted Italy could afford to keep her forces at the 1866 level for long.

21 March Having suggested mediation to Bismarck via Loftus, now that Wilhelm seemed keen Clarendon pointed out that he had not officially offered to mediate. He also told Loftus, 'If we act at all in this matter I entirely agree with you that it must be in conjunction with France.' On the same day, 21st, the Cabinet decided that Britain *should* offer 'good offices' if Prussia asks and Loftus was told this. On 21 March Bernstorff told Bismarck that Clarendon had told Apponyi (on 7th) that Britain will stay neutral.

21 March (Pottinger) Napoleon told Nigra to go ahead with the Prussian treaty. Around this time he told Nigra, 'Don't cherish any illusions. Austria will not cede Venetia unless she is forced to it by war.' This was passed on by Goltz to Bismarck on 23rd.

22 March, morning (Mosse) Bernstorff read out Bismarck's long letter full of accusations against Vienna but also making clear his goal was annexation — the duchies were 'politically & militarily indispensable' to Prussia. Clarendon told Bernstorff that helping on annexation 'was not to be thought of for a moment'. Millman's account is unclear on timing around this. NB. Bismarck did not reject mediation entirely. Clarendon considered 'all question of good offices ... at an end' and relations with Prussia 'remained as before'. In Berlin, Bismarck told Loftus that London should try to moderate the Austrians who were the aggressors.

22 March Metternich reported to Mensdorff various discussions with Eugénie et al, including about the Principalities (cf. 12/3). Realising they'd erred, Napoleon had brought Drouyn into the picture to calm Metternich. Drouyn had reassured him: Venetia will not be raised again unless circumstances cause a general redrawing of boundaries, and relations have not been damaged by the episode with Eugénie.

23 March (JS 26th) In a letter to a friend, Roon wrote: 'Things are not good here. Our friend Otto Bismarck in Herculean day and night efforts has worn down his nerves ... The day before yesterday he suffered such hefty stomach cramps and was as a result yesterday so depressed, so irritable and annoyed — apparently by little things — that I am today not without anxiety, because I know what's at stake.... Complete freedom of thought does not combine well with a bad stomach and irritated nerves.'

23 March Goltz to Bismarck: Don't push for war, here in Paris everyone is suddenly anti-Prussian except Napoleon, 'You must know better than I ... that Rothschild refused you the Saarbrücken coal business.' Bismarck noted: 'It has not been offered to him.' Clark: **Goltz was also secretly part of the Coburg Intrigue (cf. 27/3) and wrote at the time he hoped for a letter from FJ to 'break Bismarck's neck'.** He wrote to Bismarck 29/3 and to Wilhelm 3/4 that there was growing hostility to Prussia in Paris.

23 March Cowley reported to the FO on growing hostility to Napoleon in Paris, he and Eugénie had just been booed on a trip through Paris to the theatre, there was growing muttering about public opinion and the failures of the regime, and Napoleon had likened the atmosphere to 1848.

23 March Mensdorff to the Duke of Coburg (his cousin: 'I did not invent the stupid Schleswig-Holstein question and am suffering for the sins of past years. Whether we shall get out of this most tedious of tedious questions without a conflict I cannot yet say' (Friedjung). (I feel his pain!)

24 March To Goltz: The problem of neutralising Napoleon requires opening 'the German question' and establishing for Prussia 'a firm and national foundation'.

24 March Bismarck to Bavarian Minister-President Pfordten: **'Direct elections ... and universal suffrage I regard as greater guarantees of a conservative stance than any artificial electoral system designed to produce contrived majorities.'** Similarly see his comment to von Coburg-Gotha on 26 March and to Bernstorff on 19 April. Gall: also on 24/3 Bismarck shared with Pfordten his motion for the Bund and asked for his opinion.

24 March Bismarck issued a circular to the Bund members portraying Austrian troop movements as a hostile act against an innocent Prussia. Clark: This persuaded Pfordten to agree with Beust that the two courts remind Bismarck of his federal obligations. By now FJ realised that Mensdorff had been right about ordering troop movements on 14/3. Mensdorff planned: 1) a public challenge to Prussia (cf. 31/3); 2) seek neutrals' support, 3) a secret plan to have Bismarck removed. He had to deal with growing warlike mood in Vienna from generals, his own department etc. Gablenz, Karolyi and Esterhazy encouraged his attempt to keep the peace. (Clark p374).

24 March (Stern) Bodelschwingh told Prussian Cabinet that he might raise 40m thaler but thereafter would need a loan. End of March he tried to sell the Cologne-Minden shares but could not sell them all without incurring a loss. Market was sagging.

24 March Victoria-the Crown Princess of Prussia: Clarendon is 'most disagreeable & unmanageable'.

24 March (WAF, p56) Bismarck negotiated the Italian deal with Count Barral because Govone did not have full powers.

24 March (Pottinger) Nigra telegraphed that he had heard that Napoleon had said that France could not support an *offensive attack* on Austria, and Drouyn was saying similar but that things might be different if Austria attacked. La Marmora was worried and sent a secret emissary, Count Arese (who knew Napoleon), to Paris. At roughly the same time (dates are confused), Napoleon's cousin (known as Plon-plon) rushed to Paris from Italy to tell his uncle that Italy was close to signing the deal, and he, Plon-plon, thought Italian unification was best served by supporting Austria and doing a Silesia/Venetia trade after a war with Prussia (much discussed in Vienna). Napoleon told Arese he supported a deal with Prussia but this was advice 'without any responsibility' for the consequences.

Friedjung talked to Nigra after the war and wrote (p113) that Nigra told him Napoleon had told Nigra: 'In this way [Italy-Prussia alliance] Italy will get Venice and France will benefit by the conflict of the two powers whose alliance hems her in. Once the struggle has begun France can throw her weight into the balance and must obviously become arbitrator and master of the situation. By occupying the Rhineland with 100,000 men I shall be able to dictate the terms of peace.' According to Marmora, Napoleon said, 'Sign a treaty with Prussia, however vague and noncommittal it may be, for it is very desirable to furnish Monsieur de Bismarck with the necessary means to push the King into war.' Bismarck passed on flattering remarks about Napoleon to Govone, knowing they would be reported via Italy to Paris.

(NB. Napoleon was not telling Drouyn much of what he was thinking and doing viz Italy/Prussia and was more pro the deal than he let on to Drouyn.)

25 March An anti-war protest in Solingen that spread. Wilhelm found this 'very unpleasant' but the liberals remained divided about how to oppose Bismarck.

26 March Bismarck to von Coburg-Gotha (private): 'A German parliament is of more use to us than an army corps.'

26 March Pfordten suggested he mediate on the basis of: Prussia to accept Augustenburg and a modification of February demands, Austria to allow Prussia greater voting rights in the Bund and to exercise preponderant influence in North Germany. Clark: this was 'unfortunately never taken seriously by either German power' and came too late — proposed formally on 31/3 but by then Prussia had started partial mobilisation. Bismarck did not dismiss Pfordten though — he 'showed deference' to Bavaria's wishes to try to neutralise her (Clark p378).

26 March The Crown Prince to the Duke of Coburg (his uncle): 'Bismarck ignores me completely. Since the autumn manoeuvres in Saxony he has not vouchsafed me a single word on the burning questions of the moment... His foolhardiness is absolutely inexplicable to me... We are handing ourselves over to blind faith with our hands tied! For my part I shall leave no stone unturned to warn against and ward off disaster. But you know how powerless I am.' Elsewhere that spring he described Bismarck's policy as 'a wanton gamble with the most sacred ideas'.

27 March Revertera reported on discussion with Gorchakov: The Tsar has written to Wilhelm who had replied in 'excessively cordial' terms. Bismarck's conduct has irritated the Russian Court. Austria has 'gained a lot of ground' here and Russian neutrality 'is already beginning to tilt in our favour'. Revertera suggested offering a 'cordial understanding' on the Principalities to buy Russian help. Mensdorff replied that Vienna could not support Russia in the Principalities, nor support Oldenburg and discussion of an alliance is premature. (Such *diplomatic* confidence, or inflexibility, could only be justified if her *military* confidence were justified, which it proved not to be.)

27 March Gramont reported: Mensdorff says he would 'consent to the annexation of Schleswig, if absolutely necessary to avoid a war, provided that Holstein ... conserved its federal independence'. This illumines what Mensdorff was suggesting on 1 March — an international conference could give Schleswig to Prussia while the Bund gets Holstein, half a loaf (Clark p358).

27 March Russell wrote to Victoria that 'There is but one remedy — one certain ... [way] of preserving peace — it is the dismissal of Count Bismarck'. He was probably hoping that Victoria would suggest this to Wilhelm. Victoria did write to the Crown Prince and his wife but to no effect.

27 March (Clark) Werther sent to Bismarck details of what Mensdorff had told him, honestly, about troop movements so far. Bismarck scribbled on the telegram: '*Ich glaube nur nichts von dem was Mensdorff sagt!*' (I just don't believe anything Mensdorff says!). He sent a copy to Wilhelm, without comment, who wrote on the note: '*Unsere Projekte von heute scheinen deinem gegenüber sehr übertrieben. Dass Beurlaubten in Mahren wieder entlassen sind, meldet auch Thile, Winckler und Feldman.*' ('Our projects today seem very exaggerated compared to yours. Thile, Winckler and Feldman also report that those on leave have been released in Mahren.' I don't understand this, maybe bad translation?)

27 March Crown Council at which William agreed on partial mobilisation but the orders were not issued. Bismarck got Roon to fix a meeting for them to get Wilhelm to sign 'definitive orders' and on **29 March (the Wednesday before Easter) Wilhelm signed the orders for partial mobilisation and a call up of reserves** (Steinberg, p239, Pflanze p294).

Steinberg: 'The Prussian King and his ministers had opted for war'. This is clearly wrong. Bismarck urged Roon on 28th to push the king to sign on 29th.

Barry dates this Council on 28th (typo?). Moltke had prepared a detailed paper for this meeting on mobilisation, pointed out Austria was diminishing Prussia's advantage, and was 'very disappointed' (Barry) by the meeting. In coming days he sent notes to Roon and Bismarck with intelligence on Austrian troop movements and urging action. On 2 April Moltke wrote to Wilhelm that the chance of victory depended 'essentially on the determination to undertake it being reached sooner than it is by Vienna and, if possible, at once': we have 5 railway lines to the frontier allowing a *concentration within 25 days* (NB. 25 days is very different to the 6 weeks claimed by Wawro), Austria only has one line into Bohemia. On 3 April he told Roon that the Austrian start meant that assuming general mobilisation started on both sides on the same day it would take 18 days for Prussia to catch up then from the 18th to 42nd day Prussia would have the advantage.

Stern: on 28th he persuaded Wilhelm to buy horses for half the field artillery.

Zerber: Moltke argued that Austria had gained an advantage from early mobilisation and Prussia must mobilise. The Crown Council (Zerber also dates it to 28th) decided to take no mobilisation measures and Moltke repeated his argument on 29 and 31 March and 2,3,5 April. 'In fact, between 24 March and 13 April the Austrians had taken no mobilisation measures at all.' Zerber presents Moltke's comment on 5 railway lines (above) as 'a momentous discovery' (really?!). On 3rd, Moltke concluded that Prussia's best chance lay around 18-42 days after mobilisation.

Clark: It was 28th when Wilhelm ordered partial mobilisation, start buying horses etc and this gave Prussia 'a considerable military advantage'.

Friedjung (p107): Wilhelm signed the orders on 29/3. Bismarck and Roon feared he would change his mind and had the orders sent off. Wilhelm then wrote to Roon saying 'I had quite forgotten Easter, would it be possible to postpone the despatch of the orders until Saturday? Ask Bismarck and let me know.' But the orders had already been sent. Friedjung writes that Prussian intelligence passed on some duff reports of Austrian troop movements to Moltke who repeated them to Roon, Bismarck and Wilhelm. (This would explain why some of the accounts of what Moltke said at various points does not seem to have been right with the benefit of hindsight, and would, obviously, be totally normal for a war so I believe it.)

27 March Duke Ernst of Saxe-Coburg 'struck the spark' (Clark) for 'the Coburg intrigue', an attempt by various people across Europe to get Bismarck fired. The intrigue involved *inter alia*: the Crown Prince and his wife Vicky (Victoria's daughter), Wilhelm's wife Queen Augusta, Wilhelm's sister, the Dowager Queen Elizabeth (sister of FJ's mother), Baron Schleinitz, Count Goltz whose brother was an adjutant to Wilhelm, and the ambassador in London. There were rumours that the Rothschilds were also agitating for his dismissal and they refused to help finance the war. (Baron James had written to Bleichröder a few years earlier that 'it is a principle of our Houses not to advance any money for war'.) (Roon thought Vicky was the prime mover but Clark says there is no evidence for this.)

On 27/3 the Duke sent his trusted secretary, Baron von Meyern, to Vienna to urge FJ to write personally to Wilhelm stressing his desire for peace. FJ feared a flat refusal so Mensdorff composed

a reply to Ernst, intended to be read by Wilhelm. Without naming Bismarck it aimed at him. Ernst forwarded it to Wilhelm (a full copy is attached to a Bismarck note to Redern 5/4) with a letter of his own and his wife wrote to Victoria. Both Augusta and Vicky wrote to Queen Victoria around this time. The Austrian court mobilised various personal connections to Wilhelm's court and many letters were sent to sisters, brothers, cousins etc.

EF: Bismarck briefed papers including *Kreuzzeitung* attacking the Duke to smoke out the plot, leading to further strains in his relationship with Wilhelm (below).

28 March Bismarck spoke to Benedetti. We're mobilising Guard units, agreed to buy horses. Those who oppose war still influencing Wilhelm. 'I hope that my master will hold fast, but I would not want to be obliged to guarantee it.'

29 March (Pottinger p78ff) Nigra telegraphed that Napoleon (after the discussions with Arese) would aid Italy if Austria attacked or Prussia and Austria buried the hatchet. The result was that La Marmora, already worried about Bismarck, made a new effort in Vienna. He suggested again to Vienna (via Baron Anselm Rothschild on 30th) some sort of deal for buying Venetia. Rothschild conveyed the message to Mensdorff and Esterhazy on 30th but was firmly refused. This convinced La Marmora to do the deal despite his worries. (This episode is unmentioned almost anywhere. There are multiple strands, conflicts in evidence, and it seems impossible to untangle what Napoleon was saying to everybody but the important point is: *Italy pressed on with the Prussian deal.*)

30 March Queen Victoria proposed to Russell and Clarendon that Britain and France threaten Prussia with intervention. Clarendon opposed — he thought that Britain had declined to intervene in 1864 and now British interests didn't justify the blood and treasure. The Cabinet agreed with him. **Clarendon wrote to Victoria (31 March) that even with French support Britain could not 'use the language of menace wh. might entail the necessity of action'.**

He argued:

- 1) France wasn't interested in intervention (Cowley had reported that Napoleon was not unhappy at the prospect of war).
- 2) Prussia has already rejected an unofficial approach about mediation, an official attempt would merely incur an 'insolent refusal'.
- 3) Given the 'menacing aspect' of relations with America and Ireland, British military and financial strength must be husbanded.
- 4) The country would not support 'any direct intervention in a quarrel with which we had no concern'.

The Cabinet agreed. On 31 March Clarendon referred to the dispute to Russell as a '*banditti* quarrel' not worth British blood and treasure. Cowley confirmed (3 April) that Napoleon also did not think such a joint warning was a good idea. I.e it is *not* true that Britain failed to act for want of an ally — she would not threaten Prussia *even if France wanted to because she did not think it in her interests to intervene.*

31 March Clarendon-Cowley: 'Prince Napoleon's advice to the Italians was very wise and sound, and all Europe would rejoice if they got Venetia, and Austria Silesia, and Prussia a licking.' (Mosse version, but cf. 3/5) Cowley should try to get Napoleon to push this proposal with Metternich, Napoleon 'would gain great popularity in Europe by helping to take the shine out of Prussia and by getting a fresh guarantee for peace by the cession of Venetia, and Austria would get the money she wants'. Cowley should also push this line with Metternich.

31 March Mensdorff declares publicly that Austria's intentions are peaceful and challenges Prussia to say the same.

There were further Prussian notes on 6/15/21 April and Austrian notes on 7th and 18th. Prussian notes were watered down by Wilhelm.

Late March (WAF) Prussian military *attaché* in Paris, Loë, was recalled to Berlin for discussions with Bismarck and Moltke. Loë advised: France would struggle to mobilise a major force in the Rhineland. Moltke agreed. Pottinger: Loë also argued that Mexico was a serious distraction. Moltke did not position forces in the Rhineland and gambled all on Bohemia.

Friedjung (p124): Loë told Berlin that the Mexico adventure/debacle plus the reinforcement of Algiers after the rebellion of 1864 had left only 100k soldiers in France, 37 batteries had been disbanded over the winter 1865-6 because of the budget, and the mobilisation system was poor. (Loë's reports and their effects seem very important and almost universally unnoticed. He apparently divulged some of his memories in 'Erinnerungen aus meinem Berufsleben', *Deutsche Revue*, i.295. Someone should find it and get it translated.)

1 April Clarendon wrote to Russell that 'there is a chance of Prussia giving way' if the minor states 'exhibit moral courage & protest [against] the war as groundless'. He was encouraged by many reports regarding strong opposition to Bismarck's policy in south Germany and Millman writes that given the opposition of Bavaria, Saxony, Württemberg, Baden and others it was 'reasonable to conclude' in London that Bismarck would fail to persuade Wilhelm to go to war. On 3/4 Clarendon wrote to Victoria that Bismarck's case for war was 'so utterly groundless' that surely Wilhelm will realise 'the truth'.

1 April Crown Prince wrote to General von Schweinitz (then military *attaché* to St Petersburg): 'The King wants no war but for months now Bismarck has twisted things so that the old Gentleman has become more and more irritable and finally Bismarck will have ridden him so far that he will not be able to do anything but commit us to war, which will stir up Europe. Bismarck's talent to manipulate things for the King is great and worthy of admiration. **As an expression of his bottomless frivolity and piratical policies some sort of Reich reform idea will be dumped on the carpet, probably with proposals for a Reich parliament and that in the light of our domestic parliamentary conflict! That is a rich irony and bears its failure on its forehead. With such a man everything is possible.**' (In November 1865 he had referred to 'Otto Annexandrovich's piratical policy'.)

2 April The Tsar gave Schweinitz (Wilhelm's military *attaché*, treated with great confidence by the Tsar) a letter advising the installation of Oldenburg with whatever concessions Prussia needed to make it work. On the same day he wrote to FJ suggesting that he withdraw troops from advanced positions in order to help a peaceful solution. Schweinitz arrived with the letter in Berlin on 5th and after discussions with Abeken (Bismarck's assistant) and the Crown Prince, realised attempts at mediation were doomed (Mosse, p234). He didn't head back to Russia until 17th. (On 9th (he wrote in his Memoirs), he learned of Bismarck's dramatic move: 'I was told about it in the morning in the ministry and I felt like covering my head and strewing ashes on it. I still remember quite distinctly my feelings at that moment and how, leaving the building, I met Privy Councillor Hahn [editor of a newspaper]. I knew him only by sight and through his excellent writing. But just as even strangers embrace in the street on occasions which bless or convulse the entire life of a nation, so I went up to Herr Hahn and shook his hand. We exchanged only a few words in the way mourners at a funeral generally do.') FJ replied on 7th in a moderate way that caused the Russian court to look more favourably on Austria, according to Buchanan-Clarendon 11/4. According to Mosse, most of the senior Russian court were anti-Prussian and the future Alexander III was 'violently anti-Prussian' (Mosse). NB. All members of the Imperial family were German or half-German but while the Tsar's mother was a Hohenzollern princess many others in his family had German relations from other states (Mosse p234).

Stern: in April, von Schweinitz returned to Berlin with a message from the Tsar. After seeing Wilhelm, he went to Bismarck's offices. 'I found at first only Keudell and with him Herr Bleichröder, which then still struck me as novel and offensive. Bleichröder occupied a position of confidence with Bismarck at that time, although as Bismarck once said to me later, "I never had a thought in common with him."' (This was, obviously, a lie. Was it told simply because he knew aristocrats like Schweinitz were anti-Semitic or because he wanted to downplay Bleichröder's access given all the rumours, a bit of both?)

3 April (Unmentioned in the books but I found in the correspondence) Wilhelm sent a note to Bismarck worrying that a reply to Karolyi is too 'blunt', asking if it can be 'softened', and worrying that Bavaria has shifted to opposition that could lead to another 100k soldiers against Prussia. Bismarck replies urging no softening and no delays for redrafting: 'Any irresolution on our part

encourages Austria and increases the chances of a situation arising from which we should emerge with honour only through war. In my most humble opinion Bavaria has not yet veered around...’ (This is clear evidence Bismarck was not telling Wilhelm, we must have a war — he was arguing, we must get what we want and not back down and lack of clarity makes it more likely Austria resists and the whole thing tumbles into war.)

Wilhelm insisted on changes which he says soften ‘the tone’ but not ‘the sense’. Bismarck sent another note replying to Wilhelm about a letter from the Duke of Coburg: he condemns the many iniquities of Coburg who has been ‘concerned in every intrigue during the past four years’ against Bismarck’s policy and is ‘one of the most implacable antagonists of your Majesty’s policy’. He also pointed out that there was a clear connection between the Coburg letter and ‘the intelligence which reached your Majesty from Queen Victoria through the Crown Prince, and similar insinuations will no doubt have reached your Majesty also from other quarters.’ All of it aims to make you ‘more compliant towards Austria’ and portray me as the problem. ‘I would at any time willingly ... retire’ but ‘I see no possibility of any other Minister recommending with honour to your Majesty another policy than that hitherto pursued and sanctioned in the Council of 28 February, for **this policy is independent of every party colour, is prompted only by Prussian interests, and is rendered inevitable by the situation.**’ Coburg is an enemy and ‘Should your Majesty also answer this present letter, with its insulting and untruthful enclosure, your Majesty would encourage your adversaries and dishearten your servants.’ You should ‘leave it unanswered and not conceal from the Adjutant the fact that the forwarding of the enclosure has not had a pleasing effect on your Majesty.’ In a note on 4th to Coburg’s adjutant, Wilhelm referred to ‘Austria is arming and sending troops to its northern frontier against Prussia.’

4 April At the gates of the Summer Palace in St Petersburg (on the day depicted in *What Is To Be Done?*) Karakozov, part of a socialist cell that chose its assassin by lot, tried to kill the Tsar but his arm was jostled at the crucial moment, the Tsar survived. (He was assassinated in 1881.)

5 April Moltke to Roon: The crucial thing is not the total numbers, which will probably be roughly similar, but ‘the time in which both sides can bring them to efficient deployment’ and we will have an ‘evident advantage in which we will find ourselves for three whole weeks if we take the initiative or at least mobilise at the same time as the Austrians’ (Steinberg). (Is this the letter that Barry dates to the 3rd, above?)

5 April The democratic campaigner Franz Ziegler: ‘Legitimacy, Caesarism, republic etc, all of that is intertwined with cotton, brandy, coal, and iron. A terrible time is coming for thinking men, but the bourgeoisie will wallow in rapture and bliss... People want to trade, earn, enjoy, and get along; they want not a state but a trading company.’ On 17/4 though, he said that the proposal for universal suffrage was ‘a brilliant victory after so many defeats... Even if the Prime Minister is not serious about the Parliament, which I deny, I think it wise to support him, for then he will be hoist with his own petard.’

6 April (WAF) Govone-Marmora: Benedetti suggests withholding our signature until Prussian mobilisation is complete, to give extra leverage and keep open the possibility of getting Venetia without war. Govone told Benedetti — the war will be short, maybe 6 weeks, and the alliance is important in persuading Wilhelm to strike, hence he believed Italy should do the deal. Benedetti says war will only become probable ‘if the mistakes made on the opposite side legitimise’ Prussian escalation, he’s still not sure it will happen, Wilhelm is dependent on Bismarck in the domestic struggle and this may be decisive. Also on 6th Bismarck told Benedetti of the Tsar’s letter urging peace (above) which also made Benedetti wonder if war would happen.

6 April Clarendon ‘The Missus [Victoria] is in an awful state about German affairs.’

6 April Clarendon was trying to get the Duke of Coburg to suggest a letter from FJ to Wilhelm exposing Bismarck’s tactics. He hoped, says Millman, that if war could be delayed then either Bismarck would be fired or a Prussian revolution would break out, either of which would stop war.

6 April The Prussian note sent in reply to Mensdorff, having been toned down per Wilhelm’s demand, is still sufficiently ‘barbed’ (OP) that **Mensdorff foolishly sent a caustic reply ‘within**

twenty-four hours' (OP — it was drafted by 'the acid pen of Biegeleben'). Bismarck saw immediately this was a 'crude and clumsy error' and used it to inflame Wilhelm.

7 April Wilhelm complained to Bismarck that the *Kreuzzeitung* had an 'abusive article on the Duke of Coburg' which is 'very unpleasant for me as only you [Bismarck], and the Queen and Crown Prince knew of the Duke's letter to me so that the source of the article is at once guessed. You always told me that the Government has no influence on the *Kreuzzeitung* but it seems to me that this is a case which proves the contrary... Such articles ... must make him more inimically disposed towards us and that is not politically correct at the moment. Please, therefore, put a stop to the mischievous procedure of the *Kreuzzeitung* in respect of the Duke.'

Picture: Bismarck's reply of 7th which breathes some of the atmosphere from the time, one can feel the fury as Bismarck read Wilhelm's note and drafted his reply!

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BERLIN, April 7, '66.

YOUR MAJESTY,

I beg most humbly for pardon if I have incurred your Majesty's displeasure through the article on the interposition of the Duke of Coburg, which does not refer to the latter's letter but follows on a series of other newspaper articles on this interposition. I would never dare to deceive your Majesty, and openly confess that I myself suggested the substance of this article, as I, like every one of my colleagues, have not influence enough on the *Kreuz Zeitung* to dictate what it shall not print, but yet so much that it accepts what is not directly contrary to its policy; the same relations exist with the *Spener Zeitung*, the *National Zeitung*, and many others, and I do not believe I have ever disclaimed this kind of influence.

It appeared to me that your Majesty yourself was indignant at the insincerity in the procedure of the Duke and of Count Mensdorff; your Majesty, however, generously pardoned the lack of veneration revealed by such procedure, as was the case with the previous malevolence of the Duke, who, by favouring the democrats, and by disturbing the re-

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lations with England, has worked more harm to your Majesty and the Prussian State than he can ever repair by a military convention, and who showed his true sentiments towards your Majesty at the time of the assembly of the Princes at Frankfurt. Your Majesty will have no doubt of my devotion and of my obedience; your Majesty will not, however, expect me to be more than human, and always to remain cool when I see how the difficult, and, I may perhaps say, wearing service which devolves on me is intentionally rendered more onerous by the disfavour of such high-placed personalities who, according to human expectation, ought before all others to have at heart the success of Prussian politics and the fame of your Majesty and of the Royal House. And why am I the object of this irreconcilable disfavour, why this fight against powerful influences which I have to sustain at every step of the laborious path? Merely because I find it impossible to serve two masters, to pursue another policy than your Majesty's, and to be susceptible to other influences than your Majesty's commands. My offence is that I was ready to serve your Majesty in compliance with your Majesty's will when others declined to do so, that I did not hesitate to obey your Majesty at the risk of incurring the disfavour of those who are nearest to your Majesty. I could obtain peace if, like so many of my predecessors, I consented to report to your Majesty as my own conviction what is suggested to me from other quarters, and especially if I would advise compliance in home politics and in the military organisation; for in foreign politics nothing happens but what was formerly desired by those who bear ill-will towards me.

Will your Majesty pardon me if, in these struggles, the feeling of being unjustly assailed, merely because I endeavour to fulfil my duty towards your Majesty without looking to one side or the other, robs me of the calm which I myself should so much like to preserve.

I most respectfully enclose some newspaper cuttings which show that the interposition of the Duke has for a long time been the subject of discussion in the press, and that it was first mentioned in Vienna.

v. BISMARCK.

8 April Bismarck signed a secret treaty with Italy. Italy was obliged to fight Austria if war broke out within 90 days. It guaranteed Austria had to commit a significant force (about a third) to the south. Barry: La Marmora had sought and got Napoleon's agreement to this.

Eyck (p 14-5): Victor Emanuel had sent Count Arese to talk to Napoleon who met him without the knowledge of his ministers and encouraged him to sign the treaty with Bismarck — adding that

his advice was as a private person without taking responsibility! (Cf. 24/3 and 29/3 for Arese.) This treaty was a complete breach of the Confederation law which explicitly forbade such deals with foreign powers. This is why Wilhelm did his best to keep it as secret as possible his whole life and when asked about it by FJ, when war was imminent, he gave his word of honour that it did not exist. Bismarck to Benedetti: 'I have induced a king of Prussia to break off the intimate relations of his House with the House of Habsburg, to conclude an alliance with revolutionary Italy, possibly to accept arrangements with Imperial France, and to propose in Frankfurt the reform of the Confederation and a popular Parliament. That is a success of which I am proud.'

Clark: Metternich had been trying to get Napoleon to pressure Italy and tried to frighten Napoleon with the scenario of an Austrian defeat (in March). He failed. Napoleon told Nigra to encourage Prussia's warlike policy while he would suggest to Austria that she exchange Venetia for Danubian territory, and he did suggest this to Metternich.

1/ Austria would not turn to France unless desperate.

2/ Austria would not cede Venetia unless forced and as part of a deal for German land.

3/ Austria would not allow France to grab German land.

[I.e They could not gain Italian neutrality without ceding Venetia but they would not yield Venetia without getting Silesia, and they could not get Silesia without war and they did not want war — and the Vienna imperial system could not think through their priorities!]

8 April Pottinger writes that around the signing of the deal Napoleon embarked on a fling with the young Countess Mercy-Argenta. (You never know what leaders are really focused on as questions of war and peace are escalating.)

9 April *Times* leader: 'The inference from these proceedings is that there is a fair chance the peace of Europe will not be violated. As for the precise degree in which the honour of the two antagonists is preserved, we profess very little anxiety indeed. The truth is the nature of the transaction leaves very little honour to be divided between these two great monarchies, for the quarrel is most vulgar, commonplace, and discreditable. ... The question is like most German quarrels; it rises into some degree of interest as soon as there is a chance of either party coming to blows, and subsides into tameness and insipidity as soon as the crisis has passed away.'

9 April Bismarck announced his plan for the Bund to have a Parliament elected by direct universal suffrage, in order to consider proposals of German governments for the reform of the Federal Constitution. General amazement, Gerlach *et al* appalled. Kleist to Gerlach: 'We are absolutely stunned. I am in despair' (10th). 'Bismarck had aligned the Prussian monarchy with the revolutionary tradition' (Pflanze). **Wilhelm protested, 'Why that is revolution you are proposing to me.'** Bismarck replied, 'But there is no harm in that. In the general storm your Majesty will be seated on a rock above the flood. All who don't wish to perish will have to seek safety there.' (Source: General Govone's record of his chat with Bismarck shortly after).

Cf. his comments to Pfordten on 24 March, to von Coburg-Gotha on 26 March and to Bernstorff on 19 April, and similar comments long ago, e.g in 1854, he had written to a colleague: 'The advocates of the three taler census have obviously not yet learned that the bourgeoisie has always been the curatrix of revolution while below the three taler mark nine-tenths of the people are good royalists.'

Bernstorff reported that in London the idea was seen as 'completely revolutionary' and Westminster was worried about its effect on discussions of Gladstone's Reform Bill. Bismarck told Petersburg and London that it had 'greater guarantees for the conservative conduct of parliament than any of the artificial electoral laws that are calculated to achieve manufactured majorities.'

When he got a report from London about Clarendon's horror at the universal suffrage idea, he wrote in the margin, 'In England only the higher classes are loyal to the monarchy and the constitution, because these embody *their* privileges, *their* rule over the country. The masses are brutal, ignorant, and their attachment to the crown is not of the same kind as it is in Prussia.'

He was also talking to Hungarian revolutionaries. In Dresden around this time (or was this in 1865 after Gastein?), Bismarck told Beust, 'You would not know how to place yourself at the head of

the revolutionary party in Germany. As for me, I could at any time become its chief.' EF: Bismarck misjudged this, the masses became synonymous with the industrial proletariat, a large scale trade union movement emerged. See discussion after Sadowa re the new North German Confederation and its constitution.

(He hoped to split the liberals (with whom he was also conducting secret talks) and mobilise public support. Interestingly the word 'equal' did not qualify 'suffrage'. This, says Pflanze, was because he still had some doubts. He also spoke privately of rejecting a secret ballot and prohibiting state officials from standing as deputies. Austria and the medium states did not dare oppose it, rightly fearing Bismarck's response. (Gall (p289): Bismarck had sent drafts of the motion to Pfordten on 24 March in an attempt to get some sort of Bavarian support. It was clear from around the 9/4 that the overwhelming majority of the Confederation would support Austria. Further the leaders of the Lesser German national liberal movement remained immune to Bismarck's threats and bribes — they still would not engage with his plans and hints. Gall's discussion of this, or the translation, is confusing.)

After the 9 April initiative the famous satirical magazine, *Kladderadatsch*, said it would shut as 'we aren't up to such competition'. A liberal newspaper (*Kölnische Zeitung*) said, 'If Mephistopheles climbed up in the pulpit and read the Gospel, could anyone be inspired by this prayer?'

9 April (Bucholz) Moltke discussed Austrian war plans with Bernhardi who told him two armies would go north but would not attack Berlin. Bucholz writes that Moltke 'apparently discounted Bernhardi ... Or did he? If true, it confirmed his strategy: what appeared risky and incomprehensible to the Prussian war elite looked very different if Bernhardi was right.' (??)

9 April Clarendon instructed representatives at all German courts: 'so long as the war is confined to Germany there is not British interest of sufficient magnitude to render imperative the tender of British good offices'.

9 April Clarendon-Cowley: 'I know of no parallel to Bismarck or any precedent for such a war as he is determined upon except some of those of Napoleon. He told Loftus that Attila was a much greater man than John Bright and had handed himself down to history, that the Duke of Wellington would be remembered as a great warrior and not as a pacific statesman — and that he meant to be remembered also by making his country great and stamping out all opposition to her supremacy in Germany.'

Russell and Clarendon continued to suggest to Victoria that the best solution was for Bismarck to be removed. On 10 April she wrote to Wilhelm (according to Mosse this was 'without consulting her ministers') that he was being 'deceived, you are made to believe that you are to be attacked, and I, your true friend and sister, hear your honoured name attacked and abused for the faults and recklessness of others — or, rather, of *one* man!... [P]ause before you permit so fearful an act as the commencement of a war, the responsibility for which will rest on *you alone*' (different books give different versions of the crucial lines). Wilhelm replied citing Austria's faults and sticking to Bismarck's line (the reply is dated 12th but was not sent until 21st, Mosse). There were other attempts during April to broker a deal but they went nowhere. Russell and Clarendon both wanted to see Prussia beaten and thought she would be. (Clarendon had written on 7 March that if Austria were to give Prussia 'a licking I am sure that Europe wd be glad' and Hammond had written to Bloomfield on 20 March that 'I should like to see the Prussians well licked'.)

11 April Clarendon-Cowley: 'Except for reasons of humanity, which must weigh lightly enough with him, he [Napoleon] can't see with displeasure the prospects of war in Germany, for the abatement of the military means of Austria and Prussia will relatively increase the military Power of France, and out of such a shindy as those two might get up and into which they will draw all the Minor States it is impossible to say that Francis will not reap some advantage, and I believe the territorial extension will be a good basis for his son's throne. Our great care must be for Belgium and our resources of all kinds must be husbanded for fulfilling our Treaty engagements respecting that Country. Russell is very anxious that I should impress this on you and beg that he will miss no opportunity of giving the Emperor to understand it. He will probably admit our position and not try to embarrass us by meddling with Belgium.'

11 April The *Nationalverein* met and refused to support the plan of 9th until constitutional government was restored. However, by now Twesten, Lasker and others 'longed for a reversal of [the Government's] internal policies that would enable them to support it on the national issue' (OP p322). Until the end of June, Bismarck had a string of secret talks with the liberals including Bennigsen, Miquel, Duncker, Bernhardi and Duke Ernst of Coburg, Twesten, Unruh. He would often start by confessing he might have to resign, and ask them which liberal should be foreign minister, bringing home to them their lack of talent trained for top jobs. He spoke (dishonestly) of national unity being his goal since his Frankfurt days. He tried to persuade them that they should support the government during the war, not insist on resolving the constitutional conflict now, and make progress after victory.

They resisted. E.g. Bennigsen and Miquel thought he had to offer something more specific on the constitutional crisis to get their support. (He told Miquel, 'Don't worry about the constitution now. Later, after we have been victorious, you will have constitutions enough.') But they were not generally confident, e.g. Twesten wrote around then of his fears about Bismarck mixing 'a Napoleonic regime with a general franchise and similar tricks. I also dare not deny that it might be possible, through stirring up and mixing foreign and domestic affairs, finally to dissolve the liberal parties in indifference and desultoriness, as happened with the conservatives.' Treitschke thought that over the summer there would be 'a great deal of dust stirred up and in the fall we will stand exactly where we were two weeks ago, namely on the threshold of war with Austria... Bismarck made a very agreeable impression on me personally, but politically the impression was all the worse... I could hardly contain my astonishment at these fantastic follies [concerning federal reform].'

Hamerow: most newspapers, including those pro-unification under a parliamentary system, attacked Bismarck's proposals, some as too radical, some as too reactionary, some as dishonest, some as naive, some as premature, some as belated. The liberals he spoke to agonised but were 'too hungry for success to refuse and too fearful of failure to accept' (Hamerow). Merchants and industrialists, municipal authorities all over Prussia spoke out or sent messages to the King opposing the imminent war. The reluctance of reservists to report was a worrying sign. After a dip, Hamerow says support grew as war approached and more elements of the middle classes saw it as inevitable and forced by Austria, but overall there was clearly no great enthusiasm (vol 2, p275ff). Bucher and Keudell (Bismarck agents) worked among the radicals to gain support and funnelled money to radical democrats who were also pro-Prussian victory in war. They had more success among the extreme Left than among the liberals. Results were meagre — 'the predominant movement among the German people in April-June 1866 was anti-war and anti-Bismarck' (Pflanze). **In May, the general view of German parliamentarians remained hostile to Bismarck's plan** and a *Nationalverein* meeting 13-14 May condemned the war and avoided commitment to the parliament proposal (OP p324).

It did not slow him down. When Bernhardi suggested this might stop him going to war he replied, '**One doesn't shoot at the enemy with public opinion but with powder and lead**' and his parting words to Miguel were the reminder — 'We don't need you at all.' He wrote to Goltz that, '**At the moment of decision the masses will stand by the monarchy, whether it follows the liberal or conservative stream.**' He was proved right: 'Bismarck's confidence was thoroughly vindicated' (Pflanze).

Two weeks after announcing the plan he spoke to Bernhardi who recorded: 'The demand for federal reform ... is by no means "a shot in self defence"... It is rather a program, ... a plan which he adopted already a long time ago when he came of age politically... When he entered into public life from the country ... he conceived the essence of conservative interests and the policy of Austria to be quite different from what they are. He believed that honest cooperation with Austria was possible and was a condition of the might and security of Germany and of the peace of Europe. But as envoy of the federal diet he soon became convinced such cooperation was out of the question because Austria simply is not honest in her relations with Prussia and because

Austria's policy regarding Prussia is a policy of envy. Since the time he perceived this, the reform of the confederation and the German parliament are his program.'

11 April Hammond to Cowley: 'England stands as isolated as she stood during the great European War [against Napoleon]'. Hammond strongly opposed cooperation with France.

11 April Letter from Wilhelm to Bismarck: 'The popular agitations against the war are assuming very unpleasant dimensions!'

11 April Clarendon privately told Cowley that he and Russell did not see completely eye-to-eye: 'He thinks it quite right that Prussia should have the military disposal of the North of Germany — I cannot say I agree with him, though we of course should not interfere to prevent such an arrangement'.

12 April (Barry) Moltke warned Bismarck about Austrian mobilisation.

13-18 April Zerber (unmentioned by others): Austria began horse purchases.

13 April (Clark) Mensdorff-Karolyi: Propose mutual demobilisation. Clark: This was Karolyi's idea. At this moment FJ and Esterhazy thought they'd made a mistake in earlier agreeing with the generals.

13 April (WAF) Pfordten sent identical notes to Prussia and Austria proposing both cancel war preparations. Bismarck told Wilhelm its phrasing was an insult to his honour.

14 April Clarendon-Cowley: 'The whole thing might be *déjoué* [foiled, evaded?] at once by the cession of Venetia, but I expect that as usual the Austrians will be 24 hours too late and that the sacrifice, evidently contemplated, will not be made until it is useless.' Re Drouyn's question re the British attitude to Prussia's proposal for federal reform, he was noncommittal ('have to consult colleagues').

14 April On 12th Cowley and Metternich had discussed in Paris the idea of Austria ceding Venetia in return for compensation. On 14th Clarendon told Cowley to push the issue and told him he'd said the same to Bloomfield. On 16th Clarendon wrote to Apponyi in London [Mosse says this was Russell not Clarendon] on the same theme: if Austria would cede Venetia voluntarily she 'may at this moment circumscribe the cession she will make, and establish a frontier Europe will respect'; and win support in England and France. Gladstone supported the idea.

14 April Zerber: Moltke sent a memo to Wilhelm (and Bismarck??). Now he proposed putting the maximum force in Silesia, not Lausitz.

14 April JS writes (p.240) that Moltke's picture of the future on 14 April, ~10 weeks before the crucial fight, was bang on. *This is wrong — Moltke had to change multiple plans over the next 6 weeks.*

14 March (Friedjung p126) Wilhelm had been alarmed by the prospect of Bavaria joining with Austria, Roon had asked Moltke to send the king a 'reassuring reply' but Moltke had replied that it was not his job 'to argue the King into a war, but only to simplify his decision by a clear and accurate statement of the situation'. On 14/3 though, Moltke emphasised Prussia's advantages and concluded: 'Once we mobilise we must not shrink from the reproach of aggression. Every delay will definitely injure our position.'

15 April Prince Charles of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen elected to the Rumanian throne. Mensdorff complained in Berlin about Napoleon and in Paris and London about Bismarck. Both Paris and Berlin denied involvement. Cf. 22/5.

15 April Bismarck's reply to Mensdorff offered to demobilise if Austria does. (Friedjung says (p127) that Wilhelm twice edited Bismarck's draft to tone it down.)

17 April Clarendon appealed to Bismarck that Prussia and Austria should reduce their armies. Ignored.

18 April Mensdorff offered to begin the process a day before Prussia on 25th if Prussia did likewise. Clark: FJ even wanted to suspend all military operations but his military *entourage* 'prevented him' (p380, how??). **Mensdorff also wrote to Napoleon suggesting they discuss a possible alliance, and asking whether Napoleon had any commitments that would prevent an *entente*.** (This letter is lost but can be partly reconstructed from other documents including Metternich's 21/4, Clark p410.)

18 April Clarendon-Cowley: Metternich and Apponyi seem reluctant to push the idea of ceding Venetia and 'from all I hear the Emperor [FJ] is unapproachable' on the subject. If only Austria could see that this move would avoid the threat from the south, and provide a chance to beat Prussia and 'help herself if she chose to some of her old Silesian territory'.

19 April Schweinitz was back in Russia and spoke to the Tsar. Tsar and Gorchakov had been shocked by the declaration on 9th — 'This is no longer politics, this is Revolution' Gorchakov told Revertera. The Tsar stressed that Austria was being reasonable while Bismarck was acting as a dangerous revolutionary. Cf. 2/5.

19 April To Bernstorff (Ambassador in London): 'In a country with monarchical traditions and a loyalist mentality, universal suffrage will, by doing away with the influence of the liberal bourgeois classes, also lead to monarchical elections.' Cf his comment to Pfordten on 24 March.

19 April Barral, Italian Ambassador in Berlin: 'Bismarck is very dissatisfied with the peaceful turn events seem to have taken... The essence of the question has not changed but for the moment there is definitely no prospect of war. It is said that England and even France have exercised pressure in Vienna to achieve this result which has also been assisted by the obstinate illness of Bismarck.' Gavone too thinks 'Bismarck is definitely discouraged by the Austrian proposal and the peaceful turn of the crisis.'

20 April Austria's Chief of Staff, Henikstein, presented a memo to FJ arguing to put the entire army on a war footing. He cited Prussia's 4 week advantage and Italy's preparations. Mensdorff commented (20/4): militarily it makes sense but our policy is to rob Bismarck of reasons for aggression, if we succeed it has great advantages, we should at least await the result of our latest initiative.

Clark: By now the minister for war and Belcredi did not believe Bismarck would be caught in diplomatic traps, they feared he already had agreements with Italy, France and German states, and did not have confidence in Mensdorff's diplomacy. Powerful military elements similarly distrusted the diplomatic strategy and were clamouring for war along with influential newspapers and street demonstrations [does anybody now know how significant these demonstrations were, has anybody analysed the Vienna and Berlin press?]. Clark adds that the pressure had got to Esterhazy who was at home with a fever and Mensdorff had injured his foot and was also confined to home (Bloomfield reported to Clarendon 19/4).

Also on 20th, **Belcredi got a report from the director of police in Vienna: the Italians are massing near Bologna and buying all available horses.** He hurried with it to FJ, alarmed, FJ telegraphed to the commanding general in Verona for confirmation, while waiting for a reply he called a Council for the next day. (I've seen no reference to this in any other book except OP.) The Chief of Staff started drafting plans for a mobilisation just against Italy. Another telegraph arrived with Belcredi at 21:15 saying trains to and from Bologna are being reserved for Piedmontese troops. Belcredi took both telegrams to see Mensdorff, at home nursing his foot. Mensdorff refused to agree on calling more men to arms in Vienna but grudgingly agreed to summon border regiments. He did not want to abandon diplomacy and after Belcredi left he telegraphed Karolyi asking for an update before bed that night.

(Clark's account is confusing — 1) he implies that Belcredi went to see Mensdorff very soon after the telegram arrived at 21:15 on 20th, but 2) says Mensdorff's telegram to Karolyi, 'dashed off ... as soon as [Belcredi] left' was sent 10am on 21st. My hunch is Belcredi went to see Mensdorff on the morning of 21st, not evening of 20th, but needs checking.)

20 April The Gablenz initiative. Anton Gablenz was a Prussian landowner and Landtag deputy, brother of Ludwig Gablenz, Austrian proconsul in Holstein. He left Kiel for Vienna at the start of weeks of secret backchannel negotiations between Bismarck and Vienna. His brother introduced him to Esterhazy who sent him on to Mensdorff. He kept the interview and the whole affair secret from everybody, including Biegeleben, except FJ, Esterhazy and later Belcredi (Clark). Mensdorff was prepared to negotiate secretly with Bismarck if the latter was interested. They 'received only encouragement from Bismarck' (Pflanze) who accepted the plan with some alterations as 'a basis for negotiation' (Bismarck). Anton shuttled back and forth with counterproposals for a month of

secret meetings. (Clark:Anton had been working on it since summer 1865 and his brother played a supporting role.)

The plan was roughly:

- an independent S-H would be ruled by a Hohenzollern prince independent of the Prussian government;
- Austria would be reimbursed for the costs of 1864;
- Prussia would get the most important of her demands;
- the command of all German military forces would be divided between the two;
- federal reform would be on this dualistic basis;
- Austria would get support from Germany against France in Italy.

Cf. Clark p425 for FJ's stipulations articulated in a letter between the Gablenz brothers, 10 May: it had to include security against Italy.

Bismarck proposed changes. It morphed into a detailed treaty. There were attempts to get the Grand Duke of Weimar to stand sponsor, failed ~25-26 May. The initiative **collapsed at the end of May** when Mensdorff told Gablenz that FJ would only back it if at least one medium sized German state backed it. Pflanze p.297

Gall (p275): 'it is quite wrong' to describe Bismarck's conduct as 'a policy of calculated risk', this was a 'legend' he nourished and historians have repeated, the reality was that for all his 'shrewd calculation and skill' he staked absolutely everything on a single card in a game in which ... chance and luck tipped the scales at the crucial moment; it was no accident that even on the Berlin stock exchange most people reckoned right up until the war that Vienna would emerge as the victor.' Wrong. And the Gablenz intrigues are clear evidence. As he often said, it was not his approach to leave himself a single path. He kept open the possibility of another deal where he made gains short of his maximum ambitions.

Cf. 25 May for more on Gablenz, which involved a series of secret meetings over the next 4 weeks.

21 April (OP, p296) Wilhelm insisted that the reply to Mensdorff's offer to de-escalate (of 18th) is conciliatory and accepted the idea of both sides backing down: Austria must take the lead but Prussian would 'keep in step'. Pflanze writes that Wilhelm was influenced by the Coburg intrigue and the lack of popularity for war in Prussia. Bismarck was furious and ill, mobilised Manteuffel and Roon to stir up Wilhelm. To Roon he wrote he could 'no longer bear this awful friction'. Manteuffel warned Wilhelm of a 'second Olmütz' which provoked the response Bismarck wanted, a 'magnificent display of anger' at Austria. Roon similarly chimed in.

Wawro: Mensdorff's initiative in April gave Austria a 3 week lead in mobilisation over Moltke who had to move fast to recover.

Bodenschwingh was trying over coming days to get Wilhelm to cancel the horse purchases as a pacific gesture.

21 April Austrian Council of Ministers agreed further mobilisation. Both Esterhazy and Mensdorff, the two strongest advocates for peace, were absent. FJ announced his decision to take 'further military measures' if the 'alarming news' — i.e the intelligence from Italy given him by Belcredi the day before — were verified by General Benedek in Verona. There was little serious discussion. FJ asked whether Mensdorff objected. Belcredi stressed his own support for military moves without reservation and said that Mensdorff agreed with calling up the frontier regiments but had 'some doubt only over the absolute urgency of the calling up of the fourth battalion'. Wrapping up FJ said that if the news were confirmed they should mobilise the navy too. There was no vote and no opposition voice was raised. **The real decision 'beyond a doubt' (Clark) had been taken the night before by FJ** in discussion with Belcredi, the military, Franck, Crenneville and probably Henikstein and Archduke Albrecht.

The Council must have finished before **Benedek's reply arrived 11:35** and 'at once the orders went out to mobilise the army corps destined for Italy' (Clark). Mensdorff learned of the decision and Benedek's confirmation and telegraphed Karolyi 15:40. The Vienna public, Clarendon, the Tsar and others thought that the Italian preparations were a Bismarck trick to smash the

agreement to de-escalate. FJ, Mensdorff and Karolyi referred to this idea at the time. **In Berlin, Karolyi telegraphed the good news that Wilhelm had accepted the demobilisation plan but it arrived in Vienna at 18:00, a few hours after the mobilisation orders had been given.** As Clark says, it is ironic that the two peace ministers were confined to their beds in Vienna the same day that Bismarck was in bed consumed with rage about the possible success of the demobilisation initiative! And FJ was usually late, here for once he was early, and it was a disaster.

Clark is the only account I've read that explains this chronology with overlapping telegrams on the fateful day (p384ff). Mensdorff later (21/9/66) said that not resigning after this episode was his second great error. (But Mensdorff also said after the war, 'I did not understand politics at all and had often told the Emperor so. But I was a general and my commander-in-chief ordered me to take the post, whether I liked it or not I had to tolerate the assistance of a trained diplomat [does he mean Esterhazy or Biegeleben?]) who lacked the courage to accept responsibility himself.' When Mensdorff was asked by the Saxon diplomat Vitzthum why he had not resigned rather than sacrifice his convictions, he replied 'It's no good your talking, you are not a soldier.' Friedjung, p137)

Carr: FJ mobilised the southern army on the insistence of his generals.

Gordon Craig: 'the first mobilisation orders' were issued in Vienna on 21/4 and had 'an electrifying effect in Prussia', accelerated on 27/4 (p30).

OP: 'alarming reports' arrived in Vienna on 20th and FJ agreed on 21st to order mobilisation of the southern army 'on the advice of his generals and with Mensdorff's reluctant approval'. Clark does not suggest 'reluctant approval' but he also does not record Mensdorff writing anything to try to influence the Council.

Barry: The Italian movements were 'later found to be inaccurate'. Clark agrees: *most of what Belcredi 'learned' on 20th turned out to be false* — Italy was in fact determined not to strike first and 48 hours made no real difference.

21 April Loftus to Clarendon: 'I think the King [of Prussia] might be induced to part with B[ismarck] for he is now aware of his dangerous policy.'

21 April (WAF) Benedetti dined with Roon who told him — if there is an agreement on disarmament, we'll sell as few horses as possible because 'in fifteen days we have to start to buy them back'. Benedetti realised that even if there is an apparent climbdown by both sides it may well not last, but that given the King has partly 'escaped' Bismarck's control for a moment he 'could very well escape again'.

22 April Bismarck to Wilhelm: '[I]t is contrary to my feelings, I may say my faith, to desire to influence in an officious manner the highest sovereign determinations on war and peace; that is a domain in which I confidently leave to God alone the direction of your Majesty's heart ... and would rather pray than advise. [!] At the same time I dare not disguise the conviction that **if peace is maintained now we shall be threatened with the danger of war later**, perhaps in a few months' time, under *more unfavourable conditions*. Lasting peace is maintained only when *both* parties desire it... Anyone who ... has for sixteen years been most intimately concerned with Austrian policy cannot doubt that hostility towards Prussia has become the chief, one might say the only political aim in Vienna. It will be actively prosecuted as soon as the Vienna Cabinet considers the circumstances more favourable than at present.' (Italics in original, bold is me.)

23 April Wilhelm to Bismarck (re a letter from Manteuffel): '[W]e have now intentionally exhibited a *minime* preparedness for war of a defensive nature... **In the Council held on February 28th, you yourself defined the policy as being that war should not be allowed to break out on account of the Duchies alone, so that the higher prize, the German question, must be brought in. This has been done...**' (I've seen no reference to this letter in any of the books but it seems important to me — also if some of the historians had read it, they would have been less confused in their reports of the meeting of 28/2.)

23 April (WAF) Napoleon proposed to Goltz an international congress. It seems Benedetti discovered this in Berlin *not* from Drouyn but in discussion with Bismarck (i.e he was out of the loop again) who made clear he intended to push for war and a conference should come after.

Instead he preferred to come to a direct understanding with France. Benedetti wasn't notified formally from Paris until 3rd.

Pottinger: the Goltz discussion was reported on 25th, and Napoleon also mentioned it to Metternich at roughly the same time.

24 April Metternich-Mensdorff: Napoleon still coy re discussing an *entente*.

25 April (Clark) FJ decided at a meeting that 'it was urgently necessary to end the present tense and increasingly unendurable situation by a decisive diplomatic action which might draw war behind it' ('... even if it might result in war' in a different translation).

In translator's notes to Friedjung (p133), it describes this meeting as a confidential discussion with advisers, not an official Council. Esterhazy was still absent but Mensdorff was here for this one. They discussed two drafts — draft A) agreed to cancel armaments mobilising in Bohemia; draft B) prepared to submit the issue of the Duchies to the Bund, and Mensdorff said this 'would not be favourably received by the Prussian Government and that the possibility of war could not therefore be ignored'. FJ decided on B. (On 26th Esterhazy wrote to Mensdorff, 'Our enemies have achieved their object. We are arming — and for a prolonged peace, which will probably compel us to fire the first shot!... This war cannot be a defensive war, or still less a conservative war for us. You can console yourself with the thought that you have struggled bravely and with self-control for peace to the very last moment'.)

26 April Bloomfield-Clarendon: 'The Austrians are driven wild by the danger of their position.'

26 April Loftus-Clarendon: Bismarck says that 'my illness and possible death may prevent war — nothing else will'.

26 April Austria told Prussia that it would allow the Duchies' fate to be decided by the Confederation (Clark: made public effectively on 28th). This effectively abandoned Gastein and provided Bismarck with a pretext to reply that Prussia had been wronged and Austria had taken the initiative in undermining Prussian rights in Holstein. (JS refers to this blunder by Mensdorff as 'at this point' referring to 5-6 June, p246.)

26 April Mensdorff-Apponyi, re Russell 16/4: 'our very existence' is threatened by the idea of ceding Venetia, 'if Europe must be rebuilt according to the system of nationalities, I do not see the place that Austria can occupy ... and we are not yet resigned to give the signal for our dismemberment'. Clarendon told Cowley (5/5) this reply was 'so well-argued and so conclusive' that he could not believe Metternich had been authorised to broach the issue in Paris.

26 April Carr: Italy ordered general mobilisation. Eyck: this was 28th.

27 April Stormy debates in Parliament over the Reform Bill. Gladstone warned Disraeli, 'you cannot fight against the future. Time is on our side.' But the liberal majority was crumbling. *The Times* withdrew support from Russell. Speculation through May of a Stanley coalition. **Through May-June, the British Parliament was focused on the collapse of Russell's government over Reform and the scrambling for a new one.**

27 April Pottinger: Ollivier announced his intention to give a speech on foreign policy during the session of 3 May, which worried the government.

27 April Zerber: Moltke updated Wilhelm on plan. Assumed Austria would defend Bohemia, maybe raid into southern Silesia. Moltke aimed to gain numerical superiority in Bohemia with main attack from Silesia. Now Prussia would have numerical superiority and could hit Austria in the flank.

27 April FJ ordered mobilisation against Prussia and ordered further strengthening on 1 May. Showalter: The Austrian generals said that mobilisation plans since 1859 were so integrated that they could not mobilise against Italy without accelerating in the north. On 27th mobilisation was ordered for the North Army and 'around that date' FJ seems to have abandoned any lingering hopes of peace. (Showalter gives Wawro p.330ff as reference for this (p148).)

Clark: As Mensdorff had told Bloomfield (reported 29/3), FJ would delay then 'go the whole hog'. If everything went according to schedule, the southern army would be in position by 12 June, the northern army a week later.

28 April Mensdorff asked the five southern German states to catch up with Prussia's armaments as speedily and quickly as possible. Saxony moved almost immediately.

28 April (Clark p410) Metternich-Mensdorff (cf. 18/4): Napoleon, the Empress and Drouyn have signalled that they now want to talk and he advised that the congress, with a previous Austria-Britain understanding, would be a good counter-attack against Bismarck. Clark: Napoleon feared that disarmament would succeed and proposed a Congress to keep control of the situation in his own hands.

29 April Mensdorff replied to Metternich: no good will come from a congress: 'it will achieve either nothing, or a settlement the cost of which we shall have to pay by the cession of Venetia without equivalent compensation in Germany'.

29 April Clarendon told Bernstorff that if war came 'the person who would be responsible in the estimation of mankind for the evils ... would be Count Bismarck'.

30 April Mensdorff wrote a private letter to Napoleon, with no record for the archives, and he kept it secret from almost everybody. (The original letter is lost but the main ideas can be reconstructed from other references, Clark p411.) If France is helpful, Venetia might be abandoned after the peace in return for a) equivalent territory in Germany, b) the Pope's position is re-established on a solid basis — and France may get some unspecified annexations. In the details of the idea there was an assumption that Napoleon would trade Italian unification to get Italian independence from Vienna. Discussions in Paris did not get anywhere for the moment. (Cf.

Pottinger p113-14 for a different account and apparently different chronology to Clark p410-11.)

30 April Bismarck had a first secret meeting with Anton Gablenz. Gablenz had repeated interviews with Mensdorff, Esterhazy, Bismarck and twice with FJ.

30 April Bismarck told the Prussian cabinet that they might have to give Napoleon territory in the Saar so they should consider how to safeguard state-owned coal mines (worth ~60 million thaler) to avoid loss: the property should be so 'metamorphosed that even in case the territory is ceded, it [property] would remain in our hands'. This shows, says Pflanze, that he was as always being flexible and realised that *in some circumstances he might have to give Napoleon something*. (Cf. apparent meetings on 2 June and 4 June below.)

EF (p139): Bismarck advised the mines be sold to private investors, which seems different to OP's account.

When Napoleon put out feelers for a congress at the end of April, Hammond opposed it ('a French trap, a very clumsy one' 29/4) while Clarendon was sympathetic. Clarendon insisted on maintaining the *status quo* as a condition for a Congress. Napoleon then pitched ideas for French gains (privately and publicly). Napoleon also opposed a general declaration by Britain and France asking Prussia and Austria to step back from war. Cowley told Clarendon (4 May) that the French argued that they could not cope with the internal pressure if Austria and Prussia were to ignore such a declaration. Further, Napoleon was set on Italy getting Venetia so could not accept the *status quo*. Britain had secretly urged Austria to cede Venetia voluntarily during April but could not be seen as forcing such a breach of treaties publicly.

May Insurrection on Crete starts against Ottoman rule, occupied the Powers until 1869.

1 May Partial mobilisation in Prussia. OP: FJ concluded war was 'unavoidable' and orders went out to strengthen the northern army (Wawro: 27 April). This news reached Berlin on 'the evening of 3 May' (OP) and a furious Wilhelm 'ordered mobilisation' (OP). Barry agrees with Wawro that the Austrian order to mobilise in the north was 27 April and agrees with OP that it was the 3rd that Wilhelm issued 'the first of a series of orders for mobilisation'. **BUT** — Barry says this was only *partial* mobilisation of the five corps nearest the frontier and although Moltke could now get going 'he did so in the knowledge that the long period of delay would cost him numerical superiority at the outset of the campaign' (Barry p151). Barry p162ff: after 3rd, a week of further instructions 'completed the order for the general mobilisation of the whole of the Prussian army'.

Stern: Wilhelm *proposed* general mobilisation, was supported by Moltke and the CP, but Eulenburg and others objected and only *partial* mobilisation was ordered.

Carr: Wilhelm ordered mobilisation of 5 corps on 4 May and on 7th mobilisation was ordered for the rest.

Gordon Craig: 3 May 'first Prussian countermoves' to Austrian action on 21st and 27th April and not until 12 May 'a reluctant authorisation for something resembling complete mobilisation'.

Zerber: Prussia mobilised 'in increments over a nine-day period from 3 to 12 May. Bismarck did not even attempt to coordinate Prussia's political and military measures. In the three days before mobilisation was ordered, Moltke was not consulted and kept completely in the dark. Due to the disorganised nature of the Prussian mobilisation, Moltke was forced to jettison his pre-war deployment planning and organise an *ad hoc* deployment.' Rail deployment started on 16 May and ended on 6 June. The battle happened somewhere between 53rd and 62nd day of mobilisation (8th-9th weeks) depending on whether you count from 3 May or 12 May.

Showalter: the news of 27th took 'a week' to push Wilhelm into action and then it was 5/9 corps. He still refused to approve their 'concentration' against Austria. Only in mid-April was Wartensleben transferred to Berlin to run the General Staff's railway operation and only on 1 May did he present a specific proposal for military-civilian coordination of routes leading to the theatre of operations. There were 9 separate orders between 3-24 May 'to bring the whole army under the colours and set it in motion.'

Friedjung (translator notes p133): On 1 May the Austrian Council was told that the army in Italy was completely mobilised and complete mobilisation would take place in the north as soon as Prussia began to mobilise. Money was needed and should be publicly committed. Mensdorff opposed because of its diplomatic effects: 'it will be said that Austria has burned her boats and wants a war *à tout prix*'. Esterhazy supported Mensdorff and said the war would 'become a European war and create circumstances which will make the existence of the old Austria impossible and will result in the establishment of a new.' Belcredi favoured aggression and argued that 'the present situation was unbearable and could only lead to the ruin of the monarchy'. **FJ himself concluded, 'war must now be regarded as unavoidable and duty only consists in preparing ourselves well for it in every direction.'** (This quote from FJ seems a) crucial (if real) and b) appears nowhere I've seen except in the translator's notes to Friedjung!?)

1 May Bismarck to Wilhelm: 'I submit the enclosure in support of my urgent ... entreaty that your Majesty will not longer leave the country in the danger to which ... it is at present exposed in view of the superior Austrian armaments which, notwithstanding all assurances of peace, daily assume larger dimensions. The Minister for War will submit ... tomorrow proposals for further precautionary measures and ... I venture to hope that your Majesty will graciously take into consideration my entreaty to accelerate measures to be adopted'. Wilhelm scribbled in the margin: 'Without waiting till our note, which is to be presented today, is received? That seems to cast all the *torts* again on us...' (Unmentioned in the books?)

YOU CAN READ OVER A DOZEN ACCOUNTS OF THIS WAR AND NOT BE CONFIDENT ABOUT WHEN PRUSSIA ORDERED PARTIAL OR GENERAL MOBILISATION OR A CLEAR DEFINITION OF THESE TERMS (even weirder given the importance of mobilisation to 1914 debates).

1 May (Clark) In Council, FJ told ministers: 'Retrospective views are no longer in place, one must look at things exactly as they stand ... [they] develop independently of all human calculation, and all efforts to avert them prove vain.'

1 May (WAF) Napoleon told Goltz that Austria was looking for a deal but he preferred a deal with Prussia and hinted at the Rhineland. Goltz told Bismarck that Napoleon didn't want Benedetti to know about this idea. On 5th Bismarck told Goltz he could *not* offer the left bank of the Rhine.

2 May Berlin stock market panic on mobilisation rumours. Stern: there was a ministerial meeting at which Bismarck repeated his argument about the Saar coal mines. All opposed except Roon. Did not happen. Rumours persisted for weeks, Bismarck lied and denied anybody was thinking about it.

2 May Bismarck to Wilhelm: The latest Austrian note 'affords no prospect that Austria will disarm' but suggests it will string us along while she strengthens her preparations to gain 'an advantage over us which we cannot recover. I am informed from the Bourse today that [Austria is making financial preparations for war] and that the merchants here ... find the inactivity of the Royal Government, in view of Austria's surpassing armaments, incomprehensible, and in the

highest degree disquieting and dangerous for the country. This feeling, which does not dominate your Majesty's ministers for the first time today, has become general in the town now that the facts which were previously known to the Government have penetrated to the public. The outbursts among the public will, should it transpire ... that **the protection of the country has actually been neglected**, undoubtedly be very animated.'

At 12:30 that night (i.e morning of 3rd) the King scribbled on this: 'General Mutius reports that it is certain that 12,000 men are stationed ... immediately on the frontier. This, taken with Werther's telegram, proves that **the final moment has come for us to order great armaments which, therefore, is to be deliberated on at 3 o'clock.**'

This is a pretty extraordinary letter essentially accusing the King of neglecting his duties and endangering the country. *It is not (?) mentioned in the books.* While Pflanze says the news prompting Wilhelm's shift in position arrived on 'the evening of 3 May' this letter clearly suggests it was the evening of the 2nd.

Separately on 2 May there was a memo from Bismarck to Wilhelm summarising recent developments. It said that there was 'what appears to be an unauthenticated offer from Vienna to conclude a treaty'; a message from Goltz that Napoleon 'considers the time has now arrived for the understanding with Prussia' and if this doesn't happen 'he thinks he cannot refuse the offers made to him by Austria' and suggests 'the eyes of France are directed to the Rhineland'; information continues to arrive re Austrian mobilisation on the frontier 'and of the fears that they will at once invade'. We must take immediate military steps; re France we should not make a clear answer but send 'a special mission with a Royal confidential letter couched in general terms' to seek information and 'to gain time'; we should explore how serious the Austrians are without 'betraying our readiness'. (In general the correspondence gives a different picture. The history books portray Bismarck generally as more in control, the correspondence shows much more the friction, the involvement/interference of the king, all the restraints he put on Bismarck's freedom of action etc.)

2 May Tsar sent Schweinitz back to Berlin with another letter. When he arrived he found Prussia mobilising. He left on 10th empty-handed. (Mosse p236).

2 May Some time on 2nd he spoke to Govone again and said that he would resign if Wilhelm abandoned Italy (Govone Memoirs). WAF: they spoke about the idea floating around that Italy may do a deal for Venetia then abandon Prussia. Bismarck agreed that Prussia was morally, but not technically, obliged to fight for Italy if the latter alone were attacked. WAF: an oddity is that Benedetti was trying to keep Prussia and Italy on good terms while Napoleon was suddenly thinking of ways to exploit pushing them apart — but his double dealings ran into the sand.

3 May (Clark) FJ wrote to his mother: '**Only a fundamental and durable understanding with Prussia could be of advantage in our situation, and such an understanding seems to me absolutely impossible without abdicating our position as a Great Power. One must face the war with composure and trust in God, for since we have gone so far, the monarchy could better endure a war than a slow disintegrating and dishonourable peace.**' This sounds like a man who thinks the war is close to inevitable at this stage and the risks of defeat worth taking.

3 May Rouher (a French minister) called for peace, the avoidance of entanglements and the maintenance of 'entire liberty of action'. France would disapprove highly of an Austrian attack on Italy but Italy would attack Austria '*a ses risques et perils*'. Ollivier gave his place to **Thiers who gave a speech.**

'One will see a return of the Empire of Charles V, which formerly resided in Vienna, and now will reside in Berlin which will be close to our border and will apply pressure to it... You have a right to resist this policy in the name of the interest of France, for France is too important for such a revolution not to menace her gravely. And when she [France] had struggled for two centuries ... to destroy this colossus, is she prepared to watch as it re-establishes itself before her eyes? [France should oppose Prussia] first in the name of the independence of the German states... second, in the name of her own independence, and, finally in the name of the European

balance, which is the interest of all, the interest of universal society.' He argued that Prussia would create a new North German bloc, control it, annex states. He rejected any idea of compensations in a Prussian trade as 'shameful'. Italy had been wrongly encouraged and should be told that France would not support her even if Austria attacked.

It lasted a couple of hours. Pottinger says it caused 'a sensation'. Although the government rejected the arguments and the official media attacked Thiers, he had the support of most of the country especially the middle and upper classes.

Napoleon firmly rejected Thiers' argument. (Clark p265 seems to confuse years and suggests this was given in 1865.)

3 May (WAF) Drouyn informed Benedetti of the congress proposal he'd discussed with Goltz, Cowley and Metternich. But by 6th he was telling Benedetti that the congress was abandoned for the time being. WAF: Bismarck at this time thought that Napoleon was trying to delay war so that Austrian preparations were complete and Italy's obligations terminated, so that Prussia would be under greater pressure and forced to accept Napoleon's demands.

4 May Prince Albert to Ludwig von Gerlach: 'I have not been able to see or speak to Count Bismarck. He is still unwell... There is much very doubtful about it but I have such boundless confidence in Bismarck that I suspect that it forms parts of his long-term, well-thought out plan and is neither a momentary inspiration nor a political chess move.'

4 May (Pottinger p114) Many meetings with Napoleon and Eugenie about how to reply to Vienna. Rouher and La Valetter urged peace, Drouyn favoured Mensdorff's plan.

5 May Eyck (p119): Napoleon told the Italian Ambassador, Nigra, that Austria was willing to cede Venetia to France, which would transfer it to Italy soon, on condition Italy would give Austria a free hand to acquire territory in Germany. La Marmora 'saved Prussia' (Eyck) by rejecting the deal: 'For us it is a question of honour and loyalty not to let Prussia down' he wired to Nigra.

WAF: on 5th La Marmora telegraphed Nigra in Paris saying that he would stick to the Prussian treaty and *not* do a deal with Austria. This possibly was not known by Napoleon when he gave his speech on 6th.

5 May (Pottinger) Napoleon told Metternich that Vienna should cede Venetia when the first shot was fired instead of waiting for compensations to be won from Prussia. In return Napoleon would not ask for compensation. And promised to keep Italy neutral. Cf. 8/5.

6 May Further exchanges between Victoria and Clarendon. She pushed for action with France. Clarendon: Napoleon doesn't want to act, naval demonstrations by us alone are pointless, we could appeal for mediation etc but that only emphasises we don't agree with France etc. (I assume these exchanges occurred before news of the Auxerre speech arrived.)

6 May Napoleon's inflammatory speech at Auxerre attacking the 'detested' 1815 Vienna settlement. It went down like a lead balloon in London. It 'was interpreted in France as favoring Prussia and Italy and [implying] the possibility that France might join in the war on Austria. That thought elicited a sharply adverse reaction in French public opinion and a steep decline on the Paris bourse. [It] was yet another attempt ... to coerce Austria into surrendering Venetia. But the reaction revealed the depth of anti-Prussian and pacifistic sentiment in France' (Pflanze, p301). Napoleon also sent a backchannel agent, a Hungarian, to Bismarck with proposals for a deal: Italy gets Venetia, Prussia gets North Germany, France gets the triangle of German territory lying between the Rhine and Moselle rivers belonging to Prussia, Hesse, and Bavaria. Bismarck rejected the last but sent back a counter-offer possibly involving Belgium and Luxembourg. This too fizzled out. (Barry wrongly dates the Auxerre speech to 15 May.)

Pottinger (p117) The paragraph that caused such ructions was *never actually spoken*, it was added by Napoleon to the written version published the next day in *Moniteur*, and the ministers didn't realise until after it was published! (I haven't seen this anywhere else but it's very plausible to me, having participated in similar episodes.) On or before the 5th the Prussian military *attaché* in Paris received secret overtures, from a disreputable character Vimercati, regarding the Rhineland. We can't prove Napoleon's direct connection to this move but it seems likely. The *attaché* guarded his position by telling Goltz, who notified Berlin. Bismarck thought Vimercati an untrustworthy

adventurer. The discussions went nowhere. *French reaction to Napoleon's speech was hostile*. Business circles were anti-Prussian and pacifist. The Paris stock market dived. The Rothschilds urged peace in Paris and Vienna. *The speech's hints about the Rhineland also annoyed Bismarck, so it generally annoyed everyone!*

7 May (Pottinger p137ff) A Hungarian expat living in Paris, Kiss de Nemesker — a colonel in the revolutionary army of 1848-9, brother-in-law to former French foreign minister Thouvenel, adviser to Prince Napoleon — arrived in Berlin. Met Bismarck on 12/5. There were further letters and discussions. It's hard to tell how seriously Bismarck took him. The discussions involved another version of — Venetia to Italy, duchies to Prussia, Rhineland to France. Cf first week of June.

7 May Bismarck note about the alternative approaches to France: 'the easier way' was to show Napoleon that 'what Austria can offer him at our expense is more readily obtainable from us'; the 'harder way' was to threaten Napoleon with a nationalist war to the knife. (Written before or after he was nearly killed that day?!)

7 May Assassination attempt by Ferdinand Cohen-Blind (stepson of the 1848 revolutionary Karl Blind) as he walked back from the palace along the footpath of *Unter den Linden* to his *Wilhelmstrasse* office. Five shots were fired: two with his back turned, one as he advanced on the attacker, two more point-blank as he grappled with him. He initially thought he had been badly if not mortally wounded. '[T]hose who witnessed the assault and its aftermath ... described his composure as remarkable' (Pflanze).

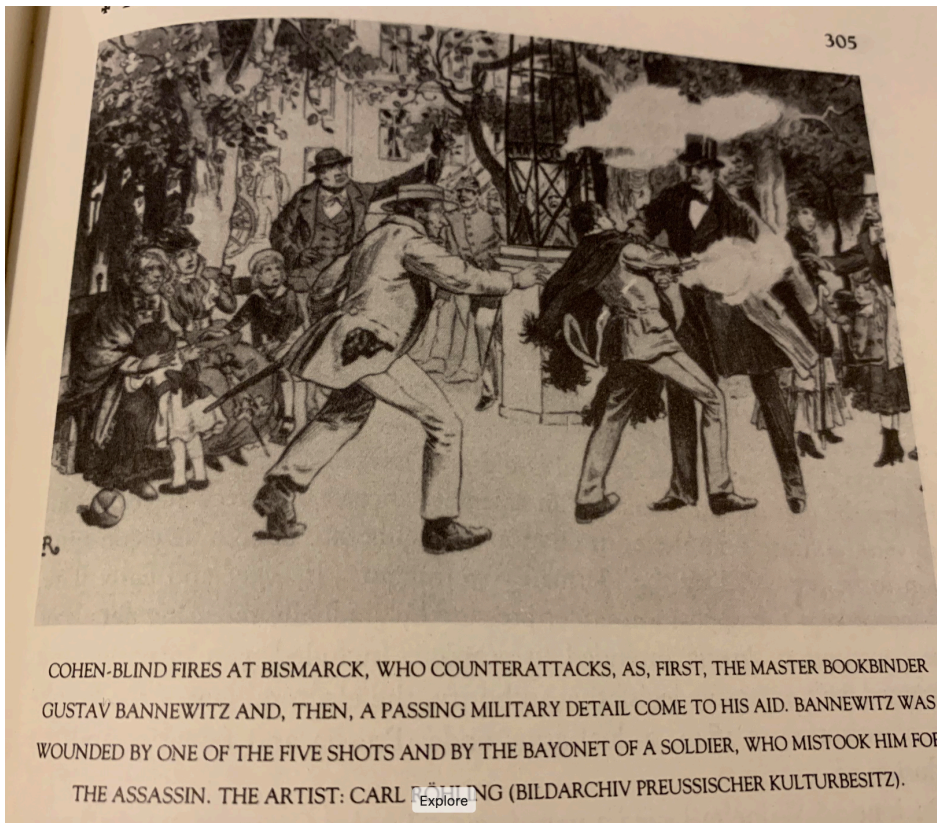
There was no evidence of a conspiracy but Bismarck used it to close some newspapers and associations; he 'appears to have acted alone' and wanted to prevent the coming war by killing Bismarck (OP). While under police interrogation he slashed his own throat and died. Bismarck kept the pistol, loaded, on a table in his office as he would the pistol from the 1874 assassination attempt. At a *soirée* Bismarck hosted for parliamentarians years later, someone accidentally discharged Cohen-Blind's pistol not realising he kept it loaded (nobody was hurt).

Gall: That evening he instructed the Prussian ambassador in St P. to point out to Gorchakov and the Tsar that 'the attempt upon my life was made by a *Württemberg republican* and that accordingly the revolutionaries of southern Germany at least regard me not as a promoter of their plans but as the representative of the monarchical principle and are trying to get rid of me, seeing particularly my German reforms as I see them myself, namely as an obstacle to their plans, that in other words my position is not after all what it has been represented to the Emperor as being'.

KL: He hounded the police investigating and eventually was so cross about their work that he instituted disciplinary proceedings against them. He sent word to Gerlach that his article had wounded more than the assassination attempt.

EF: Keudell wrote that in general over the spring-summer period Bismarck did not talk politics when he left his office and spent time with his family and this helped him preserve equanimity. After the assassination a crowd formed outside his official residency and he briefly addressed it (some biographies say he NEVER addressed a public meeting but there must have been quite a few informal occasions like this?). He noticed no note from Goltz and remarked that Goltz had never been good at hypocrisy!

Eyck: A story that spread about that day: a famous professor of physiology hurried into a Berlin bookshop and said crossly, 'How bad revolvers are in this country.' (Four years later the same professor described Berlin professors as 'the spiritual life-guards of the House of Hohenzollern'.)



Same day — Ludwig von Gerlach's article for *Kreuzzeitung* 'War and Reform' (Gall: 'War and Federal Reform') published: 'The justified mission of Prussia to develop her power in Germany is opposed by the equally justified mission of Austria to maintain her power in Germany. This dualism is the vital fundamental characteristic and the real basis of the constitution of Germany. It has matured and gained strength more and more during the last three hundred years, and after the glorious liberation of Germany in 1815 it was sealed by solemn treaties. It has given Germany fifty years of peace, flourishing prosperity, and, as almost never before, of freedom from foreign intervention. Germany is no longer Germany if Prussia is absent or if Austria is absent... The German Confederation has great defects but I do not destroy my family or my fatherland because they have defects... Let us take care not to fall into the dreadful false belief [alternative: the abominable heresy] that God's holy commandments stop at the field of politics, diplomacy and war, and that these areas have no higher law than patriotic egoism. *Justitia fundamentum regnorum* [justice is the foundation of kingdoms]... Universal suffrage means political bankruptcy. Instead of vital legal relationships and political ideas, instead of concrete personalities, [it recognises] only numbers and sums... Let us therefore hold firmly to our recognised truths and most of all to the divine and eternal content.'

Gerlach defended the strict legitimist position, made clear his opposition to a war with Austria, and insisted that the principles laid down by God for personal behaviour must govern diplomacy too. Bismarck never forgave him.

(Hamerow: before Wagener fell under Bismarck's spell he said many similar things. 'The principle of nationality ... is not justified but is lawless, unrighteous, and unchristian, seeking to dissolve and disintegrate the Christian community of peoples and simply to lead the peoples back to the natural pagan basis of blood and descent... We have ... no right to tear a province away from another state because its inhabitants speak the same language we do and are of the same descent as we are.' Leopold Gerlach had also condemned 'the vice of patriotism': 'Why do I detest patriotism, "the dearly beloved Fatherland" and things of that sort? Partly because of the hypocrisy and emptiness, but there is also something wrong with them. Loyalty to the king and love for our fellow man, which can just as well be extended to Russians, Englishmen, and Frenchmen, are quite enough.')

Gall says this article hit the newsstands on the afternoon of 7th 'at almost exactly the same time' as the assassination attempt.

Lerman: it was on 8th.

JS — 5th.

EF: 7th and Gerlach sent Bismarck a copy of it attached to a note congratulating him on his escape and went to see him and found him 'abrupt, pale, passionately excited, incapable of a friendly word ... there was something restless and desperate about him. He spoke of God, of prayer, as if to say that he would make his case with God, with God alone, but not with friends or party colleagues'.

(It seems clear it was 7th. How do historians get this wrong?! Some careful historians footnote it 8 May. A theory: perhaps the official date on the newspaper was 8th but it first appeared on the streets in the afternoon of 7th so a) it is correct to say the newspaper is dated 8th but b) in fact it appeared early, just as newspapers are today dated day-T but they are first seen on day-T-1?)

Hamerow: around this time he said to von Below-Hohendorf, '**They will not prevail on me to abandon my plans. But they will force me to seek my collaborators in places where I would not otherwise seek anything, so that I may thus arrive at my goal by roundabout ways which are not unobjectionable.**'

8 May Clarendon in Lords: 'There is now little of that secret diplomacy which in former days so much prevailed. There is on the part of every Government — such is the power of public opinion — so great an anxiety to appeal to it and obtain its support, that despatches of the most important character and entailing the gravest consequences are no sooner delivered than they are published; and the telegram secures that there shall be no priority of information. We are, therefore, all placed on the same footing... [As he said this, obviously 'secret diplomacy' was underway with Bismarck-Gablenz and the Coburg shenanigans.] Up to about a fortnight ago there was an appearance that moderate counsels would prevail, and that the calamity of war would be averted. But within the last fortnight this hope has become less and less felt, and, although each Power declares that it has no aggressive intention against the other, and although each declares that it has only armed against an attack which they all declare they do not meditate, yet when three large armies are marching to their respective frontiers there is too much reason to fear that war is at hand. If we had the least reason to hope that our good offices would have been of any use, they would have been freely offered and conscientiously employed. That we have taken care the Powers in question should know. I should not be discharging my duty if I said too much; but, my Lords, we have stood alone, and alone we could do nothing against the determination that war was the most effective means — the only effective means of giving effect to an ambitious policy. This determination may possibly be carried into effect — we must hope that until war is actually declared it will not be carried into effect, but more than a million of men are now armed and prepared for the conflict. And I must say that it is a melancholy sight in this enlightened age, and in the present state of civilization and progress, that Europe should be even menaced with war for which no *casus belli* can be said to exist, and for which there is no justification.'

Earl Grey replied: 'It seems to me that what has now taken place in Europe is the natural consequence of that conduct which we thought it right to pursue some two years ago. Your Lordships will remember that it was at that time ostentatiously laid down as the political rule of conduct of this country that we were never to interfere with foreign States except when our own interests were directly and immediately threatened. The rule or principle of nonintervention, which had been understood in a very different sense by great statesmen in former times, was abused to this extent. In former times, when the principle of non-intervention was invoked, it meant this — that no State had a right to interfere with the internal affairs of another; that it was an abuse and scandal if any nation prevented another from settling its internal Government in the manner it thought best for its own welfare and its own prosperity. But in these days no man ever dreamt that the principle of non-intervention applied to the case of the disputes which arise in the civilized world, or that it meant that a great country like this had no duty to perform in endeavouring to prevent the oppression of weak States by the strong, and in maintaining, not only peace, but the interests of justice throughout the world. My Lords, I say this is a new doctrine, for the first

time put forward and for the first time acted upon in a manner which has left a stain on the fair fame of this country some two years ago. We then not only acted on this principle, but acted on it in this manner — we deluded unfortunate Denmark by intimations, if not promises, of support, until we brought her into a false position — and then we abandoned her. I then foresaw that if we were to proceed on the purely selfish principle of thinking of our own interests only, it would very soon happen that some strong and unscrupulous Power would avail itself of the new principle to be guilty of acts of spoliation, that the peace of Europe would be in danger, and that sooner or later we should see those deeds of wrong and violence which we had encouraged by our sufferance rise to such a height and be applied in such a manner as to fill the world with blood and misery. I ventured at the time to express to your Lordships my conviction that this would be the consequence of the policy pursued; that, encouraged by our sufferance, scandal, wrong, and robbery — what we stated in our official papers to be wrong and robbery — would result; and I am certain that a single word said at the right time and with proper firmness would have stopped the entire mischief without danger of war. We are told that it was a great triumph for the Administration of that day that it kept us out of war. I ventured then to say that they ought not to boast until we had seen the end of it; and, looking now at the threatening state of Europe, will any man tell me that we are not now more in danger of being drawn into a contest than if we had at that time taken a bolder course? My Lords, I say the consequences may be put off for a time, but they will come; and for those consequences I hold Her Majesty's Government to be responsible.'

Russell replied to Grey: 'I never heard it laid down — I know not whether anybody laid it down, but certainly Her Majesty's Government did not — that this country was not to interfere where the peace of Europe or the interests of justice might require. What I said was that if neither your honour nor interests were concerned you must consider long and with great deliberation before you enter into a war. **If you enter into a war merely for the sake of preserving the general balance of power in Europe, without your interests or honour being involved, you ought to see whether you are not likely to produce much more evil than you are likely to remedy.** My noble Friend, on the other hand, says it was no question of Germany being in the right or of Denmark being in the right, but that there was an opportunity of entering into a war and we ought to have accepted it. I differ entirely from my noble Friend, and I certainly cannot accept his representations of the conduct of Her Majesty's Government.'

Derby attacked Russell for 'misrepresentation' and also connected the current situation to 1864: '... when Denmark depended on your moral if not your material support, then you took an opportunity of withdrawing from the contest which you had yourselves encouraged, and abandoned the ally whom you had led by your encouragement to maintain her own rights.'

8 May Cowley reported that the French Finance Minister, Fould, expressed himself very strongly to Napoleon that his speech, and encouragement of a Prussia-Italy alliance, was a disaster. The speech went down very badly in London — 'the worst & most ominous thing he has done since his accession' said Clarendon.

8 May (Pottinger) Goltz saw Napoleon just after his discussion with Fould. Napoleon stressed he wanted peace and a conference to sort out Venetia, the duchies, and the German question. The same day, Drouyn wrote to his ambassadors in London and Saint Petersburg suggesting that the French, English and Russian government issue invitations to a Congress. Cf. 15/5.

8 May Mensdorff-Metternich: Napoleon's suggestion of 4/5 is no good — we cannot promise to cede Venetia unless the campaign in Germany has brought compensation and cannot make commitments re the postwar status of Italy.

9 May A majority of representatives to the Diet voted in favour of a resolution demanding that Prussia explain its mobilisation. (Clark & JS) OP — 10-5 vote.

9 May Landtag (prorogued since Feb) dissolved and new elections announced. '*For or against the soldiers*' was Bismarck's slogan.

10 May In England, failure of the great banking house of Overend and Gurney, followed by a crash on the Stock Exchange and a rise in the bank rate to 10 per cent.

11 May Pfordten announced that the entire Bavarian army had been ordered to the colours. His example was soon followed by Württemberg, Darmstadt, and Nassau.

11 May Prussia raised discount rate to 9% in response to market fears (connected to the problems in the City?).

12 May Clarendon to Cowley: '[W]e are willing to do anything for the maintenance of peace except committing ourselves to a policy of action that we cd. not justify & wh. wd. not be sanctioned by public opinion at home...[W]hat wd. please everybody in Europe wd. be that Italy got Venetia, Austria, Silesia, & Prussia a licking.' (Cf. 31/3)

12 May Bloomfield-Clarendon: Mensdorff says, 'Count Bismarck's plans have been too long and too deeply laid to admit of sufficient modification at the last moment ... to be reconcilable with the interests of the Austrian Empire.'

12 May Hohenlohe noted of the military parade on 12th that 'The King's appearance horrified me. He was ashen-grey and there were deep lines on his forehead. His dreadful seriousness and deep anxiety showed that he was trying to make up his mind to some vital decision'.

13-14 May Conference of middle states at Bamberg including Hanover.

Clark: by now Bavaria, Saxony, Württemberg, Darmstadt and Nassau had mobilised forces. Within a week Dalwigk told Vienna 'we are completely mobilised and will fulfil our duties to the last moment'. **Vienna proved unable to organise serious coordination of German forces.** Beust had proposed at Bamberg a coordination plan but Pfordten wouldn't agree and returned from Bamberg 'more pacific than ever' (Clark). Pfordten kept changing his mind and would not commit. He wanted to keep relations with Bismarck and his own role as a potential mediator open and his own generals thought Prussia's army superior to Austria's. (*So not all shared the consensus view that Austria would win.*) King Ludwig was thought to be mad by many. Pfordten had rejected neutrality but would not prepare seriously until after the war had been going a week. He continued talking about possible ways out of the war. (Clark p447 and p457ff for lots of detail re Vienna's dealings with the middle states.)

14 May (WAF) Bismarck spoke to Benedetti. Bismarck was concerned about the confused/confusing signals coming from Paris. Bismarck let drop that Napoleon had suggested to Goltz (1/5) about compensation on the Rhine, while there were also rumours of Napoleon doing a deal with Vienna. Benedetti, embarrassed by being kept in the dark again, suggested that his own impressions remained that Paris was not looking for a deal with Austria. He did not reveal that he had no idea what was going on between Napoleon, Goltz, Metternich and Nigra in Paris. Bismarck told him that a Major von Burg had been sent to Paris with a letter from Wilhelm to Napoleon asking for clarity. (Pottinger p136ff: he sent Burg because he was unhappy with Goltz's reports and wanted a direct route. Goltz sabotaged the mission and this worsened relations with Bismarck.)

15 May Werner-Mensdorff: 'A confidential report from Count Hohenthal yesterday, which I saw, speaks of negotiations that were secretly held between Austria and Prussia on the question of the duchy; Count Bismarck, when asked about this, is said to have stated that they only took place in order to compromise Austria with regard to the medium-sized acts...' Cf. 25 May re Gablenz.

15 May (Pottinger) There was a meeting in Paris with Drouyn and the English and Russian ambassadors in Paris about the proposed congress. And after much to-ing and fro-ing formal invitations were sent on 24 May.

16 May Zerber: Prussia's rail deployment started.

16 May Metternich-Mensdorff (possibly as a consequence of the constant intrigues around Napoleon who lied constantly to everyone): 'I have the feeling of a man who, involved by duty and by patriotism in the events of the day, understands nothing, nothing at all, of the situation.'

17 May Schweinitz (back since 12th) found the Tsar in bad humour after reading despatches from Berlin. Gorchakov was still talking about an Austro-Prussian understanding on Bund reform but clear he would maintain neutrality.

18 May Moltke given a paper from staff warning that 'Public opinion ... is increasingly hostile to the idea of the war. Unless the army is set in motion its morale will be seriously affected.' In Berlin in May lots of institutions lobbied for peace such as the Chamber of Commerce.

18 May Lerman: Last meeting with Gerlach. Gerlach reported he looked 'strikingly serious, pale and agitated'.

18 May (WAF) Bismarck spoke to Benedetti: Major von Burg has returned without delivering the letter (cf. 14/5), Goltz says that Napoleon is preparing a conciliation program with British and Russian ambassadors. Bismarck attacked Napoleon's behaviour saying he was setting up an Austrian grab of Silesia in compensation for Venetia and stressed that Prussia would fight. Bismarck suggested that Benedetti knew about Napoleon's nefarious schemes. Benedetti was alarmed — actually he was in the dark but he feared that he would lose Bismarck's confidence. He complained to Drouyn (19/5): 'they all [all the ambassadors] imagine, and Bismarck with them, that I am in the possession of all your secrets'. Bismarck said to me yesterday that France's other ambassadors are speaking in an anti-Prussian sense 'and how can one believe that they are authorised to speak while you are asked to remain silent'.

18 May (Pottinger) There was a ministerial meeting in Paris. According to Persigny, Drouyn eloquently set out the history of the crisis but proposed nothing. Rouher babbled and pulled out document after document suggesting he was conducting a parallel diplomatic operation, and also proposed no plan. There were discussions about the possibility of stripping Prussia's Rhineland provinces but ministers preferred to aim for the congress. The next day Drouyn told Metternich that he thought an alliance would happen if war broke out or the congress failed.

18 May Goltz-Bismarck: Drouyn says the French military think Austria will win.

19 May Mensdorff: mobilisation is less than half complete. Clark: in early May it was not a third ready, the earliest date for completion was 10 June but that kept getting put back.

20 May A panicky Bodelschwingh told Bismarck that he did not have enough money for war or even enough to guarantee sufficient funds beyond 2 months.

21 May (Pottinger) There was a court ball where Napoleon and Metternich talked in a side room for an hour (reported by Metternich on 23/5). Metternich explained his opposition to a congress based on cession of Venetia: 'Your Majesty has just thrown on the gaming-table a card which we had furtively passed You ... the congress is the first act of hostility undertaken against Austria.' Napoleon said — you will beat Italy but I don't want to have to fight to save Italy or see it destroyed. He asked whether Vienna would accept that Venetia would be given up *even if the Austrians won*. Metternich was 'horrified' (Pottinger) and Napoleon said this is why we can't do a deal.

22 May On 30 March a provisional offer of the Rumanian throne had been made to Prince Charles of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen. It was confirmed by a referendum 15 April. On 22/5 Prince Charles entered Bucharest. His election was contrary to the Treaty of Paris and a sign of the crumbling old order (Mosse). It had happened with the tacit support of Bismarck and Napoleon. The acceptance by the Powers 'contrasted strikingly' (Mosse) with the Russo-Turkish occupation 17 years earlier in similar circumstances.

Oddly, Vienna missed the fact that the Prince travelled through Vienna by boat down the Danube and missed a chance to arrest him! It turned out the Prince was too scared to do much and Vienna did not have to divert troops to deal with him, contra Bismarck's hope. (Clark p443)

22 May *The Times* said that Prussia was mistaken in relying on its army and on 23 May, Italy and Prussia have made 'a strange and almost unnatural alliance'; Bismarck's policy of war is unpopular across Germany; 'the Prussian army, which is popular in its constitution and contains a large proportion of educated men, has no spirit for a war condemned by the nation, a war which can give no real glory, and the ultimate consequences of which are likely to be a great national misfortune.' The proceedings of the Bund show how the German people oppose Bismarck's policy. If war starts it is a 'probability' that it is checked by 'some political movement in Germany'. If Austria ignores 'the advice of Europe' on Venetia, 'we assume' that she will remain on the defensive, not attack. 'It is almost needless, however, to repeat that the course of events will be in the main directed by the French Emperor.' During the crisis *The Times* ran a series of editorials predicting disaster for Prussia. The *Manchester Guardian* also predicted success for Austria.

22 May What Wawro calls 'a truly spectacular intelligence coup' (p64, footnotes 52,53 for sources): FJ's spies reported that the Prussian General Staff had ordered 150 linen maps of Saxony and Bohemia which highlighted an invasion route through Görlitz and Dresden to Königgratz. Belcredi informed Mensdorff on 22nd and **Benedek was told but he ignored the report.** (Not in OP, JS, Gall, or I think G Craig.)

23 May Metternich-Mensdorff: 'The Emperor wants to induce us at all costs to yield Venice, and expects to get it either through the war or by means of the congress.' See above 21/5.

24 May Napoleon announced that Britain and Russia supported a congress. (The French accepted that Britain could not commit in advance to forcing anybody to give up territory. Clarendon felt he could not refuse an invitation provided there were no pre-conditions.) **Bismarck accepted on 29th, Austria insisted on pre-conditions that doomed it 31 May.**

25 May Moltke met Wilhelm: the deployment on the borders of Saxony and Bohemia will be done by 5 June and 'from then on we must not wait a single day before acting.' Austria will not have transported all their forces by then but 'with every succeeding day they will become stronger' and we have to worry about the French intervening. 'Military considerations make it highly desirable that our diplomacy action should come to a conclusion by 5 June.' Blumenthal attended the meeting and recorded that he thought Wilhelm was still hoping for peace but was fearful of an Austrian strike at Berlin.

25 May FJ told Gablenz: 'it was regrettable that these proposals had not been made six or eight weeks earlier, when they would certainly have been accepted'. 26/5: FJ discussed the draft treaty with Mensdorff, Belcredi and Esterhazy and decided not to continue further negotiations unless Gablenz could persuade Bavaria or Saxony to sponsor the deal. Gablenz talked to Beust but obviously he had no interest in the plan. **The Gablenz initiative was dead by the end of May.** Of course, Bismarck argued to the King: Austria has abandoned negotiations and clearly wants war.

There are three records of him telling people years later a fascinating detail about the secret conversations: that he **proposed that Austria and Prussia join forces, attack France, capture Alsace, and make Strasbourg a federal fortress with an Austrian garrison with Prussia garrisoning Mainz.** (The 3 accounts: 1880 to Dr Cohen, 1883 to Busch, 1890 to Friedjung: *all three accounts agree, says Clark.* This seems underweighted by historians.)

In December 1866, Bismarck spoke to Count Wimpffen, sent by FJ to Berlin: **"I wish that we had shot the stag together"** was Bismarck's expression. He had believed, he said, that there was a chance in the last hour before the war, when he sent Baron Gablenz to Vienna. **That moment seemed to him the most appropriate time to clasp each other's hand and with guns loaded to face in another direction'** (Wimpffen-Beust, 6/12/66). At the time Manteuffel was let partly into the secret and he wrote a memo 21/5 on the idea concluding: '... should France object [to this settlement] then we will have a fine war and Austria has the prospect of Milan.'

Bismarck worked seriously on the draft treaty in May amid all the other demands on his time and sent the section on military arrangements to Moltke for comment. Would he have done so if it were not serious? Clark points out he went to the trouble of drafting a treaty between Prussia and Augustenburg in Feb 1865 despite thinking it would be unnecessary, and a treaty with Oldenburg in June 1865 for the improbable contingency that Austria would accept Oldenburg. Bismarck was an obsessive character who left no promising path unexplored — that he worked on it seriously does *not* mean that he thought it 'more likely than not to work out'.

On 15 May Werner-Mensdorff: 'A confidential report from Count Hohenthal yesterday, which I saw, speaks of negotiations that were secretly held between Austria and Prussia on the question of the duchy; Count Bismarck, when asked about this, is said to have stated that they only took place in order to compromise Austria with regard to the medium-sized acts...' This is a characteristic comment.

On 25 May Bismarck told Karolyi: Prussia, Austria and Italy should exchange views upon a common attitude in preparation for a possible congress. He urged that Mensdorff 'appear in

Paris with the most extensive powers for concluding an agreement with Prussia' and hinted that Mensdorff should not take Biegeleben to Paris. (Karolyi was not in on the secret negotiations so did not understand the significance of the discussion.)

Anton Gablenz told FJ (25/5): 'Your Majesty will presently send a representative to the congress, at the same time conclude the treaty with Prussia in Kiel and quickly ratify it. As soon as the Venetian question is brought up at the congress, Your Majesty's envoy will leave the conference and your Majesty will reply with the ratified treaty. Napoleon of course will be surprised but the sword of justice is taken from him — but history will label the Treaty of Kiel with the motto: revenge for Villa Franca! and revenge will be sweet and sure, for behind the Kiel treaty will stand a million soldiers'. This further shows that Bismarck had been talking in May to Gablenz about possibilities dependent on the congress happening.

Clark thinks Bismarck's main motive was to show Wilhelm — see, I've done all I can to avoid war but *Vienna wants it*, we have no choice. Further that if Napoleon suddenly tried to intervene, Bismarck had an escape route. The congress was looming at this time, he could not be sure what Napoleon might do (as Napoleon did not know himself!). He was perhaps also thinking he could use the document to incriminate Austria at some point, as he did later with Benedetti. (Clark p419ff).

What do I think? This was a classic example of Bismarck keeping multiple possibilities open as long as possible and some historians' analysis is distorted by forgetting how in May multiple possible futures still seemed possible to Bismarck.

- 1) This secret backchannel provided him an escape route if various things happened such as a) Wilhelm wobbling again, b) Napoleon and/or Britain intervening, c) a Congress proving unavoidable because of Great Power pressure etc. I think because the Congress did not happen, historians have not considered properly the fact that in May Bismarck had to take seriously the possibility it would happen, and that a significant part of his motive in May was using the Gablenz initiative to weave new combinations for this scenario.
- 2) One of his core operating principles was: *try to make opponents seem unreasonable to key audiences*. This gave him a great chance to show Wilhelm and others that 'Austria wants war'.
- 3) It gave him a means to undermine Austria further with the middle states by making it public if he chose, as per the Benedetti document in 1870.
- 4) Taking it seriously had no obvious downside. Why turn it down and let Vienna whisper more strongly to Wilhelm via different channels 'you are being dragged into a dishonourable war by Bismarck'?

Clark: It was perhaps a missed opportunity. If the Gablenz initiative had started 2 months earlier before the generals and armies came to the foreground then perhaps it could have worked. For FJ prestige ranked higher than a province and he felt he could not give in to threats, though he might have done a secret deal that allowed him to claim his honour intact. In the end, FJ was right to reject the deal that emerged. Bismarck watered down then removed the secret protocol giving Austria defence against France. The deal was much more skewed to Prussia. It would have alienated Austria's German allies without solving the Italian problem, overstretching the empire and leaving FJ vulnerable to revolts everywhere. But the manner of the rejection was not adroit. Clark thinks Mensdorff and Esterhazy probably did not take the talks too seriously and were stringing them out to buy time and prevent a surprise attack. E.g Mensdorff to Bloomfield 12/5: 'Count Bismarck's plans have been too long and too deeply laid to admit of sufficient modification at the last moment ... to be reconcilable with the interests of the Austrian Empire.' Clark also quotes a letter from Anton von Gablenz to Wilhelm on 25th in which he wrote that FJ had told him with a sigh that Bismarck had many traits he 'regarded highly' but 'one must never trust him and in this country one cannot forgive him for setting Italy upon us'.

25 May Mensdorff told UK and Russia: we cannot accept Venetia as part of the discussion in a Congress, and said it should first discuss the duchies which were the source of the problem.

25 May Blome-Mensdorff: Pfordten considers his mediation ended and now wants the long-postponed diplomatic initiative.

26 May Crown Council. Stosch attended and wrote his account in a letter to his wife: 'Bismarck gave hints that the war must decisively achieve the rounding off of Prussian territory. That caused the Crown Prince to ask whether there was an intention to annex territory... The King answered angrily that there is no question of war yet and still less of deposing German princes. He wants peace... Bismarck was by far the clearest and sharpest. I became convinced that he had brought about the whole situation in order to encourage the King to be more warlike... The meeting went on for three hours and as we came out **the Crown Prince said "we know no more than we did before. The King will not, Bismarck will."**' But Stosch added that Bismarck would soon go to the conference in Paris and 'people see that as decisive because by his absence he loses his power over the King and his opponents, who number grows each day, gain ground'. (JS, p245)

Gordon Craig dates this Crown Council as 25th. Moltke wanted Wilhelm to declare war as soon as rail movements were complete on or about 5 June and Roon urged this to the King but Wilhelm not only turned this down but refused Bismarck's request to send an ultimatum to Saxony offering neutrality or invasion (p33). (I suspect different accounts are confusing one meeting on 25th.)

26 May G Craig: Benedek arrived at Olmütz HQ, stayed there for 2 weeks. This wasn't appreciated by Prussia until 10 June. Showalter: he arrived on 27th.

27 May Bismarck, 'circular to the missions' (Gall): 'If we were to face a major crisis with the Confederation in its present form, a wholesale revolutionary upheaval in Germany is the most likely outcome, given the instability of circumstances as they are present. **That kind of catastrophe can be precluded only by timely reform from above.**' (On 14 April 1891 he said, 'German unification was a conservative achievement.')

28 May (WAF) Benedetti met with Bismarck to discuss the Congress. Bismarck suggested Wilhelm would probably accept the invitation but said that the danger of war came from Austrian armaments, not the duchies issue. Benedetti reported to Drouyn that although Wilhelm may prefer to avoid war, probably only the threat of isolation would make Bismarck pull back, otherwise he would try to wreck peace initiatives.

29 May Bome-Mensdorff: Bismarck wants a surprise attack to shorten the war and save money. Cf. Bismarck-Manteuffel 9/6.

29 May Barral-La Marmora: Bismarck said 'with a mark of deep discontent, "The French emperor now wants peace at all costs."'

29 May (Mosse) **Bismarck accepted the invitation to the Congress.**

30 May To Goltz: 'In the decisive moment the masses stand by the Monarchy without distinction whether it has a liberal or conservative direction at that moment.' (Barry: in the build up to the war Goltz was telling people like the British Ambassador in Paris that Bismarck had screwed up and 'will be eventually driven from power'.)

30 May Bloomfield-Clarendon: Mensdorff says the Austrian reply 'would contain a declaration that Austria did not seek any territorial aggrandisement or increase of power, and that She trusted the other states would be disposed to make declarations in the same sense. The Roman question would be alluded to.' FJ's approval would be sought the next morning. Bloomfield expressed the fear that the reply would not aid the congress and indicated an intention not to attend. Mensdorff replied that he was ready to set out for Paris, but would not do so 'until he heard further'.

(Bismarck had told Karolyi that 'there is a better chance of their coming to an understanding at Paris than elsewhere'.) **Either during the afternoon of 30th or the morning of 31st, FJ went over the draft and tightened the reservations.** FJ felt he could not cede Venetia under pressure in a Congress and selling it would be dishonourable. There was no formal council but he was 'probably' influenced by Esterhazy (Clark p431).

31 May Wilhelm to Russian Ambassador: 'I feel trapped like a fox indoors. In the end I will have to bite my way out.'

31 May Bodelschwing resigned ('nervous collapse', Stern), Heydt took over. (They hated each other.) He was distrusted by liberals and conservatives but had good connections to banks and business. He took the job on condition that after the war *Parliament would be asked for an indemnity.*

Bismarck agreed. (Bismarck said of Bodenschwingh: 'I never underestimated how dangerous Bodenschwingh was. Do you know what he is? He's the fox that you think you've shot, throw over your shoulder to take home, and which then bites you in the arse.')

31 May early afternoon (Clark) Vienna informed UK, France, Russia that Austria accepted with pre-conditions: that all powers should renounce any territorial gains and she refused to discuss giving away territory like Venetia on principle. (The official reply went the next day, hence books using 31/5 and 1/6. According to WAF, Bismarck first learned of the Austrian reply on 4th, via Goltz. True?)

Mensdorff hoped the congress would be dead but continued making travel plans. Clark: this was another error, FJ should have attended at least to buy time and improve his diplomatic position. (I agree.) The secondary states complained about Austria's reply. Clarendon and the Tsar expressed disapproval. Napoleon was not really bothered as by now 'his trap had worked and now it could be discarded', as Austria had to press for his alliance (Clark).

The FO were pleased that the failure could not be blamed on England (Millman p.21). Mosse: Even at this stage Napoleon could probably have ensured peace but he hoped to pick something up from the chaos and had 'the mistaken belief that the contestants would be evenly matched'.

1 June Crown Council (Stern). Heydt urged war as soon as possible before anti-war agitation undermined the army. (Around then Marx and Engels predicted the army would mutiny and refuse to fight. Petitions arrived from all parts of Prussia clamouring for peace.) After this, Heydt organised with Bleichröder and Hansemann to sell the Cologne-Minden shares. Other bankers pulled back and Bismarck 'never forgot' this (Stern). 'The Berlin *haute finance* did not feel strong enough as regards capital to muster the courage to risk what they had for the sake of the nation' (1889). Heydt sold the shares gradually and waited until news came in of Prussian victories so the price rose.

29 May Instructions and notice were sent from Vienna to German courts, on 1 June the Austrian ambassador to the Bund denounced the Prussian occupation of Holstein as illegal and in breach of the terms of the Convention of Gastein and in breach of the Diet's rules, and proposed a resolution calling for the Bund to decide the Duchies — and accused Prussia of plotting with Austria's enemies and intending to use force. Austria had thereby renounced the deal of Jan 1864 and Gastein. Pflanze misdates this as 11th. (When did Bismarck find out this had happened?)

At this point it was still thought the Congress might happen. At the same time, Gablenz was told to call the Estates of Holstein to give their opinion. (This had been discussed in May but delayed until now because of the Gablenz affair and the military timetable.)

Early June Bismarck pushed preparations for various national groups to start revolutions to destroy Austria if necessary.

Cf. meetings with Kiss de Nemesker around 7-12 May. He met an agent from the revolutionaries 'in late May' (Pflanze).

On 1 June Bismarck telegraphed approval for the recruitment of a Slavic corps in Serbia. On 3 June some veterans of the 1848 Hungarian revolution were summoned to Berlin.

Gall (p294): Bismarck, via Usedom, invited Türr to Berlin and together with him and another Hungarian revolutionary from 1848-9, General Klapka, discussed the formation of a Hungarian legion. Türr arrived in Berlin on 10/6, on 11/6 Bismarck told Usedom to make a commitment to the Italian government to reimburse half the costs of such an undertaking and to ask them for an advance in order to get things moving from the Italian end immediately. (According to Pottinger in June Bismarck sent Türr to offer Paris a deal with Belgium and Luxembourg replacing the Rhineland.)

He also discussed another force under Garibaldi attacking the Dalmatian coast and had agents contact Rumanian nationalists.

(When Prussian troops entered Bohemia they tried to provoke a nationalist uprising but the response was 'limp' (Pflanze).) Clark: The Rumanian attempt led nowhere.

To a French journalist 'around this time' (Gall): 'I am pursuing my objective with the clearest of consciences as it seems to me to be right for my country and for Germany. **As far as means are concerned, I use those that in the absence of others present themselves to me.**'

2 June A royal edict gave Moltke the authority to issue orders directly to troops rather than via the Ministry of War. Wilhelm's note to the Ministry of War informed it that 'from this date my orders for the operations and the movements of the main army and its isolated detachments will be communicated to subordinate commanders by the Chief of the Great General Staff of the Army [Moltke]. You will, for your part, at the same time keep the Ministry of War informed of developments' (Wilhelm to Moltke).

GC: there is no sign of Bismarck objecting to the partial sidelining of his ally Roon, and later claims that Bismarck opposed this move are wrong. Moltke did not have Roon's appreciation of the primacy of politics.

2 June Bismarck met Govone. According to a document that leaked years later when Bismarck was still alive, he suggested that being 'much less German than Prussian' he was willing in some circumstances to cede the region between the Rhine and the Moselle but Wilhelm would not agree. (He also told Govone what a nightmare Augusta was and that 'If I could do what I wanted with the king, ... if I could sleep with him as the queen does, everything would be fine'.)

Eyck: Govone asked him if any frontier would satisfy Napoleon and he replied: 'Oh yes, the Moselle. **I am much less German than Prussian.** I would have no objection to ceding to France the whole of the territory between Moselle and the Rhine: the Palatinate and part of the Prussian Rheinprovinz. But the King is under the influence of the Queen, he would have the greatest scruples and agree to these cessions only at a moment when it is a question of either gaining all or losing all.' Two days later (4th) he told Benedetti that he would try to influence Wilhelm over the Upper Moselle and Luxembourg.

3 June Metternich met Napoleon at Tuileries (reported to Mensdorff on 6th). Napoleon said: 'We must frankly discuss the Venetian question for without its solution, at least in prospect, we cannot reach an understanding.' He took from the drawer of his desk a '*petit projet bien court et bien simple*'. **Napoleon offered Metternich French neutrality on two conditions:** 1) the cession of Venetia after the war *in all circumstances*, 2) the promise not to make territorial changes without French consent, if the balance of power in Germany were threatened. 'If you accept what I propose nothing will embroil us anymore, if you think you must refuse, I shall be forced to arm and eventually to intervene.' **Metternich protested 'Your Majesty holds the knife at our throat.'** The meeting ended on a personal and friendly note but the demand was clear. (Clark p434-5).

Pottinger: Napoleon admitted he'd been discussing options with Bismarck including the Rhineland but it had come to nothing.

4 June Napoleon summoned Drouyn and Gramont (who had come to Paris a fortnight earlier ostensibly on a family matter) and asked the latter to start secret negotiations on the basis of his *petit projet*. After back and forth (Clark p435), FJ called a council on 11th.

4 June Bismarck sent a note to the Powers saying that Austria's response to the Congress offer was 'a deliberate, direct provocation and a desire to force a rupture of relations and war'. (Presumably this is after the telegram from Paris below?)

4 June Bismarck met Benedetti. He suggested that Wilhelm wanted French compensation to be confined to French-speaking areas but he may be persuaded France should have the region of the upper Moselle and Luxembourg, but would definitely not give up the lower Rhine. (When these documents (re 2&4 June) emerged years later, he denounced the first and the second was explained as an offer he knew Napoleon would not accept, designed to smoke out the terms offered to Austria (OP, p302). Surely Pflanze is right — Bismarck was never the dogmatic type who would have said 'never' to the sacrifice of German soil. His comments on the 30 April about selling the coal mines in the Saar to avoid loss in the event of having to cede them to France suggest his true view — try to avoid it but prepare for the worst. OP — *if Napoleon had responded cunningly to*

Wilhelm's March letter about a 'more intimate entente', Bismarck would have had to offer the frontiers of 1814 and would have done so (p303). I agree.)

(WAF) Benedetti was in Bismarck's office when a telegram arrived from Goltz announcing the conditions Austria had attached to the congress.

5 June (WAF) General Gablenz in Holstein ordered the convocation of the estates of the duchy, which was seized on by Prussia as a pretext for military deployments.

6 June Zerber: Prussian rail deployment ended (JS agrees on 5th/6th, citing Roon's papers).

Moltke wanted the war to start now. This is roughly 'four weeks' from the first week of May, cf. 7 June 1865 correspondence between Bismarck-Moltke.

6 June Craig: Beck arrives at HQ, suggests to Benedek an aggressive push north to try to persuade south Germans to get involved. Benedek says No. Around this time, a successful operation tapped telegraph wires and Austrian agents in Silesia read signals between 2nd Army and Berlin. These persuaded Benedek that Prussia was massing for an attack from Silesia.

7 June Prussian troops entered Holstein, encountered no resistance from the Austrians who withdrew into Hanover. (The 'first act of war' on 10th, JS; 8th Wawro, 9th Gall & EF). JS — Bismarck was enraged that Manteuffel had let them march out with full honours. Writing angrily to Manteuffel he remembered that Manteuffel was an admirer of Schiller's *Wallenstein*: he quoted one of the characters that 'now it is time for alarm' and copied some lines under his signature ('*Lingering irresolute, with fitful fears / I drew the sword — it was with an inward strife... I fight now for my head and for my life.*'). OP — this was the first skirmish, to the 'mutual distress' of those in the Ballplatz and Wilhelmstrasse the Austrians withdrew. (No mention in OP of the exchange with Manteuffel.)

Clark (p463ff) There was confusion between Gablenz-Vienna with telegrams and messengers crossing. Gablenz thought his army would be destroyed or forced to surrender and he wanted to retreat. Vienna wanted a skirmish to trigger the conflict so she could ask the German states to get going. Manteuffel also did not do what Bismarck wanted. Manteuffel told the Austrians on 11th that he would march into Altona the next day regardless of their actions, Gablenz withdrew across the Elbe in the dead of night, cheered by Holsteiners with whom he was popular. (Great example of the fog of war — neither set of local leaders did what those in the capital wanted!)

10 June Prussia presented a text of a new German constitution which would exclude Austria and with a lower chamber elected by direct (but not yet 'equal') universal suffrage.

It included proposals for federal authority over:

- tariffs
- commercial legislation
- weights and measures
- coinage
- banking
- patents
- intellectual property
- freedom of movement
- German shipping
- German railway system
- navigation on waterways
- postal and telegraph system
- a common code of civil jurisprudence.

Hamerow: Bismarck was articulating the desires of liberal businessmen for years.

Even now on 10th Wilhelm held back from war. **Bismarck said to a Hungarian General: 'I have not yet succeeded in convincing the King that war is immediately necessary. But what does it matter — I've led the horse to the ditch. *Il faut, qu'il saute*' (he has to jump).**

Memoirs: 'Looking to the necessity, in a fight against an overwhelming foreign power, of being able in extreme need to use even revolutionary means, I had no hesitation whatever

in throwing into the frying pan, by means of the dispatch of 10 June 1866, the most powerful ingredient known at that time to liberty-mongers, namely universal suffrage, so as to frighten off foreign monarchies trying to stick a finger into our national omelette... The acceptance of universal suffrage was a weapon in the war against Austria and other foreign countries, in the war for German unity, as well as a threat to use the last weapons in the struggle against coalitions. In a war of this sort, when it becomes a matter of life and death, one does not look at the weapons that one seizes, nor the value of what one destroys in using them: one is guided at the moment by no other thought than the issue of the war, and the preservation of one's external independence. The settling of affairs and reparation of the damage has to take place after the peace.'

The next day (11th) he asked Treitschke to draft a speech for Wilhelm to give on the declaration of war. JS — by now Treitschke supported Bismarck's desire for a small German state excluding Austria, and thought it 'terrible' that Bismarck was 'the most hated man in Germany' whose ideas had been met with 'such humiliating coldness', though after they finally met he wrote in shock: 'Of the moral powers in the world he has *not the slightest notion*.' (At some point, possibly after Sadowa, Bismarck encouraged Treitschke to put some details in the public domain: '[I]t is not politically useful to leave the genesis of contemporary history in the dark' he wrote to Treitschke.)

JS: Bismarck 'miscalculated' and 'overestimated the power of these monarchies [Saxony and others] and the loyalty of their subjects. Had he known how easily the princes would surrender their sovereignty (Hanover was a stubborn exception) he would never have introduced universal suffrage' and by the late 1880s he was considering ending universal suffrage to fix his error. (True?? Cf. his comments in Memoirs on this subject.)

Eyck: 'There is no longer any doubt that Bismarck's foresight was at fault and that his calculations were completely wrong' viz universal suffrage (p115). He did succeed in weakening the liberals but the real winners were social democracy and the Centre Party.

10 June Gordon Craig: Moltke told by 2nd Army that Austrians seemed not to be planning drive into Bohemia but massing at Olmütz.

By 11 June Moltke was 'irretrievably committed' to concentrating on Austria and leaving commanders in the west with modest forces and Bismarck was supportive of this (Barry).

11 June Council in Vienna, agreed a deal with Napoleon on Venetia. FJ summarised negotiations with Paris. If we don't agree an alliance, then France will sign an alliance with Prussia, which has agreed to cede Rhine provinces and is negotiating with Italy to extend their alliance beyond 8 July. 'Under these circumstances, with the pistol at our breast, there seemed no other choice but to enter the negotiations'. FJ asked Mensdorff to summarise the current proposal. No one questioned whether Prussia really had offered Rhine provinces. Only Esterhazy questioned whether Napoleon's pistol was really loaded, pointing out that the suggested text was so loosely drafted that a different interpretation was possible (i.e. that Austria might escape the obligation to cede Venetia). Nobody opposed signing the deal. **FJ concluded 'with an expression of regret for the soldiers who would have to fight *in vain* for Venetia'** (Clark p437), emphasis added).

12 June Mensdorff and Gramont signed a secret treaty with Napoleon (and exchanged some explanatory notes) to buy his neutrality (which he had already decided). Agreed to cede Venetia *even in victory*. Austria also agreed France could have Belgium. France agreed that Austria could gain territory in Germany provided it did not 'disturb the European balance by establishing an Austrian hegemony'. FJ told Gramont he expected to take Silesia and let some south German states grow, he would not oppose a new independent German state in the Rhineland, and there was some haggling over compensation for potentially dispossessed princes and dukes.

This deal bought French neutrality and got hazy French support for Vienna's war aims. **But it made a fight with Italy meaningless — Austria fought a two-front war for 'honour'!** If she'd accepted the loss of Venetia when everyone was telling her to sacrifice it months earlier, she could have bought peace with Italy, wrecked Bismarck's plan and perhaps have preserved peace — but if war had somehow come anyway it would not have been a two-front war. Clark points out that

although it looks very foolish now, having made the errors she had made over the previous 3 years by June she was boxed in — it was not stupid to worry that if Vienna refused Venetia, then Napoleon could throw his lot in with Prussia and Italy, as *most contemporaries thought at the time this would happen*. But Vienna failed to check a) if Bismarck really had offered the Rhineland (he hadn't but had let Paris fool itself, as it would soon discover), b) if Napoleon really were seriously contemplating mobilising the army (he actually wasn't) (Clark p437).

NB. This sort of disaster is what happens when you a) can't face reality and can't prioritise among conflicting goals and b) face an enemy who does both.

Over May-June Napoleon focused more on Austria than on Bismarck. His advisers were 'nearly unanimous' (OP) that Austria would win. Showalter writes (p153) that it was 'the almost universal conviction of French military experts that Prussia and Austria were an *even match*' [emphasis added] therefore France would have a great opportunity to step in and grab what it wanted. Barry writes that Napoleon's military *attaché* in Berlin was one of the few who advised that Prussia would win. EF also says Napoleon thought Austria would win. (Wawro dates this Austrian offer to 9th, and with much understatement describes this move as indicating 'a lack of brilliance in Austrian diplomacy' p43.)

Pottinger: the general view in 'almost all circles in France' in spring and early summer was Austria would win, and *both Bismarck and Metternich thought Napoleon believed this*. In May General Desvaux gave Napoleon glowing accounts after touring the Austrian army. Eugénie and Drouyn agreed. There were two groups, a) around the Minister of War (Marshal Randon, a veteran of Napoleon's invasion of Russia!) who thought Austria would win, and b) around some younger figures, such as the able Bourbaki (who had observed Prussian exercises), who thought Prussia would win. When the Prussian military *attaché* left Paris on the outbreak of war, both Randon and Bourbaki made their views clear to him and the latter said that France might pay highly for her error. The French *attaché* in Berlin had reported on Prussia's intense training and preparation since December, and he estimated Prussia could mobilise in just 25 days. He also said that Prussian troops did not appear enthusiastic and the public were unhappy about the war. In contrast the French *attaché* in Vienna [clearly useless and distracted by his wife's health] reported great Austrian morale, many volunteers and great support in Vienna. It was also thought in Paris that Austria being a bigger country could muster further reserves, so even if Prussia won some early victories Austria would wear her down. The idea of a single knockout blow does not seem to have been seriously considered (p103).

Showalter, very confusingly, suggests (p154) that 'Despite operating under the gun, Mensdorff managed to make the cession of Venetia contingent upon Austrian victory over Prussia' — as if this was a diplomatic success! He seems to misunderstand completely the point that Austria's diplomacy rendered the war pointless.

12 June Mensdorff instructed Karolyi to ask for his papers. He and Bismarck exchanged polite farewells and Karolyi left that evening.

12 June (Barry) Bismarck described two scenarios to the Crown Council: if the middle states stay neutral, all the troops scattered in the west will be moved to Silesia and Bohemia; if not, they must take immediate action against the middle states starting with Hanover. (This meeting is unmentioned anywhere else.)

On 14 June, at the last plenary meeting of the diet in Frankfurt, Austria's resolution mobilising the Bund was passed 9:5 (Carr & Showalter: 8:5). (Barry: it was unclear until the last moment how the vote would go.) **The Prussian delegate walked out and declared that the Constitution of the Bund had been broken and Prussia saw the Confederation as dissolved.** German opinion was pro-Austrian. Saxony was securely on Austria's side. When Austrian troops left Frankfurt, they were cheered; the Prussians left without cheers.

EF: Prussia only had the support of states she virtually surrounded — two Mecklenburgs, Brunswick, and Anhalt.

Eyck: Bismarck's order specified that the Prussian representative should make the declaration *regardless of how the vote went (i.e. his arguments about legality were spurious)*.

Showalter: this vote was what finally persuaded Wilhelm there was no alternative to war.

Clark: the diplomacy around this vote was a further clumsy error by Vienna. The situation was so chaotic neither Berlin nor Vienna knew how vote would go. Baden was neutral but Hanover and Hesse-Cassel voted with Austria, Saxony, Wurtemberg, Hesse-Darmstadt, Nassau.

14 June Bismarck advised the heir to the throne of Electoral Hesse — take a special train to Cassel and secure neutrality. He refused. Bismarck — if you don't and we win, Electoral Hesse will cease to exist. He refused and observed that '800,000 good Austrian troops have still a word to say on the matter'.

15 June Ultimatums sent by Prussia to Hanover, Dresden, and Kassel. They were rejected.

At midnight Prussian troops started marching. Bismarck strolls with Loftus in the garden behind the Foreign Office. Loftus recounted the drama: 'We had been walking and sitting in his garden til a later hour, when, to my astonishment, it struck midnight. Bismarck took out his watch and said, "At this moment our troops are marching into Hanover, Saxony and Electorate of Hesse-Kassel. The struggle will be severe. Prussia may lose but she will, at all events, have fought bravely and honourably. If we are beaten I shall not return here. I shall fall in the last charge. One can only die once and, if beaten, it is better to die."'

Saxon troops withdrew to Bohemia.

15 June *The Times*: 'Whether under Prussian or Austrian hegemony, the country must emerge more consolidated than at present, more capable of preserving peace within its limits and repelling aggression from abroad. If, then, events shall prove that the Confederation is now a thing of the past, there may be no reason to regret the change.'

15 June Bethmann Hollweg wrote to Wilhelm that Bismarck's policy since 1863 has been that of a gambler — 'the steps of a man who proceeds at random, throws everything into a tangle, and brings things to a situation from which he may make his profit, or of a gambler who after every loss only punts higher and finally cries *va banque!*' He has destroyed confidence in your words, he wrote, 'by a policy full of intrigue'. In the chaos Wilhelm didn't open it until he was at Nikolsburg in July and he wrote: 'I first opened your letter at Nikolsburg and the place and date of my answer should be answer enough.'

Prussian & Austrian mobilisation, June 1866 (Wawro)

By mid-June, Moltke had 'been forced' by the delays and Wilhelm's meddling (Wawro) to split the army into four groups small enough to be transported quickly by rail: one was on the Hanoverian border, two around Saxony and Bohemia, and one ~500km east of Halle in Upper Silesia near Neisse, separated from the other three by Bohemia's Giant Mountains.

The basic plan: invade Saxony and other German states, penetrate Bohemia and envelop Benedek's North Army with three mobile groups. (He had wanted to concentrate more around Saxony.) Moltke assumed Benedek would try to reconquer Upper Silesia and Breslau, lost to Prussia in 1740. It was a surprise when Benedek put his North Army not in Bohemia but Moravia in a defensive formation around Olmütz. The Iser Army was to hold the Iser River to support the Saxons (this was forced on Benedek by FJ).

16 June (some say 17 or 18) Bismarck published a manifesto from Wilhelm, 'To the German people' (others say 'nation' - which was it?). The Bund has lost the trust of the nation by illegal mobilisation against Prussia. Prussia is fighting for the 'living unity of the German nation' and the 'national development of Germany'. Austria 'will not consider Prussia as her natural ally but as a hostile rival'. I've tried to avoid war but Austria refuses to make peace. 'Our opponents deceive themselves if they imagine Prussia to be paralysed by dissensions at home... We are compelled to fight for existence... If God gives us the victory we shall be strong enough to reunite more firmly and more prosperously those loosened ties of Germany which they who fear the right and power of the national spirit have torn asunder.'

16 June FJ, worried by Benedek's inactivity, took the unusual action of ordering him to leave Olmütz and move closer to the Prussians. The order arrived 'hours before **the Prussian invasion of Hanover and Saxony on June 16**' (Wawro). Benedek headed for Josephstadt.

16 June Clowley-Clarendon: Napoleon will want compensation if Prussia controls north Germany.

17 June Wright-Seward (US State Department): When someone pointed out the number of peace demonstrations, Bismarck replied, 'Events change public opinion and a battle won, or even a battle lost, strangely alters men's minds'.

17 June Austria published a 'war manifesto'. Prussia is 'under the influence of an ungovernable craving after aggrandisement'. (It did not set out a picture of how the German issue would be solved after an Austrian victory.) Prussia did not declare war on Austria but treated this publication as equivalent to a declaration of war by Austria. (Showalter: this was 18th. No.)

17 June (16th Eyck) Usedom (Ambassador in Florence) sent his 'stab-in-the-heart dispatch' in which he urged La Marmora (Italian PM) to march on Vienna to support the Hungarian and Slavic insurgents. Cf. June for Bismarck's contacts with multiple revolutionary groups. (Some of these secret discussions were revealed by La Marmora in the Italian Parliament on 21 July 1868, including reading out the Usedom telegram of 17/6. It caused a sensation. Bismarck issued false denials, claimed forgeries, blamed Usedom. Eyck: The plan was a failure — the Hungarians turned on the pro-Prussian forces. One of the leaders was sentenced to death by Austria and Bismarck threatened to shoot ten prisoners in Trautenau unless he was released. Everybody was released, cf, 8 July.)

On 17, 18, 19 June Prussia occupied successively Hanover, Dresden, and Kassel. Saxons had not been able to agree a policy, now the 32k army retreated over its own border into Bohemia.

18 June (Craig, 1866, p41-2) Benedek began to march towards the Elbe. On 18th Moltke was still unsure whether Austria would aim for Silesia or Lusatia.

19 June Bismarck passed on to Falckenstein a telegram from his representative in Karlsruhe reporting that Federal forces were 'still fully disorganised. A speedy advance by Prussia against Frankfurt would make any organisation impossible and would easily lead to a second Rossbach' (a reference to a stunning Prussian victory over Austria and France won by Frederick the Great against numerical odds in 1757). GC: Apparently under the influence of this telegram Falckenstein, when he lost contact with the Hanoverian army on 22nd, broke off the pursuit and headed for Frankfurt, though Moltke deployed other troops to subdue Hanover.

19-22 June Zerber: Moltke developed final plan for advance into Bohemia. His hope for a lead in mobilisation had failed. **Between Austrians moving on 27 April and Prussia between 3-12 May, Prussia had lost ~6-15 days. Prussia was ready on 6 June but did not move until 16 June, another 10 day delay. Moltke only ordered advance on 23 June.** According to Moltke's pre-war calculations, Austria should now have been full strength. His plan 'did not survive contact with the German Chancellor'.

'By optimising Prussia's diplomatic and political situation, Bismarck was endangering the Prussian army's chances of winning a military victory. This was short-sighted. Even Bismarck needed a quick military victory, for a stalemate would allow the intervention of Napoleon III. Moltke had developed a sophisticated war plan to produce a quick victory, which Bismarck blithely ignored. Bismarck had his own conception of war... [He] was oblivious to the fact that mass armies and rail

mobility were changing the nature of war and therefore were also changing the conditions of [politics].'

(Zerber seems to me right that the 'Moltke's plan was executed as he foresaw' argument is clearly wrong and some revisionism is needed. But he overstates parts of the argument. He does not address the fact that Bismarck had been constantly trying to push Wilhelm into action *but could not do it until Austria clearly mobilised*. He did not 'blithely ignore' the plans, as the deal with Italy showed he was trying very hard to combine military planning with the diplomacy — but 1) he could not get Wilhelm to think through and accept an approach that connected the diplomatic game and the military plans, 2) he had no direct authority of any kind over the military and 3) Moltke's own authority was tenuous despite the order of 2 June and there was neither a clear plan nor clear authority on the Prussian side, so both he and Moltke had to devise *ad hoc* schemes in a desperate scramble.)

19 June Italy declared war on Austria activating the Prussian alliance. (Carr & Showalter: 20th.) Italy committed over 200,000 men to their offensive in Venetia, forcing the Austrians to divert an extra 100,000 troops to the southern front.

20 June Bismarck met Unruh (arranged by Bleichröder). Unruh bemoaned 'the absolute indifference' of the population. He asked Bismarck to restore the Constitution but he replied that he wanted to but Wilhelm would not budge ('everybody thinks he can do everything. He, too, is only human.') After victory he would resign rather than continue the conflict, he claimed. He informed Bleichröder of the conversation, clearly happy for people to realise that he was building bridges (Stern, p87).

21 June Cowley: 'Poor Austria! I cannot but fear that this is the end of her.'

22-23 Prussia invaded Bohemia.

23 June Buchanan-Clarendon: Gorchakov agrees that Prussia does not have the right to abolish the Bund alone and says the powers who want to preserve 'right and legality' should jointly 'declare their intentions'. By now this was all hot air. Revertera reported to Mensdorff (20th) that the government's sympathies were with Austria.

24 June Austria defeated Italy at Custozza and there was now a chance that Austria could transfer forces to the north: Moltke's entire strategy 'was dead just as the Prussian offensive started' (Zerber). Moltke had spread his forces to give a chance to attack an *under-strength* army but delays meant he now had to concentrate his forces as fast as possible against a *full strength* enemy. The planning documents were not published until 1896 and this allowed the Myth to spread (p132). (But the Austrian forces did *not* transfer to the north.)

Richard Evans (*Pursuit of Power*, p259): 'After their defeat by Prussia, the Austrians realised they could not continue to fight the Italians, despite their victory of Custoza, and capitulated, leaving the peace settlement to cede the rest of northern Italy to the the Italian state'. No. Austria had already secretly agreed with France before the war to hand over Venetia in any event, thus rendering the Italian fighting essentially pointless (cf. 12 June).

25 June First round of voting in Prussian election showed swing to conservatives.

26 June Russell's Cabinet resigned (the last Whig government), 28 June Derby replaced Russell as PM and Stanley replaced Clarendon as Foreign Secretary. In June London was dominated by discussion over the Reform Bill, not the European situation. There were rallies in London. On 29 June 10,000 marched from Trafalgar Square to the Carlton Club to vent frustration at the defeat of the Reform Bill. On 2 July a march turned violent in the West End. (Clarendon blamed Gladstone's 'obstinacy' for the government falling and thought 'his temper unfits him for supreme command' (to Cowley 26/6).

When Victoria suggested to Derby that he put Stanley elsewhere ('May he not be inclined to go too far in the line of noninterference?'), Derby replied that the FO was not best suited to Stanley but 'Lord Stanley is better suited to the Foreign Office than any other person whose services he can command', since unfortunately 'so few of our public men give much of their attention to foreign affairs.' Stanley had written to his father in April saying this position 'is that of all others for which I judge myself least fit.' Clarendon refused Derby's offer (on the Queen's instruction) to stay in the role despite the change of government (he disliked Derby and hated Disraeli). Clarendon

said that 'the policy of not meddling is of course the right one but it is not necessary that all mankind shd. be let into the secret twice a day': 'he [Stanley] says himself that he knows and cares nothing about Foreign Affairs but he is clever, industrious ... at any rate he must do better than ... Disraeli'. Russell said he felt 'dread' at the thought of Stanley in the FO and thought if he became PM it would be 'a fore-runner of the downfall of this country'. Over the next few weeks the Queen voiced her concern that Stanley's vocal non-interference would lead to a big fall in influence. On 28th in response to news that Prussia had suffered a military reverse, Clarendon wrote to Cowley: 'the Prussians seem to have got a licking and the joy thereat in London knows no bounds — I believe that the Queen will be as well pleased as her subjects'.]

28 June *The Times*: 'it is difficult to believe that any good strategical purpose can be served by an invasion of Bohemia... [W]hatever the plan may have been, it seems to have been defeated.' Interestingly, the second leader says: 'It is a most agreeable feature of the present political crisis that all the foreign relations of the country should be in a satisfactory state. No troublesome embroilment or estrangement exists between our own and any other Government... [O]ur relations with the United States, which in importance transcend those with any European Power, have been gradually brought to a point of more cordial understanding than has subsisted for years.' (The third leader is also interesting — it says that everyone notices speeches in Parliament, few beyond the Cabinet see 'wisdom in council', and 'administrative ability is often rewarded with no acknowledgement at all'.)

28 June Hanoverian army defeated. (29th Wawro, Craig, Eyck). Craig: with small forces and few losses, Prussia had cleared north Germany, linked its scattered territories, and detached states with rich resources from the Habsburg alliance. Occupation of Saxony had been very valuable. **Moltke did not have to worry about complications in the west while dealing with Austria.**

29 June He wrote to Cathy Orlov: 'I am not allowed to sleep anymore and I nevertheless need a lot of sleep; my energies are being exhausted physically and mentally. After days of hard work without a break I am always being summoned to the king at 1 or 3 o'clock in the night.'

29 June Prussia beat Austria at Gitschin. This 'awakened in the whole Austrian Army the thought that the war was lost' (G Craig). Zerber: now the 2nd Army realised it was facing the main Austrian force and reported to Moltke who now realised the bulk of Austrian forces could not have reached the Iser (p136). Showalter — on 29th Benedek was already defeatist and when the news reached him of Gitschin he ordered a retreat towards Olmütz.

30 June (Stern) Bismarck left Berlin with a hoard of gold coins strapped to his body. Zerber: Moltke and Wilhelm left Berlin, arrived in Bohemia on 1 July. (Were Wilhelm, Bismarck and Moltke together?)

30 June King, Bismarck and others at Reichenberg (check, seems a long way to go to Jicin in 24h?). In his Memoirs, Bismarck said that a sharp operation by the enemy could have captured the King, he pointed this out and suggested changes, and the military were annoyed at his interference. 'This was the germ of a bad feeling towards me on the part of the military authorities on account of my personal position towards the King, which proceeded from departmental jealousy and was destined to develop still further in the course of this campaign and of the French war.' Barry: two days later he wrote to his wife and asked her to send him 'a revolver of large calibre'. (He couldn't get someone to find him one?!)

1 July Benedek, on the verge of nervous collapse (Wawro), telegraphed Vienna: 'Pray conclude a peace at any price ... A catastrophe of the army is inevitable.' FJ telegraphed that immediate peace was a diplomatic and political impossibility and asked, 'Has a battle been fought yet?' (Showalter: the line was not FJ's but was added by an advisor as an insult to goad Benedek into action.)

Showalter: Benedek's army lurched into Königgrätz throughout the 1st in chaos. Benedek decided that crossing the Elbe immediately was impossible and he ordered a halt to sort themselves out. When his generals met him on 2nd most assumed the discussion would be about how to continue the retreat, such was the chaos and low morale. By 2nd, his army's staff 'had ceased to function at any level above routine order-drafting'.

Showalter: Wilhelm's HQ arrived at Gitschin/Jicin on 1st. On 2 July Wilhelm, Moltke Frederick Charles and others discussed the situation. Most officers argued for bringing the armies together. Moltke insisted on the advantages of keeping them apart and advancing against Austria's front and flank, and the three armies were close enough together to provide support — whichever Benedek attacked, the other two of the three could join in. Wilhelm agreed with him. Late that night, intelligence arrived of Benedek's position — west of the Elbe, with the river at his back. Wilhelm and Moltke were in bed when the news arrived. Moltke started writing orders: pin the army against the Elbe and destroy it. The royal HQ left Gitschin about 5am and three hours later Wilhelm and Moltke were on high ground near the village Dub.

2 July (Pottinger) Mensdorff cabled Metternich saying — ask Napoleon to affect an armistice on the southern front between Austria and Italy, then Austria will immediately arrange to cede Venetia, thus freeing the army to concentrate in the north. Napoleon asked for a day to think. (Both Vienna and Paris were too late as usual. This also exposes the stupidity of the entire Austrian approach — now they were prepared to ditch Venetia, if they'd done this any time before June...! Why is this cable so little mentioned?!)

3 July Cowley-Clarendon: 'The Emperor is getting alarmed at his Frankenstein.'

3 July Austria smashed at Königgrätz/Sadowa. At the end of the battle, someone in the King's entourage said to Bismarck, 'Your Excellency, you are now a great man but if the Crown Prince had arrived too late, you would be the greatest villain in the world.' After the battle, he rode to Horitz with Wilhelm. There was nowhere for him to sleep. As he entered a courtyard he slipped and fell in a manure pit. He slept outside on a cushion until the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg took pity on him and gave him a bed.

3 July Elections: conservatives rose from 28 to 142, Progressives from 143 to 83, left centrists from 110 to 65 (OP).

JS: conservatives from 38 to 123.

Gall: conservatives from 35 to 136; left centrists and PP down from 247 to 148.

GC: conservatives 38 to 142.

EF: conservatives 35 to 136; PP 141 to 95; centrist liberal groups 106 to 77.

The timing was accidental. If they had come a few days later when the news came through, the conservatives would obviously have done better. The Government's slogan was '*For us or against the soldiers*' (OP leaves out 'us'). The earlier round of voting was on 25 June and had already shown a swing to conservatives.

GC: Before the result of the battle was known crucial newspapers had already deserted the liberals.

Hamerow: Turnout 30% (34% 1862). 1.14 million voted in these elections, having fluctuated between 1m and 500k since 1849. This roughly tallies with the number who attended political meetings in the early 1860s, ~1-2m. Conservatives from 36 to 136, liberals from 258 to 172.

*

'The war of 1866 did not arise from self defence against a threat to our own existence, nor was it called for by public opinion and the voice of the people. It was a struggle recognised in council as necessary, aimed at for a very long time, and prepared with calmness. It was a struggle not for the acquisition of land, the expansion of territory, or material gain, but for an ideal good, for a position of power.' Moltke, ~1880.

First Army (Lusatia) was commanded by Prince Frederick Charles, Wilhelm's nephew.

Second Army (Silesia) was commanded by the Crown Prince.

Factors in the war:

1. More productive agriculture made bigger armies possible
2. Conscription
3. Better maps
4. Spread of watches allowed more time specific orders
5. Railway and telegraph
6. Longer range, faster, and more accurate guns
7. Spreading education (universal in Prussia)
8. Mass opinion. Hamerow (p396): Treitschke said that 'the saddest thing is: only through a mass movement can a revolution succeed, but our masses think of everything except German unity.' Bismarck said near the end of his life: 'I had believed that in the creation of the Reichstag on the basis of universal male suffrage I had found a corrective against the centrifugal force of gravitation of dynastic strivings, and thereby I had overestimated the energy of the national feeling in the mass of the voters.' Hamerow argues the masses of central Europe were largely 'neither nationalist nor particularist' but swayed with the wind'. Left to themselves they would have stuck with the status quo but when it changed after 1866 they changed. The great believers in nationalism were among the educated middle classes.
9. Prussian General Staff
10. Moltke: strategic offensive (using railways), tactical defensive (Austria vice versa)
11. Auftragstaktik and trusting NCOs
12. Wargaming and lessons learned
13. Needle gun and training, not relying just on 'shock tactics' (charge with bayonets)
14. Benedek was the type who liked to boast he'd never read a book
15. Austria had no staff to compare with the Prussian and had inferior training (many soldiers could not communicate in the same language as officers and needed mimes).

Showalter: Not until 1858 did Austria make the military use of railways the responsibility of the general staff and even after this the section was 'undermanned and marginalised'. Over two billion florins were spent on the army in FJ's first decade but much went to theft, bribery and corruption as well as sinecures and pensions. In 1862 spending on the army was double Prussia's and almost equal to France's. 45% of Austrian state spending went to the armed forces 'in that decade' [1850s or 1852-62?]. Reductions from 179M florins 1861 to 139M 1862 and 118M in 1863 were not short-sighted but reflected parliamentary hostility to the government's attempts to divert army spending to nonmilitary ends like pensions and sinecures. They didn't start planning for railway use until 1863 and it was not done well. Although there were attempts after 1859 to improve physical fitness, there was little effort to improve marksmanship because it was assumed few of their soldiers could learn. Benedek was terrible but he hadn't wanted the job and had pointed out he understood Italy, not Germany.

In the morning of the battle at Sadowa, the First Army made no progress advancing against the Austrians and by lunchtime the Prussian high command were worried. Also in the morning the armies clashed to the north in the Swiepowald. A desperate Prussian defence held out and absorbed huge pressure. Moltke refused to commit 1st Army's reserves to help. Mollinary's actions were similar to Daniel Sickles at Gettysburg — a subordinate committed a good part of the army to a sector the commander did not regard as decisive. Arguably Benedek, having lost control, should have reinforced Mollinary. He neither stopped him nor reinforced him. Scholars have wondered whether a full Austrian all-out attack around noon, before the 2nd Army arrived, could have routed the 1st Army.

Showalter: It was a more near-run thing than some such as Wawro think. Moltke's separation of the armies left them vulnerable to a more able commander who could have decisively attacked either the 1st or 2nd Army before they had time to come together. If the 1st Army had been held at Gitschin and the 2nd thrown back into Silesia — if on 3rd the North Army had not had to retreat

headlong but still held high ground and was ready to fight another day — then this might have changed the political considerations and forced Prussia to negotiate. Benedek's incompetence meant rapid disaster and no time for diplomacy to help.

Prussian artillery was generally outclassed and did not contribute significantly. The combination of the needle gun and tactical flexibility was decisive.

'Entre une bataille perdue et une bataille gagnée la distance est immense, il y a des empires.' [Between a lost battle and a won battle the distance is immense, there are empires.] Napoleon before the battle of Leipzig.

Spectator: 'The political face of the world has changed as it used to change after a generation of war... Prussia has leaped in a moment into the position of the first Power of Europe.'

Gordon Craig: Moltke dismayed many by flouting conventional theories about interior lines and concentrating forces.

'If one considers the economy with which Moltke employed material forces in order to achieve results according to a preconceived plan, then the victory of Königgrätz deserves to be regarded as a work of art... [Victory came primarily from] Moltke's operational plan and his strategical sense... [His contemporary critics] all repeated time-honoured shibboleths about the dangers of separation when confronting an enemy on interior lines' (Gordon Craig)

Craig: The Austrians could not afford to enforce universal service so real numbers were much lower than theoretical numbers. Their cavalry was great. Their artillery were roughly the same as Prussia which failed to modernise as they could have done (e.g they rejected Krupp's advice to shift to steel barrels and Krupp sold those mainly to Egypt and Russia for a while). Their infantry were worse. Their staff system was much worse. FJ himself made clear he did not want discussions about new infantry tactics to deal with breach-loading guns. Benedek did not want the command and had to be pushed by FJ. He was then saddled with two unsuitable staff officers: Krismanic, who was ultra cautious, and Henikstein, who was defeatist. (Showalter: Henikstein had 'neither the force of character, the institutional leverage, nor support of his general staff subordinates to alter state or army policy... he was not a man to go to war with.')

Prussia did enforce universal service. Excellent education meant higher calibre of soldiers. The needle gun was an advantage but not decisive. Unlike Austria, Prussia learned from the Danish campaign to avoid old school shock tactics. The chaos of Wrangel's HQ in the Danish campaign had prompted Wilhelm to send Moltke and the lesson learned was: put Moltke in charge. **Bismarck: Moltke is 'unconditionally reliable and at the same time cold to the very heart'.**

The Austrian inquiry blamed Benedek. He saw it coming but refused to defend himself or use his conversations with FJ to escape blame. When his wife threatened to go public he begged her not to. Various reports and leaks blamed him for everything and rehabilitated others (even Krismanic) but he died without defending himself. He told his wife, 'A beaten commander must bear his misfortune.'

GC: Both sides kept masses of cavalry in reserve, after the war Moltke and others concluded this had been a mistake and cavalry should be used as per Napoleon for reconnaissance etc.

Van Creveld: The battle was 'a last minute improvisation'.

Zuber: 'Moltke never intended to "march separately and unite on the battlefield", and he especially did not intend to do so at Königgrätz. Moltke's war games had no relation to his war planning. Moltke's vaunted rail deployments were nowhere near as well-planned or well-executed as the Moltke Myth would have us believe, and the rail deployments had little to do with Prussian success in either war... Far from being a great battlefield genius, Moltke had little to do with planning the battle of Königgrätz and at Gravelotte-St. Privat. In both battles Moltke quickly lost control of the Prussian armies and spent the day as a spectator. The real reason for the success of the Prussian army in 1866 and 1870/1 lay in factors over which Moltke had no influence whatsoever: the peacetime training and the battlefield courage of the Prussian infantry, and the skill of the officer corps from company to corps levels. The Prussian infantry managed to win in spite of Moltke, not because of him.'

'None of the six [General Staff rides] Moltke conducted before 1866 bears the remotest resemblance to his concept of the operation either in the 1866 war against Austria or for the 1870 war with France' and 'there was no hint of an offensive "concentration on the battlefield" to encircle the enemy.'

'By 13:45 [on 3rd] Moltke had completely lost control of the overall battle. Throughout the entire day Moltke did not receive a single situation report from the 2nd Army. He did not even know when they had begun their movement...' He wrongly stopped Friedrich Carl from pursuing Benedek. The pursuit by the Elbe Army was hampered by garbled orders from the General Staff. 'Even a year later, Moltke still did not understand the significance of the fight in the Swiepwald.' The supposed encirclement never happened, Benedek escaped and the pursuit was botched. The Austrians had numerical superiority because less than half the 2nd Army was too late to fight. Friedrich Karl: 'There were no geniuses... Our battles and campaigns were won by our work in peacetime... It is our well-trained, well-oiled mechanism in which each knows his place, a place which **even mediocrity is entirely ready to fulfil his tasks (for it is calculated on mediocrity)** which has taught us how to win victories.' Moltke's 1869 statement about 'uniting on the battlefield' was a lesson learned from 1866, not a 1866 plan.

Moltke said himself in an 1867 article: 'The union of the Prussian army at the proper time has never been considered, in the Prussian army at least, to be a particularly clever idea or profound combination. **It was the sensibly arranged and energetically executed expedient in an unfavourable situation which was necessitated by the original course of events.**' (Bold added)

Prussia published *The Campaign of 1866* in 1867, a model for future official histories. Moltke wrote *Instructions for Large Unit Commanders* (published 1869). 1866 convinced Moltke that the army corps (~25,000 infantry, ~70 guns) was superior to the division as the basic operational formation. Corps were permanent organisations and their subordinate units and officers were used to working together. This allowed it to adapt in battle.

Post-battle

4 July Robert Cecil (then Lord Cranborne) wrote to the Danish Ambassador: 'The policy that was pursued in 1864 has undoubtedly had the effect of severing [England] in a great measure from the course of continental politics: & the declared principles of non-intervention, which it was the effect of the policy of that year to establish, have necessarily diminished her influence in the decision of Continental questions. The general feeling in this country is in favour of abandoning the position which England held for so many years in the councils of Europe.'

4 July Wilhelm spent the morning writing letters and drafting a proclamation, in the afternoon he went from Horitz to Sadowa to visit the wounded, attend funerals. Gablenz, an emissary from FJ, told Prince Frederick Charles 'My Emperor no longer has an army, it is as good as destroyed.' His initial attempt to negotiate a three-day armistice failed because he did not have full powers to negotiate and Prussian demands were too high, so FJ ordered the continuation of retreat and summoned armies to defend Vienna (G Craig).

4 July Bismarck agreed with the Crown Prince about settling the constitutional conflict — not, as many conservatives hoped and expected, by suspending or revising constitution. Even on this day Bismarck was already talking of a new settlement for north Germany as a 'stage' and thought that he must use nationalism to strengthen his new creation and this required settling the constitutional conflict, not absolutism (OP p328). He said around this time, 'The power of the monarchy in Prussia must be supported by a powerful army. But it must go with the opinion of the nation. It is the duty of every Prussian minister to regard the will of the king as authoritative, but at the same time to let the will of the king be saturated with the opinion of the nation.'

4 July Lyons: 'We have here [Constantinople], as elsewhere, a great deal to do to recover the loss of reputation entailed by the Danish business'.

4 July Gorchakov suggested to Britain and France that they should jointly reply to Prussia that she could not dissolve the Bund alone nor arrogate to itself the right to reform it; identical notes would warn Prussia and suggest a conference. (Clearly the news of 3rd had not yet reached St Petersburg!)

4 July (evening) Napoleon was preparing to head to Vichy for a holiday and hopefully improve his health when the news of Sadowa arrived. Pottinger: it's hard to establish what happened over the next day or so. Seems clear that in the evening Metternich rushed to Tuileries. Together they drafted a plan for French mediation and telegrams were sent. Gramont was even told that *France would intervene militarily if mediation were refused*. Drouyn arrived.

Roughly midnight on 4 July (WAF) Napoleon sent a telegram to Wilhelm: Austria has conceded Venetia to us and asked for French mediation.

In his Memoirs Bismarck wrote that before 4th, 'Napoleon had calculated on our being defeated and in need of assistance.' At Nikolsburg, Bismarck asked Moltke — what if France intervenes? Moltke replied: we'll defend against Austria and attack France swiftly. Bismarck thought: if there is French interference, then we'll either a) make peace with Austria with moderate conditions and if possible an alliance with her against France, or else b) 'quickly and completely cripple Austria by a sharp onslaught, and also by furthering disaffection in Hungary and perhaps in Bohemia as well; until then we must maintain a defensive attitude towards France instead of towards Austria, as Moltke wished.'

He feared that it would not be possible to smash France quickly and it would quickly be very bad to be fighting on two fronts with southern states like Bavaria encouraged to join in. 'Under the pressure of the French intervention, and at a time when it was impossible to see whether we should succeed in making headway against them in diplomacy, I resolved to advise the King to make an appeal to the Hungarian nationality. If Napoleon intervened in the war in the manner indicated, if Russia's attitude remained doubtful, and especially if the cholera made further ravages in our ranks, our position might become so difficult that we should be obliged to seize every weapon offered us by the outbreak of the national movement, not only in Germany but also in Hungary and Bohemia, in order to avoid succumbing.' (2p37ff).

To Abeken and Keudell (5th, Gall): 'In a few years' time Louis will probably be sorry he took sides against us like this, it may cost him dearly.'

NB. In 1874 in a speech to the Reichstag, Bismarck said that a serious French intervention 'would have immediately forced us to cover Berlin and abandon all our successes in Austria' and he repeated this when Friedjung interviewed him in 1890 (p390).

Gall: his actions over the next few weeks in concluding the peace and keeping Napoleon out of things without serious commitments showed him 'at the height of his diplomatic powers' and was 'an extraordinary achievement'.

Through July Russia was trying to organise a congress. However, Napoleon did not want one, wrongly thinking he could exploit the situation to get things out of Bismarck. Stanley did not want one and worked to scupper it. Stanley also rejected the Russian idea of a joint declaration with France that no changes to the Vienna settlement could be made without a congress. France also rejected this.

5 July Ministers came to Saint-Cloud in the morning. Drouyn, Empress Eugénie, Marshal Randon *et al* urged Napoleon to rush 80,000 to the Rhine frontier. Rouher, La Valette, Baroche opposed them. Initially Napoleon agreed with mobilisation. Pottinger says he signed a decree for the convocation of the Chambers and an official announcement and although he postponed the signature of the mobilisation order until the next day the meeting ended with people thinking he supported armed intervention. His cousin urged hostility to Austria. In the evening Rouher and Valette came back and urged him again not to involve the army. Valette thought the public would not support war. Also during the day it seemed Prussia had accepted mediation. **Napoleon therefore did not authorise mobilisation.** He was caught between fear of Prussian expansion and the danger of him provoking a nationalist surge in Germany against France if he interfered.

Bismarck fed these fears telling Goltz to convey that French threats of intervention would be met by 'a national uprising in Germany' on the basis of the Frankfurt constitution of 1849. As was his way, he also held out possibilities for French compensation. Napoleon was ill with a painful kidney problem: Empress Eugénie told Metternich 'The Emperor can neither walk nor sleep and can hardly eat' (Eyck).

5 July Mensdorff visited Benedek's North Army and reported to Vienna it was a useless rabble.

5 July With everything else going on, Bismarck received two leaders of the Hungarian revolutionary movement and gave them a note for 400,000 thaler payable in Berlin, 100k from FO funds and 300k from Bleichröder. Bucher would deliver the money to a Berlin hotel where the two would stay under assumed names. Cash was for a Hungarian Legion to wage war against Austria.

Bleichröder took cash shaken down from the Saxons over the next few weeks and funnelled it to the Hungarians on Bismarck's orders. Bismarck later told Heydt that the Saxon money had been spent on this Hungarian operation because 'the pressure that it will exert on Austria is of such great importance for the conduct of the war and for peace that payments could not have been delayed' (Stern, p90). These fascinating details are absent in pretty much all the main books.

6 July (WAF) Benedetti was informed that Wilhelm had telegraphed acceptance of French mediation. He was still stuck in Berlin and could do little.

6 July Moltke ordered 2nd Army to pursue Benedek to Olmütz.

6 July Cowley-Clarendon (why was Cowley writing to Clarendon when Stanley had taken over, just because they stayed friends?): Rumours and fears about possible French moves against Belgium but we should keep quiet for the moment.

7 July Stanley wrote of discussion with Clarendon: Clarendon 'seemed more alarmed about the Fenian business and its influence on American diplomacy than about any of these European complications'. *The Spectator* wrote: 'The most audacious man in Europe is in possession of its most effective weapon.'

7 July Stanley-Cowley: It would be best if we could avoid a congress at all given 'our practical power will be exceedingly small'.

8 July In conversation Count Seherr-Thoss, a Hungarian exile, Bismarck said, 'They took me for a Junker, a reactionary... with the king they denounced me as a secret democrat... this fight has cost

me my nervous strength, my vitality. But I have beaten them all, all' smashed his fist on the table. (JS —says wrongly this was August. OPI,p316.) EF: a few days later, the Count was imprisoned by the Austrians and Prussia threatened to shoot hostages unless he was released. (GW,VII. 139, p140) 8 July Benedetti (stuck in Berlin) telegraphed Drouyn that Prince Henry VII (sometimes referred to as Prince Reuss) would arrive in Paris on 10th with a letter from Wilhelm for Napoleon. WAF suggests this was intended by Bismarck to buy time for him to sort out Austria without French interference.

9 July A desperate Metternich wrongly told Vienna that Napoleon was sending the fleet to the Adriatic and was still talking about armed intervention.

9 July Drouyn ordered Benedetti to go to HQ and seek to speak to Bismarck to hasten an armistice and warn of 'the gravest of consequences'. Benedetti spoke to Werther, got a safe conduct letter and headed off.

9 July Derby to Lords: '... safe and steady progress, strengthening, rather than subverting, the institutions of the country, and maintaining that balance between the various parts of our constitutional system – a monarchy limited, an aristocracy tempered, a House of Commons not altogether Democratic – the consequence of which has been a progressive improvement in our legislation according with the temper and character of the times.' Our policy is 'above all to endeavour not to interfere needlessly and vexatiously with the internal affairs of any foreign country, nor to volunteer to them unasked advice with regard to the conduct of their affairs...

Above all, I hold that is the duty of a Government to abstain from menace if they do not intend to follow that menace by action.' In this war 'the honour of this country is in no degree involved and ... the interests of this country are very remotely, if at all, involved... [T]he conduct of the Government with regard to such a war as that now raging is studiously to maintain a strict and impartial neutrality between all the contending parties, only ready at any time to offer their good offices, if there should appear to be the slightest gleam of hope that, combined with other neutral powers such as France and Russia, they might lead to a termination of this bloody struggle.'

9 July Cowley-Stanley: it is not in the interests of any Power other than Prussia for Austria to collapse but 'can it be prevented, and if it can, is it worth while to attempt to preserve what is unmistakably rotten[?]' By 30 July Cowley thought Austria 'done for'.

9 July (Some put it on 11th) Bismarck wrote to his wife: 'Provided we are not excessive in our demands and do not think that we have conquered the world, we shall also achieve a worthwhile peace. But we are as quickly carried away as we are cast down and I have the thankless task of pouring water into the bubbling wine and pointing out that we do not live alone in Europe but live in it with three other powers that detest and envy us... Our men are wonderful. Every man so completely fearless, calm, obedient, well-behaved, despite empty stomachs, wet clothes, wet beds, little sleep, boot soles falling off, kind to everyone, no pillaging and burning, paying what they can and eating mouldy bread. There must indeed be a deep fear of God in our common man otherwise all that could not be.'

9 July Bismarck inquired how Napoleon felt about Prussian annexing some of the northern states and within hours learned that only Saxony was a problem. Bismarck concluded that 'every full annexation attainable without the cession of Prussian territory is better than the half by way of reform.' To Wilhelm he argued that it was better either to take whole states or to leave them intact.

10 July (WAF) Prince Henry delivered Wilhelm's letter in Paris. It was vague enough to deepen alarm. That evening Drouyn urged that Benedetti threaten a Franco-Austrian alliance but Napoleon said No. Benedetti arrived in Reichenberg on 10th and Pardubitz on 11th to find Wilhelm and HQ had moved on to Zwittau (~80 miles from Nikolsburg). The next day Goltz told him that a courier was coming with more detailed ideas for mediation and Napoleon ordered Benedetti to report to Paris.

Pottinger: Napoleon and Henry spoke on 10th, Henry kept things vague and asked Napoleon what he wanted. Napoleon was vague.

11 July General Peel to Derby: 'Any proposal for an augmentation of the army would be most unpopular, and I am sure we could not carry it in the House of Commons unless there is a prospect of war'.

11 July Austria had sent Beust to Paris on 9th, he spoke to Drouyn on 11th. Drouyn told him ministers had agreed that day that *armed intervention was off the cards*. He pointed to Mexico, Rome and Algeria as reasons for inaction. Pottinger: Drouyn still wanted to mobilise but repeated official policy. After speaking to Beust he again tried to shift Napoleon, who that morning had given the impression to Metternich that the idea was just about dead, but failed. Eugenie was still pushing for action but felt she had lost the argument and was isolated — 'we are not ready for a fight' was the dominant feeling around Napoleon.

12 July (WAF) Benedetti finally caught up with HQ but didn't know what had happened while he was travelling. He found Bismarck, Abeken, von Keudell and other staff in an abandoned farmhouse in Zwittau at about 1am. Abeken told his wife that 'Benedetti had to share my room'.

Benedetti urged no further military action and suggested the other Powers may intervene. Bismarck pointed out he had accepted the principle of French mediation and prevaricated suggesting they await discussions between Goltz and Napoleon in Paris. Their discussion ended at about 4am and Bismarck promised to fix an audience with the King. Keudell wrote that 'Bismarck received the unwelcome guest politely, but his discontent over his visit caused him pains in the left foot which lasted for some time.' On a telegram from Werther informing him that military authorities have been instructed to assist the French ambassador in reaching HQ, Bismarck scribbled 'stupid'. (Evidence of problems with communication then: this telegram informing him that Benedetti had left Berlin and was heading for HQ arrived *after* Bismarck and Benedetti met at the farmhouse.)

At 10am Benedetti met Wilhelm who told him that an armistice depended on Italy agreeing and agreement with Napoleon. He also prevaricated saying he'd have to consult with Moltke etc.

Wilhelm said he'd be moving HQ to Czernahora later that day and Benedetti was offered a place in Bismarck's carriage, which left at 5pm. When they arrived Wilhelm held a council on the terrace of the castle he was staying in. They agreed a three-day armistice (see below).

12 July Karolyi found Bismarck at Zwittau. They discussed terms. Austria would withdraw from the Bund and accept Prussian control of North Germany but Vienna insisted on the integrity of Saxony. 'These conditions contained all we wanted, that is to say, a free hand in Germany' (Memoirs, 2,47).

12 July Prussian council of war. They discussed how to capture fortifications at Floridsdorf in order to reach Vienna. After listening to the plans, Bismarck says 'We cannot spend fourteen days in waiting without considerably increasing the dead weight of the French *arbitrium*.'

He suggested an alternative plan which the king agreed with though it was executed 'unwillingly' (2p41). 'It was my object ... as far as possible to avoid cause for mortifying reminiscences if it could be managed without prejudice to our German policy. A triumphant entry of the Prussian army into the hostile capital would naturally have been a gratifying recollection for our soldiers but it was not necessary to our policy. It would have left behind it, as also any surrender of ancient possessions to us must have done, a wound to the pride of Austria which, without being a pressing necessity for us, would have unnecessarily increased the difficulty of our future relations. It was already quite clear to me that we should have to defend the conquests of the campaign in further wars... **That war with France would succeed that with Austria lay in the logic of history...** We could not foresee how far the later wars would make for the maintenance of what had already been won, but in any case it would be of great importance whether the feelings we left behind in our opponents were implacable or the wounds we had inflicted upon them and their self-respect were incurable. Moved by this consideration, I had a political motive for avoiding ... a triumphal entry into Vienna in the Napoleonic style. In positions such as ours was then, it is a **political maxim after victory not to enquire how much you can squeeze out of your opponent but only to consider what is politically necessary.** The ill-

feeling which my attitude earned for me in military circles I considered was the result of a military departmental policy to which I could not concede a decisive influence on the policy of the state.' (GC: He was 'certainly right' that this clash with the generals outraged the general staff and encouraged them to consider how to marginalise him in future.)

After Napoleon's telegram of 4 July, William sketched what he wanted from peace: reform of the Federation under Prussia's leadership, and acquisition of Schleswig-Holstein, Austrian Silesia, a strip on the frontier of Bohemia and other territories including parts of Saxony and Hanover. 'I gauged the proposed acquisitions from Austria and Bavaria by the question whether the inhabitants, in case of future war, remained faithful to the King of Prussia in the event of the withdrawal of Prussian officials and troops, and continue to accept commands from him, and I had not impression that the population of these districts, which had become habituated to Bavarian and Austrian conditions, would be disposed to meet Prussian predilections... Nevertheless I did not succeed at Nikolsburg in getting the king to accept my views.'

In Holstein's Memoirs, he recounts an interesting detail... After the war Bismarck told him that he was very displeased with, and reprimanded, the Prussian military *attaché* who did not return to his post in Paris after the battle. This meant that Bismarck did not get good information from Paris and this meant he was not made aware of *how little* the French had really prepared to intervene.

12 July Stanley-Cowley: 'I have not the slightest faith in Prussia being stopped by words. We certainly will not fight: the Emperor must choose whether to risk a war or to submit to the terms of peace being dictated by Prussia.'

12 July (Pottinger) Napoleon wrote to Metternich: 'I believe I can declare to you frankly that it is impossible for me to aid you by force of arms. My efforts for the armistice will only succeed if you accept preliminaries of peace.'

12 July (WAF) Evening, Goltz received detailed instructions from Bismarck (drafted 8th in Pardubitz and partly outdated).

13 July Goltz spoke to Napoleon and sketched Bismarck's demands: NGC, reparations, some annexations, abdication of King George of Hanover, the SH duchies... Only Saxony seemed a potential sticking point. Napoleon asked Goltz to draft a document he could forward to Austria as basis for armistice. Goltz delivered it on 14th. Pottinger: Napoleon again vaguely mentioned the idea of a Rhine buffer state but did *not* press firmly for specific compensations at this decisive moment. Pottinger: Napoleon and Beust talked on 13th. Napoleon tried to put a brave face on and claim he had helped Austria in the negotiations. He said France was not prepared for military involvement. Eyck: Beust was shocked to see Napoleon's condition and reported that 'Like a child, he stammered all the time: *je ne suis pas prêt à la guerre*.' He did not think French opinion would support it.

13 July HQ moved again to Brunn. Benedetti reported that the telegraph lines were down, couriers were bringing news from Berlin 3 days late. In this environment, Bismarck was happy to tell him that they both had to wait for the discussions in Paris.

13 July Stanley-Cowley: 'in 1859, he [Napoleon] encouraged an Italian war, hoping to establish an Italian confederacy dependent on France. Instead of that he has created a strong united Italy, not even friendly to France. In 1866 he has allowed a German war to begin, hoping various results none of which have been attained. He has created by the side of France a strong compact German empire fully the equal of France in military power. Was ever man so over-reached twice? It must be his chief object to get out of the affair, even at some sacrifice of prestige.' The Cabinet will support France in inducing Austria to accept Prussian terms. A Congress could only 'ratify the decrees of Prussia' and the terms will be 'dictated by events, rather than by the choice of any of the neutral powers.'

14 July (WAF) Goltz delivered the document to Napoleon who accepted it with few changes. It did not specify territorial changes as Goltz felt this was too fluid (also possibly because he disagreed with Bismarck, see below). The document was forwarded to Vienna and Nikolsburg as formal basis for mediation. Pottinger: Goltz's telegram reached Bismarck on 17th.

14 July Loftus was warning Stanley that Prussia's advances would make a war with France likely: 'the [Austrian] war instead of being arrested will only assume larger proportions'. Stanley to Cowley: 'we must make up our minds to consider Prussia as a leading — perhaps as the leading — military power of Europe'. Austria needs a generation of internal improvements.

15 July (WAF) Benedetti-Drouyn (Brunn): Bismarck rejected my argument that he was risking a general war, saying I was mistaken, he thinks that 'France and Prussia, united and resolved to redress their respective borders by allying in solemn engagements, would henceforth be in a position to regulate together these questions without fear of encountering armed resistance, either on the part of England or on the part of Russia.' He will not agree an armistice unless assured of the North German Confederation and what he considers necessary territorial compensation for sacrifices. In the evening Benedetti left Brunn for Vienna. (WAF does not explain well why he thought it would be more useful to communicate from Vienna. On his way he was fired on by Prussians and Austrians. Arrived Vienna morning on 16th. He was informed about the document Paris was circulating and told to return to Prussian HQ.)

15 July Moltke to wife: 'There must be no such thing as an armistice! We must in the first place have some definite propositions and these are not yet forthcoming.'

15 July Barry: Bismarck had a 'particularly violent altercation with the generals' at Czernahora about capturing the Floridsdorf lines in front of Vienna. Nobody else mentions this on 15th and Barry's account of the meeting has quotes which others place on 12th (above).

16 July Frankfurt occupied. On 17th it was ordered to pay 6 million gulden within 48 hours. Bismarck then imposed a further indemnity. There was a furore and Bismarck backed off a bit.

17 July (WAF) Bismarck realised that Goltz had not been forceful enough about annexations and he telegraphed Goltz to rectify his error and get Napoleon's agreement to territorial changes. Goltz spoke to Napoleon on 17th, 18th and 19th.

17 July (Mosse) Prussia notified the Powers of her terms: Austria to leave the Bund; Electoral Hesse, Hanover, Frankfurt, Nassau and part of Hesse-Darmstadt to be annexed. Stanley thought they were 'moderate under the circumstances' and Austria would accept them.

18 July Benedetti left Vienna to return to the Prussian HQ, arrived Nikolsburg early hours of 19th.

18 July Keudell to Bleichröder: peace is not done but seems likely.

19 July Barry: 'Bismarck's confrontation with the soldiers came to a head'. GC: French Ambassador made clear to Bismarck that Napoleon expected Prussia to agree an immediate five day armistice. Goltz had not presented Bismarck's demand for some annexations to Napoleon — to Bismarck's anger and he had demanded Goltz fix his mistake but it was still unclear. Now, acceptance of an armistice meant he could not be sure that Napoleon would not refuse to consider annexations, while rejection risked a two front war. He gambled on acceptance. The generals disagreed. There were violent quarrels with the King, Bismarck and generals. Moltke seems to have agreed with the generals but not led the attack. Roon supported Bismarck who prevailed. (Only Barry and GC mention this on 19th. Keudell seems to be the source for GC's account.)

19 July (WAF) Bismarck talked to Benedetti — explained that Goltz had not followed instructions. He did not reject the Goltz-drafted document but made clear it would have to be amended. After the council with the soldiers, Bismarck told Benedetti: we accept an armistice but *we will insist on territorial changes that Goltz neglected to include and we'll fight France if we have to to get them.*

19 July Napoleon agreed with Goltz on the territorial demands.

20 July Stanley told the Commons:

'Ours will be a pacific policy, a policy of observation rather than action. I think there never was a great European war in which the direct national interests of England were less concerned... [W]ith regard to ... the establishment of a strong North German Power ... I cannot see that, if the war ends, as it very possibly may, in the establishment of such an Empire — I cannot see that the existence of such a Power would be to us any injury, any menace, or any detriment... [I]f North Germany is to become a single great Power, I do not see that any English interest is in the least degree affected...

I think, in the next place, that if we do not intend to take an active part in the quarrel, we ought to be exceedingly cautious how we use menacing language or hold out illusory hopes. If our advice is solicited, and if there is any likelihood that that advice will be of practical use, I do not think we ought to hesitate to give the best advice in our power; but while giving it under a deep sense of moral responsibility, as being in our judgement the best, we ought carefully to avoid involving ourselves or the country in any responsibility for the results of following that advice in a matter where no English interest is concerned. I do not think we ought to put ourselves in such a position that any Power could say to us, "We have acted upon your advice, and we have suffered for it. You have brought us into this difficulty, and therefore you are bound to get us out of it." We ought not, I say, to place ourselves in a position of that kind. And now, Sir, I have stated all, I think, that it is possible for me to state at this time, and it remains for me only to assure the House — knowing, as I do, **how utterly impossible it is for any member of the Executive to carry on his work effectively without the support of public opinion** — it only remains for me to say that, as far as the nature of the case allows, I shall always be anxious that the House shall be conversant with everything that is done.'

Stanley generally thought German unification inevitable and was more worried re Napoleon and Russia and he told Apponyi that 'the danger of disturbance to the peace of Europe lay in the weakness rather than the strength of Germany'. Gladstone supported the Government's approach in the Commons: 'The influence of England is best maintained by refraining from continued interference.' The French Ambassador in London told Paris that the government had the support of public opinion. On 18th Stanley had told Loftus that the 'feeling for nonintervention' was 'stronger in the House of Commons and among the public than I ever saw it before'. On 21st he told Cowley that in the debate the day before only one voice had been raised for Austria (Sir G. Bowyer) and "Keep out of the quarrel" seemed to be the universal feeling of the House'.

20 July Italy suffered a naval defeat at Battle of Lissa which pushed her to accept an armistice. It was the first major sea battle between ironclads.

21 July Brunnow read to Stanley a despatch explaining Russia's view that Britain and Russia should not leave France alone to mediate peace. Stanley did not want to get involved and didn't reply.

21 July Apponyi urged that Britain and Russia intervene to 'check the aggressive pretensions of Prussia'. He politely told Stanley that his statement to the Commons, about the the formation of a strong north German power not being injurious to Britain, was a mistake as it increased the chance of another war given neither Russia nor France 'were likely to remain long on good terms with a neighbour so powerful and so ambitious'. Stanley replied that he disagreed — the real danger to peace 'lay in the weakness rather than in the strength of Germany'. When Apponyi appealed to the 1815 Treaty, Stanley told him 'it was useless to appeal to those Treaties as being still binding'. Britain would 'not in any case interfere willingly, and certainly we would not do so unless we knew first on what basis Austria was prepared to treat'. It would be hopeless to fight against exclusion from the Bund. (Stanley passed on this account to Bloomfield and Buchanan.)

21 July Hammond: 'if Belgium is left alone, I conceive of no possible circumstances occurring on the Continent which would induce us to take a prominent part'.

22 FJ capitulated. There was another imminent battle at Pressburg. Bismarck asked Moltke how dangerous it was and Moltke was clearly worried. **Bismarck recommended to Wilhelm an immediate 5 day truce starting midday.** When the Italians protested, he dismissed them: 'If our troops rest for five days that is nothing more than the Italian Army did for weeks after Custoza.' By Now Napoleon was sick of his allies, and sarcastically told Metternich (reported to Vienna 26th), 'I would ask nothing better today than that you could beat them again, chase them from the Quadrilateral and keep Venetia'(!).

The Austrian delegation arrived at Nikolsburg in the afternoon of 22nd.

22 July GC: Goltz telegraphed that Napoleon accepted Bismarck's annexation list though he did not want Saxony to disappear from the map.

23 July In London the government was absorbed by demonstrations organised by the **Reform League Committee**. Walpole, advised by Derby, told the police to close Hyde Park to protestors. Many thousands arrived (some books say 10s of 1,000s, others 100s). In chaos the crowd overwhelmed the police and occupied Hyde Park. (The police only restored order the next day with a regiment of Life Guards.) Stanley thought 'there was more mischief than malice in the affair and more of mere larking than either'. Granville made clear the Opposition did not support violent demonstrations. Walpole collapsed under the pressure. Derby made clear the government would not allow a further occupation of the Park.

On 23rd in Lords, Derby said: 'We have not been asked for advice and we have not offered any. We have simply stood aloof.' In the last week of July Russia inquired about support for a congress but Stanley was not keen and couldn't see the point. (Not many books make clear that this domestic issue, not war and peace, dominated the minds of British statesmen.)

23 July Prussian Council of War. Bismarck, Memoirs: 'I was firmly resolved to make a cabinet question of the acceptance of the peace offered by Austria. The position was difficult. All the generals shared the disinclination to break off the uninterrupted course of victory and during these days the King was more often and more readily accessible to military influences than to mine. I was the only person at headquarters who was politically responsible as a minister and forced by the situation to form an opinion and come to a decision without being able to lay the responsibility for the results upon any other authority, either in the shape of the decision of my colleagues or superior commands. **I was just as little able as anyone to foresee what shape future events would take and the consequent judgement of the world, but I was the only one present who was under a legal obligation to hold, to utter, and to defend an opinion. This opinion I had formed after careful consideration of the future of our position in Germany and our relations to Austria, and was ready to be responsible for it and to defend it before the King.**' Because of a 'painful illness' the meeting was held in Bismarck's room to discuss whether to accept peace on offered terms. 'I declared it to be my conviction that peace must be concluded on the Austrian terms, but remained alone in my opinion and the King supported the military majority. **My nerves could not stand the strain which had been put upon them day and night. I got up in silence, walked into my adjoining bedchamber and was there overcome by a violent paroxysm of tears. I heard the council dispersing in the next room. I thereupon set to commit to paper the reasons which spoke for the conclusion of peace, and begged the King, in the event of his not accepting the advice for which I was responsible, to relieve me of my functions as minister if the war were continued.**'

Around this time there was a meeting at which the military presented options for pushing on to Vienna. Bismarck said sarcastically (Keudell): 'If the hostile army surrenders Vienna and withdraws into Hungary, we must follow them. Once we have crossed the Danube it will be advisable to concentrate on the right bank, because the Danube is such a mighty ditch that one can't march along it on horseback. Once we are across we lose our communications to the rear, then it will be best to march on Constantinople, found a new Byzantine empire, and leave Prussia to her fate.'

23 July Moltke to his wife: 'The results which have been already obtained should not be set in jeopardy if that can possibly be avoided. There should be no necessity to do so if only thoughts of revenge are dispensed with and we fix our eyes on our own advantage.'

24 July Bismarck went to the King. He found in an antechamber 'two colonels with a report on the spread of cholera among their troops, barely half of whom were fit for service.' By now Moltke was losing 200 per day to cholera. Bismarck thought this a further reason for peace as Hungary in August was particularly dangerous for this disease. He explained to the King his reasoning: we must avoid leaving Austria with bitterness and desire for revenge; 'we ought rather to reserve the possibility of becoming friends again, and to **regard the Austrian state as a piece on the European chessboard and the renewal of friendly relations with her as a move open to us.**' If we continue fighting and Austria is broken up, 'Fresh formations on this surface [the territory ruled by A-H] could only be of a permanently revolutionary nature. German Austria we could neither

wholly nor partly make use of. The acquisition of provinces like Austrian Silesia and portions of Bohemia could not strengthen Prussia, and Vienna could not be governed from Berlin as a mere dependency.' Further conquests in the east would weaken our overall position. We must finish off rapidly before France wins time to bring further diplomatic action to bear upon Austria. The King 'raised no objection' to these arguments but declared the actual terms inadequate. He wanted more than on 4 July and insisted on the cession on territory from Austria. **'I replied that we were not there to sit in judgement, but to pursue the German policy. Austria's conflict and rivalry with us was no more culpable than ours with her, and our task was the establishment or initiation of a German national unity under the leadership of the King of Prussia [italics in original]...** I repeated that we were not there to administer retributive justice, but to pursue a policy' and he did not wish to see 'mutilated territories whose princes and peoples might very easily, such is human weakness, retain a lively wish to recover their former possessions by means of foreign help'.

The discussion became so heated that 'I left the room with the idea of begging the King to allow me, in my capacity of officer, to join my regiment. On returning to my room the thought occurred to me whether it would not be better to fall out of the open window which was four stories high, and I did not look around when I heard the door open, although I suspected that the person entering was the Crown Prince, whose room in the same corridor I had just passed. I felt his hand on my shoulder while he said: "You know that I was against this war. You considered it necessary and the responsibility for it lies on you. If you are now persuaded that our end is attained, and peace must now be concluded, I am ready to support you and defend your opinion with my father." He then repaired to the King and came back after a short half hour in the same calm, friendly mood, but with the words: "It has been a very difficult business but my father has consented." This consent found expression in a note written with a lead pencil on the margin of one of my last memoranda, something to this effect: "Inasmuch as my Minister-President has left me in the lurch in the face of the enemy, and here I am not in a position to supply his place, I have discussed the question with my son, and as he has associated himself with Minister-President's opinion, I find myself reluctantly compelled, after such brilliant victories on the part of the army, to bite this sour apple and accept so disgraceful a peace.'" (Memoirs, 2p50ff).

In 1877 he gave an account to Lucius von Ballhausen (who recorded it in his diary) that was similar to his Memoirs: 'I was the only person among 300 or so who had to rely entirely on his own judgement without being able to ask anybody. In the war council, all, with the king at the head, wanted to continue the war. I stated, fighting a war in Hungary in the heat, with the drought and the spreading cholera was extremely dangerous and what was the objective? After all the generals had voted against me I declared, "as a general I have been outvoted but as minister I must submit my resignation if my judgement were not accepted." The deliberations took place in my room because I was ill. After my declaration I left, shut and locked the door and went to my sleeping quarters and threw myself, sobbing and broken onto the bed. The others deliberated in whispers for a while and then slipped away.

'The following day [24th] I had a stormy encounter with the King ... he called my peace conditions "shameful". He demanded Bohemia, Austrian Silesia, ... a slice of Saxony, etc. I tried to make clear to him that one could hardly fatally wound those with whom later one would want and indeed have to live. He rejected that idea and threw himself weeping onto the sofa. "My first minister will be a deserter in the face of the enemy and imposes this shameful peace on me."

'I left him, firm in my decision, and had just slammed the door to my room and laid down my sabre when the Crown Prince walked in and volunteered to go to his father. He wanted peace and could understand and approve my motives. I had made the war and must now bring it to a conclusion. After a few hours he brought me a letter from his father which I have kept. The expression 'shameful' appears twice in it... These shameful conditions became the Peace of Prague.'

(JS says Bismarck may have 'conflated' his memories of summer 1866 and the more intense rows of 1870. This seems very unlikely, particularly given this account from 1877 is so similar to his Memoirs. While details may be exaggerated it's likely the overall story is right. Cf. Steinberg, p254ff.)

In Memoirs (2p81) he wrote of his lenience towards many who had sided against Prussia during the crisis: **'In general I regarded the principle of retaliation as no sound basis for our policy, since even where our feelings had been injured, it ought to be guided, not by our own irritation, but by consideration of its object.'**

WAF: On Bismarck's note, Wilhelm scribbled: 'After my minister-president deserts me in the face of the enemy ... and because [my son] shares [his] opinion, I find myself, to my sorrow, forced to bite into this sour apple and accept this disgraceful peace after such brilliant victories of the army'.

24 July Minister-president of Bavaria, Pfordten, arrives in Nikolsburg. Has to depart without a deal with Bismarck because the latter is still fighting with Wilhelm. (WAF: Pfordten was not empowered to agree a deal so Bismarck refused to deal with him, Pfordten turned to Benedetti for help and after 3 days managed to speak to Bismarck. I can't disentangle the Pfordten dates from the different books.)

25 July The *Kreuzzeitung* started to sound the alarm about Bismarck's tactics. A leak from a Cabinet minister to von Kleist-Retzow led to a push from 'reactionaries' hostile to Bismarck to lobby the King before the speech from the throne was given. The conservatives had been happy with Bismarck's fight with Parliament, the Alvensleben convention, and the Austrian alliance. They were happy with the Bad Gastein deal of 1865. Though some had qualms about the annexation policy they convinced themselves it was a just reward for the army's victories and few supported Gerlach's 'thou shalt not steal'. After Bismarck kicked off the next phase in January 1866, they were worried but Bismarck presented the whole thing as defensive. In April, news of Bismarck's reform plan and the drift to war threw them into confusion. Wagener used the *Kreuzzeitung* to defend the government. Gerlach wrote his famous article in May and the two soon had their final meeting that ended their lifelong friendship. Only one Cabinet Minister resigned. Most did not take the 9 April plan seriously.

When the *Kreuzzeitung* and the reactionaries started to mobilise at the end of July/August, he was contemptuous and bitter. 'Lippe [justice minister] talks big against me in the conservative sense, and Hans Kleist has written me an excited letter. **The little people don't have enough to do, they see no further than their own noses and like to swim on the stormy sea of phrases. One can cope with the enemy but one's friends!**' (to Joanna, 3 August).

(JS recounts (p261) that after the Speech from the Throne on 5 August, Bismarck and Kleist waited until everyone had left, looking at each other. Bismarck walked over.

'Where did you get the speech from the throne?'

'I will not tell you.'

'In this matter I don't like jokes. I shall have to get the state prosecutor onto you if you don't.'

'You can lock me up but you still won't find out.'

They parted. They met again later. Bismarck shook his hand. 'It's all forgotten.' An indiscrete minister had confessed. [I can't judge how reliable this story is.] JS says their friendship never recovered.)

The conservatives also split into the 'old' conservatives and the Free Conservatives. The former were Prussian particularists, the latter more open to German nationalism. The former were Lutheran, the latter more catholic or nonreligious. The former were dominated by the feudal gentry (of East Prussia, Pomerania, Brandenburg), the latter were stronger in the annexed territories of Silesia and the Rhineland. After his triumph of 1866, Bismarck promoted the reconciliation of the old aristocracy with the new finance/industrialist class (OP p337ff).

Leopold Ranke had grumbled, 'The concept of real kingship and the understanding for it have already been as good as completely lost in our time. Nothing will remain in the end except radicalism and imperialism facing each other.' After the constitutional conflict was over, Ranke admitted, 'we utilised the victory in order to deny the principles on which we ourselves rest. We submitted ... in order to make our persons and property conditions secure.'

Gerlach had written in his diary over the tumultuous months: 'I reproached myself for speaking out too little before Bismarck for justice, which has been so trampled... I felt in doubt again whether I should not have testified more extensively and more openly against the sins of the Prussian anti-

Danish and anti-Austrian policy... God knows that what matters to me is not this or that political view but a conscience made chaste through God's secret law.' But he did not speak out.

26 July Peace of Nikolsburg. FJ accepted terms at ~17:00 (Pottinger) and the formal paper was signed that evening. Peace deal considered in detail below. Basic terms: Prussia withdraws, no territorial gains, Bund is over, Austria accepts a North German Confederation without Austrian involvement, Duchies to Prussia, 40m thaler indemnity.

26 July Cowley to Stanley: France and Prussia 'may certainly pose a check to each other, but they may as certainly combine, if they have any object to attain in common. But these Powers also aim at becoming Great Maritime Powers and ... we ought hardly to look with indifference upon the possible combination of their naval resources'. Italy might become part of this combination.

26 July (OP p312) **Benedetti sounded out Bismarck on a secret treaty** giving France the 1814 frontiers and Luxembourg (though he raised the issue of how to compensate the king of the Netherlands). Examining a map, Bismarck replied that the 1814 borders offered 'no difficulty' — except getting approval from Wilhelm and the Landtag. Bismarck got the impression from Benedetti that Napoleon would not fight. OP also says that Drouyn put the demands for 1814 frontiers and the left bank of the Rhine to Bismarck on 4/8 (p312) but this contradicts WAF who puts this discussion back in Berlin on 5/8 .

OP: According to Benedetti, Bismarck mentioned the possibility of Belgium as compensation on 26th. Benedetti reported back to Napoleon that: 'Bismarck is the only man in the whole kingdom who understands what an advantage there would be for Prussia in forming with France an intimate and lasting alliance at the price of territorial sacrifice.' This document fell into Bismarck's hands after the war of 1870 and reviewing it he scribbled in the margin, '**So he honestly believed it then!**'

(WAF) Drouyn sent instructions on 23rd, they arrived on 26th and Benedetti then met with Bismarck. Napoleon had suggested to Goltz that France receive Luxembourg and Landau.

Benedetti was told to push for:

- 1) Saxony remains an independent state,
- 2) France gets the 1814 borders,
- 3) Luxembourg 'provided compensation can be arranged for the king of Holland' (Drouyn).

At the start Bismarck replied that these demands would probably mean abandoning the peace negotiations and restarting the war (in fact he hastened the conclusion of peace, WAF). Benedetti replied with resolution to convey that he was not intimidated. They then considered a map and Bismarck said he was happy with the 1814 frontiers but said no mention of territorial concessions should be made to Wilhelm for now. Bismarck rapidly began a media campaign in the German press to combat the idea of Napoleon getting territory (Bismarck-Foreign Office, 31/7) and told Wilhelm that he'd answered Benedetti 'evasively and dilatorily'. Benedetti told Drouyn that Bismarck had a reasonable argument about the difficulty of dealing with the King of Holland viz Luxembourg and had suggested focusing on Belgium instead. Compensation was not discussed further between the two in Nikolsburg. Benedetti's report reached Drouyn on 29th in Vichy where he was with Napoleon (ill in bed). (20/9/73 Bismarck-Wilhelm: 'I could only impede the Napoleonic policy by always letting Benedetti ... presume that I was completely willing to leave the path of virtue [agree territorial concessions]'.)

26 July Metternich cabled Mensdorff that Napoleon was ill: 'He is very pale, very emaciated, and has the air of a man in whom the force of willpower has had to yield before a general exhaustion.' He even suggested that Eugenie was discussing that he abdicate in favour of her. Many contemporaries recorded similar observations before and after this. Interestingly Cowley wrote to Bloomfield (31/7): 'I do not conceive that there is anything seriously wrong with him. He suffers from rheumatism and neuralgic pains, and, like all of us, he is growing older. It is the fashion to say that his intellect is not what it was. I should rather say that it is in energy, not in intellect, that he is the worse for wear.' Historians are vague about how much illness affected his judgement in this crisis.

27 July At Nikolsburg, Bismarck was told that Oubril had formally proposed a congress. The Tsar told Schweinitz that Napoleon had already accepted. 1815 could not be destroyed without the

participation of Europe. He would prefer no Prussian annexations. On 3/8 Wilhelm decided to send Manteuffel to St Petersburg (Mosse).

28 July Brunnow spoke to Stanley about a conference (he had on 23rd too). Stanley was not enthusiastic. On 31st he again essentially torpedoed it (accepting with qualifications). On 30th Cowley said 'what can be done [in a conference] but ratify the behests of Prussia'.

28 July The old Bund voted itself out of existence in the dining room of the Three Moors Hotel in Augsburg.

29 July Crown Prince to mother: 'Without letting myself be in the least blinded or deceived by Bismarck, I cannot deny that I am astonished at the reasonable liberal views which the man is now putting forward and wants to implement.'

29 July La Tour (French Ambassador in London)-Drouyn: Stanley says he won't oppose French push for compensation provided Egypt, Constantinople and Belgium are unaffected.

30 July Gorchakov told Revertera that 'The Emperor ordered me yesterday to telegraph to Vienna, Berlin, Paris, London and Florence that His Majesty could not consent to the map of Europe being changed without the direct participation of the three great neutral Courts. We invite the British Cabinet to a similar declaration and we already know that the Emperor Napoleon is ready to support it.'

30 July Cowley to Bloomfield: 'I do not think that the future is a pleasant look out for England. I have no faith in the friendship of Prussia and if ever she becomes a naval Power she will give us trouble... I look upon her [Austria] as done for.'

31 July Clarendon-Cowley: 'There has never yet ... been recorded in history such a collapse as that of Austria. France is no longer the first military Power.'

31 July Bismarck: 'The population of the country [LUX] is hardly homogenous with ours. In the judgment of military experts the fortress is not of such strategic importance that its possession ought to be bought at the cost of other advantages and couldn't be compensated for by other strategically more important points in our adjacent area.'

1 Aug Bismarck-?Herbert: '**... in politics, when one has many enemies, one must first put the strongest out of the running and then bleed the weaker ones, which would be a very unchivalrous and low trick in private life**' (*was im Privatleben eine sehr unritterliche Gemeinheit ware*).

2 August Grey to Derby: though it is 'quite right that we should avoid, as much as possible, being mixed up in these continental troubles', the Queen thinks 'it will hardly do ... for England to stand so completely aloof, as to be totally disregarded abroad, and to abdicate her position as one of the great European powers'.

3 Aug Benedetti arrived back in Berlin. Metternich told people Benedetti had consistently helped Bismarck in the negotiations but Drouyn wrote to him, 'I entirely approve of your steps and your language and [the peace is as favourable] to the interests which we have defended as we could hope for under the circumstances.'

4 August Bismarck traveled from Prague to Berlin with the King and discussed the domestic future and **Indemnity** etc. He sketched the considerations in his Memoirs... There was pressure from the Right to bin the constitution etc. They could have done so but he says: this would have created huge opposition and given ammunition to those trying to undo the victories of 1866, plus Prussia could not have imposed absolutism in her new territories and Austria and the southern states would have exploited the situation. *Better to cut a deal.*

'I do not consider absolutism by any means a form of government that is desirable or successful in Germany in the long run. The Prussian constitution [with trivial exceptions] is in the main reasonable. It has three factors, the King and two Chambers, each of which by its vote can prevent arbitrary alterations of the legal status quo. **This is a just apportionment of legislative power, but if the latter is emancipated from the public criticism of the press and from parliamentary control, there is increased danger of its going astray. The absolutism of the Crown is just as little tenable as the absolutism of parliamentary majorities... Before the victory I would never have mentioned the word "Indemnity", but after the victory the King**

was in a position to make the concession magnanimously'. He wanted to build 'a golden bridge either in policy or words, in order to restore the internal peace and from this solid Prussian basis to continue the German policy of the King'. These discussions were 'very trying' and conducted on the train with King and Crown Prince (2,p76). He also had to battle forces wanting annexations in the south. He thought that grabbing bits of Bavaria etc would just encourage them to side with Austria for revenge. OP: the idea of indemnity had been first discussed by the Cabinet in Berlin while the King and Bismarck were at the front in July — only Heydt supported the idea.

5 August Indemnity Bill announced in the opening of the special session of the new Landtag; also an annexation bill and a Reichstag suffrage bill for the new NG Confederation who.

In his speech from the throne the King said of the indemnity sought: 'I am confident that recent events will so far contribute towards effecting this indispensable understanding that my government will readily be granted the indemnity in respect of the period of administration without a legal budget for which Parliament is to be approached and that with this, the conflict that has prevailed hitherto will be brought to a close for all time... Government and parliament, working together in harmony, will have the task of bringing to ripeness the fruits that must grow from this bloody seed if it is not to have been scattered in vain.'

Much to everyone's embarrassment when Forckenbeck officially presented the chamber's response to his address, Wilhelm blurted out, 'I had to act that way, and I shall do so again if the same circumstances recur.' OP: this was embarrassing for Bismarck and Forckenbeck and the latter chose to consider that the occasion was unofficial so did not have to be formally reported to the chamber. (The speaker, Grabow, had been a leader of the opposition. He was now replaced by Forckenbeck (a lawyer), a sign the liberals wanted to improve relations.)

Bismarck did not think absolutism was the best path, he knew Prussian conservatives were not popular in the rest of Germany, he knew he had to reckon with a change of king soon, he was already thinking ahead to the psychology of the south German states etc. He wanted a deal with the moderate liberals and 'his interviews with Twesten and Lasker apparently convinced him that the opposition could be reconciled only by sweeping concession' (OP).

Some of his conservative colleagues objected to his idea for an Indemnity Bill. Bismarck never forgave their 'desertion'.

OP (p 333) The liberals mostly wanted a deal. But those who valued nationalism more were more likely to think of the conflict as lost and were willing to ditch it on Bismarck's terms. Those more on the democratic left feared accepting the Indemnity Bill on the basis that it would legalise the 'gap theory' and wanted to fight for future rights. Twesten, Lasker, Forckenbeck, Michaelis and others wanted a deal and feared voters would shift further to conservatives if they held out.

Twesten said in the debate: '**No one may be criticised for giving precedence to the issue of power at this time** and maintaining that the issues of freedom can wait, provided that nothing happens that can permanently prejudice them.' Mommsen said after victory, '[it's] a marvellous feeling to be there when history turns a corner. That Germany has a future and that this future will be determined by Prussia is no longer a hope but a fact, a mighty fact for all time.' Treitschke: 'Politics is the science of the attainable.'

Bismarck stressed the French threat and played up the national goal. He also allowed the liberals to make some amendments to the Indemnity Bill. On **3 September** it passed 230-75. In his Memoirs, Bismarck applied one of his frequent quips to the Indemnity affair — *In verbis simus faciles!*

Liebkecht: 'The oppressors of yesterday are the saviours of today; right has become wrong and wrong right. Blood appears to be a special elixir, for the angel of darkness has become the angel of light before whom the people lie in the dust and adore.'

EF: 'It was a great watershed in Prussian and German politics... His solutions proved to be unstable and his rebundled package [his mix of reactionary, liberal and other elements] unravelled within a time span scarcely longer than his period in power.' Twesten thought it better to cooperate with Bismarck. Bamberger, a south German liberal in exile in Paris in 1848, wrote: 'This act was not the

best the government could have offered the Landtag but in fact it was the best it was willing and did offer. Could hostility have secured anything better than what the government condescended to concede?' Lasker, Unruh and Twesten supported the Act. An article by the liberal historian, Baumgarten, is often cited: he attacked the 'extraordinary ineptitude' of liberalism and the middle classes who were 'only in exceptional circumstances able to participate in great political action with success'. This trend 'boded ill for Germany's future' (EF).

Gall: Virchow, Waldeck, Hoverbeck opposed the Bill. Twesten, Lasker, Forckenbeck, Unruh supported it.

OP (p335): 'The constitutional conflict was over but so also was the unity of the liberal movement.' **Bismarck nudged the split along by holding out the intoxicating feeling of acting with, and influencing, the ruling power:** e.g redrafting legislation, all sorts of little tweaks. Liberals split into the Progressive Party, largely Prussian and trying to maintain traditional liberal ideas, and the National Liberal Party, largely non-Prussian, more national, and less liberal. (Bennigsen and Miquel were Hanoverian.) Economic issues such as the Zollverein had 'no influence on the split' (OP). The priority given to national unity by the NLs appealed to many merchants, bankers, industrialists who shared that priority and looked forward to a united Germany spreading the financial burden of military spending and freeing capital for more productive uses.

'To the small businessmen and artisans of democratic temperament who clung to the Progressive party the financial benefits to be expected of German unity were either less important or not so apparent; hence they were more reluctant than the moderates to surrender or defer the issues of freedom and parliamentary rights for which the constitutional conflict had been fought' (Pflanze).

The democratic left saw the split as opportunists versus principle; the moderate right saw the split as practical statesmen versus naive idealists. 'German liberalism had reached a point of divergence. The moderates took the track that ultimately lead to unconditional surrender, the democrats that which finally ended in frustration and impotence' (Pflanze). Further, in August 1866 Bebel and Liebknecht founded the Saxon People's Party which got 2 seats in the August 1867 Reichstag election (Hamerow says 3). At the start it was democratic rather than socialist but in 1868-9 it shifted towards the radical program of the Socialist International. It grew into the Social Democratic Workers Party founded at Eisenach in 1869, founded for the 'emancipation of the working-class', and became the SPD in 1875 and is the origin of today's Social Democratic Party.

'The refusal of liberals to accept the political equality of labour through universal suffrage, their unwillingness to face the social issue by questioning the dogma of *laissez-faire*, and, finally, their betrayal in 1866 of their own highest ideals, began to convince proletarians of the validity of the concept of class struggle. The crack that had opened in the German social structure in 1863 began to widen' (Pflanze).

Sybel wrote a few years later: Waldeck thought the government had offered nothing justifying an expectation of more constitutional conduct; Virchow said he and his friends had a better way of getting Germany unity than Bismarck, namely the way of freedom. The final vote was 230-75 and the practical question, what would happen in similar circumstances in the future, 'was left to future decision and it was considered sufficient to heal the present wound by mutually trusting the royal word'.

5 Aug (WAF) Benedetti forwarded Drouyn's latest document to Bismarck with a cover note. He told Drouyn he'd thought it best to let Bismarck consider it alone before they spoke. It reiterated: Prussia gives up territory that was French in 1814, Prussia gets Bavaria and others to hand over territory to fit 1814 borders, Prussia withdraws from Luxembourg and the fortress of Mainz.

Benedetti was summoned to Bismarck in the evening. They had a friendly but tough chat. Bismarck suggested the King would not give up territory and Napoleon was going back on his promise of friendliness. Benedetti stressed that Prussia was upending the European map and France must be compensated. WAF makes no mention of the harsh words below. After this Benedetti was encouraged to return to the argument by Drouyn. Bismarck told Goltz: the king won't give up

territory; he was very unhappy about the Mainz demand; he suggested a deal could be done on Luxembourg; he again encouraged France to think about Belgium.

OP (p312): Having strung him along, Bismarck now said **'If you want war, you shall have it. We shall arouse the entire German nation against you', I will unleash 'revolutionary strokes' against which German thrones are more secure than Napoleon's** — OR I will do a deal to give you compensation, he was, he said, prepared to make 'important sacrifices' for French friendship.. Cf. his similar comments on unleashing revolution to Govone on 10/8 and viz Russia on 11/8. In July he had spoken to people about practical steps for such eventualities, *he was not bluffing*. The French couldn't move quickly enough or deal with Bismarck's double-dealing, and time slipped away.

Bismarck used the French demands for 1814 borders and German territory to pressure Bavaria et al to accept secret military deals in return for generous approach from Prussia. In his first meeting with Pfordten, Bismarck made voracious demands; Pfordten hurried to see Benedetti who offered nothing as he was trying to get the Palatinate out of Bismarck; Pfordten went back to Bismarck who stressed his isolation — then described how he would modify his demands in return for an alliance; Pfordten agreed, Bismarck got what he wanted (OP, p370, dates not given but seems during August). (This is classic Bismarck — diverting the pressure exerted on him by France in order to pressure one of his opponents. The French pressure achieved something for *him* but not for *France*.)

Eyck: a few days later Bismarck leaked the demands and his rejection to the French opposition newspaper which caused a sensation and forced Drouyn to resign.

6 August France asked London's opinion on Russia's proposed conference, even though Bismarck had already made clear he opposed. Stanley consulted and replied (8th) negatively. England has 'no cause to object to such increase of power on [Prussia's] part' he told Cowley.

6 August Brunnow again pushed Stanley: Prussia is ripping up 1815 alone, are you going to allow this? Stanley said he would have to consult colleagues.

7 August Stanley wrote to Cowley: 'The growing jealousy of Russia, and, I suspect, of France also, against Prussia is natural. We should feel the same in their position. **But to us there is no loss, rather a gain, in the interposition of a solid barrier between the two great aggressive powers of the Continent.**' Stanley-Bloomfield: 'if anything wanted to persuade me of what is in our interest in this matter, I should find it in the evident jealousy of the two great nations, between which Prussia is interposed as a barrier'. Cowley informed London that France was requesting the 1814 borders from Bismarck.

A Cabinet was held and Cowley was instructed (10th) to obtain assurances about Belgium and was told by Drouyn that it was safe. (Cf. Cowley of 30/7 — one of the few who predicted the new Prussia 'will give us trouble'.) The Queen, so vocal about Bismarck's methods, now also saw the world differently: '... Germany, a country allied in so many ways... Germany's wish is to be united under the supremacy of [Prussia], & not divided into N. and S., the result of which would be to throw the latter into the arms of Fr. — than which nothing could be worse. A strong, united liberal Ger. would be a most useful ally to [England]' (Victoria-Stanley, 7 Aug). Stanley-Cowley (11th): **'Our line is plain: let German and Frenchman fight, or divide the plunder as they please: but speak out strongly for Belgium if it should be necessary. I hope the necessity will not arise.'** Cf. Stanley-Cowley 18/8.

7 August Manteuffel received his instructions (Mosse): he was to stress the pressure of public opinion and how sacrifices must be rewarded, we are taking as little as possible. Wilhelm also sent the Tsar a letter. He arrived in St Petersburg on 9th.

7 August (WAF) A second interview with Benedetti and Bismarck who said the king rejected the demands but he suggested there could be other combinations and said this was not his final word, he was still inclined to make 'sacrifices' for the relationship. He said the military *attaché*, Loë, would take detailed instructions to Goltz. They met again in the morning of 8th. Benedetti questioned him about Manteuffel's departure for St Petersburg (there 9-24th). He did *not* push vigorously on

compensation as he thought it would lead to a major crisis. Rumours were spreading, he was getting panicky visits from other ambassadors *et al*, and he thought he had to go to Paris for urgent consultation. Departed on 9th, arrived Paris on 10th where stories were leaking about talks in Berlin (some of them from Bismarck's office to French journalists, p121).

(The whole crisis showed that 1) Napoleon, like FJ, did not have clear priorities before the crisis blew up, 2) this made it impossible to handle coherently the many tactical questions of the crisis, 3) this structural problem was exacerbated by the inevitable chaos flowing from communication failures and delays as people moved, telegrams missed them etc, 4) in such chaos, Bismarck's clear priorities, fluid style and ability to divert pressure aimed at him against others for his own ends meant he was playing at a far deeper level.)

8 August Stanley to Cowley: England has 'no cause to object to such increase of power on [Prussia's] part' and British public opinion sees Prussia's success with 'extreme favour'. England would not join any protest against what was happening. Stanley to Loftus: 'the advantage to England of a strong Prussia is so obvious, that in my judgement it may fairly be set against the disapproval which we would otherwise feel of acts which however useful in their ultimate result, have undoubtedly been violent and arbitrary.' Loftus wrote in August (undated) that he 'could not view with any dissatisfaction or fear of danger to England an increase of power to Prussia. She was the great Protestant State of Continental Europe... She will become a Power of great importance in maintaining the peace of Central Europe... We have much in common with her — our race, our religion, our mutual interests are all interwoven with [Prussia], & our political interests should be identical... A strong Germany will always look to [England] for moral support, & will naturally seek the alliance of a great maritime power.'

9 August Manteuffel met the Tsar in evening. The Tsar 1) expressed shock at the end of dynasties based on divine right, complained about 2) Bismarck stirring up revolutionaries and 3) about the democratic character of the planned new North German Parliament, and 4) worried that the south German states would fall under the influence of revolutionaries and/or Napoleon. The next day Gorchakov reinforced these arguments and suggested moderating Prussian demands. He also hinted at future Prussian support for getting rid of the Black Sea clauses.

10 August Loftus to Stanley: 'We have no interest in opposing the creation of a strong North Germany in the hands of Prussia. Commercially and Politically it can be only of benefit to us. France and Russia have other views and interests but we may safely keep aloof'. Loftus also discussed the desire for France to get compensation and the possibilities of war between France and Prussia and the consequences for *Belgian independence*. 'Both will apply for our aid. It is evident that we have no special interest in such a war... There is no object for us to take part in the struggle save and except for the preservation of Belgium'. London should therefore use her leverage and the desire of both sides to get from both guarantees of Belgian independence.

(As the historian Millman wrote, 'Once Bismarck had succeeded in unifying North Germany the means he had used to do so were forgotten in the flush of glorious success. Whereas his conduct had been labelled unscrupulous and without principle, its results were now praised. The expansion of Prussia, instead of alienating England, drew her sympathy.')

10 August Bismarck told Govone that if France came to terms with Austria or Russia 'we would conduct a war of revolution; we would incite rebellion in Hungary and organise provisional governments in Prague and Brunn.'

10 Aug (WAF) Bismarck-Goltz: if France threatens war over compensation we'll need to make alliances with south Germany and Austria.

11 August Stanley confirmed to Brunnow that Britain would not protest to Prussia. It was clear she would not support Gorchakov's efforts to organise the three Powers to interfere and dictate to Prussia. Brunnow accepted that the 'European' policy had failed and Russia would come to terms with 'reality'. Brunnow now 'has quite changed his tone and assures me that nothing was further from his thoughts than to protest against the acts of Prussia! If this is true, words don't carry the same meaning to him as to me' (Stanley-Cowley), (Mosse p246 & 248).

11 August (WAF) Goltz-Bismarck: Napoleon is not pushing the border changes and says there's been a misunderstanding. On or before 12th, Napoleon and Benedetti met. Napoleon was now trying to shift blame for the growing fiasco onto Drouyn. (It's murky quite what Benedetti personally thought re what compensation claims to make.)

11 August Bismarck was angered by Manteuffel's report of discussions with the Tsar and Gorchakov (9/8). In response to pressure from Russia, in his instructions to Manteuffel who was sent to Russia, Bismarck wrote: **'Pressure from abroad will compel us to proclaim the German constitution of 1849 and to adopt truly revolutionary measures. If revolution there is to be, we would rather make it than suffer it.'** According to Pflanze, this was even a threat to awaken Polish nationalism against Russia. He was not bluffing and had made various preparations for such events including building his network of revolutionary nationalists (though he also planned to betray the revolutionaries by not granting them the 1849 constitution in full after he had used it to mobilise them for war).

18 months later he said to Carl Schurz that if France and Austria had intervened **'We would have been forced to explode every mine [in Germany, Serbia, and Hungary]. If this primer had been ignited, of course, retreat would no longer have been possible. To treat with Austria would have been out of the question. Her destruction would have been unavoidable. A great empty space would have been opened between Germany and Turkey. It would have been necessary to create something to fill this vacuum. We could not have left our Hungarian friends in the lurch.'** However, he thought 'such eccentric means' were only a 'last resort', the existence of Austria was preferable. In his Memoirs he wrote that 'new creations in this area could only be of a continually revolutionary character.' He preferred a lenient peace with Austria and no war with France. (OP p313-14.)

Although he made a few minor concessions to Russian complaints he carried on. Manteuffel told the Tsar and Gorchakov that Bismarck, if driven to desperation, would stop at nothing. Manteuffel reported that everybody in St Petersburg was *'kopfscheu und verletzt'* ('scared and aggrieved?') at Bismarck's threats of revolution.

12 August (WAF) Drouyn offered resignation. (On 11th it seems he sent an agent to Berlin to try a backchannel negotiation with Bismarck, possibly with Napoleon's agreement. The agent got nowhere.) Napoleon offered the job to Benedetti, discussions over a few days, he refused for reasons that are unclear, WAF guesses probably because of his health. He worked with Napoleon on a new set of demands, abandoning German territory and focusing on Belgium and Luxembourg as Bismarck had suggested.

13 August Gorchakov in conversation with Talleyrand made clear he had given up hope of a congress. On 15th Buchanan reported a similar change of tone.

14 August (JS) Heydt presented the Indemnity Bill to the budget committee and said the indemnity and lines of credit should be considered together. Passed on 3/9.

15 August Stanley-Cowley: If Napoleon, after the Mexican failure and surely soon to be followed by the 'inevitable' surrender of Rome, fails to get compensation from Bismarck, it 'will be the most serious shock his dynasty has yet undergone. If he does not give way it is war. We do not want Napoleon upset, nor do we want a new war.'

16 Aug Benedetti arrived back in Berlin. He found opinion very aggressive against concessions of German territory to France.

17 Aug Discussions with Benedetti (see 29 August below). Bismarck prevaricated but was irritated by Benedetti's approach and demand for an answer within 3-4 days (WAF). There were further talks on 22-23/8.

18 Aug Prussia and other northern states agreed in principle a treaty for North German Confederation. Bismarck had used the spectre of French demands to pressure the Germans.

18 Aug Loftus to Stanley: 'We must look out that France and Prussia do not come to an understanding at the expense of Belgium.' He had got wind of Benedetti's gambits.

18 Aug Note from Wilhelm to Bismarck complained that he's out of the loop and says 'I wish, therefore, now to be informed daily of the negotiations with Bavaria and Darmstadt.'

18 Aug Stanley to Cowley: 'I begin to suspect that the German revolution may go farther and faster than its authors intend. Bismarck wants a new German federation. Napoleon wanted an Italian federation. We know what came of that: may not the precedent be followed? In any case the southern states will not long endure exclusion: and then will be seen, whether France and Russia will tolerate a German empire. But as I think you said in one of your letters, it is a question for '68 rather than for '66.'

20 August A letter to the Grand Duke of Baden reported Bismarck saying to Württemberg's war minister, in response to the question — how long might it take for the south to join: 'Perhaps six weeks, perhaps three years.'

21 Aug Clarendon to Cowley (interesting the former Foreign Secretary was writing to the ambassadors in such a way): 'I think that under his regime [Stanley's] England will become more and more isolated — he will not, like [Russell] create a host of enemies but he will cool and render indifferent such friends as we may still have. It is perhaps best, tho not glorious, that we shd. try to efface ourselves for we are in a horribly defenseless position.' (Cf. discussions over Corry review, December 1867.)

22 Aug Stanley to Disraeli: 'The only question as to which I feel nervous is the American', re the *Alabama* claims. During August-Sep Britain was also concerned about the revolt on Crete (thought vital for the security of communications with India) and the Turkish response. On 13/8 Stanley-Lyons: Urge the Turks to act with 'the utmost forbearance and in a conciliatory spirit', it would be 'a great misfortune for Turkey' if anything excites 'the sympathies of Europe in favour of the Christian subjects of the Porte.'

22 Aug FJ letter: 'When all the world is against you and you have no friends at all, there is not much prospect of success, but the man must defend himself as long as possible, do his duty to the last, and finally fall with honour... **We were very honourable but very stupid... Before the war, we were already betrayed and sold... It is a war of life and death which will not be ended for a long long time.**' Clark: he convinced himself that he had been the victim of a conspiracy between Bismarck and Napoleon and that his attempt to behave decently had brought him to ruin. He'd remarked on 3/5 that 'it is becoming clearer every day that each step in Berlin and Italy is ... the link in a chain of measures which have long been agreed upon'. This is why he dismissed his ministers and appointed Bismarck's greatest enemy in Germany, Beust. He had something like a serious spiritual breakdown, he felt everything he tried turned out badly and he had an 'unlucky hand'. He kept this very quiet. In 1867, he wrote, 'I have a bitterly hard crust to eat, and only my trust in God and an honest will to do my best can give me the strength to keep afloat.'

23 August Peace of Prague and independent treaties were signed Aug-Oct (Bismarck excluded Italy and other German states from discussions, leaving them all to handle their own peace negotiations).

- The only territory lost by Austria was Venetia.
- Austria accepted an indemnity of 40M thaler (some books say 20M — which number was finalised?).
- Austria accepted 'the reconstruction of Germany without participation of the Austrian imperial state' and a North German confederation (new Prussia, small northern states, Saxony) with individual states retaining their own constitutions but accepting extension of the Prussian military system.
- Austria recognised the 'alteration of possessions', what Pflanze called Bismarck's 'most revolutionary act in 1866': Schleswig-Holstein, Hanover, Hesse-Kassel, Nassau, and Frankfurt were annexed. Prussia constituted more than four-fifths of the population and land area of the 1867 confederation.
- Baden, Württemberg, and Bavaria were left intact.
- Hesse-Darmstadt (lost some territory) and Saxony were not annexed but brought into the NGC.

- Bismarck threatened the south German states with France and forced *secret military alliances* on them (in which they promised that in the event of war they would accept the supreme command of Wilhelm), while publicly urging patience on German nationalists. At Nikolsburg, he described the difficulties of digesting south Germany. He could not annex them now; the military alliances were enough.
- Napoleon's prevarication meant he got very little: a promise of a referendum in the Duchies and a guarantee of an 'independent existence' for the southern German states, neither of which Bismarck thought were important. (French policy suffered a basic problem: Napoleon was trying to woo the southern states *and* get some German territory, and the latter helped Bismarck thwart the former.)

OP: Bismarck realised that he should either take states whole (thus helping assimilate as effectively as possible) or leave them alone (thus helping restore relations quickly rather than creating grudges): 'every full annexation attainable without cession of Prussian territory is better than the half by way of reform' (OP p315). France was not the only reason for halting at the Main. He worried about expansion in the south. He was hostile to, and afraid of, the ultramontane influence (cf. his comments to Gerlach in 1854). In July he thought that including the Bavarian, Catholic element would make it impossible to consolidate her gains and that 'for a long time' the south would not consent to rule by Berlin.

Victory changed many minds. E.g Rudolf von Ihering, Professor of Law, Göttingen University... Just before the war he wrote of the 'shamelessness and ghastly frivolity' of Bismarck. In August, 'I bow before the genius of Bismarck who has accomplished with great energy a master stroke of political teamwork. I have forgiven this man all that he has done in the past, yes more than that I have convinced myself that what we uninitiated thought was criminal arrogance was necessary; it has since then become evident that it was an indispensable means to the goal... [F]or such a man of action I would give a hundred men of liberal opinions [but of] impotent honesty.'

It did not change some conservatives. Ludwig von Gerlach: 'My pain is ... the pain a Prussian German Christian feels that my party and my fatherland Prussia has violated the ten commandments of God in this terrible manner and through a depraved pseudo-patriotism has done damage to her soul and stained her conscience.'

24 Aug The Tsar, still cross, swallowed his complaints. He told Wilhelm that Prussian behaviour had struck a severe blow at monarchic principles but the two states must 'remain in future what they had been in the past: old and faithful allies'. Russian objections to the peace ended.

25 Aug Crowe sent to Stanley a copy of a letter he obtained somehow from Napoleon to La Valette. Crowley told Stanley on 28th he was sure it was genuine.

27 Aug Bismarck asked Goltz to return (via a holiday spot to avoid suspicion) to discuss French demands.

28 Aug Gladstone wrote in a letter of the 'great events' that 'seem ... to begin and complete [the] needed work in the reconstruction of Germany'.

28 Aug Stanley to Bloomfield: 'We have only as yet seen the first act of the great drama. The more complete union of Germany will probably be next — and then a war with France'.

29 August On 17 August Benedetti had proposed two agreements: a) a public treaty conceding to France the 1814 frontiers and the right to Luxembourg; b) a secret treaty giving France the right to annex Belgium. Bismarck rejected the 1814 frontiers again and suggested that he would be prepared to give Napoleon Luxembourg and Belgium in return for a 'free hand in Germany'.

On 29th, they discussed it further and **Benedetti left with Bismarck a draft treaty** specifying that France gets Belgium and Luxembourg in return for a 'federal union' between NGC and the southern German states. Benedetti said he was going on holiday to Carlsbad while the king waited for Goltz to arrive. WAF: he was reserved in this discussion as he was awaiting further instructions. He left 2/9, returned 14-30/9. (For details of French thinking, cf. WAF p130ff)

On 7 September (but WAF says he was away then??) Bismarck told him that there would not be a treaty but Wilhelm desired friendship - 'a circumspect refusal' (Pflanze). Benedetti tried

unsuccessfully for years to get the draft back, and **finally saw its text splashed across the front of *The Times* on 25 July 1870** as part of Bismarck's propaganda effort to keep Britain neutral. He also failed to report back Bismarck's suggestion that France organise demonstrations in Luxembourg. Benedetti then insisted on going on holiday for a fortnight for his health. When he returned to Berlin on 15th he was told Bismarck was too ill to see him and Bismarck then left for the country. France had missed its chance. Bismarck ruthlessly exploited the errors and carelessness of his diplomatic opponents. (Cf. Pflanze p. 371ff for details.)

Memoirs — after the war was finished, Napoleon thought that Prussia's gains would create a force *against* unification and he thought that non-Prussian Germany would be better disposed to France. He 'did not realise the national drift of the time and judged the situation in accordance with his schoolboy reminiscences of South Germany, and from diplomatic reports which were only based on ministerial moods and sporadic dynastic feeling... I assumed that a united Germany was only a question of time, that the North German Confederation was only the first step in its solution, but that the enmity of France and perhaps of Russia, Austria's need of revenge of 1866, and the King's Prussian and dynastic particularism must not be called too soon into the lists... I was at that time preoccupied with the idea of delaying the outbreak of this war [against France] until our fighting strength should be increased by the application of the Prussian military legislation not only in [North Germany] but, as I could hope even at that time from the observation I had made, to the South Germans.'

He wrote (Memoirs) that he had 'overestimated' the danger of a war with France at that time because he overestimated the size, skill and organisation of its army, but it was still 'quite reasonable' to postpone the conflict. (2p57-9) The Tsar was friendly to Bismarck and grateful for 1863 and had immediately accepted Nikolsburg but Gorchakov was making trouble. Bismarck thought that Russia would not support a French attack but would probably be happy to see a coalition 'pour a little water into our wine of 1866' — but then intervene after Prussia had suffered defeats.

29 August Lyons warned Stanley that the Cretan affair was likely to become serious and Stanley wrote to Gladstone that there is opposition to Turkish rule in principle and Greek agents are active. At the end of August Russia suggested joint intervention with London and Paris but this didn't go anywhere.

29 August Disraeli warned Derby about 'the obstinacy with which the Admiralty has declined building iron ships'.

1 September Drouyn resigned, replaced by Moustier as Foreign Secretary — cf. Eyck above — this happened because of Bismarck leaking details to a French paper. According to Millman, Goltz informed Bismarck of the change on 30/8. Mosse: Drouyn resigned on 31st and Cowley informed Stanley of the switch to Moustier. Mosse: the change was unpopular in St Petersburg as Moustier was seen as pro-Turk and anti-Russia.

Cowley was scathing about Moustier — he 'prefers the society of ballet dancers to all others' and is a 'bird of a feather' with Napoleon (22/9). (Millman says by now Cowley was old and deaf, disliked Moustier and distrusted Napoleon, and wanted to retire and only stayed at Stanley's request.) Eyck says that Rouher, minister of state, took over the negotiations — not Moustier.

1 Sep Gorchakov proposed joint remonstrances in Constantinople re Crete.

1 September Bismarck told Loftus: 'Prussia had no personal interest or wish with respect to Luxembourg... Prussia was quite ready ... to withdraw her garrison ... and we are prepared for any arrangement which may be agreeable to the King'.

1 Sep Bismarck speech to Landtag on Indemnity:

'The more sincerely the Royal Government wishes for peace, the more its members feel the obligation to abstain from any kind of retrospective criticism, be it in the form of defence or attacks. **Over the past four years, we have frequently advocated our respective viewpoints on both sides, sometimes with more bitterness than goodwill, and in these four years, no one has succeeded in convincing the other.** Each protagonist believed he was correct in acting

the way he did. In external affairs, too, it would be difficult for a peace agreement to materialise if one demanded that it be preceded by the one side acknowledging: "I now accept the fact that I have acted wrongly." We wish for this peace, but not because we are unable to fight; on the contrary, the tide is more in our favour today than it was years ago. We do not wish for peace to evade possible prosecution under a future law on [ministerial] responsibility; I don't believe we'll be charged – but if it does come to that, I don't believe we'll be convicted. Be that as it may, our ministry has been accused of many things, but fearfulness has never been one of them.

'We wish for peace because in our view the fatherland currently needs it more than ever before; we wish for it and seek it especially because we believe we can find it at the present moment; we would have sought it earlier if we had had hopes of finding it then; we believe we can find it because **you will have recognised that the Royal Government is closer to the tasks to which the majority of you are also committed than you may have thought it to be earlier; closer than the government's silence about things that must be kept silent would entitle you to believe.**

'For this reason, we believe we can find peace, and we are seeking it honestly; we have held out our hand to you, and the committee report gives us the guarantee that you will shake this hand. We will then solve the tasks that have to be solved in cooperation with you; I certainly do not exclude from these tasks improvements in the domestic fulfilment of promises made in the constitution. However, we will only be able to solve them jointly by recognising, on both sides, that both sides are in fact serving the fatherland with the same good will, and we must do so without doubting the other's sincerity.

'At this moment, though, the tasks of foreign policy still remain unresolved; the brilliant successes of our army have only, as it were, raised the stakes, and we have more to lose than before, but the game is not won yet; the more firmly we stick together at home, the surer we are to win it. [...] 'If it is commonplace to say, "What the sword won, the pen spoiled," then I have complete confidence that we will never have to hear, "What sword and pen have won has been destroyed from this rostrum." ...'

3 Sep Indemnity Bill passed. Memoirs — he wanted to show the world as united a domestic front as possible. He wanted to remove not just 'internal dissensions' but also 'any appearance of such a thing'. If we could gain independence and security, 'we should then be able to move freely in our internal development and to organise our institutions in as liberal or reactionary a manner as should seem right and fitting.' Until security was clear, he was prepared to pay 'blackmail' to the opposition in order to be able to throw Prussia's full weight into the scale including 'the possibility of letting loose national revolutionary movements against our enemies.'

13 Sep Malmesbury warned Derby: he had 'been for a long time anxious about the state of our navy which ... does not bear nearly the same relative position as regards other navies which it formerly did'.

15 Sep Benedetti back from holidays, tried to see Bismarck, told latter too ill to see him.

15 Sep Stanley thought 'the final collapse' of Turkey in Crete may be near. Lyons told him (19th) this was wrong and the rebel cause was hopeless. On 25 September Stanley wrote to Cowley, 'I do not believe in the Turkish Empire: it seems to be worn out and unable to maintain itself.' Sadly Greece is 'bankrupt, anarchical, without an honest politician or a class which can be trusted with power. I see no natural heir to the sick man.'

16 Sep Derby-Disraeli: 'I am coming reluctantly to the conclusion that we shall have to deal with the question of Reform.' Possibly influenced by continuing level of protests and meetings from the pro-reform movement (Blake). Disraeli and Cranborne were not convinced. Discussions continued through Oct-Dec. They didn't want to say No to any reform, and therefore provoke opponents to unite. So they looked to delay and keep opponents divided. Discussions ran on into the new year.

16 Sep France issued a circular. It welcomed the destruction of the 1815 system and the breakup of the coalition of the northern courts. It stated: 'An irresistible power ... pushes people to unify in

large agglomerations by making the secondary states disappear.' This was a hint that France would push for border changes on the principle of nationality.

20 Sep Cowley to Stanley: Napoleon is 'a man, who thinks that no promise, however securely made, is binding under altered circumstances' so 'no precautions one can take can be of much avail'.

20 Sep Wilhelm promoted Bismarck to Major General.

?21 Sep Victory parades in Berlin. (JS & OP: 21st (photo below says 21st. EF says 20th and a note from Wilhelm suggests 20th. Maybe lasted 2 days!)) Bismarck rode with Moltke and Roon in front of Wilhelm's carriage. 22/9 *The Times* editorial: 'Well may the Prussian people enjoy their round and happy day. The army is part of them. It is "the Prussian nation in arms". That nation did not go forth impelled by lust of conquest, or even by love of strife and adventure... They thought of nothing but what they owed to King and country.'



26 Sep Keyserling-Bismarck: Gorchakov is talking very positively re our friendship and alliance. On 15/10 Gorchakov wrote to Bismarck personally, inquiring after his health and stressing '*de notre détermination d'entretenir avec la Prusse les relations les plus intimes*' (our determination to maintain the most intimate relations with Prussia). Mosse: this was probably connected to a) the uncertain relations with Austria and France, and b) Gorchakov's plotting to denounce the Black Sea clauses and his

view on the likely dismemberment of Turkey. He had drafted notes denouncing the clauses but although the Tsar initially approved them, in a Council with the Tsar, the ministers of war and finance, The Grand Duke et al — his plan was successfully opposed as too dangerous. The date is apparently lost but is believed to be the last week of September. Gorchakov told Oubril (November) that he would return to the issue when the Franco-Prussian war, which he expected, materialised and he did indeed use these drafts in October 1870. (Mosse p257)

26 Sep-1 Dec Bismarck retreated to the countryside to recover and think. 26/9 he went to his cousin's at Karlsburg then on 6/10 to Putbus (on the Baltic). There he wrote the 'Putbus Dictates' (30 Oct & 19 Nov) on the new constitution for the NGC.

The idea that he drafted the entire Constitution over a few days in December is false. He got ideas from Wagener, Max Duncker, von Savigny and others.

EF: Bucher and others had prepared drafts but after Bucher described his work Bismarck hardly listened then started dictating.

In the Putbus dictates he wrote, '**In form we shall have to stick more to the confederation of states [Staatenbund] while in practice giving it the character of a federal state [Bundestaat] with elastic, inconspicuous but far-reaching forms of words... The more easily we continue the previous forms, the more easily can the thing be done, whereas an attempt to have a fully formed Minerva spring forth from the head of the Presidium will run it aground in professorial disputations.**' (NB: 'elastic, inconspicuous but far-reaching' — very Bismarck — as was 'professorial' as a term of abuse.) He also insisted on 'no attendance fees, no delegates, no census, unless the latter goes to the lengths described above [very severe property qualification]'. He attacked attendance fees: '**Attendance fees mean paying the educated proletariat for the professional practice of demagoguery.**' In negotiating the details, he was flexible. **He was concerned to avoid 'the grave hindrance inherent in the friction of the artificial machinery of the constitutional state'** (as he put it in Feb 1869). See December debates.

Early Oct (Mosse) Austria appointed a Pole to be Governor of Galicia which was seen as an insult in St Petersburg. 7/11 Revertera reported the noise about this was dying down and the time was good for a proposal re joint action in the east.

6 Oct Werther reported to Bismarck from Vienna that there were some signs that Austria was reorienting policy to the East: 'Has she finally understood that her future is not in Germany but in the East?'

6 Oct Loftus-Stanley: Since Manteuffel's return to Berlin (August?) 'a change was apparent in the language and bearing of M. d'Oubril, and this has become more striking since his own visit to St Petersburg... The former sympathy for Prussia appears to have returned, no expression of disapproval of Prussian annexation is heard. "*Les faits accomplis*" no longer find a murmur. The only Legation of a neutral state which illuminated (altho' only very modestly) on the eve of the entry of the victorious Prussian Army was that of Russia. In short, the attitude of M. d'Oubril is no longer one of jealous disquietude but has become one of passive and calm satisfaction.'

12 Oct Stanley sent to Lyons a FO memo on the importance of Crete as, with Gibraltar-Malta-Cyprus, 'one of the chain of sentries which ... keep open this important connection with our Eastern Empire.' Cyprus and Crete are 'the keys of Egypt' and would be 'a great menace' in the hands of a 'maritime power hostile to England'.

17 Oct Disraeli-Derby: 'It can never be our pretence or our policy to defend the Canadian frontier against the U.S.... Power and influence we should exercise in Asia; consequently in Eastern Europe, consequently also in Western Europe; but what is the use of these colonial deadweights which we do not govern? ... Leave the Canadians to defend themselves; recall the African squadron; give up the settlements on the west coast of Africa; and we shall make a saving which will at the same time enable us to build ships and have a good budget.' Cf. 2/2/67.

22 Oct 'The French must retain hope and especially faith in our good will without giving them definite commitments.'

23 Oct Disraeli: no department should exceed the estimates of 1866-7. Stanley and Disraeli opposed expanding army despite the summer war.

27 Oct Goltz told Thile that with Bismarck away he could not provide answers on Luxembourg.

30 October Mensdorff replaced by Beust in Vienna. Beust had been foreign minister for Saxony, Bismarck's refusal to deal with him in negotiating peace led to his dismissal there. (See 22/8 for FJ motives.) In February 1867 he was also appointed Austrian minister-president and in June Imperial Chancellor. He was set on overturning Prussia's success. He worked to create the Dual Monarchy as he knew Austria had to sort out its internal chaos first. He hoped it would appeal to German liberals. However, the Hungarians had no interest in fighting with Prussia over Germany. Few in Vienna wanted another war against Prussia. Most thought instead that Vienna should try to profit from a war between Prussia and France. Beust hoped to embroil Prussia in an eastern war instead. Mosse: his appointment was unpopular in St Petersburg, Gorchakov complained to Buchanan that Beust would try to get an alliance with France and disturb the peace of Europe again.

November Bismarck impounded all funds and properties of the Guelph dynasty. He then negotiated a deal with the King then living in Vienna. For the return of millions shipped to Britain before the war, Bismarck offered millions invested in Prussian securities (and some other properties/securities) to remain in Prussian control until Georg abdicated. Georg had no intention of abdicating but accepted the deal. The Bill went through the Landtag (with difficulty) on 18/2/1868. That day, Georg said publicly in Vienna that he hoped God would restore his reign and Hanoverian independence. Bismarck took back control of all funds and declared he would use the income to counter Guelph subversion. This was approved by the Landtag in February 1869. This created 'the reptile fund' which gave Bismarck an annual income of over a million marks to spend as he wished with no supervision. He used it for his espionage network, to bribe journalists and editors, help colleagues, and bribe all sorts of characters (including bishops and cardinals to help end the *Kulturkampf*). (Pflanze 2p101) Stern: Until 1872 Keudell managed the fund from the FO and Bleichröder was involved. All records were destroyed in 1872 (check) and most of Bleichröder's involvement is lost.

7 Nov Revertera reported to Vienna that Russia feared an Austro-French *rapprochement* over Turkey.

9 Nov Cowley to Stanley: the tension between Prussia and France will probably die down because 'either the most bloody war will be waged ... or the people will revolt against the Gov[ernment]s on account of such heavy taxation'. Lotus agreed about the taxation dynamic. The Palmerston generation was more optimistic. However in the course of 1867 this initial optimism was replaced by a more fatalistic attitude. (Otte)

15 Nov (WAF) Benedetti returned to Berlin after his holiday and a trip to Paris. On 16/11 he spoke to Thile at the Foreign Office and was encouraged by their discussion. On 19/11 he spoke to Wilhelm and was discouraged. He complained to the new Austrian envoy, Karolyi's successor, Count Felix von Wimpffen, that Wilhelm was blinded by success, not frank in relations with others, he feared closer relations between Prussia and Russia, and said he wanted closer relations between France and Austria. Countess Marie Bismarck-Keudell (19/11): Bismarck does not intend to be disturbed further by Benedetti in whom he has lost confidence.

27 November Stanley to Cowley: 'France and Germany may fight out their quarrel with little harm to us.'

December Bismarck told von Wimpffen that he wanted an 'intimate understanding' with Austria, he regretted the failure of the Gablenz mission and that the two had not formed a common front against France and 'shot the deer together', and so on.

December Bismarck returned to Berlin and completed his draft Constitution between 1-8 December (Pflanze). He presented his draft to Wilhelm et al on 9 December giving everybody very little time to argue before the special conference of governments on 15 December.

'Seldom in history has a constitution been so clearly the product of the thought and will of a single individual... He wished to repeat in the North German Confederation the basic power arrangement of the Prussian state and thereby perpetuate the conservative order in the larger political context created by Prussian conquest [and to] circumvent the collegial structure of the Prussian cabinet in order to build up his own authority as the chief minister... It united the forces of German nationalism and particularism, and solved the problem of uniting states of disproportionate size. Planned as the first stage toward small-German unity, its national features were intended to attract southern peoples and its federal ones to reassure their governments... **The essence of the Bismarckian constitution was its perpetuation, by the use of revolutionary means, of the Prussian aristocratic-monarchical order in a century of increasingly dynamic economic and social change... Pressure would be met by counterpressure: the nation against the dynasties, the confederation against Prussia, Reichstag against Bundesrat, parliament against parliament, centralism against particularism, the centripetal against the centrifugal**' (OP p342).

The constitution was a practical instrument to manage the forces of German nationalism. Its national features were to attract southern peoples, its federal ones to reassure their governments. It was not based on Montesquieu or America. It derived from his own experience and consideration of forces. It was not intended to provide balance between three equal forces but to provide a fulcrum of power that he could manipulate.

Nobody desired his solution. In getting it passed, he applied to domestic politics his approach to diplomacy — playing off different forces against each other. 'Every attempt to alter the fundamental arrangements of his plan was countered by evoking the opposing interest that stood to lose by the change' (p351). **He used his 'illness' (how bad was it?) to keep himself away from the King and Cabinet October-November. He then bounced them with the draft, giving them almost no time to consider it (two days lost to a royal hunt!). He threatened the National Liberals with the princes and vice versa, threatened the smaller states with Prussia, bludgeoned the Prussian cabinet with the states' hostility, used the threat of the February Reichstag elections to pressure the princes, and generally played off all forces against each other to push through what he wanted with his usual mix of charm, threats, bribery, concessions on lower order priorities, blackmail and so on.** He often let them have their way on phrases that he regarded as 'mere words' so long as he got what he wanted on the substance. Saxony was his main problem. He told the Saxon envoy his goal was 'to overthrow parliamentarianism with parliamentarianism' but that if he was not supported by the princes he would abandon them and agree a constitution with the radical liberals! The other governments were working against the clock of Reichstag elections on 12 February, after which they feared Bismarck would have even more powerful forces supporting him. '**Yes, *Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo***' he told them repeatedly. (Cf. OP p353ff for details.)

(EF) His threats to ditch the constitution were not realistic, he needed the Reichstag to balance the monarchies. (I think this is overstated. Yes he wanted some sort of Parliament but it's generally a mistake to assume Bismarck was bluffing.)

Prussia encompassed over four-fifths of the population of the new North German Confederation (and two-thirds of the future German Reich). The NGC was a federal entity comprising the twenty-three northern states. The King of Prussia was given a federal 'presidency' (not 'Kaiser'), a title previously held by the Habsburgs. The presidency had full control of foreign policy, could make treaties, and declare war and peace. It could appoint and dismiss the Chancellor and any officials of the Confederation. It could publish the laws of the confederation and oversee their execution. It could summon, open, prorogue and close parliament. On the motion of the Bundesrat it could dissolve the Reichstag (with no provision for new elections or reconvening that body within a

definite time). Despite some typical Bismarckian window dressing, the Prussian king controlled the highest officers who swore allegiance to him, as did all confederate troops. He could mobilise the army at will. He could declare martial law. He could authorise an 'execution' against a rebellious state. (OP p343ff)

Bismarck's draft extended the Prussian military system over the NGC, established the peacetime strength of the army at 1% of the population, all males had to serve three years in the line, four in the reserve, and five in the militia. The Prussian king controlled weapons, command, organisation, training — and all these matters were excluded from the Landtag or Reichstag.

Budgetary clauses were scattered through the original draft (perhaps to hide the significance, says OP). There was no provision for an annual budget, the NGC could only raise indirect taxes, and the Presidency could raise sums from the states as it wished. The military budget set yearly appropriations for the army (per soldier) indefinitely and only military expenditure in excess of the amounts determined were subject to regular legislative approval (other aspects were fudged until 1871, see below). In 1868 the military received 99% of the confederate revenues [Pflanze uses the figure of 90% and 99% (misprint, or 89% army plus 10% navy?), Showalter uses 99%].

There was no bill of rights, no independent judiciary, and no responsible cabinet. Many of the laws used to suppress Prussian liberals were copied into the new Constitution. Officials were ineligible for election to the Reichstag (this was changed by the Reichstag and Bismarck conceded). Payment of deputies was expressly forbidden (EF: expense payments were introduced in 1906). The Confederation was given power over things such as weights and measures, banking, transport, communication, commercial law etc. Prussia got 17/43 votes in the Bundesrat which made it practically almost impossible for her to be outvoted. He deliberately left 'gaps' without rules for resolving them, including no process for resolving disagreements over the constitution itself. (OP p347)

There was equal, secret and direct male suffrage for the February 1867 elections and only those in receipt of poor relief were excluded (unlike the old Frankfurt parliament that had restricted the influence of the masses). EF: he had cold feet re this on 30 October. Hamerow: he told Keudell around then, 'I would much rather advise that the members [of parliament] should be chosen by various voting procedures, one half perhaps to be elected by the hundred most highly taxed voters in the election districts ... and the other half in direct elections.' He told Benedetti that, 'If these liberal successes, however, should induce the opposition to create obstacles for us ... which it would not be possible for us to surmount, **we would promptly put an end to them by a turn of the key. We would close Parliament. Finishing the story of Red Ridinghood, we would kill the wolf who would have devoured her.**' (Interesting quote, Hamerow gives references, 2,p320.) But in the Reichstag he said, 'I can only say that I at least know of no better election law.'

Interestingly Treitschke was very worried by it: 'I consider the general suffrage in Germany a crude experiment... Surely once we have yielded this point then, in view of the envious impulse towards equality in our century, it will be almost impossible to take it back again. I fear that this is the most harmful of all of Bismarck's deeds. It will provide him for the moment with a compliant parliamentary majority but will create unforeseen complications in the future.'

Freytag, a National Liberal elected in February to the new Reichstag, complained about the demand of democracy — 'Oh, this general suffrage ruins a man's character. For fifty years I did not worry about popularity and now I send a bouquet of flowers to a woman in childbed without knowing whether she had a boy or a girl and I shake the hands of 100 good friends whose names I do not know and never will know. Fie, Bismarck, that was no masterstroke... No one now knows whether he will be elected.'

The Bundesrat delegates (who unlike Reichstag deputies *could* be paid) were representatives of the state governments which instructed their votes. Constitutional amendments required a 2/3 majority in Bundesrat. In the draft, the Bundesrat was not the upper house of a bicameral legislature but a 'cabinet' holding executive and legislative power. Disputes between states were to be settled in the Bundesrat.

The Chancellor role was originally quite minor and it is unclear whether he was determined to take it. In his original version, the Prussian Foreign Minister had the power to direct Prussian delegates to the Bundesrat including the Chancellor which was considered a minor role, and Bismarck would have had the decisive voice in a government of which he had no official role. However, as the negotiations proceeded and amendments were made, and when the Liberals insisted the Chancellor have the power to countersign laws, he then took it for himself. Pflanze writes that during October he also became suspicious that Savigny, a talented and well-connected man, was planning to make the role altogether too threatening, even potentially asking for the right of direct access to the king — so this was killed.

He wrote to Savigny:

'Through the responsibility clause the chancellor has become to a degree — if not legally, yet actually — the superior of the Prussian cabinet... [T]he Chancellor thereby receives the power of final decision in the affairs of the Prussian ministries of trade, war, and naval affairs, of the more important parts of the Finance Ministry, and, if the Confederate constitution develops correctly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs... He receives this authority due to the circumstance that he influences the Reichstag by granting or withholding his countersignature. Because of this amendment therefore the Chancellor must be simultaneously president of the Prussian cabinet if the new machine is to function at all.'

He kept opaque his ideas about how the civil service would work in order to minimise suspicion and attacks. He assumed that departments would develop and a civil service would grow but kept quiet about it to avoid arguments both within Prussia and the other states.

He created an Office of the Federal Chancellor to support himself and made Delbrück its first head, with his job being to turn Bismarck's will into effective bureaucracy. Between 1867-1870, Delbrück helped Bismarck create a single currency, a system of free movement of people and trade within the federation, and a long series of liberalising economic measures (e.g. freedom to establish public companies, anti-guild measures). In 1870, Bismarck said of Delbrück to the Grand Duke of Baden, 'Delbrück is the one man of whom I can say that he is completely orientated in every aspect of his office and has an unusual ability to manage affairs and carry them out.' Savigny said, 'the strength of Delbrück's position is that he is only interested in the things that Bismarck finds boring.'

He accepted some amendments that did not jeopardise the essentials (OP p354). Cf. 27 March.

[See below for details of the 1871 German constitution that extended the 1866 version.]

Gall (p314ff): 1866 was 'a crucial turning point in the history of central Europe, much more so than 1870' and the year 'shows Bismarck at a high-point of his political creativity and effectiveness.' He had an 'absolute determination and readiness to move with the times... To say that in 1866 and 1870-1 Bismarck was erecting a bulwark against the spirit of the age is a piece of well-meaning self-deception that refuses to take account of the realities of historical development in Germany and uses a single figure to create for itself, usually with the aid of the idealised example of Britain, the

illusion that things might have turned out quite differently. In fact it is precisely Bismarck's policy, with its primarily power-oriented opportunism often amounting to a complete lack of principle, that reflects those realities with sober clarity. He saw that in his day, of all the conceivable possibilities, a parliamentary majority offered the best foundation for a powerful, effective executive as well as one that was relatively independent of the throne and the person currently occupying it... He saw that in the long run the power of Prussia could be effectively and permanently enhanced only in collaboration with the Lesser German national movement and in particular with the economic interests inside Prussia itself and in the neighbouring countries that the Customs Union had increasingly focused on Lesser Germany as a national objective... Without ever completely ruling out alternatives, he pursued a foreign policy line that in its consequences gradually cut off all other possibilities... The North German Confederation was the expression in political terms of a highly realistic understanding of the way things were going economically, socially and politically; it was much more a consummation of something for which the time was ripe than the manipulative creation of an individual.'

Gall (p322): After the great triumph, the arch-conservative forces, 'the forces of inertia', were greatly strengthened. 'Bismarck's persistent concern ... was therefore to re-trim the ship of state, as it were, by redistributing the weight, not just superficially but in terms of its very substance. That was what the Indemnity Bill was for. That was what the constitution was for... And that was the purpose particularly of the fundamental reforms that were introduced as soon as the new federal state had been constituted.' He accepted the repercussions of the reforms he introduced 'because **he regarded the process itself, the process that they helped along and in which they were one factor among others, as inevitable.** Here too, as in his approach to politics as a whole, he bowed to the ineluctable "*unda fert, nec regitur*". The idea that the ever-accelerating dissolution of the traditional economic and social order could be permanently halted and that order preserved was one he rejected with relentless clarity of vision. Slowing the process down, channelling it, keeping it within bounds — these he thought possible in principle... But to set oneself up in opposition to it was in his estimation to be overwhelmed or simply swept aside by it... As he saw it, it was a question of either placing himself at the head of a development that he deplored but regarded as unstoppable, even of accelerating matters in order to drive that development in his direction and exploit it to his own advantage — or of seeing it sooner or later forcing him on to the sidelines. The fundamental conviction of most liberals, and particularly of those who were prepared to cooperate, was that this would happen anyway. Bismarck, on the other hand, was confident that by making limited concessions and by continually trimming and re-trimming the balance he would be able to hold his own.'

(But they *could* have 'turned out quite differently'! The decision for modesty with peace terms was his alone; the King's circle was hostile. The decision for Indemnity and a deal with the liberals was his alone; the King's circle was hostile. The shaping of power in the new constitution was dominated by him; if he'd been assassinated in September a new constitution would probably have swung towards Manteuffel's ideas (or, conceivably though improbably, in a more liberal/federal direction). Gall ignores his secret preparations in winter 1866-7 to ditch the whole constitution and find a different path. His life would have been much easier short-term if he had gone with the flow, as it would have been in November 1863 if he swung behind Augustenburg (which would have had support from King and the liberals!), but he chose otherwise. Of course he was constrained. Of course he saw advantages in bringing the middle classes and the commercial interests into a system where their activities were strengthening a Prussian state still dominated by King and Army. But it is an overstatement to say a) things could not have 'turned out quite differently' and b) that Bismarck felt he had no choice but to accept the 'inevitability' of governing in alliance with the middle classes. **And a decade later, watching developments, he decided on a fundamentally new course that shattered the deal with the liberals.** The deal proved not to be 'inevitable' nor the product of an irresistible tide.)

‘However, we must not let this blind us to the plain fact — which had an effect far beyond all political calculations and crucially influenced the future — that in the years following 1866 it was a government still regarded as conservative that created certain basic preconditions for the acceleration of the process of economic and social change, the process known as “modernisation”, in central Europe. This raised fundamental doubts about whether political progress and social change did in fact go hand in hand. The ambivalence of progress, particularly when speeded up like this, suddenly came to light. Many people began to ask themselves in alarm, echoing the historian Jacob Burckhardt, a liberal of the old school, whether freedom and a life truly fit for human beings had not been very much better provided for under the old systems. “A certain supervised amount of wretchedness, with promotion and in uniform, begun and ended each day with a roll on the drums — that would be the logical next step.” Thus **Burckhardt saw the prospects for the future in 1872, speaking of a Europe of mindless “non-stop night trains” that would replace the Europe of old.**’ Ironically, Gall argues, Bismarck was the driving force of this and benefited from it: ‘when the factors that he had furthered after 1866 threatened to become too powerful he made use of the growing pessimism about progress felt by large sections of the middle class to apply the opposite lock, as it were, and once again give greater weight to the other side.’

Further, says Gall, after a career in which he raged against bureaucracy and its arbitrary interference with established patterns, he drove the creation of a modern, bureaucratically centralised state that broke down many parts of the old Prussian system including local powers of the aristocracy. It was not surprising that associates and opponents could ‘no longer make head nor tail’ of him. Was there any alternative to concluding he was an opportunist who subordinated everything to immediate success and his own power? Bamberger argued — he was the man of the hour because the hour demanded exactly an opportunist balancing act. His obvious opportunism became an increasing problem for him as others saw him as uncommitted to any particular principles.

This pushed him towards the use of the national idea. And, further, the NGC was inherently unfinished business: it ‘lacked any truly stabilising and integrating element as long as the state was not at the same time a national state’ and ‘there was quite clearly an inner necessity after 1866 to make progress in the matter of national unification to revise the results of 1866 to this end’ (Gall).

Bismarck repeatedly denied this logic over the next few years and warned (2/69) against the ‘wordy restlessness with which people not involved in the business of government search for the philosopher’s stone that will immediately establish German unity ... [which concealed] a shallow and in any case impotent lack of familiarity with realities and their effects... **We can put the clock forward but time will go no faster for that, and the ability to wait while circumstances unfold as a pre-requisite of practical politics.**’ However, argues Gall, such rhetoric was a smokescreen, he knew the NGC was unstable and contained dangers for Prussia and himself, and ‘his watchword had to be not patience but action’ though for long periods he acted reactively.

There were major financial and constitutional battles 1867-69 that I will cover in the next instalment.

‘The form in which the King exercises sovereignty in Germany has never particularly mattered to me; to the fact of his exercising it I have devoted all the strength of endeavour that God has given me.’ To Roon, 27 August 1869.

‘Theoretically, there is much that can be said about it [the Constitution]. In practice it was the impress of what was actually present at the time and possible in consequence, given the limited amount of stretching and adjusting that could be done at that moment.’ 5 March 1878



**GERMANY
1866-1870**

— North German Confederation

War of 1870-1871

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1 Dec Treitschke: 'Our revolution is being completed, as it was begun, from above and with the limited understanding of subjects we are groping in the dark.' Bismarck told Busch 'Only kings make revolution in Prussia' (Busch, I, p568).

1 Dec Beust-Revertera Regarding discussions about possible joint action in the east, Beust was suspicious and noncommittal. He assumed Russia would seek to maintain her position as protector of Christians in Constantinople. There may be some areas of cooperation in the Balkans but Beust was not pushing much for closer relations.

3 Dec (WAF) First meeting Bismarck-Benedetti since September, at the Foreign Office. Benedetti urged rapid agreement on outstanding questions. Bismarck prevaricated again saying that he remained friendly to the idea of a treaty but he had to persuade the king and Crown Prince who were not so keen. They agreed to talk again on 6th. Benedetti suspected he was being strung along. Bismarck told Goltz to complain to Moustier about Benedetti's pressing. Moustier agreed to tell Benedetti to be less demanding and limit his push to the removal of the Prussian garrison in Luxembourg. This undermined Benedetti in Berlin and encouraged Bismarck's procrastination.

3 Dec Revertera informed Beust (via sources in the Imperial family) that at the wedding of the Tsarevich, Greek and Serbian envoys declared that next spring the Balkan Christians would rise against the Turks. Russia started to prepare including her armed forces though her plan was to promise the Balkans benevolent neutrality, and active intervention only with other Powers. Gorchakov approached Austria and France. He told Revertera (reported 10/12) that a crisis was coming and the Ottomans may collapse. Revertera stressed their special interests including Herzegovina. Gorchakov stressed that the Powers should renounce territorial gains, Russia would be content with the restitution (not acquisition!) of southern Bessarabia, and expressed doubts about whether people in the Balkans wanted to join the AH empire or whether administrative autonomy (*une existence autonome*) might not be better. He was frank with Revertera that Russian interests, particularly making progress in the East, required an alliance with Prussia. In December in Paris Budberg also talked to Moustier re joint action: Crete to be autonomous like Romania, Russia and France to declare non-intervention in Turkish affairs to prevent interference with the free development of Romanians, Serbs, Bulgarians and Greeks.

6 Dec Bismarck instructed Goltz to express doubt that acquiring Luxembourg would be worth the German animosity that seizing it would 'certainly' cause in Germany. Although he had thought in the summer (cf. 31/7) that it was of little value and its population was anti-Prussian, after his return from Putbus he started referring to its population as 'German'. On 19-20/12 he pointed out that Prussia could not be expected to take the initiative in ceding 'German land' and reaping the 'odium' of handing over 'Germans against their will' to France. An alliance with France is not worth 'a humiliating injury to German national feeling', he told Goltz. OP: While Goltz assumed the next steps in Prussia's advance would best be achieved with friendship with France, Bismarck assumed it would come in conflict with her.

13 Dec (WAF) Benedetti requested a meeting. Thile declined. WAF: this was a big shock to Benedetti. The Foreign Office was also silent on the situation in Italy where troops were evacuating. Benedetti told Moustier of the change in approach since Bismarck's return and complained he was 'sending plans to Paris and maintaining silence in Berlin'.

15 Dec The other states got Bismarck's draft Constitution.

17 Dec Goltz-Bismarck: Moustier says that if Prussia won't sign the draft treaty then France will be forced to seek an alliance with Austria or south Germany.

19 Dec (WAF) Bismarck and Benedetti had a chance meeting in the street. Bismarck made clear Prussia could not guarantee the Papal States (Prussia was Protestant plus he didn't want to complicate his relations with Italy). When Benedetti complained that Goltz had encouraged Paris to think he supported a guarantee, Bismarck bluntly told him that Goltz had been misled by vanity in wanting to be involved in drafting a treaty! **He suggested France should organise petitions in Luxembourg calling for the retreat of the Prussian garrison.** (This turned out to be a trap.)

Benedetti: before we do that we must know it will work out. Bismarck: it took me four years to get the king to declare war on Austria, it would not be easy to persuade him 'to serve up Luxembourg to the emperor on a silver platter'. Benedetti suggested a further discussion, Bismarck referred to his work on the constitution and his illness.

Bismarck-Goltz: I saw Benedetti and told him that France should arrange demonstrations in Luxembourg and present Europe with an accomplished fact. An alliance would have to await the Prussian garrison being withdrawn. (Millman p47).

19 December Lyons to Stanley: If Turkey collapses in Europe there will be 'a desperate struggle, and ... in mixed districts we shall have massacres and every kind of horror. Great calamities may probably be avoided, if we can keep the Turks going... If things go on as they have done lately, the Turks will be squeezed out ... by the increase in numbers, wealth and intelligence of the Christians. I am not one of those who look upon the Turkish Empire as a good per se — to be upheld at all hazards — but ... I should like to let it down gently.' Russia, however, is openly playing the role of protectors of the orthodox Christians.

Both Buchanan and Loftus agreed that saving the Ottoman position required 'cutting off its rotten members' (Loftus, 16/2/1867) and this was the position of the Palmerstonians in the FO — Turkey's role is salvageable if it reforms and pulls back.

19 Dec Stanley to Disraeli: if there is a row with the Admiralty about the naval budget, note that our naval *attaché* in Washington assures us that 'our seagoing ironclad fleet is far superior' to America's.

23 Dec Benedetti called on Thiele and offered to work with him on the long-delayed deal. There was discussion over Italy. Around this time, regarding Bismarck's excuse of illness, Benedetti remarked to Paris that he was not too ill for hunting in the rain and snow, banquets, speaking in both chambers and presiding over constitutional debates. He was increasingly suspicious that Prussia no longer wanted a deal and was assembling other alliances in secret, including with Russia. On 26/12 he wrote to Moustier that while he could not be sure, 'if I had to formulate the solution which seems most probable to me, I would say that they are resolved not to accept our treaty project.'

24 Dec (cf. 6 Dec) Moustier-Talleyrand: 'I told the Baron [Budberg, Russian ambassador in Paris] that our adherence to this agreement presupposed above all the prior adherence of [Russia] to the policy that circumstances might lead us to follow in the West.' Moustier was generally favourable to Gorchakov's overture and the latter was pleased. In December Moustier had also probed with Beust about closer relations.

26 December Stanley to Loftus: 'All that Germany can do for us is to act as a counterpoise to France and Russia; and for that purpose she cannot be too closely united. I could wish if it had been possible, that the mediatisation of the small sovereigns had been complete... I only hope Bismarck's health may not so break down that he will be unable to control his Parliament — That would be a misfortune for all the world. — These people would fail in 1867 as they failed in 1849.'

28 Dec Goltz-Bismarck: Moustier says France will not provoke demonstrations in Lux nor ask for compensation.

30 December Disraeli wrote to Stanley re the latest rumours of a deal between Napoleon and Bismarck over Belgium and south Germany — 'The Emperor is like a gambler who has lost half his fortune & restless to recover; likely to make a coup, which may be fatally final for himself.' Opinion here would probably react against further trouble: 'Reaction is the law of all human affairs; & the reaction from non-intervention must sooner or later set in. I would rather, however, try to prevent mischief — i.e as long as we can.'

31 December Pfordten, who had wanted a southern union under Bavarian leadership, replaced as Bavaria's Minister-President by Prince von Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst who thought Bavaria had to look for good terms in negotiations to join a federal union led by Prussia. Bismarck carefully began to draw the Prince towards a constitutional alliance, see 31/1/67 (OP p383).

1867

The English Constitution, Walter Bagehot.

Das Kapital, Karl Marx. Two further volumes 1885 and 1894.

In 1867 'the mirage of a Franco-Russian arrangement in the East flickered across the diplomatic horizon' (Otte). Britain's post-Crimea containment of Russia required a strong navy and diplomatic cooperation with France. There were also fears about Balkan instability and the potential for the collapse of Ottoman rule there to give Russia chances. From the mid-1860s diplomats thought that Russia was stirring up trouble in the Balkans and elsewhere against the Ottoman Empire: Hammond referred to Gorchakov as 'most odious' and Ignatiev was seen as a menace. Crete was unstable. Everyone knew Russia was looking for a chance to ditch the Treaty of Paris framework. Lack of support for Turkey over Crete and on the Danube meant Britain lost influence with Turkey and Russia sought to capitalise. The FO assumption was that if the West could be kept quiet, then it would be much easier for Britain and France to cooperate on the East. By early 1867 there was a growing fatalism about a future war between Prussia and France. (Otte)

During January Stanley had to deal with some unwelcome complications from the Crete revolt, including Austria suddenly suggesting the abrogation of the demilitarisation of the Black Sea and a conference on the Eastern Question. Stanley rejected it.

End December / early Jan Reports in London re Bismarck's alliances with south Germany. Loftus told Stanley he believed that Bavaria and others are bound in the event of an attack by France on Prussia to put their militaries at Prussia's disposal. Lots of rumours buzzing around about the status and terms of such deals.

1 Jan Beust-Metternich: The Treaty of Paris is out of date, we should propose a conference to discuss the East and the rights of Turkey's Christian subjects, we should impose a plan on the Porte, the Black Sea clauses should be lifted. This was not welcome in Paris. Moustier feared too close an understanding with Austria and Russia and Napoleon didn't want a general congress on the Eastern question — he preferred a conference in Vienna on the immediate problems of Crete and Serbia. When Gorchakov heard of the back-and-forth between Paris and Vienna later in January, he thought that Beust's suggestions about the Black Sea were inopportune, he disliked the idea of a conference which would be too slow. By the end of January it was clear Gorchakov and Beust could not agree on a plan for the East and discussions between Gorchakov-Moustier/Napoleon also seemed to flounder in February — Napoleon wanted Russian support in the west but would not be specific, and was keeping his plans on Lux/Belgium secret (Mosse p259-61).

1 Jan German Commercial Association statement to members: the most important task is free markets, common legislation for industry, commerce, communication. Twisten: free movement and industrial freedom should be 'one of the first tasks of the new Reichstag'. On the eve of the February election, Bismarck nudged his spin machine to tell the papers — the new constitution provides many fruitful opportunities for commercial, industrial and legal reform.

3 Jan Rouher told Goltz that France must have Luxembourg.

9 Jan Queen-Stanley: We must ensure Paris and Berlin understand that England 'will never stand quietly by, or remain a passive spectator of any attempt against the integrity or independence of Belgium.'

10 Jan Stanley to Grey: 'I have no doubt that [Bismarck] ... would be glad to see Belgium sacrificed, if that act would avert the jealousy so generally felt in France ... and thus save Germany from being involved in war, which, as matters stand, seems to be a very possible event... I do not mean that it seems to be probable. I should say the chances were considerably against it. Still it is on the cards: & I do not believe that a French invasion of Belgium is'.

11 Jan Benedetti-Moustier: Bismarck says Wilhelm is opposed to withdrawing the Prussian garrison and Bismarck repeats that France should organise demonstrations there. Bismarck stressed he still

wanted a deal, complained of illness and the king as usual. Benedetti: we can't proceed in Luxembourg unless we have a guarantee from you. Benedetti was not encouraged. But in Paris they decided to press on with an initiative in Luxembourg.

14 January Bismarck wrote to Bernstorff: Belgium is of little importance to Prussia and is a pawn to be used either by offering it to Napoleon in return for further Prussian gains, or by using the threat of such a deal to win British support against France. When asked by Stanley if Bismarck and Napoleon had done a deal on Belgium, Bernstorff said no.

15 Jan In Upper House: 'A great state is not governed in accordance with party opinions; the sum total of the parties existing in the country has to be carefully weighed and out of that a line drawn that a government as such can pursue.'

17 Jan Benedetti told Bismarck that France would organise some manifestations in Luxembourg, Bismarck warned they should not be of an anti-Prussian character. He said he'd asked Moltke to consider the importance of Luxembourg for Prussia's defence.

19 Jan (WAF) Bismarck informed Goltz that Moltke saw Luxembourg as a key railroad centre between France and the Rhine. Goltz told Moustier who told Benedetti.

30 Jan As the Cretan problem rumbled on, Austria suggested to England and France the abrogation of the demilitarisation of the Black Sea and a conference on the Eastern question. Stanley replied on 30th that 'England and France would never consent to abandon the principle of the neutralization of the Black Sea.' He had a problem as, given he would not help France in the west, he had to worry about Franco-Russian action in the east.

31 Jan (OP p383ff) Bismarck outlined his plan for a constitutional alliance to von Spitzemberg, Bavarian minister at Berlin (cf. 31/12/66). Varnbüler was favourable. Bismarck hoped to pressure Hohenlohe through him. Although Hohenlohe was personally favourable, opposition in Munich was too strong and he rejected it. In February Hohenlohe began to insist that for Berlin the key to the south lay in Vienna with regard to Bavaria's acceptance of the wider confederation and her support in the Luxembourg crisis. The fear of Prussian hegemony and a Franco-Austria alliance would be allayed by agreement between Berlin and Vienna. (Of course, this development was an example of exactly why Bismarck had made such a generous peace with Austria, to allow such possibilities to flourish. Cf. his comments to Wimpffen in December about his regrets about the failure of the Gablenz mission.)

Feb-Spring The British government was consumed with debates over a new Reform Bill.

Also in the first half of the year Derby had to worry about Victoria's increasing isolation, refusal to participate in events, public hostility, rumours about her relationship with John Brown etc.

2 Feb After months of complaining about waste and stupidity in the Admiralty, Disraeli had concluded that only the PM, nobody else, could enforce serious change: 'The Admiralty is beyond the control of a Chancellor of the Exchequer, or any other subordinate Minister. It is the Prime Minister who alone can deal with that department ... It is useless to attempt to reason with them. The whole system of administration is palsied by their mutinous spirit.' Cf. 17/10/66. During February the government found itself moving towards a Reform Bill that session though it had been their intention to delay to 1868 (Blake). A month of chaos was resolved at Cabinet on Saturday 2 March.

3-5 Feb A conference in Stuttgart among southern states to discuss military coordination with Prussia. They agreed to increase and reorganise their forces on the principles of the Prussian system to make possible 'the defence of the national integrity in common with the rest of Germany' though important elements (including length of service and training) were not agreed. Even in Baden there was hostility to the three year period and the cost. Elsewhere hostility was stronger. In the south the Swiss militia system was popular. Prussian practice, training, and equipment spread (all but Bavaria adopted the needle gun) but there was patchy resistance.

4 Feb (WAF) Benedetti complained to Thile that he had got nowhere in the last few weeks. '*Rien ne marche, we make no progress — and we have so little time — only eleven or twelve days before the opening of the legislative session... I tell you I am frightened.*'

7 Feb The final draft of the Constitution was agreed.

12 Feb 1867 first elections to new Reichstag. Turnout was high. The old conservatives won 59, the Free Conservatives 39, the old liberals 27, the National Liberals 79, and the Progressives were just 19. Half the 297 deputies were noblemen. Progressives criticised the willingness to sacrifice liberty for unity and insisted on a cabinet of responsible ministers and full budget rights for the Reichstag. (EF: NLS got 80. Twisten, Forckenbeck, and Lasker joined and Bennigsen (Hanoverian) was leader.)

Free Conservatives: 2 dukes, 3 princes, 9 counts, 11 barons. Hamerow: Followers were mostly Prussian but not from the rural north-east which remained loyal to legitimist orthodoxy. Strongholds were in Silesia and Rhineland. No statistics on participation were published but estimates suggest about 64%, roughly double the rate of the Prussian election June 1866.

12 Feb Wilhelm note to Bismarck granting him 400,000 thalers.

12 Feb Bismarck told Benedetti that the military had concluded the Luxembourg fortress must remain in the Prussian defence system. He also suggested Moustier did not want a treaty any more. Benedetti rejected this. Maybe, said Bismarck, things could improve if Wilhelm and Napoleon met at the exhibition in Paris. Benedetti was more convinced nothing would happen quickly.

14 Feb Napoleon speech. He tried to distract attention from his failure to win compensation. OP: it was boastful but 'his delivery was uncertain, his manner melancholic'.

15 Feb To Goltz: Every delay in dealing with French demands is good 'for we shall win time thereby for the consolidation of our relationships in northern Germany and with southern Germany.' 'We would already see the ... Triple Alliance between France, Italy and Austria ... as a danger, an even greater one, but in a closer connection between France and England, whose predominant naval power would destroy our trade in such a case and support France's land operations.' (Latter quote Mosse, p263)

15 Feb Bismarck approached the southern states for informal discussions about the *Zollverein*. Prussia favoured either a *Zollparlement* or southern deputies joining the Reichstag when customs and commerce were discussed. Cf. 11/3.

18 Feb Moustier again told Benedetti to relaunch the effort on LUX.

19 Feb Although Bismarck was playing everyone off against each other as usual, and succeeded in bullying the states into resisting most Reichstag amendments, he also prepared for the Reichstag imposing amendments he could not tolerate. **On 19 Feb he invited some of the state governments to negotiate a secret treaty 'providing that in such a situation the governments would dissolve the Reichstag and decree their own version of the constitution'** (Pflanze). As the conflicts with Parliament played out over the next few months, Bismarck pushed them into signing the treaty (second week of April). *Thus he used the liberals to rally the states behind the draft that he wanted and they had not wanted while he also got them to accept some liberal amendments he did not mind.*

In the Reichstag, he pointed out that the treaties that obligated the states to consider the constitution would expire on 18 August 1867 and the states had a right of approval of the Reichstag's work, therefore the Reichstag had to move quickly and avoid amendments unacceptable to the states. Although his backup treaty remained secret, he allowed hints to spread. He did allow some amendments (e.g. to give deputies some legal protections against the government) and took a relaxed view of the *Kompetenz-Kompetenz* issue — whether the Reichstag and Bundesrat could extend their own competence. An amendment that other heads of administrative branches could countersign laws in addition to the Chancellor affected his own position: he informed the Reichstag that the states opposed it, and it was dropped. He accepted a secret ballot but rejected pay for deputies (he wanted only people of means as deputies, and the pressure of their own affairs would keep sessions short); the Reichstag called his bluff with a majority of 6 on this but he forced them to retract it. (He had even thought of putting the Reichstag in a provincial city to discourage journalists from political careers.)

22 Feb Bismarck told Benedetti that Wilhelm was willing to come to Paris for the exhibition in the summer. Cf. 22 March.

24 Feb Wilhelm speech.

25 Feb Stanley-Loftus: There are fears in Netherlands re a Prussian attack, such an attack would 'be regarded with extreme dissatisfaction in England' and 'all moral support would be given' but 'more I could not at present promise'.

28 Feb Moustier suggested to Netherlands a defensive alliance against Prussia and the cession of Luxembourg, with the consent of the people of the duchy a precondition.

March/April Luxembourg crisis. Luxembourg had been a member of the Confederation and *Zollverein*. It was the property of William III, king of the Netherlands. Under a 1816 treaty, Prussia garrisoned the fortress. Bismarck used the crisis to nudge the constitution through so *the momentary crisis left a permanent mark on the Reich's institutions*. It was also another classic example of how his fluidity allowed him to play off multiple forces against each other. The clumsy moves of Paris were encouraged to further both his foreign policy goals and his domestic goals.

2 March After weeks of tortuous discussions, a British Cabinet ends with Cranborne and others resigning over the Reform Bill. The government continued to push the Bill through. Cf. 13/4 and August.

8 March (WAF) Benedetti learned from Bismarck about the military alliances agreed with south Germany in 1866.

9 March Benedetti returned to Paris for 10 days as La Valette was ill.

11 March Bismarck described his *Zollparlament* idea to the Reichstag, hoping it would generate support for further political steps. 'German national feeling in the south was chiefly the property of middle-class liberals who were prejudiced against the aristocratic-authoritarian regime in Berlin' (Pflanze). Only in Baden was there enthusiasm for joining Prussia. Others responded coolly. **The *Zollparlament* experiment would show the serious obstacles to further unification and generally things didn't proceed as well as he and others hoped 1867-70 in south Germany.** He kept lots of schemes in mind, including a 'wider confederation' in which the constitution of the NGC would extend to the south other than in military matters. This would have stopped any independent foreign policy by the southern states and stopped the reinforcement of northern liberals by southern liberals in future attempts to overthrow the iron budget. The expansion of the *Zollparlament* might also create such a wider confederation. As always he had a clear picture of *the priority of goals* — maximally: the extension of the NGC to the south without war and without any important amendment, minimally: military alliances plus a *Zollparlament* — and was extremely flexible in how to make progress given events. (OP p382)

12 March Cowley rightly warned Stanley that he was 'almost sure that there is something in the wind' about Luxembourg.

13 March Stanley unconcerned about Luxembourg: 'Prussia will be furious. I do not see ... that England has any reason to object.'

Mid-March Thiers launches attack on Napoleon's foreign policy which had abandoned the balance of power and allowed Prussia to expand. 'There is not another single mistake to commit.'

14 March Cowley-Stanley: 'I inquired about Luxembourg with Napoleon but he clearly found the subject disagreeable'.

14 March Note Wilhelm-Bismarck: I have been told that 'beyond a doubt' as a consequence of a discussion between you and the former Hanoverian minister 'you have challenged him' and if true 'I hereby forbid you most explicitly to take any step in the matter before you have communicated to me ... details of the whole affair.' (No trace of what this refers to in any books I've seen!)

15 March While negotiations between Gorchakov and Paris were dragging on, the former learned of the secret dealings over Luxembourg (reported by Revertera-Beust on 15/3) and this made Russia less keen on committing to helping France in the west.

16 March Stanley, after being told privately by Bernstorff about the treaties with the southern states (Bismarck was tipping Britain off before publication on 19th), telegraphed Loftus that he 'was glad in the interests of European peace, to hear of the union of Germany for defensive purposes'.

16 March After months of frustration and internal attacks, France said to William III that they must have Luxembourg and in return would give him a treaty guaranteeing the integrity of the Netherlands.

19 March **The King of Holland agreed to sell Luxembourg to France accompanied by a treaty. The same day, Bismarck's secret treaties with three south German states (agreed in August 1866) were published to dramatic effect at home and abroad.** Publishing these treaties also helped him show the Reichstag that he had made more progress than they had assumed and helped his arguments with the Reichstag over the Constitution. 'He is as smart as a snake but hardly lacking in deceit like the dove,' said Bennigsen. It was a big blow in Paris where there was 'a great explosion of irritation' (Cowley). On 26-27 March there were crucial debates on ministerial responsibility, 30 March a vote on remuneration of deputies, early April debates on the budget. But publication also created pushback. In Stuttgart (Württemberg), Varnbüler consented to publication under protest and requested a public declaration from Prussia that the treaty was purely defensive. Bismarck's reply 'was an irritated refusal' (OP) and he feared what was happening between Württemberg and France.

22 March Benedetti presented a formal invitation to Wilhelm for the summer exhibition in Paris. Bismarck inquired in St Petersburg whether the Tsar would visit. The reply was that the Tsar would if his uncle did. (Mosse: The Tsar wanted to visit his mistress, Princess Catherine Dolgoruky — a fact well known to diplomats.)

23 March Hammond to Cowley: France will seek 'to break lances with Prussia without more delay' and is behaving with its 'usual insincerity'.

24 March La Tour-Moustier: Stanley told Apponyi that Luxembourg 'does not affect the interests of England'. Millman: Stanley was sympathetic to France's desire for Luxembourg and was not opposed to a deal but neither was he willing to press for it to happen. As the prospect of a sudden war increased, he did not get more involved to try to stop it — he withdrew further so as not to be involved. On the other hand his genuine aversion to commitments meant he was unlikely to cause trouble by misleading signals.

26 March William III asked Wilhelm for his consent to sell Luxembourg. France thought this would not be a problem.

27 March Gall (p318-19): Bismarck probably got an old school liberal and friend of Max Duncker, Carl von Saenger, to propose the amendment by which political responsibility was imposed on the Chancellor. It was 'thoroughly ironical' (Gall) that it became known as the 'Bennigsen Amendment'. Bennigsen tried to extend accountability to other federal ministries, Bismarck refused, on 27 March the Diet accepted an amendment and Bismarck had what he wanted and only what he wanted.

27 March Lyons-Cowley: Russia and France can do 'almost anything they please with the Porte, unless we interfere to prevent it, wh. I suppose we shall certainly not do.'

28 March (WAF) Bismarck told Benedetti that Wilhelm had replied to William III that he could not give any advice until he had ascertained the views of the other signatories of the London treaty.

28 March He denied to the Reichstag any 'deeply laid plot against freedom of the bourgeoisie in association with the masses to set up a Caesarean type of government'. Gall: he wanted alliance with the middle classes, not further conflict.

30 March Vote on pay for deputies. Bismarck had been adamant he would reject it. It passed by 6 votes. But he forced them to u-turn in April.

30 March Bismarck suggested to Britain and Russia that they intervene in the Hague to stop William III signing. By now Stanley, though determined to stay out of the row, felt some sympathy for France. Loftus thought on 30th that the sale either had been or shortly would be effected.

30 March evening (WAF) Moustier learned the Luxembourg government had been authorised to refute formally that the duchy had been ceded to France.

30 March To Goltz: French clumsiness has aroused public opinion, 'stoked by our opponents, the excitement is growing to critical dimensions'.

31 March (WAF) Bismarck spoke to Benedetti. Said that his political opponents were making a big noise, discussions should be postponed. He would say that the government had been informed of

the negotiations and the King would discuss the situation with the other Powers. (This is a bit different to other accounts of this discussion, cf. below.)

31 March Goltz protested that French clumsiness was making the deal impossible; involving Wilhelm made it hard to get agreement; the French-arranged demonstrations of the mob were not the sober petitions of bankers that Bismarck had advised and had aroused German public opinion etc. According to Millman Goltz asked France to drop the whole plan because German opinion made it impossible. The same day, Benedetti reported from Berlin that Bismarck would be questioned about it the next day in parliament and wished to say he was not aware of the sale of Luxembourg. **Moustier was furious and told Benedetti that he would not drop it even if it led to war, and that Bismarck would have to tell the Reichstag that he had discovered the sale too late to object.**

31 March Bernstorff read Stanley two telegrams. Will Britain seek to stop war by influencing William III not to sell? Bismarck considers Luxembourg as well as Belgium to be under the 1839 guarantee — does Britain agree? Stanley said that he needed time to consider and consult but (he wrote to Loftus) that he said he 'did not consider that the arrangement, whatever might be its precise character, was one of a nature to call for the intervention of England. Though the principle involved might be questionable, yet **if by so small a re-arrangement of territory the irritation now undoubtedly existing in France could be allayed and the peace of Europe thereby secured, I should have thought so great an advantage cheaply purchased**'. The next day (Mosse 2 days later) Stanley replied that if William III sold it then 'the question of protecting his interests would not arise'; 'it had certainly never been contemplated by England to guarantee the integrity of Germany'; 'It did not seem ... that the possession of Luxembourg would materially affect the future of Belgium'; while Germany might dislike a sale, that was not an issue for Belgium or for Britain.

April 1867 Bismarck buys estate at Varzin in Pomerania, 14,000 acres (he expanded it to ~20,000), 8 hours by rail and 2 by road from Berlin. In August 1869 he wrote to Motley that 'Leaving Berlin at 9 you are here [Varzin] for dinner.' Cf. August 1872 for a description of it by Motley. (JS: he bought it in June.)

April Russia sold Alaska to USA (Alexander feared it would fall into British hands in another war). Russia also reduced her naval budget around then.

In the first week of April, Bismarck further explored opinion in Britain and dangled the dangerous position of Belgium. Britain was distracted by discussions over the Reform Bill. Loftus to Stanley (9 March 1867): 'Continued agitation on the subject [the Reform Bill] would do great harm and be dangerous. The final settlement of the Question will very much tend to increase the Weight of England abroad'. Buchanan (in St. P) agreed. London was also distracted by the Cretan revolt. The FO saw Napoleon as the more dishonest and dangerous in this crisis, pushed by domestic tension and court intrigues.

1 April Bismarck very likely arranged Bennigen's raising of the Luxembourg question in the Reichstag: 'let us show that we do not fear war ... and if it breaks out the responsibility will be with France... Is the Prussian Government in a position to inform the Reichstag ... that they in common with their confederates are determined to secure the connection of [Luxembourg] with the rest of Germany?' Nationalist sentiment ran high, the applause was long. Bismarck's reply was moderate: The King of the Netherlands has asked us what we think, 'for the moment' we are saying nothing, and before we answer we will consult with our German allies, with the 1839 signatories, and with German public opinion. EF: he told the leader of the Free Conservatives (March) he thought a war with France inevitable but he would not bring it about, he saw out of his window war cripples from 1866 looking up at his window blaming him.

WAF: The *Nationalverein* saw Luxembourg as German and was adding to the clamour. There is conclusive evidence Bismarck welcomed Bennigsen's interpellation — Bennigsen wrote to his wife (1 April) that Bismarck had told him on 30th he wanted to keep Luxembourg and so did the generals. Moustier still wrongly thought (31st) he'd fixed a *fait accompli*. Benedetti met Bismarck on his way to the Bundestag building on 1st. He invited Benedetti to accompany him and told him on

the way that he would not accept a *fait accompli*. It seems Benedetti did not tell him of Moustier's telegram. In Paris they remained determined to press on.

1 April Goltz told Napoleon that Germany favoured war over giving Luxembourg to France. Goltz was told that France would not withdraw even if the result were to be war. Bismarck also pressured William III *not* to sign the deal. 'As things stand in Germany we must in my opinion dare the war rather than yield, despite the fact that the object, Luxembourg, is in itself hardly worth a war' [to whom?].

2 April Further meetings between Goltz and Napoleon in which Goltz is told that Napoleon now regards acquiring Luxembourg as necessary for his survival. Bismarck told Benedetti to stop negotiations with the Dutch. [My impression is that many if not all the books compress / confuse the different meetings between Goltz / Napoleon around this time.]

2 April (WAF) Bismarck told Benedetti that the military were adamantly opposed to ceding LUX and it was 'impossible for Prussia to lower her flag in Luxembourg at a summons from France'. (Benedetti maintained to the end of his life that Bismarck had not been duplicitous over Luxembourg and the problems arose from Moustier's indolent slowness and the King of Holland's indiscretions. This shows what a great job Bismarck did in his relations with Benedetti as it is clear that he had been duplicitous.)

2 April (WAF) Unknown to Benedetti, that day Bismarck began moves for a Prussia-Austria-Bavaria alliance against France. Beust undermined discussions: 'Picturing to our minds France as vanquished, can we expose ourselves to the chance of having the parchment on which the Treaty of Prague is recorded thrust into our hands and be thanked for a successful defence?' (to Wimpffen, 19/4).

3 April Bismarck telegraphed to the Hague, 'After the excitement of public opinion, war would scarcely be avoidable if the affair proceeds.' The Dutch government requested negotiations be suspended.

3 April (WAF) Benedetti advised Paris that Bismarck would fight, not accept a deal, and therefore the question is — are we ready to undertake war and should we do it or try other diplomacy first? Bismarck's success in threatening the Hague on 3rd threw the question of war onto France.

3 April Bernstorff told Stanley that Bismarck thinks war is likely, and if France does start a war what would Britain do, particularly given the position of Belgium may become 'exceedingly precarious'? Again Stanley said that it was not British business — Britain had 'nothing to do' with the causes of the dispute and no British minister 'would venture to propose to Parliament' armed intervention on either side. Stanley also encouraged Cowley to get Napoleon 'spontaneously to renounce views of aggrandizement at the expense of Belgium'.

Bismarck's telegram to Bernstorff of 3 April suggested that if he had to do a deal with France then *he would use Belgium to buy off France*. Stanley rightly guessed (letter to Grey 3 April) that 'Bismarck has held out hopes to [Napoleon] of Prussia giving her consent to the transfer, which hopes will be disappointed by the general feeling of Germany being too strong for [Bismarck] to disregard' (accurate other than the idea that Bismarck would *really* be forced by public pressure, rather than use it as an excuse as usual). Stanley told Bernstorff that no British minister could justify getting involved in a Franco-Prussian war over Luxembourg. Cowley told Stanley that Napoleon regards getting Luxembourg as essential to his survival, after which Stanley thought war probable. Disraeli told Stanley that the Rothschilds had received information that Napoleon had told Bismarck the deal with Holland is done and he shall act on it.

5 April William III declined to sign with France.

5 April Stanley-Grey: 'I fear the state of things is not improved by this unsuccessful negotiation. Luxembourg would have been a small price to pay for a reconciliation between France and Prussia. As matters stand, the feeling of exasperation in France will be aggravated by this fresh failure — and the prospect of permanent peace seems to me very gloomy.'

5 April Cowley-Stanley: even getting Luxembourg would not solve Napoleon's problems or 'calm the irritation felt against Prussia' and 'Altogether the horizon looks very black'.

6 April The French Council of Ministers met. Although they thought they could barely survive another humiliation they decided on peace. It was decided that 'a pacific declaration should be made to the Chambers today'.

Napoleon knew that the reorganisation of the army had just begun, forces withdrawn from Mexico had not arrived in Europe, he had no dependable allies, and he had just opened a grand international exhibition in Paris to which Wilhelm and Alexander had accepted invitations. (*Mosse says this was 8th. Was it 6th?*)

6 April Stanley to Cowley: France getting Luxembourg is 'a small price' for peace, our only priority is to make sure France realises we are 'in earnest' about Belgium.

6 April Bernstorff reads to Stanley a message from Bismarck: Stanley thinks Bismarck hints he would not mind a conference to avoid war (Bismarck later denied this).

6 April Loftus to Stanley: 'Now a mere declaration of our neutrality will neither avert the War ... nor will it secure us hereafter, either from an eventual War, perhaps single-handed, in defence of Belgium, or from a moral humiliation in passivity witnessing the destruction of the Belgian Monarchy.'

6 April Hammond to Cowley: faced with a choice between a) a Franco-Prussian war and b) France seizing Luxembourg, a Franco-Prussian war is preferable because if two signatories to the 1839 Treaty go to war 'there could be no question of the guarantee [of Belgium] of 1839' (!). (Foreshadow of debates pre-August 1914 and see 17/4.)

7 April Benedetti still believed Napoleon would insist on Luxembourg and therefore war was coming unless Prussia backed down. He suggested to Wimpffen that a victorious war could allow Austria to regain losses. Wimpffen reported to Beust that Benedetti was 'exasperated' with Bismarck about the last year and 'believes himself to have been fooled' (inconsistent with WAF saying Benedetti thought Bismarck had *not* been tricky on LUX — maybe this refers to 1866 or maybe Wimpffen confused?)

7 April Cowley-Stanley: Napoleon said (on 6th; Mosse 7th afternoon) that Bismarck has 'played him false' and Napoleon wants a way to get his hands on Luxembourg that we will support — e.g if Luxembourg is 'made over to the Grand Duke, Prussia withdraws the garrison'. Cowley wrote that unless something could be done war was 'inevitable' (despite the decision of 6th).

8 April Bismarck warned Bavaria that if deserted, the north would seek allies elsewhere and consider only its own interests. Cf. 12/4.

8 April Gorchakov and Moustier swapped messages around this time probing each other to see if there was common ground on the East.

8 April (WAF) Moustier made a pacific speech in the French chamber. He lied through his teeth about the whole affair, saying there was no diplomatic correspondence as the whole thing had been unofficial, and no reference was made to discussions with Prussia about compensation.

8 April Stanley discussed 3 options with the French Ambassador: the duchy ceded to Belgium, duchy remaining with Holland, and the people of Luxembourg to decide their own future. Stanley-Cowley: 'I am quite willing it should be understood that we will do anything that may be in our power — short of steps which might commit us to armed intervention to bring about a better understanding.' He told Cowley that Bernstorff is hinting that Bismarck will do a deal with France over Belgium.

9 April Cowley-Stanley: the French minister of war (Niel) told Napoleon (night of 7th, Mosse) that it was 'out of the question' to fight Germany now, 'it would take eight months to get [the army] ready' but it then would be ready — this 'probably' persuaded Napoleon who was 'wavering all Sunday [7th]' (Cowley). Cowley didn't want to see Luxembourg fall into French hands, partly as he thought it would increase French leverage on Belgium, but he thought this preferable to war.

10 April France instructed its Ambassador in The Hague to drop negotiations, it seemed war would be averted but France was still badgering Britain for help in getting something out of Prussia. France was casting around for options — e.g the garrison leaving and the duchy declared neutral.

11 Victoria-Stanley: We shouldn't yet again help Napoleon get out of a 'scrape', which we have often regretted, nor get dragged into the quarrel. We are committed to Belgium and if France gets Luxembourg then the danger grows. She urged him not to take a new step without 'the full consideration of the Cabinet' with whom she wanted her letter shared.

12 April Bismarck was worried about opinion in the south and the possibility of some of his enemies there doing deals with Napoleon. On 12th he sent a note to all German capitals warning of inflaming national opinion and not guarding Luxembourg: **'If a people feels its honour injured, then it is injured and must be dealt with accordingly. National feeling and national honour are potencies that do not lend themselves to logical measurement.'** Were those who refused support ready to make their case for the loss of Luxembourg to the public?

OP: Karlsruhe (Baden) and Hesse-Darmstadt were supportive but Munich (Bavaria) and Stuttgart (Württemberg) were equivocal. On 12th he also outlined to von Tauffkirchen (an intimate adviser of Hohenlohe) an idea — not a constitutional alliance but the revival of the German Confederation without the Diet. Austria would get a defensive alliance and a guarantee of the security of her German provinces. The Holy Alliance would be revived.

Beust knew that such schemes from Bismarck were aimed at grabbing the south. He declined. This made it impossible for Hohenlohe to accept offers. Gorchakov also suggested that the Balkans prevented any revival of the Holy Alliance. Around now Bismarck also suffered defeat on another plan, an invitation to Hesse to join the NGC which was successfully resisted by Bismarck's enemy and staunch opponent of Prussia-dominated Germany, Baron Dalwigk (Minister of Hesse Darmstadt) who worked with Beust (p387).

13 April Loftus reported to Stanley that **Bismarck had told him: while Luxembourg may be irrelevant to Britain, so Belgium was irrelevant to him and he would not mind Napoleon grabbing it, BUT he would also throw Prussia's weight behind defending Belgium in all circumstances 'if in return Great Britain should make common cause with Germany in a defensive war against France' (Loftus).** Again, Stanley could not be tempted and made clear Britain would not get involved in any conflict over Luxembourg. Stanley guessed reasonably accurately that Bismarck had tricked France into pursuing Luxembourg only to shut the door. On 13th he wrote to Grey that Prussian evacuation of Luxembourg could be a solution, but if Prussia objected there would eventually be war. Stanley summarised to Grey: France will accept almost anything so long as the Prussian garrison is removed; if Prussia accepts then we'll have peace, if not 'war must probably follow'; 'the decision is to be made in Berlin'.

13 April Disraeli won the vote on a Gladstone amendment after epic Parliamentary battles going on for weeks. He rode home, declined a celebratory dinner at the Carlton, and his wife gave him a pie and a bottle of champagne: 'Why, my dear, you are more like a mistress than a wife.' The battle continued through the summer.

14 April (WAF) Wimpffen reported that Benedetti was enraged and displaying an embarrassingly vindictive temper towards Prussia. While Benedetti had steered clear of Bismarck over the previous few days, the latter knew Benedetti had been stirring up trouble among other diplomats in Berlin.

15 April France suggested to the Powers (in a note from Moustier) that Prussia evacuate the Luxembourg fortress. Bernstorff told Stanley that Bismarck rejects withdrawal. Briefly around mid-April Stanley favoured the idea of Luxembourg going to Belgium but Belgium itself objected and he dropped it.

15 April Baroness von Spitzemberg wrote in her diary that 'Bismarck is suffering so badly that he can scarcely hold out any longer.'

15 April Bernstorff told Stanley that Bismarck would not and could not evacuate Luxembourg, he would prefer a war than to lose the confidence of Germany.

16 April Stanley-Cowley: It's all up to Bismarck, if he'll negotiate over evacuating, 'all is plain and easy' but if not 'we are landed in a war. The Prussians are evidently very anxious to drag England into the affair by creating an alarm about Belgium.' Cowley-Hammond: 'I wish that Lord Stanley could be induced to propose some scheme for neutralising or razing the fortress.'

16 April Reichstag passed Constitution 230:53. The biggest problem was the military budget. The Progressives wanted the right to set yearly the strength of the army through the budget. The National Liberals (?) were willing to accept the iron budget until 1870 when it would be subject to legislative approval for an additional period of years. Even this was rejected by Wilhelm and the generals.

Bismarck worked out a compromise. The peacetime strength was fixed at 1% of the population until 31 December 1871 thereafter it would be subject to legislation. The amount per soldier was also fixed until the same date but with the proviso that the states must continue to provide money at the same rate until the army's size should be changed by law. *Also the Reichstag could not use military appropriations after 1871 to alter the army's organisation.* Bismarck did not fear a renewal of the constitutional conflict in 1871 as the liberals would have to attack the constitution itself. He also rejected the incorporation of the Prussian Bill of Rights and won the vote. The German constitution was therefore 'the first in the history of European constitutionalism not to include such a bill' (Pflanze). *Neither the head of the military cabinet (a Prussian post) nor the head of the General Staff had any controls on them under the NGC constitution.* Under Manteuffel's successor, von Tresckow, the military cabinet became increasingly independent from 1867. There was no Confederate ministry of war — the Prussian Ministry was in charge. 'Unity over freedom and power over law — this was the constellation under which the German Reich was born' (OP p361). He now also insisted on them abandoning their vote of 30/3 on pay for deputies. (EF: this was finally introduced in 1906.)

On 31 May the Prussian Landtag accepted the new NGC constitution by 227-93. Some democratic liberals maintained their opposition to the end both in the Reichstag and Landtag. Bismarck was prepared to throw the whole Prussian constitution overboard if he did not get what he wanted. EF: the Reichstag did win the change that the rest of the budget was subject to an annual vote and this became important.

17 April Stanley to Loftus: Prussia has a long sea coast, France could apply naval pressure leading to financial pressure and thereby weaken Prussian influence and the union 'so lately formed'.

17 April Hammond to Cowley: 'we shall not allow ourselves to be led into the mess out of any apprehensions for the contingencies as regards Belgium'. Interestingly Cowley did *not* seek assurances from Napoleon re Belgium as he thought that being put on the spot might force Napoleon to renounce the 1839 treaty. Cowley thought that neither France nor Prussia could keep territories seized in a war and that Britain had to worry about a deal between the two to grab Holland and Belgium, therefore Britain should consider a joint mutual declaration with France concerning the neutrality of both. Hammond also worried that any attempt to join with Russia to urge mediation would simply give Russia the chance to hawk her friendship in return for support against Britain in the East. Hammond was overwhelmingly concerned with a) preservation of Belgian independence and b) containment of Russia in East.

18 April Napoleon to Cowley: I want peace and have given up acquiring Luxembourg but Prussia must evacuate 'or I become powerless and war is inevitable.' Cowley-Stanley: people here think we can avoid the war, 'Surely it must be worth while to make the attempt.' Moustier-Talleyrand: assure Gorchakov that we will renounce claims over Luxembourg in return for Prussia withdrawing the garrison.

19 April Cowley-Stanley: Napoleon is being reasonable, 'a calm & solemn representation at Berlin of the facts ... has become a duty, even if the appeal is to be unsuccessful. It is perhaps the last chance for the preservation of peace'.

19 April Stanley to Loftus: tell Bismarck that avoiding war requires Prussian evacuation, and we 'would see with deep regret the breaking out of war, for an object apparently so trifling'. (Loftus reported that Bismarck was not in Berlin then and he had passed the message to Thile. *When did he leave Berlin?*) By now Queen Victoria is also very worried about Belgium. Her secretary, Grey, urges Disraeli to pressure Stanley for more robust action. She also wrote to Derby stressing that losing Belgium to France would be a disaster and 'disgrace', it would be an abdication as a Great Power, and that it should be made clear that Britain would fight for it alone if necessary. Stanley,

though, was not sure Britain would fight for Belgium — Victoria was right that he was not committed. (Again interesting foreshadows of 1914 and 1938.)

20 April (WAF) Wimpffen reported to Beust: Benedetti says — If Austria were with us, 'in six weeks we would have reduced Prussia to a smaller power than she was before the last war and would dictate peace in Berlin... I want peace but believe me that if war has not come in two months from now, we shall have missed a unique occasion which might never again present itself. Today one can still benefit from the state of affairs in South Germany; in a year or two Prussia will be so strong that war between us will perhaps become impossible.'

21 April Gorchakov told Talleyrand that the Tsar had written to Wilhelm urging peace. Gorchakov suggested a conference in London.

22 April Disraeli to Stanley: 'Two things seem to me clear: that France is not prepared, & that Bismarck lies to everyone — his explanations prove his perfidy. I think myself ... that we might begin to dictate a little to Europe — Gladstonism is at a discount.' Disraeli also pushed Stanley towards the idea of Victoria writing to Wilhelm, which she and Grey wanted to do.

(WAF) Disraeli was with the Queen at Windsor and saw dispatches between 'all the cousins'. He thought 'pressure should ... be put upon Berlin'.

22 April Victoria wrote to Wilhelm urging him to evacuate. (Bismarck was in his newly purchased estate of Varzin for some of this time. Millman says he returned from Varzin on 24 April.)

23 April (WAF) Moustier asked Benedetti to try to discover if Bismarck had gone to Pomerania and if so was he meeting Gorchakov to conclude an alliance.

23 April Stanley to Disraeli about avoiding strengthening commitments to Belgium: 'I am ready to go so far as may be necessary in support of Belgium, short of giving an absolute pledge to fight for its independence. Suppose we gave such a pledge, that France and Prussia came to an understanding. Russia and Austria standing aloof, where should we be. But I say nothing in an opposite sense, lest we should lose our influence'. Disraeli and others urged him to give Luxembourg a guarantee and argued that the public would support it. Stanley reluctant.

24 April Victoria to the Crown Princess of Prussia (her daughter): '[I]t is not France ... who wish for war... It is Bismarck who has for the last 8 months encouraged the Emperor to believe he cd get Luxembourg without difficulty... I fear the time may come when Europe will wish France to be strong to keep the ambition of Germany in check.'

24 April Hammond to Stanley: we should not host a conference unless both sides agree in advance to abide by its decision. **Hammond also wanted to avoid a guarantee as much as Stanley but they both gave way to the pressure of Derby, Disraeli and the Queen.** 'Hammond was a dominant influence on Stanley throughout the crisis... Many times the foreign secretary merely mouthed Hammond's words' in his memos to others (Millman).

25 April Delane (Editor of *The Times*) thought that war was imminent and Britain should try to get Prussia to withdraw the garrison.

25 April (WAF) The wedding in Berlin of Princess Marie (a Hohenzollern) to the son of the Belgian king brought many royals and dignitaries. Bismarck was back from Varzin for the wedding. There were political meetings in the margin of the wedding. Guests assured Benedetti that Prussia wanted peace and the next day the papers were calmer.

26 April OP: Having squeezed what he felt was possible for the moment out of the affair, Bismarck agreed to an international conference, held 7-11 May in London. On 26th Loftus told Stanley that Bismarck would evacuate the fortress and accept the duchy neutralised if there were a European guarantee. He suggests a conference at which Prussia could make 'concessions to Europe and to Holland in behalf of peace which she could not make to France.' The idea that Bismarck, who always defied opinion when he wanted, was really pushed in this affair by 'public opinion' is untenable; it was an excuse. If he *had* wanted a war, he would not have pressured the Dutch not to sign. Some in Berlin were advocating a strike against France before her army was reorganised. OP (p381) says that Moltke was among them. **Bismarck said 'the chance of success**

is not a just cause for beginning a great war.' He'd been trying as always to manipulate pressures to give him good chances across a range of options: either a) give Napoleon Luxembourg and Belgium for further progress in south or b) use the threat of such a deal to get Britain allied against France. He'd now pushed things as far as he could for the moment and did not judge the time was right for a war against France.

26 April Cowley to Stanley: we should *not* ask Napoleon for a public commitment on Belgium, it would be 'distasteful to France' and 'injurious' for Napoleon and might provoke him to denounce the 1815 borders. He preferred a joint guarantee from Britain and France. He expected the war to be inconclusive.

26 April Gorchakov informed Talleyrand that Prussia had agreed a conference in London in which Luxembourg would be neutralised in return for a European guarantee and the garrison would then be withdrawn.

27 April Stanley to Grey: '[T]here never was a time when the English public was more thoroughly bent on incurring no fresh responsibilities for Continental objects; yet it is expected, and reasonably, that we shall do what is in our power to preserve peace. The difficulty is increased by the impossibility of placing confidence in the Prussian government. That Fr. desires peace, is, I think, as certain as anything can be in the actual condition of the world. I do not feel the same conviction as to [Bismarck]; and still less as to the K. of Pr... The fact is one cannot trust Bismarck, even if he had given a promise, unless it were in a form that could be made public.'

By the 29th, France, Bismarck and Britain had agreed to do the conference and got William III to invite people to London on 7 May. 'The crisis passed' (Millman).

Late April Bismarck complained to the southern states that they had not improved their military preparations since the previous year and he suggested that they summon their parliaments to demand cooperation in remedying these problems. They refused. Bavaria and Wurttemberg resisted any closer military cooperation.

30 April (WAF) Benedetti and Bismarck met at a reception at the Russian legation. Oubril toasted the success of the London conference.

May Hyde Park demonstration in England. It was too big for the Government to dare to disperse (Home Secretary had to resign). It encouraged Disraeli to make the **Second Reform Act** more radical. Passed in August.

First week of May Bismarck pressured Stanley telegraphing threats of withdrawal from the conference within 'three days' and spreading rumours about imminent withdrawal.

2 May Stanley-Cowley: 'I think the European guarantee will be made a strong point of, and that it will not be easy to escape giving one in some shape; but **I will certainly give none that amounts to a pledge to take up arms in defence of the arrangements to be made, should they be attacked. Such a pledge would be useless, for opinion here would not allow of its being made good:** unless we change more in the next few years than I think likely, and in a direction opposite to that in which we are now tending.'

3 May Bismarck-Bernstorff (a 'long essay', Millman): we can only concede evacuation in return for a European guarantee.

4 May Loftus-Stanley: Bismarck says that the evacuation of the Prussian garrison must proceed from the neutralisation of the Duchy under a European guarantee. Stanley replied that he would not 'contract a new guarantee'.

4 May (WAF) Benedetti thought Bismarck was trying to be conciliatory.

5 May Loftus-Stanley: 'Prussia will not withdraw from the fortress unless the Grand Duchy is neutralized and placed under an European guarantee'. Moustier supported a guarantee if it would end the affair. Victoria pressed Stanley to agree. Disraeli supported giving it.

6 May Bismarck told Bernstorff to tell the diplomats gathered that if he did not get his European guarantee there would be war.

6 May Hammond-Stanley: If Derby, Disraeli and Queen press you to give a new guarantee, 'you should give in, but not till after a decent fight recorded on the protocol' and you ought to have

Cabinet sanction a new course. If Bernstorff presses you on the guarantee, prevaricate by saying you'll have to speak to the Queen and Cabinet. 'You could then get on record your objections, and show to Parliament and the country that you consented to guarantee only under the sanction of your colleagues and of the Queen.'

Hammond later told Cowley (22 June) that Stanley gave way on the guarantee some time before 6pm on 6th because of a meeting in Parliament.

7-11 May International conference in London.

7 May Bernstorff to Bismarck 3:25pm on 7 May: Stanley says that if other powers want a guarantee he would not object but thought Parliament would. Loftus telegraphs from Berlin (4pm): Bismarck will mobilise the army if 'peace were not assured' within three days. (Stanley received the telegram between 4pm and 6pm when he sent it on to Cowley.)

Stanley told the London conference, in reply to Bernstorff's pressure, that he did not want to give a guarantee but would discuss with the Cabinet — just as Hammond had advised the day before.

The general view was that the guarantee would happen and the affair was already settled.

8 May (WAF) Benedetti-Moustier: Bismarck told Wimpffen and Loftus that he might have to advise mobilisation given French military moves. I called on him late evening. **Bismarck said rumours of French plans to invade the Rhineland made Prussian preparation necessary.** The Council of Ministers won't meet until 11th so the Conference over the next few days will be crucial. Benedetti also reported he saw the King who said to him that on his desk lay mobilisation orders and he awaited only a report from Goltz.

9 May Stanley, under pressure from Derby, the Queen, and Disraeli told the conference that Britain would give a 'collective' guarantee. However, Hammond commented, 'you might very safely undertake [it] ... as it amounted to nothing'!

On 9th, Stanley told the Commons that war had been averted and that 'we have not incurred any fresh responsibility'! Hammond to Cowley: 'The House of Commons ... received with complacency Lord Stanley's explanation about guarantee to the effect that the choice lay between giving it and an European war, while when given, it involved little, if indeed it involved that... There was no further discussion, and so the affair ended with repeated cheering for Lord Stanley.' Stanley was surprised how little objection there was in Parliament.

Hammond minuted (8th) that the new arrangement was 'in effect merely an extension [of the 1839 guarantee] to the *neutrality* of Luxembourg'.

Millman (p84-5): Influence can be exercised on the basis of reputation/prestige which depends on expectation of future conduct based on a memory of previous effective conduct. British prestige could not be renewed in the 1860s because 'Cobden, Bright, and the middle-class had temporarily captured opinion, which had already begun to turn away from a policy of commitment as a result of the Crimean war'. It would have been very hard to pursue an active policy and Stanley reinforced the prevailing wind and his popularity was because he 'so closely mirrored the public mood' and to have fought it was 'beyond his capacity and repugnant to his character.' The foreign policy of Clarendon, Stanley and Granville until the Franco-Prussian war was more popular with contemporaries than Castlereagh's, and as popular as Canning's or Palmerston's.

9 May Moustier complained to Benedetti that Bismarck's claims were nonsense or a trick and told Benedetti to inform him that mobilisation would be seen as an act of aggression.

10 May (WAF) Benedetti reported that the King had postponed the ministerial meeting and Bismarck said that reports were hopeful from London and Bernstorff would sign the treaty. It felt like the crisis was waning.

Late afternoon, 11 May the Treaty was signed. The sovereignty of William III was confirmed; the duchy was neutralised under the collective guarantee of the Powers; the Prussian right of garrison was withdrawn; the fortress was consigned to demolition. Overall, it was a 'harsh defeat' (OP) for Napoleon with only the withdrawal of the Prussian garrison to show for huge efforts and he'd had other disasters including Mexico. It was not popular among German nationalists but *Nationalverein* agents reported over summer that 9/10 people in Luxembourg preferred France to Germany if

forced to choose: 'Bismarck had known it all along' (OP). Benedetti was bitter and felt duped and now shifted towards thinking about alliance with Austria against Prussia, according to WAF.

11-15 May In Mexico, Maximilian tried to escape and was captured. Executed 19 June.

13 May In the Lords Derby said that the 1839 Treaty 'was under the collective guarantee of all the powers' and the new guarantee 'is not a joint and separate guarantee, but it is a collective guarantee, and does not impose upon this country any special and separate duty of enforcing its provisions. It is a collective guarantee of all the Powers of Europe.' *Actually the 1839 Treaty did NOT contain the word 'collective'*. Cf. below 20 June.

20 May Stanley-Disraeli (probably this year but no year on the document): 'We have been lucky in our foreign policy; for what we did involved no risk and cost no trouble, while it has given us the appearance of having helped, more than we really did, to bring about the result.' *Millman: the real reason why the crisis fizzled was that neither Napoleon nor Bismarck thought this was the moment to push it, not because Britain/Stanley defused the crisis.*

Crete was also causing trouble in spring 1867 during the Luxembourg crisis. Stanley was 'waiting and hoping for a Turkish victory to obviate the necessity for European intervention' (Millman). He feared Crete being separated from the Ottoman Empire. Russia was pushing for Greek annexation. Bismarck supported Russia over the spring-summer.

During May, Bismarck rejected schemes from Bavaria and Württemberg. **He declared that a common parliament was an 'indispensable prerequisite' for the Zollverein's renewal and if it was not agreed by 1 July Prussia would serve notice of withdrawing from the Zollverein.** The southern states could not cope with this threat and feared Bismarck would extract more concessions if they delayed. On 23 May they suggested a conference and Bismarck accepted. It assembled 3 June.

28 May The Tsar and Gorchakov left for Berlin then Paris. Mosse: Gorchakov complained that he had not been consulted about the visit and had misgivings about it. The influential head of the Asiatic department in the Foreign Ministry (Stremouchov) also posed the visit and wanted a clearer friendship with Prussia agreed in Berlin then signalled in Paris.

30-31 May (Mosse) The Tsar and Gorchakov met Wilhelm and Bismarck at Potsdam. Both kings expressed their desire for 'peace, peace and more peace' (Wilhelm) but worried about French national feeling and the pressure it exerted on Napoleon. Bismarck explained to Loftus (7/6): The visit was not popular in Russia and Gorchakov wanted some positive news to tell at home. Gorchakov's ideas about European peace were of 'a very vague nature' about a French guarantee not to attack Prussia. 'Count Bismarck appeared to attach no importance to them and to think their practical realization impossible.'

June Cowley talked to Bismarck about the situation and said Britain does not want to see the southern states forced to join the NGC or an 'overt act of hostility towards France'. Bismarck said that there is nothing to fear. France wanted British support on the Treaty of Prague and Schleswig. Stanley suggested France drop the issue. Wilhelm also had Augusta, visiting Victoria in June, ask that Britain not support France which might provoke a war. Stanley stuck to his view of saying/doing as little as possible.

3 June The south German states' ministers assembled in Berlin to discuss the Zollverein. Bismarck presented them with a plan drafted by Delbruck and extensively revised by himself. As with the NGC, 'its revolutionary character was concealed by the fiction of continuity with older forms' (OP): the current treaties would remain but *Zollverein* affairs would be decided by a 'common organ of the contracting states' (organised like the old Diet) and a 'common representation of their peoples' (composed of the deputies of the Reichstag and deputies elected from the southern states). The legislative competence was expressly limited to tariffs, their collection, and taxation of sugar, salt and tobacco. Prussia had a subtle veto. After toing and froing, especially with Bavaria, it was agreed, cf. 8 July.

6 June (Gall) To Catherine Orlov: 'If it comes to war we shall immediately be faced with a whole series of wars: whoever is beaten the first time round will simply wait till he has got his breath back and then start all over again.' Cf. similar comment to Keudell 12/69.

12 June National Liberal Party formed.

15 June Stanley said to the Commons that the guarantee was more of a 'moral sanction' than 'a contingent liability to make war. It would, no doubt, give a right to make war, but it would not necessarily impose the obligation.'

19 June An Austrian Field Marshal reported a severe snub from the Tsar, then passing through Warsaw. It was a sign that relations were at their lowest ebb since 1863 (Mosse).

20 June Debate in House of Lords. Russell said that he hoped Britain had not 'entered into any guarantee involving probable danger'. Derby replied: 'A guarantee of neutrality is very different from a guarantee of possession. If France and Prussia were to have a quarrel between themselves, & either are to violate the neutrality of Luxembourg by passing their troops through the duchy for the purpose of making war on the other, we might, if the guarantee had been individual as well as joint, have been under the necessity of preventing that violation... but the guarantee is only collective ... [N]ot one of those Powers is bound to fulfil the obligation alone... The only two Powers by which the neutrality of Luxembourg is likely to be infringed are two of the parties to the collective guarantee; and, therefore, if either of them violate the neutrality, the obligation on all others would not accrue.' Granville replied that this view ran 'the risk of being considered unfaithful to our agreements'. Russell said that Britain was committed to action if the duchy's neutrality were to be violated.

On the same day, Bismarck expressed to Loftus his 'astonishment and regret' at Stanley's interpretation as it made the guarantee 'illusory'. 'Bismarck said that he could not accept this view of the collective guarantee. In such case all treaties ... would be worthless. He could not imagine that England would undertake to give a guarantee which should be a mere delusion'.

NB. The 1839 Treaty did not use the word 'collective' but 1867 did. On 22 June Hammond said to Cowley that the collective nature of the guarantee meant 'it was no guarantee at all'. It's clear that Hammond and Stanley thought that their insertion of the word 'collective' allowed them to keep the peace by a trick — Prussia accepted the guarantee as the payment for withdrawing the garrison while in fact Britain was not committed to do anything. While Bismarck is rightly seen as a liar and trickster, he would doubtless point to this example as justification for his behaviour — in international relations, people lie and cheat. It also seems Derby at least was mistaken in his view of the 1839 Treaty obligations.

According to Millman, the 1839 Treaty was 'placed under the Guarantee of their said majesties' while the 1867 treaty was 'placed under the sanction of the collective Guarantee of the Powers'. In 1870 a legal opinion re the 1839 Treaty, sought by Granville, was given to the FO and concluded that 'the refusal or incapacity of one or more of the guaranteeing powers to act does not ... liberate the remaining Powers from the obligation to do so' (cf. Millman, p.91). On 1 August 1870 Disraeli told the Commons that the 1867 treaty 'is not so large as the scope of' the 1839 treaty. (Overall watching Whitehall deal with the 1839/1867 treaties and negotiations in 1866/7 and 1870, it is clear that British politicians and officials were more likely to accept a certain amount of fog and confusion that helped them achieve immediate ends than think cold and hard about what they were/not committing to, and this makes it more comprehensible why 35 years later they made such disastrous errors over Belgium.)

22 June - 2 August A relatively brief holiday at Varzin. While there, Bleichröder wrote him that the market was unsettled by rumours of conflict with France. Bismarck sold shares bought with the public gift because although 'I do not believe in any dangerous political complications ... influential people in Paris are working *a la baisse* and hotheads are writing dispatches and inspiring newspaper articles' so the markets might go down when I need to find some cash. It seems that he was here by himself over the summer, his father-in-law wrote to him on 28/9 saying he was sending clean

linen and napkins so 'there would be no scarcity' when the family arrived. Bleichröder sometimes offered Bismarck loans and pointed out that he was getting no particular favour, presumably to assure Bismarck that he was not somehow getting into his banker's debt? But Stern says it also seems that he sometimes simply lent Bismarck money for short periods without charging any interest and this seems to have been undiscussed (p104). His own wealth was invested internationally in things like US bonds and his relationship with Bleichröder taught him a lot about the economy, international banking and so on.

25 June Bernstorff-Stanley: He repeated Bismarck's complaint of 20th. Stanley tried to argue that it was 'impossible to define with legal strictness the amount of obligation really incurred, but whatever that might be'(!) he did not think the force of the engagement 'was in any degree lessened' by his comments. He also told Loftus that Derby's language 'was, I suspect, not quite accurately reported: but I have admitted to Bernstorff that if he had said what appears in the newspapers [he clearly has not ascertained *what the PM had actually said*], he went further than I should have done in denying the existence of any obligation — I think I satisfied him; but considering Bismarck's own language on the subject of guarantees, his indignation, if real, is curious'! A German newspaper close to Bismarck a few days later mocked, 'Was it intended to guarantee the neutrality of Luxembourg only against Lichtenstein, Greece, or Mexico?' (sent back by Loftus to the FO). A bit later, the paper wrote that Derby's interpretation would effectively prevent 'any treaties being concluded with England in the future'.

26 June Wilhelm-Augusta (visiting London): You should stress that if England and the North German Confederation push for peace, and 'keep a watchful eye on France', then we will all enjoy peace. Mosse: Bismarck did not want to be dependent on Russia or pressured to support her in the East. He kept putting out feelers to London where he knew he was distrusted. A copy of this letter was handed by Augusta to Victoria and from her to Stanley. Stanley replied in a friendly but distant way, making clear a desire for peace and friendship but also stressing England's role was neutral between Prussia and France and he stressed to Grey/Victoria that England must preserve 'strict and impartial neutrality' which was 'the best guarantee for the preservation of peace: for it is only the reputation for impartiality that can give weight to the advice of a mediator'. Grey and Victoria were keener on some sort of defensive assurance towards Prussia and they sought to enlist Disraeli in support, who hinted that he agreed with them and that Stanley was inclined to lean towards Prussia. Stanley didn't budge: 'If war does break out, we have only one course, that of rigidly impartial neutrality' (9/8).

Late June (Gall) Following the deal with Hungary, Beust was also appointed Imperial Chancellor.

Early July Alexander visited Napoleon in Paris but there was 'no serious political discussion' (Pflanze). Gorchakov's hopes of a closer alliance receded. Russia had not helped France much in the Luxembourg dispute, the visit led more to 'coolness' than closer relations (Millman) and Napoleon started to shift more toward working with Britain in the East, according to Millman, who describes this visit as June (so does Otte). The Sultan had 'a warm reception' in Paris and London during a summer visit (Millman). The Cretan revolt lingered on and the focus of Europe returned to the West.

Mosse (p272-3): The Tsar and Gorchakov wanted serious discussions with Napoleon but the latter did not. The Tsar arrived early for the first dinner at Tuileries but he hardly entered Napoleon's study before Eugénie walked in and the conversation turned to 'trivialities' (Mosse). None of the meetings went far. Only a discussion between Gorchakov and Moustier turned seriously to Turkey but they made little progress. Even on the social front it was not a success. Alexander noticed the coolness of the crowds, there were some shouts of '*Vive la Pologne!*' On 6 July, returning from a military review in an open carriage two shots were fired by a Pole. As he prepared to leave the Tsar watched the preparations for the arrival of the Sultan. He returned '*fatigué, vieilli et sérieux*' (Brenner-Beust). All hope of French support in the East seemed over so the Tsar and Gorchakov had no interest in helping France in the West. Gorchakov distrusted Moustier and Beust and watched with 'disquiet' the 'steady *rapprochement*' between Vienna and Paris (Mosse). What if England joined this pair? Only Bismarck stood as an ally — and what if he settled

differences with France and Austria? Around this time Gorchakov remarked: 'What else can we do? Nobody can rely on France or England, Austria is weak and not well-disposed towards us. If we break with Prussia, we stand alone.' The failure of this trip pushed Napoleon towards Bismarck and Austria, despite misgivings about their weaknesses. (Why didn't Napoleon make more of an effort with the Tsar? Why didn't he explore options such as — you support me grabbing Belgium I'll support you in the East, at least to put pressure on London? London worried about such possibilities and Bismarck hinted at them.)

6 or 7 July To Keudell: 'Luxembourg was the limit of our peaceableness, if that does not secure peace then there is no keeping it.'

8 July The Zollparlament deal was agreed. Huge pressure from commercial interests pushed the southern governments and parliaments into ratifying the deal by the end of October (as usual Bismarck set a speedy deadline when it suited him to apply pressure). Bavaria saw great resistance from Catholics, pro-Austrians, aristocratic particularists — but the liberal national press bashed them with warnings about its indispensability and they folded. *Bismarck got most of what he wanted but 'the degree of opposition it met was inauspicious for Bismarck's further aims' (Pflanze).*

12 July Bernstorff stressed to Stanley again Bismarck's anger re the interpretation of the guarantee. On 18th the Queen complained to Stanley about the dispute and said 'regard for our character for fidelity to our engagements imperatively demands some official notice'. Stanley dodged and assured the Queen (20th) the problem was solved.

20 July Grey to Disraeli: the Queen thinks that Stanley is in 'a somewhat ignoble groove' because of his overly passive attitude. On 29th she followed up by stressing that Britain should support Prussia, France 'can have no right to interfere in the internal organization of Germany', and she will not dare provoke a quarrel with Prussia if she realises Britain sympathises with Prussia. According to Millman Grey 'was more German than the queen'. She wanted to make clear Britain would intervene to preserve Belgian independence.

21 July To Thile: 'I think it neither necessary nor desirable that the King should formally open the Bundesrat's first session. It would give our colleagues in the Federation the impression that their state representatives were in the same category as a Prussian parliamentary body. In reality only the federal budget and the customs treaty should come before the Bundesrat, both already known realities, which need no All-Highest decisions.'

August Office of the Federal Chancellor set up under Delbruck. Delbruck began the business of pushing through liberalising economic measures, unifying huge amounts of regulations, and integrating the new economies into the Prussian system:

- freedom of internal migration and settlement
- freedom to establish public companies and anti-guild measures
- common passports (67)
- Prussian military laws replace local (67)
- uniform weights and measures (68)
- equal rights for different denominations (69)
- common commercial code and a supreme court to interpret it (1869)
- an industrial code guaranteeing free enterprise (1869)
- abolition of government control over the establishment of joint stock companies (1870)
- a common criminal code (May 1870)
- common currency (71)
- central bank (1875).

These developments sowed confusion among liberals: some elements of the middle class were already becoming hostile to the rapid pace of change while others feared that the Bismarck approach may succeed in divorcing economic liberalism from political liberalism. The economic direction of Prussia had been resisted in south Germany. Liberal deputies were not docile and amended many bills (Bismarck defeated the abolition of capital punishment, 'this sickly sentimentality of our times').

Delbruck wrote before Bismarck elevated him: 'My relationship to the King and to Count Bismarck was of the sort that I could reckon on the possibility that after a few years I would become the successor to Count Itzenplitz in the Ministry of Trade. As Prussian Minister of Trade I would end my career. But it all turned out differently.'

15 August Second Reform Act got Royal Assent.

It a) 'granted the vote to all householders in the boroughs as well as lodgers who paid rent of £10 a year or more; b) reduced the property threshold in the counties and gave the vote to agricultural landowners and tenants with very small amounts of land. Men in urban areas who met the property qualification were enfranchised and **the Act roughly doubled the electorate in England and Wales** from one to two million men' (HoC). Franchise extended from 1.4m to 2.5m, a third of adult males (Evans).

Disraeli had made all sorts of concessions and changes, without any real principle except resisting whatever Gladstone argued. Cranborne later summarised the 'success' as 'purchased at the cost of a political betrayal which has no parallel in our Parliamentary annals... Neither the recklessness of Charles Fox, nor the venality of Henry Fox, nor the cynicism of Walpole will furnish them with a case in point. They will have to go back to a time when the last revolution was preparing – to the days when Sunderland directed the councils and accepted the favours of James while he was negotiating the invasion of William.'

Blake, p460: 'Cranborne came to believe that Derby and Disraeli had secretly decided to bring in household suffrage with or without safeguards ever since summer 1866, perhaps even since 1859. This was not true, though some later remarks of both leaders give it plausibility. Certainly Disraeli had been through gyrations so extraordinary that a sinister explanation might well seem called for.'

Blake, p. 464: 'Gladstone's amendments, which would have prevented the indiscriminate enfranchisement of the borough occupiers, were rejected, while Radical amendments which greatly extended it went through with scarcely a debate. And all this was done by a Conservative Government which on principle and past practice had been prepared to concede only the minimum 'safe' increase in the number of voters. Disraeli was assisted in bringing off this remarkable manoeuvre by the general Conservative hatred of Gladstone and by the desire of a large block of members on both sides to get the question settled and done with. **He was helped, too, by the ignorance of most MPs when discussing the technicalities of rating law, a dry, tedious and excessively complicated matter which bored the House**'.

Derby described the Bill later as 'a leap in the dark' and he never really denied Granville's charge of having said that his object was 'to dish the Whigs'.

Blake: the idea that Disraeli enfranchised householders anticipating it would make the electorate more conservative is wrong: he twisted and turned to keep power: 'All the evidence of his contemporary papers suggests that Disraeli saw the electorate in traditional terms of rural voters being Conservative, urban voters Liberal; and that he thought of politics as a matter of 'management' and 'influence' in the old-fashioned sense, not mass persuasion of a new class' (p. 476). Personally Disraeli's handling of the Commons raised his esteem among colleagues and ensured he was now seen as the natural heir to Derby. Blake: 'Of Disraeli at this time it could be said as Lord Beaverbrook wrote of Lloyd George: "He did not seem to care which way he travelled providing he was in the driver's seat." For what he did in 1867 he deserves to go down to history as a politician of genius, a superb improviser, a parliamentarian of unrivalled skill, but not as a far-sighted statesman, a Tory democrat or the educator of his party.'

The Second Reform Act was followed by the secret ballot in 1872 and in 1884 the provisions of the 1867 Act were extended to the countryside after which nearly two-thirds of adult males had the vote.

In 1874 the historian Froude would remark that it was becoming assumed that the nation was wiser than its leaders. In 1912 Lord Selborne would remark, 'There is no more a House of Commons than a House of Lords. There is nothing but the cabinet, subject to a continuous but slight check of the Crown, and the violent but occasional check of the electors.' Derby's

view of hardship as a call on individual Christian charity gave way to the view that it was government's duty to ameliorate it.

Hawkins: Derby was the last PM to uphold the axioms of Victorian 'parliamentary government', i.e. parliamentary parties, discussing at Westminster in a social environment described by Trollope as a 'single special set that dominates all other sets in our English world', defined the national interest distinct from the clamour of the voters. For Bagehot, Parliament was 'the most efficient instrument for expressing the practical opinion of cultivated men the world has ever seen' but it changed fundamentally from 1865: 'The change since 1865 is a change not in one point, but in a thousand points; it is a change not of particular details but of pervading spirit' (1872).

August Reichstag elections. Turnout down roughly a third. 84 National Liberals, 70 conservatives, 36 free conservatives, 30 progressives, 22 federal-constitutionalists (mostly Saxons and annexed Prussians), 15 old liberals. (Hamerow: Cons 59 to 68, NL 79 to 83, FC 40 to 34, Centrists 27 to 16, PP 19 to 31. 3 socialists were elected, the first ever in a German legislative body.) Prussian Chamber of Deputies also elected in 1867 (when?): 125 conservatives, 48 free conservatives, 99 National Liberals, 48 progressives. In both parliaments state officials were most strongly represented (42% Prussia, 46% Reichstag). The number of deputies who classed themselves as merchants, industrialists, businessman was about 5% but this is misleading because of the significant number of big landlords in both chambers heavily involved in coalmining and other industrial projects. No majority could form without the National Liberals but neither could they dominate. The NLs wanted: to complete German unification, expand the competence of central government, increase budget rights for the Reichstag and Landtag, responsible ministers in the legal sense, more economic and personal freedom, judicial reform, and local government reform at the expense of corporate institutions.

August The leaders of the national parties met in Stuttgart to agree a common platform calling for the extension of the powers of the *Zollparlament*.

[Please leave corrections with link to the best source to make your point and any other thoughts about my analysis, how this could be used to teach and so on. And to those who have studied this, you've studied the single best detailed case study in high performance politics that exists given we can't study the likes of Themistocles, Alexander, Augustus et al in anything like this detail (I mean the material is the best, not my document)! In 2024 I will explore fine-tuning a LLM on some large corpus of this material. If you work in a university and are interested in a discussion with students please get in touch.]