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THE PRUSSIAN REFORM MOVEMENT:
A CASE STUDY IN DEFENSE REFORM

by

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The author examines the development of the Prussian officers' corps and General Staff system during the Prussian Reform Movement of 1806-1819. Using this movement as a case study in defense reform, the author determines the basis of the Prussian "tradition of excellence" central to understanding the qualities of Prusso-German officership which generated the tactics and methods of command and control many now wish to emulate. The author determines the historical roots and the essence of Prussian officership. He further examines the transformation of war which occurred between Frederick II and Napoleon I and the constituents of war which that transformation changed--armies, means, costs and superstructure. The author then analyzes the Prussian reformers' reorganization and reform of the Prussian army to meet that Napoleonic challenge. The major conclusion of this study is that the essence of Prussian officership is individual, not institutional, excellence informed by the spirit of Bildung, that is, an acceptance of the lifelong requirements of an educated, cultured officer corps.

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The Prussian Reform Movement
A Case Study in
Defense Reform

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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from the

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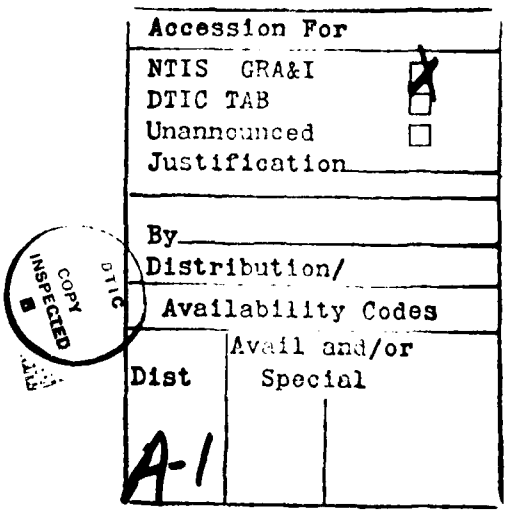
ABSTRACT

The author examines the development of the Prussian officers' corps and General Staff system during the Prussian Reform Movement of 1806-1819. Using this movement as a case study in defense reform, the author determines the basis of the Prussian "tradition of excellence" central to understanding the qualities of Prusso-German officership which generated the tactics and methods of command and control many now wish to emulate. The author determines the historical roots and the essence of Prussian officership. He further examines the transformation of war which occurred between Frederick II and Napoleon I and the constituents of war which that transformation changed--armies, means, costs and superstructure. The author then analyzes the Prussian reformers' reorganization and reform of the Prussian army to meet that Napoleonic challenge. The major conclusion of this study is that the essence of Prussian officership is individual, not institutional, excellence informed by the spirit of Bildung, that is, an acceptance of the lifelong requirements of an educated, cultured officer corps.



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The idea of returning to the academy in my fortieth year after twenty years in uniform was, for the author, a rather daunting prospect. I wish to thank my professors, Donald Abenheim and Russel H.S. Stolfi, for making that experience what it should be--a sabbatical from those years of practical experience and a challenge to cultivate long dormant faculties of thought, expression and imagination through exposure to new ideas under the intense lamp of history as taught by these two unique men.

I also wish to thank the Department of the Navy for allowing these two teachers to continue their vital work of educating officers amid all the training. While however strongly I might disagree with the current imbalance between training and education in both my curriculum and this institution, I must appreciate the tolerance of both and the opportunity that tolerance has afforded me.

I. INTRODUCTION

"Command and Control" as a term of military art suffers from the same definitional malady as the term "strategy." There are, it seems, as many definitions as articles on either subject. The definition which provides the clearest meaning is Roger Beaumont's "extension of authority over distance."[1] The authority extended is the commander's, whether of a flight of two aircraft with the distance being a matter of feet, a company over a few kilometers, a naval squadron over the horizon, or of the president extending his authority as commander-in-chief over the thousands of miles between the White House Situation Room and a distant battlefield. The medium of extension is communications, thus compounding the acronym to command, control, and communications. Communications are necessarily electronically filtered to handle the volume and enhance the clarity of transmissions. The human analogue of the electronic filter is the commander's staff which has similar functions of handling volume and enhancing clarity. Tremendous advances have been made in the technical performance of electronic filters; advancement in the capabilities of the human filters has been far less spectacular.

This thesis addresses the human filters of command and control--the military staff. Over the last decade, command and control has become a central theme for reform arguments for simpler, more robust military capabilities. Indirectly, command and control reform was the central issue in the finale of the reform movement, the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986. That Act was the culmination of a decade of defense reform debate. The American defense establishment and the "military reform movement"[2] settled on the Act's compromise "half measures" in the

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[1]Beaumont, R., The Nerves of War, p. 8, AFCEA Intl. Press, 1986.

[2]A loosely coordinated group of legislators, congressional staff members, Department of Defense civilians, retired officers and a few, necessarily anonymous, active duty military officers centered on the oversubscribed congressional Military Reform Caucus. See Kross, W., Military Reform, pp. 12-15, National Defense Univ. Press, 1985.

finest traditions of American consensus politics. The debate centered on institutional power and the Act's most important remedies redistributed power among the main players in the defense establishment.[3] These new arrangements of power are supposed to meet the challenges ahead in the last decade of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century; but, in the author's opinion, the chief ills of our defense establishment concern not who holds bureaucratic power, but what "they" do with that power.

There can be little surprise that an American political debate, even one about the military, should revolve around the question of power. Representative democracy is necessarily about groups vying for power and our military is certainly not immune to this tendency. The quintessential American defense debate has almost always been between one service group seeking power at the expense of another. Interservice rivalry was born in the American Revolution and came of age in the debate between "brick and mortar" continentalists and "blue water" battleship navalists.[4] Whether in struggles of Army versus Navy, Air Force versus Navy or Army versus Marines, the military services have always displayed a strong chauvinism based primarily on the "need" to protect missions and roles which conflict with those of the other services and inevitably this chauvinism has led to interservice rivalry. This same chauvinism is also evident in the intraservice rivalries between the strategic and tactical air forces, among the surface, submarine and aviation "communities" of the Navy and among the various combat and support arms of the Army and Marine Corps. Thus the defense reform "jointness" debate of the eighties naturally centered on power: if only this or that reform is implemented then the "good guys" will save the country from the wrong-headed, if honorable, "bad guys" and finally "put the Key West Agreement right."

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[3]The author has no quarrel with the particulars of the Goldwater-Nichols Act and strongly supports the transfer of influence to the combatant commanders. The quarrel is with the mistaken belief that the Act cures much less even addresses the fundamental ills of our defense establishment.

[4]Millis, W., Arms and Men, pp. 131-210, Rutgers Univ. Press, 1981. See also Weigley, R.F., The American Way of War, pp. 167-192, Indiana Univ. Press, 1977, and Millett, A.R., and Maslowski, P., For the Common Defense, pp. 233-265, Free Press, 1984.

The participants in the most recent debate seem to be nearly unanimous in framing the central problem: America has no coherent national military strategy.[5] Where they go from there seems to depend on their particular agenda. Some would argue that without such a national military strategy, procurement specifically and defense management in general are bound to be incoherent, inconsistent and fraught with "fraud, waste and abuse." Without an overall strategy, others believe the defense establishment is at the mercy of the separate services and their individual service programs. The civilians in the Office of the Secretary of Defense have either usurped the traditional prerogative of the military to design a workable military strategy or the military has ignored its tactical, operational and strategic responsibilities, forcing usurpation on the civilians.

A common thread in all of these "apparent" defense deficiencies and the Cassandra calls for attention by the various elements in the debate is, in the author's opinion, the absence of a core of (uniformed) military thinkers of sufficient repute with the civilian leadership[6] to design, defend, implement and execute a coherent national military strategy. The defense reform debate of the eighties missed the point; the problem is not malapportioned power, therefore the solution cannot be a readjustment of power within the Defense Department. The problem is the perceived quality and reputation of the military officers responsible for designing, defending, implementing and executing a coherent national military strategy. If the problem is quality and reputation, the solution must be excellence.

Excellence as a concept has been cheapened to the level of an advertising slogan through overuse,[7] but there is no better concept to describe the requisite capacity of staff officers serving at our national military headquarters. The usual historical

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[5]The single exception being those chiefly responsible, the serving national command authority, the President and Secretary of Defense, and the serving chiefs of staff. For an excellent discussion of the vagaries of strategic thinking see Builder, C., The Masks of War, pp. 45-92, Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1989.

[6]Both in and out of government.

[7]E.g. the 1986 "Army of Excellence" which had more to do with retention than excellence.

example of staff officers with a tradition of excellence and a reputation for military acuity and sound strategic, operational and tactical planning and execution capabilities is the Prussian General Staff.

> The fundamental explanation of German combat ability, and of the quality of German military power as demonstrated in two world wars, lay in the organization and operation of the Prussian/German General Staff. In military history, consistent performance comparable to that of the German armies in World Wars I and II can be found only in armies led by such military geniuses as Alexander, Hannibal, Caesar, Gustavus Adolphus, Genghis Khan, and Napoleon. Such a comparison automatically suggests that through the General Staff the Germans had institutionalized military excellence....[8]

Dupuy continues:

> It was the essential quality of the General Staff, as it seems originally to have been envisaged by Scharnhorst, that it enabled men who individually lacked the qualities of a genius to perform institutionally in a manner that would provide results ordinarily achievable only by genius.[9]

Congress addressed a proposed American general staff--based on the Prussian General Staff--three times in our history, before World War I, after World War II and during the 1980's. The pre-World War I debate, inspired by Emory Upton's glowing report on Moltke's German General Staff of the 1870's[10] and resolved by Secretary of War Elihu Root in 1903, resulted in an American General Staff Corps which served the U. S. Army through World War II. The 1947, 1958 and 1986 debates were, at least on the question of the continuation of an American General Staff, highly emotional and germanophobic. These debates were carried out with little or no input from serving military officers. It is now time for military officers to pick up the mantle of the tragic Upton and address rationally the requirement for an American general staff and the connected concept of military excellence.

Each generation of officers has a solemn duty and responsibility--to the nation and its sons those officers may lead into combat--to examine critically the strategic and

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[8]Dupuy, T.N., A Genius for War: The German Army and General Staff, 1807-1945, p. 302, Prentice-Hall, 1977.

[9]Ibid., p. 307.

[10]Upton, E., Armies of Asia and Europe, Greenwood Press, 1968.

tactical preconceptions, usually founded on past wars, which enervate the ethos of the present generation of military and political leaders. This task may well call into question the fundamental beliefs upon which our military traditions rely for coherence and consistency. Surprisingly, this is most difficult for American officers because the conceptual roots of our military traditions are primarily civilian, not military.

The most fundamental precept of American officership is acceptance of "civilian control of the military." Apart from this "constitutional commandment," there is no touchstone for the American officer cum citizen--except his status as citizen and his oath to protect and defend the constitution. As we address the vital questions of defense organization, strategy and doctrine, how we might better plan for and fight a future war, we must continually deal with this requirement for civilian control.

A clear practical lesson of the present interpretation of the civilian control reality, as exemplified in the defense reform debates of the last forty years, is that reform of our military establishment is a civilian responsibility. The American military has an obvious advisory role, but a balanced reading of recent events[11] suggests that that role requires public agreement with the executive branch, the only alternative open to uniformed leaders being resignation.[12] Thus, derivatively, open, public debate on military reform is a civilian matter, not a military responsibility, even--perhaps, especially--in so basic an area of military performance as defense organization. This reality does not however, release the officer corps from the responsibility to challenge our leadership's preconceptions; preconceptions which may block effective operational planning and execution on our next battlefield.

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[11]The chilling effects of this principle are difficult to document because it is in the interests of all parties involved to keep them private; however the Singlaub affair and the recent public admonishment of the Air Force Chief of Staff, General Welch, by Secretary of Defense Cheney certainly should give the observer some sense of the openness of public discussion of defense matters by uniformed officers.

[12]What this means for junior officers interested in anything approaching truly open public comment goes almost without saying. The recent demise of the Air University Review after a particularly candid exchange of views on the Air Force's security review procedures is a rather stark example. After a short period of time a new journal, Airpower, reappeared after the Review was cancelled due to fiscal restraints.

Nowhere has the civilian responsibility for military reform more clearly abrogated military input and politicized the discussion of proposed reform than in the debate over an American general staff. Over the past century, the general staff concept, once the central issue in American defense organization reform debates, has become the dead letter of defense reform. Although an American general staff was accepted in a modified form in 1903, during the second half of the twentieth century various constituencies have "shouted down" an American general staff (and therewith any institutional excellence which might have flown from such an institution to the greater officers' corps). In the few cases where opponents of the general staff concept--as exemplified by the Prussian General Staff--have bothered with justification, they have posited historically-derived suppositions of linkage between the general staff system and Prussian militarism, anti-democratic institutional biases, elitism and military dominance of civil-military relations.

Some of these suppositions seem historically questionable, others patently absurd,[13] while the larger argument appears irrelevant to an American military with such a clear tradition of "civilian control of the military." Moreover, many statements of opposition to an American general staff are heavily laden with emotionally germanophobic prejudice--in large measure a reaction to aspects of German behavior in World Wars I and II which, insofar as they reflect on the German General staff system, were aberrant expressions of larger societal failures wholly distorting the legacy of the General Staff's originators. Over the last century, this prejudice[14] seems to have acquired the status of religious precept and something approaching a tenet of American defense organization has emerged: whatever form of defense organization we may

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[13]Are we to suppose that an egalitarian, democratic military would be the best defender of an egalitarian, democratic society? If so we should return to election of our officers and vote on tactics.

[14]In 1956, then Senator Hubert Humphrey described the general staff system as "anathema to every concept of democracy." Staff Report to the Committee on Armed Services United States Senate, Defense Organization: The Need for Change, 99th Congress, 1st Session, October 16, 1985, p. 235, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1985.

accept it should bear no similarity to the Prussian General Staff; for that form of organization is distinctly un-American, the antithesis of civilian control of the military.

The post-World War II congressional "distaste for German military institutions" eventually led to the 1958 Defense Reorganization Act's prohibition of the Joint Staff from organizing itself or operating "as an overall Armed Forces General Staff." This codified prohibition of an American General Staff came after the House Armed Services Committee found that "a general staff organization...is a fundamentally fallible, and thus dangerous, instrument for determination of national policy" which possessed the following deficiencies: "(1) a failure to systematically consider the full range of alternatives; (2) rigidity of thought; (3) an attempt to control national policies that are beyond military affairs; (4) isolation of civilian officials from other points of view; and (5) erosion of civilian control of the military by concentrating too much power in the hands of the military officers immediately below the senior civilian official." The 1985 Senate Staff Report on Defense Organization precedent to the Goldwater-Nichols Act stated "these congressional criticisms are highly inaccurate and cannot be supported by historical analysis of the work of General Staffs, particularly those of Prussia and Germany."[15]

One voice was missing from this debate. The absence of clear, objective military thinking[16] in national military strategy and on the proper path of defense reform is the direct result of not having a resident elite corps of staff officers at the national level with standing in the defense establishment. The absence of such military voices is due to the demise of the American general staff and is indicative of a larger deficiency of independent minds within the officers' corps of all the services. The bitter irony is that at the same time as we see an explosion of interest in the tactical excellence of the Wehrmacht, seek to learn the proper lessons from the German understanding of war "as it really is" and concepts such as auftragstaktik, and attempt to instill in our junior

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[15]Ibid., pp. 230-235. The report continues, "In fact, these criticisms more accurately reflect the actual deficiencies of the current Joint Staff than they do the imagined shortcomings of the General Staff concept."

[16]Which the author would assert can best be found in the minds of those who might die as a result of emotionalism and subjectivity.

officers the traits of initiative, originality and independence of mind so harmoniously present in the German officer, the consensus on the evils of the German military system--conveniently though incorrectly encapsulated in the Prussian General Staff--closes off the necessary correlate of precisely that which we must begin to understand about the German military if we are to adopt the tactical expressions of that excellence, the essence of Prussian officership.

The National Security Act and Goldwater-Nichols debates seem to have fixed our attention on power relationships as the only measure of reform but we cannot fix the problems we face by changing names and rearranging boxes on organization charts.[17] To begin to approach the real problems we face past prejudices and the biases of our present must be overcome to find the key to German military excellence. It is the author's thesis that there is something unique about the Prussian officer of the nineteenth century and that, if we are to understand those qualities of Prusso-German officership which generated the tactics and methods many now wish to emulate, we must carefully examine the historical roots of the Prussian officers' corps and attempt to resolve the essence of Prussian officership.

The purpose of this study is to examine the historical reality surrounding the development of the Prussian officers' corps and the Prussian General Staff system and attempt to discover the basis of that institution's tradition of excellence. The initial approach to this study was to begin with the Prussian General Staff in the years before the Wars of Unification; however, it quickly became clear that it was necessary to go back to the inception of the General Staff during the Prussian reform era prior to the War of Liberation. This search for a beginning point eventually led to the "transformation of war" which occurred between the time of Frederick II and Napoleon,

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[17]Individual excellence cannot be placed on a wiring diagram but the military education debate in the Skelton House Panel on Military Education seems to be just such an abortive attempt. Of nine specific recommendations six deal with conceptual frameworks (complete with the requisite wiring diagram), phases, positions and power, name changes, and use of examinations and writing as "essential elements of graduate-level education." Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives, Executive Summary of the Report of the Panel on Military Education, 100th Congress, 2d Session, November 18, 1988, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1988.

for it was this transformation that precipitated the Prussian Reform Movement and laid the necessary groundwork for both the development of the Prussian officers' corps and the inception and initial development of the Prussian General Staff.

The Prussian Reform Movement provides a paradigm for defense reform which we should not ignore. To provide a framework for understanding this paradigm the nature of war is described in its constituent parts followed by comparisons of the Frederickian system and the Napoleonic system which the author believes may be styled "modern war." After an elaboration of the reasons for the decline of the Frederickian system, the thesis addresses the largely unsuccessful initial attempts by Prussia to reform and the preconditions for and execution of the later, successful reforms. The author then addresses the approach of the Prussian reformers to answer the Napoleonic challenge through both fundamental reform of the Prussian defense establishment and, by applying a new realism to the art of war, redefining the profession of arms. In the final chapters the author applies the Prussian paradigm of defense reform to our unique American circumstances and attempts to resolve the implications of the Prussian example for our future defense.

At the center of the Prussian Reform Movement the author found not the beginnings of the institution of the General Staff but the many individuals who came together to transform the Frederickian system into a vehicle for the liberation of their nation. And so after many months of looking for the "secret" of the tradition of excellence of the institution of the Prussian General Staff the author found that the schwerpunkt of this study is not the institution but the individual and that is fitting for the essence of Prussian officership is not an institutional excellence but a collective excellence of individuals.

II. THE CONSTITUENTS OF THE NATURE OF WAR

Since men first began to think of themselves as members of a group set apart from the rest of mankind, it has been necessary to organize society to defend lives, liberties and possessions against those apart. Within this clear need exists a deep dilemma: how to organize that defense so that it constitutes a reliable deterrent to those apart without the possible sacrifice of some or all of the liberties so defended. This age-old question of defense organization is still before us today with but little promise of solution. To attempt to find right paths for our own efforts at solving this dilemma we must look at other men in other times who dealt with the same problems and discovered their own answers.

One such group was the Prussian Reform Movement led by Heinrich Friedrich Karl vom und zum Stein, Gerhard Johann David von Scharnhorst, August Wilhelm Neithardt von Gneisenau, Hermann von Boyen, Carl von Clausewitz, and Karl Wilhelm von Grolman. These men and many Prussian officers such as General Hans David Ludwig von Yorck who, while not reformers, nevertheless shared their immediate goal of victory over Napoleon, were anxious to see Prussia's army find its way out of the Frederickian past into the dawn of a new era of warfare and to create an army able to stand up to the revolutionary army of France and the aftermath of the "transformation of war"[18] that that army had wrought.

In the process of awakening the Prussian army which, as Prussia's Queen Louise, wife of Frederick William III, wrote, "went to sleep on the laurels of Frederick the Great",[19] the Prussian reformers laid the foundation for the continuation of the proud heritage of Prussian arms. Out of this process of reform and the reformer's struggle to save the essential core of the traditions of the Frederickian system while creating the necessary "new" with which to deal with the transformation of war came a Prussian

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[18]Colin, J.L.A., The Transformation of War, trans. L.H.R. Pope-Hennessy, H. Rees, 1912.

[19]Craig, G.A., The Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 56, Oxford Univ. Press, 1979.

army which did not lose a war for the rest of the nineteenth century, a Prussian Great General Staff which became the envy of the world's armies and worthy of their emulation, and a Prussian officer who was the essential core of both.

The origins of this Prussian officer and the Prussian general staff concept are to be found in the period of the "transformation of war" between Frederick the Great and Napoleon. It is first necessary to understand this transformation and the effects it had on the nature of war before beginning a detailed study of the Prussian Reform Movement. To aid in this elaboration of the change in the nature of war between Frederick and Napoleon the nature of war will be treated in eight constituents: combat, death, causes, attributes, armies, means, costs, and superstructure.[20] Within this framework it is possible to understand the radical change in the nature of war which should be expected during this great social and political cataclysm in European history; and as well those constituents which could have but did not change and also those enduring constituents of the nature of war which remain constant in all times.

A. COMBAT

Men go to war to win. No tribe, state, or nation has ever waged war expressly to lose. For war to exist there must be at least two antagonists with conflicting aims or views, each wishing to "win" more than he desires to remain at peace; then, finally, peaceful conflict becomes armed conflict, combat, resulting in victor and vanquished. Clausewitz, using the German Gefecht meaning "an episode of fighting, combat," describes combat as "the essential military activity"[21] which "no matter how it is constituted....remains unchanged. That is what we mean by war."[22] This is the most fundamental and, arguably, unchangeable constituent of war, the conflict of antagonists physically expressed in fighting. The sources of conflict can be territorial, religious,

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[20]The author fully acknowledges the pretentiousness of such a short treatment of an admittedly difficult typological problem. Where possible the author has followed the master, Clausewitz.

[21]Clausewitz, C.v., On War, p. 225, trans. and eds. M. Howard and P. Paret, Princeton, 1976.

[22]Ibid., p. 127.

political, economic, moral or even personal, but without conflict war makes sport of men's blood.

B. DEATH

Conflict can, of course, exist without war. War cannot exist without conflict and to be war the conflict must be among armed men. Conflict among armed men--combat--results in death. War without conflict and death is not possible.[23] Death in conflict bespeaks violence. The level of violence and the manner of death surely changed between Leuthen and Waterloo; but whether death is by pike or bayonet, musket or rifle are questions of efficiency and technology. Men die in war. That is unchanging.

In all times when we speak of war we ask: who won, who lost, at what price in lives? These questions of combat and death are fundamentally unchanging; other questions require a knowledge of the times, the texture of history, to allow the inquirer to frame the questions we here ask of war.

C. CAUSES

The question of what caused a war is usually a question asked only after war is over and even then it is especially to be heard on the quiet lips of those who experienced it: why? Before the war, the situation is different, war seems so right to those who feel the call of glory and pride of arms.[24] We have said that men die in war and surely the cliches of "the world sliding into war" are just that, cliches. Men must decide to wage war and however neatly we phrase the formulations of the causes of war it must still come down to one man having the idea of war and spreading the idea far enough within the counsels of state to bring war about.

The defeated and thus exiled Athenian general Thucydides wrote in his military history on the causes of the Peloponnesian War:

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[23]Wars on drugs, crime and illiteracy are mere false aphorisms, neologisms for the age of Rambo.

[24]Surely, the author was not alone in that feeling of quiet desperation as a high school senior in 1965 that his war might end before he "could get in it."

All this came upon them with the late war, which was begun by the Athenians and Peloponnesians by the dissolution of the thirty years' truce made after the conquest of Euboea. To the question why they broke the treaty, I answer by placing first an account of their grounds of complaint and points of difference, that no one may ever have to ask the immediate cause which plunged the Hellenes into a war of such magnitude. **The real cause I consider to be the one which was formally most kept out of sight. The growth of the power of Athens, and the alarm which this inspired in Lacedaemon, made war inevitable.**[25] [Emphasis added.]

Michael Howard, in his essay "The Causes of Wars" points to this passage as an indication of a timeless verity. Paraphrasing Thucydides, he finds as the analogous cause of World War I that:

> Finally the point was reached when German strength attained a peak plain for all to see, and the Germans began to encroach upon Britain's allies. It was at this point that Britain felt the position to be no longer tolerable and decided by starting this present war to employ all her energies in attacking and if possible destroying the power of Germany.[26]

Writing of the causes of war just before the French Revolution, Jeremy Bentham found five: colonial rivalry, the feudal system, religious antipathy, the rage of conquest and uncertain succession.[27] It is an interesting list but when one generalizes it we find that Thucydides might agree for it includes those elements which make man unique--his power as reflected in his possessions, his relationship to his God, God's earthly vicars, both temporal and spiritual, and his fellow men--and that element which makes men go beyond defense of the particular, that is rational, to the irrational "rage of conquest." Bentham's list is clearly a product of the enlightenment reflecting the divisions of the Ancien Régime. Frederick the Great was also a product of both the enlightenment and the Ancien Régime and for Frederick "war was to be preeminently a function of Staatspolitik, and so it has remained ever since."[28] Bentham chose the

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[25]Thucydides, The Complete Writings of Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War, trans. J.H. Finley, Jr., p.15, Random House, 1951.

[26]Howard, M., The Causes of War, p. 20, Harvard Univ. Press, 1983.

[27]Bentham, J., A Plan for a Universal and Perpetual Peace, p. 25, Grotius Society, 1927. Quoted in Howard, M., War and the Liberal Conscience, p. 33, Rutgers Univ. Press, 1978.

[28]Howard, The Causes of War, p. 13.

phrase "rage of conquest" before the Revolution, but no phrase could better characterize the spirit of Napoleon's march across Europe; however Napoleon and Frederick, though on a different scale, are both demonstrating the fundamental truth that all war's are about power. "The vanity of nationalism, the will to spread an ideology, the protection of kinsmen in an adjacent land, the desire for more territory...all these represent power in different wrappings. The conflicting aims of rival nations are always conflicts of power."[29] It might be argued that whatever the cause of war, it is not a constituent of war for, while it is a necessary prelude to and precondition for war the cause is irrelevant to the prosecution of the war. This could not be more false and is in fact central to the tragedy of the First World War when cause and object, politics and war, became separated. Clausewitz, sometimes accused as creator of this abomination, is in fact father to the opposite idea. He describes the political object of war as "the original motive for the war"[30] and later speaks of the "political purpose" of war as the objective guiding military action.[31]

The cause of war for the Frederickian and Napoleonic systems was power--whether to defend or aggrandize the territorial holdings of the state. Though there is in Napoleonic War some altruistic spreading of revolutionary and Napoleonic ideas, in the main Napoleon is doing no more than Frederick, increasing his holdings to increase his state. Whatever individual French soldiers might have thought they were fighting for--liberty, equality, fraternity--is largely irrelevant to causation (however important it was to execution); what mattered was the will of the ruler, only Frederick and Napoleon determined the cause of war.

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[29]Blainey, G., The Causes of War, p. 149, Free Press, 1973. Quoted in Howard, The Causes of War, p. 13. For a warning against theoretical oversimplification of the causes of war see Brodie, B., War and Politics, p. 339-340, Macmillan, 1973.

[30]Clausewitz, On War, p. 81.

[31]Ibid., p. 90.

D. ATTRIBUTES

Whatever the causes of war we must admit to an essence of war--its fundamental attributes. This constituent includes all those concepts which belong neither to tactics nor strategy, states nor nations; but those aspects of fighting wars which are usually beyond the understanding of men who have not felt the loneliness of "death at the door." The attributes of war are of the nature of men: chivalry, honor, fear, error, fatigue, and the capriciousness of attempted execution of planned action. The first two aspects of Clausewitz's "remarkable trinity," violence and chance, and his related concept of friction describe clearly this very human, elemental constituent of war, "composed of primordial violence, hatred, and enmity, . . . a blind natural force" which is an enduring constituent of the nature of war.[32]

These four constituents, combat, death, causes and attributes, did not change between the reigns of Frederick and Napoleon. The four remaining constituents changed dramatically. Fundamental concepts such as we treat here usually do not change in the instant but over time and the seeds of what may appear a dramatic change are, no doubt, firmly planted in the fields of the past. Even the apparent exception--the flash of individual genius and creativity--has the parent, education. We often cannot uncover the roots of genius, but they are there. With this understanding of the evolutionary nature of change, we can now examine each remaining constituent under the rubric of Frederickian and Napoleonic warfare. These four remaining constituents--armies, means, costs, and superstructure--provide a framework for understanding the changes in the nature of war we posit from the Ancien Regime of Frederick the Great through the French Revolution and the reign of Napoleon Bonaparte.

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[32]Ibid., p. 89.

E. ARMIES

Between 1740 and 1815, armies changed in their size, methods of recruitment, and organizational forms. Throughout this period armies were the surest symbol of the power of the state and, therefore, the ruler. This symbolism transcended any requirement-purpose connection; state requirements for defensive and offensive intentions were subsumed by the symbolic requirement for power. Power resulted from the size and proficiency, or the perception of proficiency, of the army.

The size of army required was directly related to the methods of recruitment. The head of state could, throughout this era, choose between various methods and mixes of filling the ranks of his army. The determinant was three-fold. How large an army was required for state purposes, what type of men best served those purposes, and what organizational forms best utilized the army size and the men selected. The choices made as to the desired size and character of the army resulted in patterns of recruitment: mercenary-hire, impressment, volunteer, and broadly-stated, national-peoples. Overlaying this typology was the choice between foreign and "domestic" sources of manpower.

The organizational forms of armies also changed. To a not insignificant degree these changes to the organizational forms of armies--for both administrative and operational functions--were as much responses to the pressures of increased size and changes in the types of men making up the armies as they were tactical evolutions of military thought. Additionally, continuity remains a powerful force even in this cauldron of change; the resulting tactical expressions of organizational forms, the uniforms, insignia, customs and, importantly, the traditions of armies remain functions of history, culture and leadership.

F. MEANS

The means of war armies employ are the weapons and impedimenta secured by the state from available technology and industrial capacity. The impedimenta of war are either offensive (e.g., siegecraft), defensive (e.g., permanent and temporary fortifications), and support (e.g., supply trains). All of these weapons and impedimenta are the province of technology. The means of war changed during the late eighteenth

century, but not nearly so much as the economic relationship of technology, industrial capacity and war-making potential of European states beginning to face the potential of the Industrial Revolution.

G. COSTS

War is an exercise of power to gain some state objective and with any gain comes a cost. The costs of war are paid both from state capital and in their real currency, the lives of men. Soldiers must be paid for their service and must be supplied and fed. Perhaps the greatest costs of war are incurred in the peacetime preparation for war and the state purposes which go unfunded in the name of national defense. There are costs of losing: lost armies, indemnities, territory, honor and even existence; as well there are costs of winning: spent resources of men, weapons, ammunition, fodder and food and also the administrative costs of control of acquired territories and subjects.

H. SUPERSTRUCTURE

The Marxian construct, superstructure, is analogized to include all those forces at work in society which, while not of war, are so intertwined with war as to become a constituent of war. The social, political and economic relationships of man and state, culture and society, labor and capital, army and state, army and society, all bring to bear certain forces that lead to the spirit of the times; leaders may attempt to ignore, react against or attempt to harness this zeitgeist, but whichever course they choose, however badly they read the history at hand, there will be effects on the conduct of war.

Such concepts as chivalry, the Ancien Régime, enlightenment, rationalism, gentlemen, revolution, reaction, romanticism, progress, modernity, authority, and order are the creations of philosophers and historians to describe perceived reality. These concepts do help explain events and provide the epochal background for examining the social, political, religious, economic and technological forces at work in the state and society. If we wish to understand the changes in the nature of war we must examine the forces at work in civilization--as explained by the concepts listed above--and the resulting change in society, for it is the ruling expression of societies--whether

autocratic, republican or democratic--which chooses to wage war and it is the object of that expression, the people, who pay the price for that decision.

Armies must be led lest they become mobs. The difference between mob and army is to be found in the relationships of commanders, officers, and soldiers. Are leaders "elected" by the men led or "selected" by class, ruler, or God? Do men owe officers allegiance to liege, employer or fellow soldier? Are officers and commander related by or at odds over class and custom? Is the officer necessary or trivial in the realm of decision? What is the role and relationship of commander and staff?

Since we seek the "changing nature of war" we must look to war itself. Our answers are best found in the history of battle and leaders. So our source must be the two men of action, Frederick and Napoleon, in the century after Frederick II ascends the throne of Prussia. This is the epoch of the flowering of the Enlightenment, the cataclysm of 1789, and the reaction, restoration and final defeat of the Ancien Régime. This is a long story and, though at times it appears that "all is new," the old world did not suddenly vanish on 14 July, 1789.

III. FREDERICK AND THE ANCIEN REGIME

Frederick II, King of Prussia from 1740 to 1768, stands as the embodiment of the warrior-king in the Ancien Régime. It is tempting to see in his generalship the culmination, perhaps fulfillment, of all that was possible of that age, for "Frederick's greatness lay not in the inauguration of a new epoch, but in the consummate expression which he gave to the age into which he had been born."[33] We cannot blame him because he did not, as did Napoleon, stand at the flood gates of modernity and therefore did not have the opportunity to harness the energies of a new age. We wish to see in Frederick a perfection of the forms and potential of war in his time. But this is not quite accurate. For in a real sense he is precursor of what is to come.

In a letter to Voltaire Frederick places himself well, "It's the fashion now to make war and presumably it will last a good long while."[34] Such sentiment is nearly impossible to imagine from Napoleon. There is a comfort with the limits of war in Frederick's words much at odds with the world view of Napoleon. Frederick was King-acquisitor, Napoleon the Emperor-world conqueror. It is the scale of ambition which most differentiates the two. Napoleon waged war against an entire continent and by 1809 had established a Pax Napoleon which rivaled Pax Romana in geographic scope, if not duration. Frederick waged war because it was the fashion of powerful kings and his dynasty wanted most to be taken seriously as a power. The Seven Years' War was as much about the claim of the Hohenzollerns to Great Power status as it was about any Prussian state interest.

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[33]Rosinski, H., The German Army, p. 18, Frederick A. Praeger, 1966.

[34]Heinl, R.D., Dictionary of Military and Naval Quotations, p. 343, Naval Institute Press, 1985.

A. THE PRUSSIAN ARMY

At the start of the Seven Years' War the size of Frederick's army of 1756 was 150,000 men. This army was two-thirds mercenary and one third Prussian. This proportion reflects Frederick's decision to reverse the proportion of mercenaries in the army handed down to him by his father, Frederick William I. That Prussian army of 1740 consisted of 26,000 foreigners and 50,000 Prussians.[35]

The Prussian soldier of the army of 1756 was called a cantonist. The canton system, codified in the Canton Regulations of 1727, provided each of the king's regiments with a geographical recruitment area.[36] Once selected, the object of such regimental recruitment--too modern a word, impressment is more accurate--served for life. These soldiers, primarily drawn from the peasantry, and their mercenary fellow soldiers had only several months of active service a year in times of peace; between April and June they prepared for the annual maneuvers by extremely intensive drill. The object of this training was an automaton who, without thinking,[37] could execute the precise march in column to engagement with immediate response to order to line and could execute the complex series of synchronized actions necessary to reload their flintlocks and fire in unison--all twice as fast as any army in Europe.[38]

In peacetime, the Prussian army was organized in regiments of ten companies, not very different in administrative lineage and financial organization from the "condottiere" of the Seventeenth century.[39] The tactical formation was the battalion of infantry supported by cavalry squadrons and the armes savant, the artillery and engineers. The battalion usually deployed in three ranks and fired by platoon. Other European armies could match neither the innovation of march in step nor Prussian

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[35]Rosinski, The German Army, p. 33.

[36]Ibid., p. 25.

[37]Frederick was clear on this, "if my soldiers began to think not one would remain in the ranks". Heinl, Dictionary of Military and Naval Quotations, p. 300.

[38]Dupuy, R.E., and Dupuy, T.N., The Encyclopedia of Military History, p. 611, Harper and Row, 1977.

[39]Rosinski, The German Army, p. 39.

precision and retained the method of volley fire of larger formations. These innovations and the well-drilled ability to change direction, front, or both simultaneously gave Frederick's army a mix of speed and maneuver unmatched in Europe.

Each regiment in the Frederickian army had its own distinctive uniform. From the time of Frederick William I the "king's coat" was uniformly bare of ornament and worn by all from the lowest rank to the king himself. The only adornment of rank was the general's white feather, a necessary, practical, visual accoutrement for distinguishing the tactical leader on the battlefield.[40] The uniform thus provided a sign that "made all officers equal, and equally the servants of the house of Hohenzollern."[41] Soldiers will attest to the real, though admittedly symbolic, relationship between the uniform worn and the ethos of an army. The uniforms of the Prussian army of Frederick the Great matched the shared nature of their stark, difficult duty, and both "officers and soldiers lived very frugal, indeed poverty-stricken lives, yet a collective spirit of 'honor' and sense of duty raised the Prussian army to a level of efficiency--and cheapness--no other European force came near to equalling"[42].

B. MEANS

The means of waging war in the eighteenth century Prussian army were the flintlock fusil with ring bayonet of the infantry, the sabre of the cavalry and the cannon and howitzer of the artillery. The flintlock and bayonet replaced the matchlock musket and pike. The requirements for standard sizes--to accommodate the ringed bayonet--greatly added to the costs and complexity. In 1718, the Prussian service introduced the double-ended iron ramrod which had long been in service for pistols. Superior to the wood then in service in other armies of the day and, combined with the precision bought by drill, the iron ramrod gave the Prussian infantry a 2.5:1 rate

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[40]Ibid., p. 24.

[41]McNeill, W.H., The Pursuit of Power, p. 154, U. of Chicago Press, 1982.

[42]Ibid.

of fire advantage with a resulting five rounds fired per minute.[43] Frederick is the first to speak of fire superiority stating in his Military Testament of 1768 that "Battles are won by fire superiority, infantry firing more rapidly will undoubtedly defeat infantry firing more slowly."[44] Like other chefs d'armée, Frederick used his cavalry for shock and reconnaissance. In two ranks the cavalry charged "boot to boot" with sabres alone--Frederick forbade the cavalry firearms, though he did use limited mounted infantry--and, unlike his contemporaries, never interspersed infantry and cavalry.[45]

Frederick demonstrated his emphasis on cavalry speed by moving the cavalry from the flank to the third rank. Ready to exploit any break in the enemy line caused by his infantry's superior fire, the cavalry would pass through the front two ranks of foot soldiers wherever the enemy proved weakest--thus the Jominian principle of attack with strength at the decisive point. After breaking the line of foot soldiers, the shock of cavalry would spread fear and chaos through to the enemy rear.[46]

The rear was also attacked with artillery. Frederick's innovations in the arme blanche complemented his belief that "artillery decided everything." Frederick developed horse artillery to support the cavalry; not horse-drawn artillery as existed elsewhere, but mounted cannoneers, ammunition handlers and ammunition boxes.[47] The main requirement for horse artillery was cannon of reduced weight and Frederick was the first to take advantage of this technological change. Later, General Gribeauval of

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[43]Dupuy, T.N., The Evolution of Weapons and Warfare, p. 150, Bobbs-Merrill, 1980. Dupuy attributes this rate of fire advantage more to Prussian discipline and drill than the iron ramrod.

[44]Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, p. 14, Princeton Univ. Press, 1966.

[45]Dupuy and Dupuy, Encyclopedia of Military History, p. 665. See also Dupuy, The Evolution of Weapons and Warfare, p. 151.

[46]Strachan, H., European Armies and the Conduct of War, p. 18, George Allen and Unwin, 1983. See also Dupuy, The Evolution of Weapons and Warfare, p. 151.

[47]Dupuy, The Evolution of Weapons and Warfare, p. 152. The Prussian cavalry incurred unacceptable casualties from enemy artillery due to the artillery's inability to stay with the newly mobile forward-deployed cavalry and therewith to provide counter-battery fire.

the French army would follow Frederick's lead and make further progress in this innovation.[48] Frederick found greater precision of fire in replacing wedges with screws for gun elevation and used the trajectory of the howitzer to attack reserves and spread fear and shock.[49] Frederick's use of the mobility of mounted artillery combined with concentration and precision of fire to attack the infantry line and reserves made maximum use of the two support arms, artillery and cavalry.

Frederick made great strides in breaking the eighteenth century dependence on depots. The soldier carried three days rations in his knapsack. The regimental supply train carried an eight day supply of bread and the army train held a full month's supplies.[50] Under Frederick the Prussian army, "assuredly the most mobile and formidable European army of its day, could march for a maximum of ten days before a pause became necessary to bring up bake ovens and rearrange supply lines from the rear."[51] To a limited degree, the Prussian soldier could live off the land; but the problem of desertion made Frederick, like all eighteenth century generals, very wary of this solution to the problem of logistics. Losses due to desertion could range up to triple the number lost in action after unsuccessful battles.[52]

Siegecraft was not a central part of Frederick's operational art. During the Seven Years' War he undertook only one major siege. Similarly, fortifications were important but hardly innovative in use or design and only became important at the end of his reign as he attempted a strategic defensive of the fruits of his long years of war. Frederick did, however, place great emphasis on canal building which unlike fortifications became a key part of Prussian strategic planning. Canals ultimately connected the Oder and Elbe Rivers creating a single internal waterway meeting

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[48]Van Creveld, M., Technology and War, p. 87, Free Press, 1989.

[49]Ibid., p. 33.

[50]Dupuy and Dupuy, Encyclopedia of Military History, p. 666. See also Dupuy, The Evolution of Weapons and Warfare, p. 150.

[51]McNeill, The Pursuit of Power, p. 159.

[52]Dupuy, The Evolution of Weapons and Warfare, p. 150.

Frederick's requirement for the "speedy and secure movement of grain and other supplies."[53]

C. COSTS

In the eighteenth century, Prussia was the poorest of the Great Powers. The standing army was the Hohenzollern idée fixe because it was all that separated Prussia from second class status. The greatest riches of Prussia were the unbelievably intense desires of the Hohenzollerns to be "great" and the energy of the dynastic heirs. That energy allowed the line from the Great Elector to Frederick the Great to slowly build a military power that was the envy of Europe from a nation which, at Frederick's accession in 1740, had only a population of two and a half million to support an army of 80,000 men with a revenue of one million pounds sterling.[54]

The economic weaknesses of Prussia, its march lands, small population, and even smaller income, were not great impediments to Frederick's ability to wage war. As William McNeill points out the "supply of weapons, gunpowder, uniforms, and other equipment did not normally set limits on military enterprise" during the eighteenth century. "Costs of such items were comparatively small." During the Seven Years' War Prussia's expenditures for materiel amounted to only thirteen per cent of total expenses, while weapons, gunpowder and lead amounted to only one percent.[55]

In 1752 the army received ninety per cent of the Prussian budget while in 1754 of the entire Prussian budget of 6 million thalers five million was spent on the army leaving only one million for all other state purposes.[56] Thus in Frederick the Great we see a monarch willing to pay an unbelievable price in both lives and currency from his

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[53]McNeill, The Pursuit of Power, p. 163.

[54]Dupuy, The Evolution of Weapons and Warfare, p. 149. At the end of Frederick's reign in 1786 the population had doubled to five million and the army had grown to 200,000 men and absorbed four-fifths of the state's revenue.

[55]McNeill, The Pursuit of Power, pp. 159-160.

[56]Preston, R.A., and Wise, S.F., Men in Arms, p. 146, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979.

own holdings as well as surrendering much of his reign to the rigors of campaigning, all to maintain his personal possession--the Prussian Army. This professional, largely mercenary force, administered and supported by a bureaucracy as attuned to the spirit of the army as any in history,[57] existed to allow the state to exist. Prussia's strategic position, surrounded by Great Powers, the battleground of Europe, allowed no other possibility, save extinction.

D. SUPERSTRUCTURE

The Prussian social and economic arrangement during Frederick's reign, which Friedrich Meinecke called "the old and dilapidated superstructure,"[58] required the bourgeoisie to produce the means of war and pay the taxes, the peasantry to supply the food, fodder and men, while the nobility gave their sons to lead the army.[59] The 1727 Canton Regulation decreed "all inhabitants of the state are born to bear arms."[60] In fact, economic reality meant otherwise. Frederick, even more than his ancestors, was extremely liberal with exemptions to conscription. Even the peasant soldier was granted leave for harvest. Frederick preferred the mercenary to his own subject partly because this freed a man to the fields and, outside war and the annual drill period, the mercenary became another productive subject.[61]

The relationships of aristocracy, bourgeoisie, peasant and state centered on the king. After long years of duress, the nobility grew to value their hold on commissions; a bond was thereafter forged between king and Junker unique in the history of armies. The concept of immediate application of officers to king is perhaps

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[57]Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, pp. 18-19.

[58]Meinecke, F., The Age of German Liberation, p. 46, ed. P. Paret, U. of California Press, 1977.

[59]Ibid., p. 17.

[60]Rosinski, The German Army, p. 26.

[61]Ibid., p. 33.

the best example of this tradition.[62] Frederick preferred the nobility, any nobility, for his officers because he valued most the honor he believed them uniquely to possess; he "knew" the middle class valued only profit and could never achieve his standard of "subordination and sacrifice of everything to one idea: duty."[63]

The Junker officer was also well suited to lead the peasant army of Prussia. The feudal bond of peasant to the landowner was simply transferred to the battlefield. Frederick's view that the soldier "must be made more afraid of his own officers than of the dangers to which he is exposed" is at odds with the admiration and gratitude he showed for the victors of the First and Second Silesian Wars. But this comment--and worse--came only after the "flower of his army lay dead on the battlefields" of those wars.[64]

Paret points out that there were in fact two types of officers even in Frederick's army--the country noble and the military professional. The first group, the Junker, "with his close bonds to the land, his central position in the affairs of his native region, his nearly total authority over the peasants of his estate, who obeyed him as instinctively in the army as they did on his acres, was a very different man from the military professional." The differences between the landed nobles and this second group, who came upon their noble patent only due to its necessity for a commission and at the state's convenience, were to have a profound influence on the events to come in the periods of reform and reaction--which can be seen as victories of each over the other--for "an old-established family could give its members a unique sense of independence that did not readily adjust itself to the emerging replacement of patriarchal loyalties by bureaucratic values, while the man who had nothing but his

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[62]Ibid., p. 24.

[63]Ibid., p. 37.

[64]Ibid., p. 35.

sword might be more receptive to the arguments of effectiveness and efficiency, or at least be unable to put up as strong a defense against them."[65]

E. CONCLUSION

It is, perhaps, a mistake to paint the superstructure of the Frederickian system of goernannce as simply a military machine. In fact, Frederick and his predecessors spent a great deal of time - Frederick spent "only" ten years of his forty-six year reign on campaign - attempting to "people" the barren reaches of his country and spent much effort on commerce, trade and improvements in the Prussian education system. His Political Testament of 1752 sums up his philosophy of government in its "main pillars": justice, sound finance, social and economic welfare, the church, and, lastly, foreign policy and war.[66]

The eighteenth century is marked by a slow, rational, procedural, limited war of position. The general was most esteemed who could so position his forces to place his opponent across the chessboard in such a disadvantageous position that he must cry "checkmate," without battle, without blood. Frederick's position--inferior numbers, inferior strategic position--forced him either to capitulate or innovate. His innovation was to defend through the offensive. His break with his times is best understood in his willingness to give battle, to attack even when the calculus of the time declared him loser, to risk everything, and then, win or lose (he lost as many battles as he won), to continue.

The central features of the Frederickian system were the willingness to give battle, mobility, speed, fire superiority, concentrated and somewhat coordinated use of infantry, cavalry and artillery, innovation and improvement in the means of war, and unity of military and political leadership. Frederick fought with limited means for

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[65]Paret, P., Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, pp. 9-10. Paret points out that the two groups are not exclusive, but the duality does establish a fundamental tension within the officers' corps which is played out in the reform-reaction dichotomy.

[66]Ritter, G., The Sword and the Scepter, v. 1, trans. H. Norden, p. 26, Univ. of Miami Press, 1969. The placing of war last in this conception is highly instructive of Frederick's view of the place of war in his conceptual hierarchy of governance.

limited ends. His small, professional, mainly mercenary army fought for territorial, dynastic objectives. He "lasted," victorious in wars of attrition by refusing defeat. Even at the end of his life, he still believed that "to win a battle means to compel your opponent to yield you his position."[67] Frederick improved and "perfected" but did not transcend the nature of eighteenth century warfare. Frederick "achieved the utmost possible within the limits set by technology and by the political and social conditions of Prussia in the eighteenth century."[68]

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[67]Frederick II, Militarisches Testament von 1768, pp. 246-249, in Werke, v. VI, quoted in Palmer, R.R., "Frederick the Great, Guibert, Bulow: From Dynastic to National War," Earle, E.M., Makers of Modern Strategy, p. 60, Princeton, 1971.

[68]Dupuy, The Evolution of Weapons and Warfare, p. 148.

IV. NAPOLEON AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF WAR

Napoleon Bonaparte was the central character in the "transformation of war" in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It seems extraordinarily trite to say Napoleon was central to Napoleonic warfare, yet the most striking facet of the changing nature of war in this period is how very little Napoleon had to do with it; he initiated very few innovations and, oddly, given his reputation, acted as a brake on change as often as he effected change. Wherever we look in our taxonomy of change, whether armies, means, costs, superstructure, or relationships, we see the hand of Napoleon; not, as we would think of the "God of War," as innovator, originator, creator, but as implementor, taking the raw material of change and adapting it to his purposes. Clearly, the transform function was the French Revolution and Napoleon had little part in the transformation; but, as we shall see, his genius was to see the first derivative in this historical calculus. It took almost a generation for his contemporaries to see what Napoleon had done, reform their own houses and bring his own genius to bear against him. Of all of Napoleon's adversaries, England, Russia, Austria-Hungary and Prussia, none was more proficient in adapting Napoleonic warfare against Napoleon than Prussia. It did so by close study and adaptation of the French changes in armies, means, costs and superstructure of war.

A. THE FRENCH ARMY

The roots of change predate the Revolution. Just as Frederick's victories led to complacency and ossification in the Prussian army, the series of defeats suffered by pre-revolutionary France led to self-criticism and reform in the French army.

The army of Louis XVI was very much the typical mercenary standing army, the royal appendage of the Ancien Régime. The aristocracy was in nearly full control of all access to the commissioned officers' corps, the practice of purchase of commissions bloating the corps with unqualified nobles. When we compare the pre-revolutionary French army of 1789, defending a nation of 26 million with an army of 180,000 of which 1,159 were general officers, with the Prussian army of the same

year, defending a nation of only 6 million with an army of 170,000 and only 123 general officers, it seems clear that the French army was ripe for reform, even by the standards of the Frederickian system. Only 1,000 of the 10,000 officers of France in 1789 were commoners. By 1791, 6,000 of these 10,000 had emigrated. Eighty-four generals were executed in 1793 and 1794. By 1793, 95% of the army had enrolled since 1789 and 85% of all lieutenants had previously been non-commissioned officers in the old army.[69] One million men served the tricolore by 1794.[70] Given these dramatic statistics, it is not too much to say that we see in France a new type of army; but not an army sprung whole cloth from the turmoil and terror of France, seeds of this army were planted in the soil of French military ideas throughout the eighteenth century.

An important theme of many pre-revolutionary military writers was that, while efficient, the standing army of mercenaries did not fully tap the greatest resource of France--its large populace. Voltaire criticized an army which defended the state with only the "poorest human material" and wrote that this "irrational" army should be replaced with a militia; Montesquieu, following the example of classic Rome, believed a republican army must be of the people, not the ruler--a citizen army to defend the state and its people from arbitrary rule; Rousseau, looking to his own Swiss background, held the "citizen" had a direct responsibility to defend his "nation."[71]

The old order of the royalist remnant soon disintegrates after 1789 and many of the ideas of the enlightenment, having percolated through the French army in the eighteenth century, begin to take shape in the new revolutionary army of France. It might seem surprising that these "new ideas" should have any affect on the army of the old regime which traditionally was isolated and disconnected from the civil populace. William McNeill points out two circumstances which allowed the army to be "infected" with revolutionary ideas. It was normal for the officers of the ancien

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[69]Strachan, European Armies and the Conduct of War, pp. 38-39.

[70]Howard, M., War in European History, p. 80, Oxford Univ. Press, 1983. See also Van Creveld, Technology and War, p. 113.

[71]Preston and Wise, Men in Arms, pp. 179-180.

régime to spend very little time with their soldiers, they were of a different class and the garrison routine of drill was largely left to sergeants. The advent of written orders had caused the army since 1787 to train sergeants to read and write. This newly literate group of non-commissioned officers had a particular grievance due to the 1781 order restricting commissions to the nobility and therefore blocking the sergeants from commissions. Thus when the many revolutionary propaganda pamphlets began to circulate the sergeants were able and--due to their grievance--willing to spread these ideas among the soldiers. The second factor was the French practice of quartering soldiers in towns unlike the Prussian and Russian practice of garrisoning their peasant armies away from civil society. These factors taken together led the soldiery to join the crowd at the Bastille on 14 July 1789 and provide artillery and arms to support the Revolution and laid the foundation of the revolutionary army.

Recruitment for this new revolutionary army was to be based on the volunteer citizen and this leads initially to a new sense of energy; but this scheme of recruitment fails and the Revolution was unable to tap the resources of the nation until the Jacobin dictatorship of the Terror. The levée en masse in 1793 uses an old form to harness this new energy. Citizen conscription produced a nationalist French army vastly increased in size with the even greater resources of the whole state to be tapped when needed:

> From this moment until that in which every enemy has been driven from the territory of the Republic, every Frenchman is permanently requisitioned for service with the armies. The young men shall fight; married men will manufacture weapons and transport stores; women shall make tents and nurse in the hospitals; children shall turn old linen into lint; the old men shall repair to the public squares to raise the courage of the warriors and preach the unity of the Republic and hatred against the kings.[72]

This then is the "nation in arms," and whether the nation required life or labor, all citizens were obligated to provide the nation whatever it required, indefinitely.[73]

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[72]Rothenberg, G.E., The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, p. 100, Indiana Univ. Press, 1980.

[73]McNeill, The Pursuit of Power, p. 199.

Another thread of ideas, again predating the Revolution and Napoleon, provided the method for organizing such a vastly increased army as a fighting entity. Guibert, du Teil, Bourcet, de Saxe and others all dreamt of an army different from that so often the loser in their day. Marshal de Saxe first used a divisional formation in the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748).[74] In 1759 de Broglie integrated infantry and artillery in a division organization. Guibert called for the use of the division in the 1770's.[75]

It was clear by 1794 that such a huge army could not fight or be commanded as a whole as had Frederick's army.[76] The army must be "divided" into smaller, self-contained units, "divisions," comprised of infantry and artillery. Lazare Carnot, France's Minister of War, combined cavalry with infantry and artillery in 1794.[77] As a separate entity the division could fight alone until support arrived; and, if properly spaced on the battle front, divisions could "march to the sound of guns" providing the strategic mobility necessary to properly use the manpower resources now available to the French army.[78] The entire French army was organized on the division concept by 1796. In 1800, the French general Moreau grouped his eleven divisions of the Army of the Rhine into four separate Corps to allow administrative control over his army of 200,000 men.[79]

The French division of 1795 contained 12 infantry battalions, 1 cavalry regiment and 32 guns. The battalion had 584 officers and men organized in eight companies of musketeers and one company of grenadiers. Two of these battalions formed a

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[74]Another "first" of this war was Maria Theresa's use of the "wild Croats" as Austrian skirmishers. McNeill, The Pursuit of Power, p. 165.

[75]Preston and Wise, Men in Arms, p. 191.

[76]Along with the levée en masse, annexations nearly doubled the number of "Frenchmen" available for service, from 25 million in 1789 to 44 million in 1810. McNeill, The Pursuit of Power, p. 200.

[77]Dupuy and Dupuy, Encyclopedia of Military History, p. 736.

[78]Ropp, T., War in the Modern World, p. 102, Collier, 1962.

[79]Dupuy and Dupuy, Encyclopedia of Military History, p. 737.

regiment, the administrative formation of the French army. By 1799, the seven corps of the Grande Armée each contained 2-4 infantry divisions, a brigade or division of light cavalry and corps artillery, cavalry, engineers and supply train.[80]

Light infantry emerges as an important combat element in France growing, between 1789 and 1795, from 4% to 23% of the total infantry force of the army.[81] This change was partially due to the poor quality of the army raised by the levée en masse. Light infantry required less training and discipline than infantry requiring drilled maneuver; but this was not simply invention based on necessity, skirmishers--the tactical use for light infantry--became a vital complement to the French tactical milieu in the late eighteenth century.[82]

Agricultural developments which transformed the open fields of Frederick's wars to the many "enclosures, walls and hedgerows" of the late eighteenth century provided impetus to the use of skirmishers--riflemen providing cover for infantry--and increased the value of the light infantry.[83] Frederick's linear tactics required open fields for deployment of the line, but the inception of variegated crops required enclosing the fields and "the landscape of western Europe became increasingly inhospitable to the old tactics." The battle lines of Frederick, two or three miles in length, could not now form up from column and were unable to move to battle as a coherent force.[84] Guibert and others called for tactical changes favoring the shock of attack by column--previously used only for march and maneuver--to the superior fire of the line.[85]

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[80]Strachan, European Armies and the Conduct of War, pp. 42-43, see also Dupuy and Dupuy, Encyclopedia of Military History, p. 737.

[81]Ibid., pp. 41-42.

[82]Preston and Wise, Men in Arms, p. 183. For the light infantry debate see Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, pp. 24-42, and R.R. Palmer, "Frederick the Great, Guibert, Bulow: From Dynastic to National War," Makers of Modern Strategy, pp. 49-74.

[83]Ibid.

[84]McNeill, The Pursuit of Power, p. 165.

[85]Ropp, War in the Modern World, p. 99.

Guibert recommended the ordre mixte, battalions in column mixed with battalions in line formation, to combine the advantages of speed, mobility, shock and fire power.[66] Others argued for combinations of skirmishers, line, and column.

It would be for Napoleon to finally put all this together in a form and with a purpose that, by 1809, would "conquer" the European continent. But he would not accomplish this historical marvel with only the "wild revolutionaries" of 1789. The officers and soldiers of the Grande Armée were battle-hardened, professional, ambitious and well-trained. They became veterans through the Wars of the Coalitions and combined their hard-won professional skills with a belief in their cause--liberty, equality, fraternity.

Those ideals were not common currency easily translated to a "professionalized" peasantry. The need to train this "mob" of hundreds of thousands of "zealots" so recently released from the suzerainty of the Ancien Régime meant a new methods of training had to be found. Frederick's methods of brutal drill and discipline based on fear of officers would not suffice for training free men bound only by patriotism and liberty. Esprit replaced brutality. Training had to center on the individual, the citizen, as well as the group.[67] It was also necessary to build upon the revolutionary fervor through continuous indoctrination of republican zeal resulting in "a new confidence in the might of the revolution flowed deep and strong through the ranks and began to inspire most of the French officers as well."[68] These recruits of the Revolution became, those lucky and skilled enough to survive, the veterans of the Grande Armée. Thus this army is more than simply a much larger eighteenth century standing army. This is a new force, the nationalistic, patriotic fervor of the citizen army combined

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[66]Ibid., p. 100, see also Preston and Wise, Men in Arms, p. 191.

[67]Preston and Wise, Men in Arms, p. 185.

[68]McNeill, The Pursuit of Power, p. 198.

with the disciplined efficiency of professionalism learned in the Wars of the First and Second Coalitions.[89]

After 1789, the officers' corps was naturally now open to all classes. The sergeants of 1789 became the experienced cadre of the officer corps of 1793.[90] Promotion was now based on merit alone and the practice of purchase of commissions ended.[91] The "world war" also brought forth a new, younger generation of leaders. Napoleon and eight of his future marshals promoted between 1789 and 1794 were, on average, only 33 years old.[92] Their youth was to provide the French army with a new vitality. Education of these officers became a rational undertaking as opposed to the assumptions of the noblesse oblige of the old order. The driving principle of L'Ecole Polytechnique (opened in 1795) and St. Cyr (1802) was that a superior officer could be produced through merit and hard work.[93]

In uniforms as in the other areas already treated, the French army found, as did their society in general, value in breaking with tradition and took the field sans cullotte. However, as with so many facets of this new army the radical "break" with the past was more apparent than real. Tradition was for a time a concept tieing the present with an unacceptable past. But the thread of ideas linking the Ancien Régime with the Grande Armée was never totally severed. Apart from the momentary symbolism, the greatest impact of wearing pants is to be found in the requirement for mass production of uniforms for an army of a million men.

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[89]Rothenberg, The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, pp. 112-114, provides some useful dampening to the usually overblown reliance on "patriotic fervor" to explain French successes.

[90]Ibid., p. 132, Rothenberg provides an interesting discussion of procedures for entrance into the officer corps by sergeants.

[91]Ropp, War in the Modern World, p. 98.

[92]Ibid., p. 109.

[93]Preston and Wise, Men in Arms, p. 187.

B. MEANS

If only because of this vast size, this new type of army--the nation in arms--required new methods for producing the means of waging war. The spirit of the revolution and the zeal of both army and citizenry also opened new opportunities for production. The Jacobins, through the well spring of the Terror and the levée en masse, "revolutionized" the army. Under the leadership of Lazare Carnot and the War Cabinet, Committees of Public Safety opened the flood gates of national mobilization of the means of war production on an unprecedented scale. For the first time we see a "great" power calling upon itself to direct its "total" resources--economic, agricultural, scientific, as well as manpower--toward the "needs" of the state: first survival, then proselytization, and finally conquest.

Due to its size, population, and commerce, France had been the greatest economic power in Europe at the start of the eighteenth century. By the end of the century France had lost much ground to England and the other powers but its economy was by no means of the second rank. Carnot, "the organizer of victory" and, importantly, an engineer, applied the methods of mass production, regimentation, and conscription to the economic mobilization of France's considerable resources.[94] While many of the programs emanating from the Committees of Public Safety had been tried before--and failed--Carnot, in much the same manner as Napoleon, harnessed the combination of resources, methods, and a mobilized society, and added the scientific talent (especially from mathematics, engineering and cartography) of the nation in a single enterprise--war.[95] Men like Gaspard Monge, the founder of descriptive geometry, applied their scientific knowledge to the needs of the army. Public musketry works were established in Paris parks and workers by the thousands were conscripted to work in them. Foundries were supplied with materiel and manpower to work at capacity.[96] The entire

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[94]Howard, War in European History, p. 81.

[95]William McNeill believes that Carnot "perhaps deserves the main credit for taking the risks inherent in radically aggressive strategic and tactical moves." McNeill, The Pursuit of Power, p. 198.

[96]Ropp, War in the Modern World, p. 111.

nation was mobilized to overcome materiel shortages and educated in how to identify and recover materials in short supply necessary for continued prosecution of war.

General Jean de Gribeauval, in part inspired by Frederick's innovations, transformed the French artillery service between 1763 and 1767. "His idea was simple and radical; to apply reason and experiment to the task of creating a new weapons system."[97] He introduced artillery with interchangeable parts and standard carriages after the Seven Years' War, and these changes had far reaching effects as Revolutionary France began mass production of artillery.[98] He also introduced paired (versus file) harnessing of horses, hardwood (versus much heavier iron) axles, a screw device for precise gun elevation adjustment, a single package of combined shot and powder which doubled the rate of fire, solid, shell and canister shot for different types of targets and brass measure tangent sights which allowed gunners to know where shot would hit before they fired; the result was greatly increased mobility, speed, range, accuracy and producibility of artillery.[99] With this single exception of artillery, the weapons with which Napoleon conquered the continent were, in most respects, identical to those of the Seven Years' War. The infantry continued to fight with flintlock and bayonet and the cavalry with sword, sabre and lance. Carnot's order of 1794 encouraged "action with the bayonet one every occasion" and much rhetoric was expended on the the need to use "cold steel" against the enemies of France. But the weight of evidence suggests that the bayonet was not a decisive factor apart from the psychological appeal.[100] Napoleon's surgeon general Larrey reported 100 wounds from gunfire to every bayonet wound.[101] France's experiment with returning the pike to warfare was merely an expedient to make up for the lack of flintlocks and as soon as

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[97]McNeill, The Pursuit of Power, p. 170.

[98]Ropp, War in the Modern World, p. 100.

[99]Preston and Wise, Men in Arms, pp. 181-182. See also McNeill, The Pursuit of Power, p. 170.

[100]Rothenberg, The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, p. 69.

[101]Van Creveld, Technology and War, p. 95.

production increased it was abandoned. More serious was Napoleon's appreciation of the lance and it became a regular tool of the French cavalry.[102]

The greatest change is found in the support of war and the effects this had on the previously important areas of siegecraft and fortification. In the late eighteenth century we see a near revolution in agriculture throughout Europe. Population growth after 1700 began a geometric rise. As the population density increased, the number of acres tilled rose dramatically. The famines of the 1780's led many to see the benefits of the potato. From a mere 50,000 acres in 1789, France's potato production grew to 765,000 acres in 1803.[103] This produced a surplus which provided the means for feeding the mass armies of France. The requirement to move this increased harvest to the towns and cities led to great improvements throughout Europe in roads and canals which the allowed these mass armies to move over the many new and improved parallel roadways. The problem of lines of communications was greatly eased and resupply of mass armies and true strategic mobility became a reality.

All of these changes, combined with the new logic of the citizen soldier and the endless supply of manpower, meant that new methods of supply could be successfully implemented. The notions that "war feeds war" and that an army must move to survive was as old as ancient Rome. But because of the fear of desertions, the King-Commander could not use them to any significant extent with the mercenary, standing army. The advent of the "volunteer" citizen-soldier made that fear illogical and, even if this rationale was incorrect, the soldier who deserted was now easily and quickly replaced. The administrative bureaus now applied their new methods to requisition. Both within France and abroad, when permission was granted by neutral powers, agents of the government preceded armies in the field and usually were successful securing the necessary provisions. In the absence of this orderly requisition, the abundance of crops in a more densely populated Europe allowed foraging to an extent previously impossible.

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[102]Rothenberg, The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, pp. 70-72.

[103]Strachan, European Armies and the Conduct of War, p. 41.

One profound effect of requisition and forage was to decrease significantly the weight carried by the individual soldier and the baggage needed in the supply train. The soldier of revolutionary France may have marched faster from the "fervor" of his patriotism but the "revolutionary" pace of 120 paces per minute was more likely the result of carrying less weight and living off the land.[104] Each soldier carried personal provisions to last for four days, while another four days' supply was maintained on the wagon trains which followed the troops. "These eight days of provisions were to be consumed only in emergency; insofar as possible daily food requirements were to be obtained by local requisition or foraging."[105]

The individual and collective decrease in baggage greatly improved marching performance and with it gave France a strategic mobility impressive even by today's standards. The size of the French army also made enemy fortresses no more than a nuisance. French armies could march around fortresses without the need for siege and investment because the manpower in the armies rear and the size of the forward elements eliminated the fear of being caught by enemy forces breaking out of a bypassed fortress attacking your rear--previously the only tactical reason for a siege campaign. Napoleon, beneficiary of these changes, was "the first commander to set up a properly organized military requisitioning service." The result was that "his troops were able to march somewhat faster and farther than most others, a most important advantage that goes some way to explain their success."[106]

C. COSTS

Despite having the entire resources of the nation, its manpower, materiel and, in fact, the whole vitality of the state, put at the disposal of war, the economic costs and costs in lives of this new, total war were staggeringly high. The common estimate for men on all sides killed or dead as a result of combat in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars is 1,000,000 men. The French army, through both the revolutionary

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[104]Preston and Wise, Men in Arms, p. 184.

[105]Dupuy, The Evolution of Weapons and Warfare, p. 164.

[106]Van Creveld, Technology and War, p. 116.

and Napoleonic periods, was "at best indifferently supplied and equipped. With stocks already depleted at the onset of the war, French financial and industrial resources were hard pressed to arm, equip, and sustain the vast numbers in the new armies and to replace the wastage of constant and hard campaigning."[107]

France's string of victories and "endless" source of soldiers allowed it to pay the human and economic costs of war, but its maritime weakness and the hostility of England did exacerbate its most fundamental weakness, the dependence of very costly overland transportation. William McNeill points out that where France fought in rich agricultural areas and completed the campaign in one season, all was well with the Napoleonic method. But when Napoleon could not defeat the enemy in one season and when he fought in the more barren reaches of Russia and Spain, the result, largely due to his inability to avail of maritime transport, was disaster.[108] Like Frederick before him, despite the severe limitations of his supply system (or lack thereof), Napoleon was willing and able to bear the costs of war.

This French willingness (and ability) to give battle, is aptly stated by Carnot's 1794 directive:

> to act in mass formation and take the offensive. Join action with the bayonet on every occasion. Give battle on a large scale and pursue the enemy till he is utterly destroyed.[109]

This "approach" resulted in unprecedented casualties during the period 1789-1815. This increase was due not to an increased rate of battle casualties--the proportion of killed and wounded per battle was actually much lower than during the Seven Years' War[110]--but from the huge increase in the number of combatants per battle and the number of battles fought. At Leuthen 116,000 men took the field; at Jena 261,000.[111]

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[107]Rothenberg, The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, p. 120.

[108]McNeill, The Pursuit of Power, p. 203.

[109]Strachan, European Armies and the Conduct of War, p. 40.

[110]Ibid.

[111]Dupuy and Dupuy, Encyclopedia of Military History, pp. 671 and 751.

In half the time, Napoleon fought more campaigns than Frederick fought battles. In the seventeenth century Vauban claimed 200 sieges and 60 battles in the last 200 years; Napoleon conducted only two sieges and twelve campaigns in a generation.[112] Perhaps the best description of the new costs of war is Napoleon's claim to have "an income of 200,000 young men a year."[113]

D. SUPERSTRUCTURE

Those "young men" soon became the only defense against reaction and restoration. With the overthrow of the Ancien Régime the superstructure of the revolution becomes to a significant degree the reason for war. The revolutionary superstructure created an egalite of war--republic, political equality of classes, nationalism, secularism, denial of privilege--which quickly, after 1789, turned to the people for defense of the state. The new mass army which answered this call had to be used if only because it could be fed no other way. The turbulence of political forms, Assembly, Convention, Terror, Directory, and, finally, the Consulate and Empire, is somehow lost in the compelling national need to defend against the various Coalitions.[114]

Perhaps the greatest contribution of what we're here calling the revolutionary superstructure to the changing nature of war is the energy inherent in that turbulence. That energy, rising out of the people, ideas, governmental forms, and especially from the absence of any continuity of authority and order, provided an opportunity for change. After 1789, the vacuum of stability allowed not a revolution in the nature of war but an acceleration of the evolutionary culmination of the many threads of progression from the limited, careful exercise of military power as an adjunct of the personal power of the autocrat to the expression of the will of the as yet unstable citizen-based nation attempting to solidify its national sovereignty. It would be for Napoleon to draw together these many threads of "progress" into a coherent whole.

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[112]Van Creveld, M., Supplying War, p. 41, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1977.

[113]Preston and Wise, Men in Arms, p. 192.

[114]McNeill, The Pursuit of Power, p. 198.

As we might expect with revolution, the underlying relationships among Napoleon's "young men," their officers, and commanders changed drastically. The soldier was now of the same class--citizen--as the officer. All were bound to the nation and the ideals of the revolution. Those ideal--liberty, equality, fraternity--indeed demanded new relationships. But this is easily overstated and it is well to remember that leaders and the men they lead, especially at the small unit level, naturally form a bond at once built on love and hate, with but little to do with the larger dynamic in society.

We can surely go too far in stressing the impact of the revolutionary ideas on the relationships within the French army.[115] Certainly the brutal discipline of the Ancien Régime army, the relationship of nobility and peasant, and the class consciousness and separation gave way to a more level playing field where ability, aggressiveness, and hard work counted more than a patent of nobility; but the several relationships between soldier, officer, and commander in the early nineteenth century still have more in common with the eighteenth than the twentieth century.

After 1801, the French officers' corps was young, ambitious, professional, experienced, open to talent, and displayed a much greater willingness to exercise initiative. Promotion was based on merit and merit was a function of battle, not barracks. Commanders displayed a willingness to take risks (lest they too lose their heads) and risks were strategically less dangerous with so many lives to spend.[116]

One relationship changed little. By 1799, Napoleon, as Frederick before him, combined political and military authority in his person. Both men retained the desire to command all by retaining centralized control. The size of Napoleon's armies and scope of the battle area made this more and more difficult for him--but he never surrendered his capacity as single war planner. Napoleon rarely shared his strategic

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[115]An example from the same era also points to the danger of overstating the impact of ideas generated by an intellectual elite: during the Russian officer's Decembrist revolt of 1825 many soldiers mistook the "constitution" in their rallying cry "Constantine and Constitution" for the name of Constantine's wife. Stolfi, R.H.S., Class Notes, "War in the Modern World," Naval Postgraduate School, January, 1988.

[116]Strachan, European Armies and the Conduct of War, p. 39.

vision even with his field marshals.[117] Staffs do begin to take on more importance during this period but in no sense do we see the "general" staff, only specialized appendages which conform to the system without strategic input or import.[118]

E. MODERN WAR

Author of many of the threads of change we have addressed, Guibert foresaw the requirement for an integrating force to break the patterns of development in the nature of war in the late eighteenth century. He seems to call Napoleon forth, asking of history to

> let there arise--there cannot but arise--some vast genius. He will lay hands so to speak on the knowledge of all the community, will create or perfect the political system, put himself at the head of the machine and give the impulse of its movement.[119]

It has been a secondary premise of this chapter that, in seeking to discover the change in the nature of war between the time of Frederick and that of Napoleon, we cannot attribute that change only to the genius of one man. The genius of Napoleon was not of the modern sense of invention beyond the understanding of lesser mortals but the genius, arguably of a higher order, of seeing the potential of the social, political and technological forces of his own time and weaving the disparate parts into a coherent whole with which to mold the energies of his nation to his own vision of the future.

We have attempted to demonstrate that the fundamental changes (1) in the size, recruitment, organization, character and tactics of the army, (2) in the economic, agricultural and industrial mobilization of the means of war and the societal willingness to accept the increased costs of war, (3) in the effects of these changes on the potential for a new tactical and strategic mobility, and (4) in the fundamental reordering of relationships within the army and in what we've called the superstructure of the society as a whole, that all of these changes predate Napoleon's rise to power in 1799. While, quite apart from Napoleon's impact on history, it is possible to see the change in the

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[117]Rothenberg, The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, p. 129.

[118]Van Creveld, M., Command in War, pp. 67-68, Harvard Univ. Press, 1985.

[119]Strachan, European Armies and the Conduct of War, p. 37.

nature of war without Napoleon;[120] it is wholly impossible to understand the lasting effects of those changes absent the imprint of Napoleon's will in integrating the many threads of change into a fabric which even two hundred years later we recognize as modern warfare.

We might even, at some great risk, assert that we can understand the "changing nature of war" without reference to Napoleon. The risk is the lack of effective example. Napoleon made the whole work; he gave "the impulse of its movement." The impulse was speed, energy, mass, mobility and a new understanding of the raison d'etre of war. Napoleonic warfare is "all out pursuit" to decisive victory.[121] The limits of war previously so firmly in place are gone. Napoleon seeks the point of attack where with his new means of warfare he can decisively defeat the enemy then pursue for utter, total defeat. Napoleon's goal is annihilation--not attrition--of the enemy army. With the exception of Napoleon's exercise of command, Napoleon like Frederick attempted to retain centralized, detailed control of his battles and served as his own planning staff and, less importantly, the lack of technological advancement of personal weaponry, the Napoleonic system of warfare is fundamentally different from the Frederickian system. Throughout this examination of warfare from Frederick to Napoleon, we have used our understanding of the constituent parts of the nature of war to discover the changes which occurred. Those constituents which changed: armies, means, costs and superstructure, provide a framework for understanding what emerged in the early nineteenth century.

Armies develop from the standing army of Frederick, a mercenary cadre paid to promote the power of the ruler, to the citizen army of the nation in arms. The near geometric increase in size, the organizational logic, and the administrative, scientific, economic, agricultural, and societal mobilization which allowed it to fight, were all combined by the genius of Napoleon to change the nature of war from a limited

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[120]As Colonel Dupuy points out in The Evolution of Weapons and Warfare, p. 154, "it is only fair to note that the military instrument Napoleon used as the basis for this system had been to a large extent inherited."

[121]Ropp, War in the Modern World, p. 101.

exercise in maneuver for the purpose of wearing down the will of the enemy ruler until he surrenders to the logic of attrition to a total mobilization of society for the single purpose of decisive victory by annihilation of the enemy army.

V. THE DECLINE OF THE FREDERICKIAN STATE

On July 9, 1807, Frederick William III, heir of Frederick the Great, signed the Treaty of Tilsit and, in effect, gave away all that Frederick had accomplished. This act, as much as the battle outcome at Jena, symbolizes the denouement of the struggle between the Napoleonic and Frederickian systems of warfare, between the Ancien Régime and the forces of modernity. As J.F.C. Fuller wrote, at Jena, "Napoleon destroyed not only a feudal army, but the last vestiges of the feudal idea, and out of the ashes arose a national army, which at Leipzig destroyed him. On the corpse-strewn fields by the Elster, present-day Europe writhed out of its medieval shell."[122]

The change in the nature of war facing the reformers in the 1807 aftermath of Jena was a fundamental transformation of the armies, means, costs and superstructure of warfare in the Ancien Régime. Armies had more than doubled in size and organically changed in character, makeup and tactical and strategic expression; the "nation in arms" required access to the entire energies and capacity of the emerging industrial state; the costs of applying this greatly expanded resource base and the concomitant increase in casualties required a new willingness to risk the manpower and materiel resources of the state; the revolutionary reordering of society required a new vision of the meaning of war in a state with "citizens" bearing the price of citizenship, and these citizens and their leaders had to reform relationships built up over centuries on bonds of feudal concepts no longer valid.

Fortunately for Frederick William and the Prussian state a small group of officers had since the Treaty of Basel been working on what we would today call a "defense reform" program. The "humiliation of Jena" allowed the reformers just enough latitude to place in effect the most important of these reforms. These reform-minded officers and their civilian counterparts were set on understanding the changes in the nature of war and reforming the Prussian state and army to recoup the honor of both. This

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[122]Fuller, J.F.C., The Decisive Battles of the Western World, p. 155, Granada, 1985.

group of military reformers, led by Scharnhorst, Gneisenau, Grolman, Boyen and Clausewitz, made a lasting contribution to future of modern warfare by redefining both the organizational framework of command through their development of the General Staff system and the meaning of officer professionalism.

There is no indication that that was their goal. The immediate goal of the reformers was the survival and redemption of the Prussian state; the means to that end was fundamental change to what was left of the Frederickian system. The challenge was immense and there was little if any reason to believe, in 1807, that there was much chance of success. In the end the reformers achieved their immediate goal but were unable to effect lasting change to the feudal relationships of the Frederickian state. That contribution though was the fundamental component of what was to come later. The ethos of the failed reforms created an environment that is the essence of what was to take its final form half a century later. For this ethos to take root it was first necessary for the reformers to deal with an army rather much longer on self-image than any real capacity to wage war. The disparity between the reality of the Prussian army of 1792 and the self-delusion of that army resting on the laurels of Frederick actually began with Frederick's own policies but did not become apparent until his death.

After the death of Frederick II in 1786 the Prussian army slipped into a long period of decay and petrification. As so often occurs, the heirs of victory seemed not to understand the organic nature of warfare and paid little heed to the signs of change emanating from the West. Under Frederick's nephew, Frederick William II, the Prussian army came under the influence of the prevailing atmosphere in Berlin[123], then "notorious as a center of moral laxity and sensual enjoyment;"[124] and, even though the next Hohenzollern, Frederick William III, stopped the more unseemly excesses of his officer corps, the state of decline in the army continued.

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[123]The editor of the Preussische Staatsanzeiger claimed that "one could call Berlin the great Babylon." Quoted in Craig, G.A., The End of Prussia, p. 12, Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1984.

[124]Rosinski, The German Army, p. 49.

The roots of this decline are found in Frederick's last years; even Treitschke held that at the end of his reign Frederick's army was "in worse condition than that in which he had found it on ascending the throne"[125]. After the Seven Years' War Frederick turned his attention to the economic well-being of his state, and continued his long dependence on mercenaries and his policy of liberal exemptions to the conscription laws. Continued after Frederick's death this dependence reached the point that by 1804 nearly one-half of the army was mercenary. The newly conquered provinces were never fully brought under the canton system for immigration was believed encouraged by the liberal conscription policies. The canton regulations for 1792 proudly stated that in Prussia "beside the mightiest and most formidable army, all the arts of peace bloom, where the compulsion of conscription is moderated as much as possible, and many classes of subjects are hardly disturbed."[126] "How excellent, it was said, that the state raised standing armies and drew on the lower classes for its soldiers....while the burgher follows his trade undisturbed, and the scholar pursues his thoughts."[127] That the consequences of such a trade between many classes "hardly disturbed" and a foreign-dominated army might be a tremendous decrease in combat effectiveness seems not to have occurred to the Prussian leadership.

Prussia's turning away from the Prussian soldier to the mercenary exacerbated another increasingly difficult problem, the wives and children of foreign soldiers. In 1777 only thirty percent of the Berlin garrison were married men as had been the upper limit of policy since the time of the Great Elector, but by 1802 there were 59 wives and 78 children per 100 cantonists and 36 wives and 49 children per 100 mercenaries. This is starkly at odds with the French figure of approximately 15

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[125]Treitschke, H.v., German History in the Nineteenth Century, v. 1, p. 85, George Allen and Unwin, 1915. Quoted in Craig, Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 22.

[126]Shanahan, W.O., Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, p. 47, AMS Press, 1966.

[127]Meinecke, The Age of German Liberation, p. 24. If the reader sees no parallel with our own condition without the author persistently drawing it, it would seem of little use, and I have refrained from beating this theme over the heads of those who will see it on their own.

percent married men.[128] The tensions created between these garrison families and the townspeople, the increased costs of providing for the women and children--Prussia was one of the only European states to provide an allowance per number of dependents--and the increase in the number of soldiers "on leave" along with the unquantifiable reduction in individual effectiveness of soldiers concerned by real family impoverishment, all these factors weigh heavily on the Frederickian system at the turn of the century. Any desire for effective training in garrison was likely disappointed by these conditions and because the larger part of most regiments was on leave or furlough.[129]

Another strain on the Frederickian system was the size of the army maintained under the corrupted canton system with its many exemptions and loopholes. As the Prussian population increased between 1760 and 1786 from 2.2 to 5.7 million the ratio of "effectives," soldiers reasonably available for duty, to the total population remained constant: one soldier for every 28 inhabitants. The mean for all European armies was roughly one soldier for each one hundred inhabitants and in France it was only one soldier for each one hundred forty-four inhabitants.[130] The "strain" this caused was the uneven distribution of hardship within the Prussian population. Exemptions were liberal in the new provinces and the cities, while the bourgeoisie and city dwellers were favored over the peasants in the countryside. The resulting army was either Prussian soldiers bitter over the inequities of their system or mercenaries with no attachment to the state.

The officer corps was to an extent undergoing a similar trend towards "mercenaries." Frederick's obsession with the desirability of the noble officer led to the forced dismissal of bourgeois officers after the Seven Years' War. This placed a strain on the talents of the Prussian nobility which could only be alleviated by offering

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[128]Corvisier, A., Armies and Societies in Europe, 1494-1789, trans. A.T. Siddall, pp. 174-175, Indiana Univ. Press, 1979.

[129]Rothenberg, The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, pp. 87-89, provides an excellent elaboration of the problems inherent in the "soldier's women."

[130]Corvisier, Armies and Societies in Europe, pp. 113-114.

commissions to foreign nobles. Swelling the officers' corps with foreign nobles, often granted a patent of nobility on the eve of acceptance, led to both officers of the highest caliber and what Treitschke called "adventurers of dubious character." It certainly diluted the homogeneity of the Prussian officer corps and its connection to the Prussian state which had been its great strengths.

Another long-standing shortcoming of the Prussian officer corps was its "very low state of educational standards".[131] In 1720 Frederick William I had instituted cadet schools first at Stolpe and later at Potsdam, Kulm and Berlin. In the intervening years the reputation of Prussian arms led much of Europe to follow and then surpass the Prussian example. It was not difficult to surpass the educational standards of a state where the prevalent view was that a "general was not regarded as uneducated, even though he could barely write his own name. Whoever could do more was styled a pedant, inksplasher and scribbler."[132] Gordon Craig holds a chief element of this problem to be the long term tendency of the nobility to send its young boys to the cadet schools at such an early age--Frederick called them "youth snatched from their mothers' breasts"--that they hadn't even the most rudimentary educational skills.

With the death of Frederick and therewith release from his iron rule, officials and officers began to show signs of "conceit and insubordination." Even well-intentioned attempts to relieve the lot of soldiers by decreasing marginally the severity of disciplinary measures and liberalizing leave procedures led to further reductions in Prussian military effectiveness. Frederick's practice of furloughing cantonists for the entire year except for the annual maneuvers was, under his successors, extended to foreign mercenaries while maneuvers were shortened to four weeks. Training for new recruits was reduced to ten weeks. All these reforms and economically motivated training changes seem driven by civil interests; the net effect was a clear reduction of Prussian military effectiveness.

Frederick's reaction to the rise of French military effectiveness in the wake of the reforms of Gribeauval and his contemporaries was to downplay

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[131]Craig, Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 25.

[132]Ibid., p. 26.

> artillery while emphasizing discipline and 'honor,' i.e., the traits that had always made Prussian officers and men ready to sacrifice their lives on behalf of the state. Frederick and his successor thus chose to rely on old-fashioned military virtues and deliberately turned their backs on rational experimentation and technical reform of the sort Gribeauval carried through. In 1806 the cost of this conservative policy became evident. At the battle of Jena, Prussian valor, obedience, and honor proved an inadequate counterweight to the new scale of war the French had meanwhile perfected, thanks, in large part, to the often reluctant hospitality French army commanders showed to the rational and experimental approach to their profession.[133]

The depth of the decline of the Frederickian system became clear when this army took the field as part of the First Coalition in 1792. Frederick William II, having endured the Prussian retreat at Valmy and with the states reserves financially drained, finally accepted the terms of the Treaty of Basel in 1795, ceding the left bank of the Rhine and accepting a neutrality based on Prussian weakness. There followed a decade of uneasy peace in Prussia, a peace welcomed by all but a few soldiers still proud of the Prussian heritage but aware of how far their army had fallen since Leuthen. Those soldiers recognized that the "Frederician army's organization and tactics[134] were obsolete, and were no match for the resources of the new era"; that their "obsolete army was no longer the force that Frederick had led; its strength had been sapped by the destructive effects of the new spirit, so that the weaknesses of the old and new era fatally converged." They recognized all of this for they were witnesses when "the old Prussian state crumbled like dry rot."[135] Their challenge was to convince the Prussian leadership that reform was not only necessary for recoupment of the faded glory of the Frederickian era but essential to the survival of the state.

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[133]McNeill, The Pursuit of Power, p. 173.

[134]For a detailed explanation of the efforts at tactical reform prior to 1795, see Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, pp. 47-110.

[135]Meinecke, F., The Age of German Liberation, p. 42.

VI. THE INITIAL REFORMS: BASEL TO TILSIT

The challenges facing the Prussian state and army at the turn of the nineteenth century were the same as have faced nations ever since: how to field a large enough army, with ranks filled with the "right" type of men and led by the "right" type of officers, at a cost which does not unnecessarily impede the economic well being of the state, with a tactical and operational doctrine which can meet the prevailing threat, and with an institutional ethos and strategic doctrine in consonance with the principles of legitimacy underpinning the raison d'etre of the state. These central questions were, for Prussia, critical to its survival; yet in 1800 only a very small number of Prussian officers and civilian officials seemed aware of the need for reform to meet the twin challenge of the decline of the Frederickian system and the rise of Napoleonic France.

It is always tempting to see in momentous events such as the Prussian reform era a clear break with the historical past, but it is the historian's first duty to find in every discontinuity the continuity of change which reminds us that history is a continuum, not the fresh page of a new chapter which it often seems. The usual starting date given the work of the Prussian Reformers is 1807, but as Otto Hintze reminds us in his article "Prussian Reform Movements Before 1806," the "past gave them justification; and so long as the basic features of Old Prussia--the army and the bureaucracy--were maintained, the continuity of Prussian history was preserved."[136]

The ranks of the Prussian officer corps were not unaffected by the spirit and ideas of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. General von Ruchel reformed the cadet schools in the 1790's and four higher military academies were established between 1763 of 1806. Ruchel's adjutant, Major von Knesebeck (and a later opponent of the reformers) called in 1803 for fundamental reform of the army to create a more national force to meet the French challenge. Georg von Behrenhorst and Generals von

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[136]Hintze, O., "Prussian Reform Movements Before 1806," The Historical Essays of Otto Hintze, ed. F. Gilbert, p. 67, Oxford Univ. Press, 1975.

Courbiere and von Ruchel called for a cadre system which could be quickly expanded in the event of war, the starting point for advocacy of universal military service.[137]

Many of these new ideas were generated in the Militärische Gesellschaft. This Military Society, in existence since 1801 but officially founded in Berlin on the anniversary of Frederick the Great's birthday in 1802 by Colonel Gerhard Johann von Scharnhorst and seven fellow officers and two professors at the Berlin Institute, had as its aim the reform of the Prussian army.[138] The first article of the Society's by-laws declared its purpose "to instruct its members through the exchange of ideas in all areas of the art of war, in a manner that would encourage them to seek out truth."[139] Scharnhorst, "one of the greatest military thinkers of all ages and the one man who had already guessed the riddle of Napoleon's miraculous success and gained an inkling of the magnitude of the change brought about in warfare by the Revolution and its heir and successor," used the society as a platform for his tactical reform proposals: "the distribution of the forces into divisions, the deployment of troops for battle in depth rather than in breadth, and the combination of the traditional Prussian line tactics with the more elastic new French system of swarms of sharpshooters".[140] Presided over by General von Ruchel, the military society included most of the future reformers of 1807, Scharnhorst, Grolman, Boyen and Clausewitz, as well as Major Knesebeck, Ruhle von Lilienstern and Colonel von Massenbach.[141]

Scharnhorst had entered the Prussian service in July 1801 and after an initial posting with the artillery service he was called to the Quartermaster-General's staff of Lieutenant-General von Geusau and given responsibility for reorganizing the military school at Berlin, the Berlin Institute. Scharnhorst expanded the curriculum to include

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[137]Goerlitz, W., History of the German General Staff, trans. B. Battershaw, p. 12, Westview Press, 1985. See also Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 28.

[138]Goerlitz, History of the German General Staff, p. 17.

[139]Paret, P., Clausewitz and the State, p. 66, Princeton Univ. Press, 1985.

[140]Rosinski, The German Army, pp. 58-59.

[141]For a complete description of the work of the Military Society, see White, C.E., The Enlightened Soldier, Praeger, 1989.

the study of strategy and used this Academy "superimposed upon the more elementary Institute" to begin the education of the generation of leaders necessary to implement his ideas of reform. The initial classes at the Institute included Boyen, Grolman, Tiedemann, Ruhle and Clausewitz.[142] It was with these individuals that Scharnhorst was to attempt the fundamental reordering of the Prussian army. To accomplish this task it was necessary to create a new type of Prussian officer and it was his individual creativity and initiative that Scharnhorst sought through education to bring forth. Central to his efforts was Scharnhorst's use of the concept of Bildung to explain the life-long process necessary to create such a soldier. Bildung, literally culture, was not "the social polish needed to enter court life" but "the perfectibility of the individual's character and intellect through education."[143]

The Military Society and the Berlin Institute became Scharnhorst's vehicles for planting the seeds of Bildung within the Prussian officers' corps. Scharnhorst expanded the curriculum of this "national academy" to include a three year course centering on military history, geography, applied and pure mathematics, logic and Scharnhorst's own lectures on strategy, tactics and the duties of the general staff. He designed this curriculum with the principal aim of "forming the intelligence and at exercising the power of judgement." Scharnhorst saw that "it is as important for a soldier to possess these qualities as it is to acquire knowledge more directly related to the practice [of war]....It is extremely important to guide the student toward independent thought."[144] This emphasis on the individual and his powers of independent thought was given the greatest practical application in the study of military history. He sought to use history, "the most complete intellectual representation of reality," to guide the student toward an understanding of "war as it actually is" and

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[142]Ibid., p. 59.

[143]White, The Enlightened Soldier, p. xii.

[144]Paret, Clausewitz and the State, p. 69.

was "not in the least impressed by the pretentious theories" of the then currently popular Bulow and Jomini.[145]

Scharnhorst is quoted as asking an associate in the Military Society, "What will happen when the men Frederick II trained during the Seven Years' War are no longer with us? The crisis can be met only be educating our officers." Peter Paret attributes the focus of his educational energies as not only on the officer corps in general "but also of a program that prepared an elite for the duties of superior command." That elite was to be composed of future commanders and "those who served in a reorganized and strengthened general staff."

Scharnhorst might well have asked "what will happen when Frederick II is no longer with us." Already before his entry in the Prussian service due to his service in the Hanoverian Army during the First Coalition, Scharnhorst realized that absent a Frederick a new way must be found to meet the challenge of Napoleon and that the answer was to establish a general staff "removed from its former subsidiary position and educate it for a role of central significance."[146]

In 1802, Massenbach, an ardent admirer of Napoleon's military accomplishments, provided the organizational logic for Scharnhorst's plan writing two memoranda which outlined the requirement for a permanent general staff which would operate in peace and war and provide in peacetime war plans for all possible contingencies.[147] These memoranda "justify his being called...the father of a unitary General Staff organization." Massenbach laid the theoretical groundwork for what was to become the Prussian General Staff, urging that (1) the quartermaster-general's staff be reorganized into three separate brigades each with specific responsibility for a given geographic area, either Austria, France or Russia, (2) that war plans be developed by these brigades for

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[145]Ibid., pp. 69-71.

[146]Scharnhorst to Lieutenant J. G. von Rauch, 15 August 1802, quoted in Paret, Clausewitz and the State, pp. 67-68.

[147]Ritter, The Sword and the Scepter, pp. 163-164, is at odds with Paret, Craig and Goerlitz on whether Massenbach's proposals on the General Staff were contained in the memoranda of 1802 or an earlier proposal offered to the Duke of Brunswick in 1795.

contingencies in their respective areas, (3) that the staff participate in exercises designed to provide familiarity with potential terrain problems both in Prussia and abroad, (4) that staff members be rotated between troop units and staff assignments, and (5) that the head of the quartermaster-general staff be granted direct access to the king, the Immediatevortrag, and the right to provide advice to the king on all military matters.[148] Massenbach's proposals were finally accepted in 1803 by Frederick William III but only over the objections of Field Marshal von Mollendorff, head of the Oberkreigskollegium, and Generalmajor von Kockritz, head of the Generaladjutantur.

Mollendorff and Kockritz represent an incredibly complex and duplicative system of military administration which was a holdover from the policy of Frederick II which set the king's ministers at odds and thereby allowed the king to pick from the several often conflicting opinions of his primary war advisors.[149] In the period between the Treaties of Basel and Tilsit there were six centers of power and influence over the king within the Prussian army. The Militardepartement of the General Directory was created by Frederick William I to allow his exercise of authority over administrative army matters. The Governors of the Prussian garrisons had near autonomy over the administration of their assigned regiments and were independent from control by the Militardepartement in matters of training, education and methods of recruitment for their canton. Overall supervision of recruitment and the canton system was vested in the general inspectors. The Generaladjutantur, also begun under Frederick William I, were originally merely the personal aides to the king tasked with handling royal military correspondence. However, throughout the Eighteenth century largely due to their immediate access to the king their influence grew and, by 1806, they had responsibility through the separate infantry, cavalry and artillery Generaladjutants for transmitting all royal directives to the other agencies of military administration. The Oberkriegskollegium, established in 1787, was designed to control this bureaucracy and

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[148]Goerlitz, History of the German General Staff, pp. 20-21.

[149]For the development of the Prussian bureaucracy see Rosenberg, H., Bureaucracy, Aristocracy, and Autocracy, The Prussian Experience 1669-1815, Beacon Press, 1958.

coordinate the actions of the various agencies, bringing under central direction all military matters.[150] The final piece of this bureaucratic maze was the Generalquartiermeisterstab, the direct antecedent of the general staff. Since the time of the Great Elector its functions had included engineering services, plans for march routes and selection of camp sites and fortified positions.[151] It was not until Massenbach's memoranda that any serious effort was undertaken to resolve the duties and the Quartermaster General Staff.

The failure of the reform proposals of Scharnhorst and the other members of the Militärische Gesselschaft prior to 1807 was in large measure due to the resistance of the "old Prussians" such as Mollendorff and Kockritz, a result of attempts to protect their positions within the bureaucratic labyrinth of army administration. A second cause can be ascribed to a certain amount of anti-intellectualism long present in the Prussian officer corps. Mollendorff, a hero of the Seven Years' War, is said to have greeted all reform proposals with the comment, "this is altogether above my head." But there is also present an honest disagreement and resistance to changing the forms and institutions of Frederick the Great.[152]

Whatever the real cause of resistance to change, the only successfully implemented proposals during the decade between Basel and Tilsit were Massenbach's general staff proposals and Scharnhorst's divisional organization proposal. Neither was fully implemented before the Jena campaign of October 1806. The General Staff was organized under the first chief, General von Geusau, with three brigades each under a Generalquartiermeisterleutnant, with equivalent rank of colonel, and eighteen

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[150]Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, pp. 29-30. See also Goerlitz, History of the German General Staff, pp. 9-10.

[151]Goerlitz, History of the German General Staff, p. 3.

[152]Scharnhorst was to use this Frederickian sentiment in many of his later reform proposals by claiming Frederickian precedent for his actions. "The historical demonstrations used by Scharnhorst as a means to persuade the King that his bold plans were correct were not merely for show (Blendwerk); it was just this miraculous blending of old and new that was characteristic of the military reform." Hintze, The Historical Essays of Otto Hintze, p. 74.

subordinate staff officers. While this is no doubt the most important milestone in the development of the Prussian General Staff concept, its original exemplification fell far short of the reformer's designs and in no way provided the "unified control of strategic policy" envisaged. Geusau, the holdover Quartermaster-General, still viewed his responsibilities, as did the king, as administrative. The three section heads, Scharnhorst, von Massenbach and Major-General von Phull, in complete disharmony over questions of strategy and tactics, were allowed to follow their own divergent paths as long as they remained within the prevailing orthodoxy of military opinion. Just months before the fatal campaign of Jena, Scharnhorst's request for a reconnoitering of Westphalia and Thuringia was disapproved by Geusau because "he feared the expense, and that the presence of Prussian officers on foreign territories would cause comment and might give rise to misinterpretations."[153] Additionally, the still dominant Byzantine system of military administration with its unspecified areas of responsibility did not allow for effective implementation of the proposals laid out by Scharnhorst and the other members of the Military Society. Even Scharnhorst's proposal for divisional organization, well understood and appreciated by all who had studied Napoleon's campaigns, was only implemented "on the march to Jena" far too late to benefit the army. This still-born reform movement had done what it could but it was not enough and Scharnhorst knew it. He wrote to his daughter on the eve of Jena, "I know what we ought to do, what we will do is known to the Gods alone."[154]

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[153]Paret, Clausewitz and the State, pp. 76-77.

[154]Goerlitz, History of the German General Staff, p. 25.

VII. THE PRECONDITIONS FOR REFORM

The still-born reform efforts of 1801-1805 were unable to overcome the fundamental decay of the Frederickian system in time to alter the battle outcome at Jena, Auerstädt, or Friedland, and finally Prussia was forced to accept Napoleon's terms in the Treaty of Tilsit. The hostility of crown, cabinet and nobility to the ideas and program of the reformers, the apathy of a Prussian people separated from the state and its army by a seemingly unbridgeable gulf, and the wholly deficient military preparations for war made Prussia's downfall in 1806 and 1807 nearly inevitable.

The preconditions for successful reform were a reversal of the reformer's lack of credibility with the crown and creation of a connection between the Prussian people and their state and army. Absent these preconditions the military reforms necessary to overcome the decline of the Frederickian system were not possible and the reformers' dreams of a professional cadre leading an army of citizen-soldiers to victory against the hated Napoleon would remain illusive. Equally illusory would be a future Prussian General Staff which might, through Scharnhorst's concept of Bildung, institutionalize the excellence of Frederick the Great and rejuvenate the Prussian officer corps.

The nascent Prussian General Staff started the campaign of 1806 not as a coherent whole but as a fragmented body totally unable to provide coherent leadership or the missing unity of command and decision making which proved to be the single greatest weakness of the Prussian forces in its struggle with Napoleon. "Thus a war accepted under the worst possible conditions was fought in the worst possible way, and what was ultimately to become the Great Prussian General Staff made its debut on the stage of history with a fiasco."[155]

When the army of Frederick William III took the field against Napoleon's Grande Armée in October 1806, Prussian command and control was hopelessly divided. Geusau, Chief of the General Staff, and his three section heads, Scharnhorst, Phull and

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[155]Goerlitz, History of the German General Staff, p. 25.

Massenbach, were divided between the three Army commanders and the King's Headquarters. Phull went with Geusau to the Royal Headquarters while Massenbach became chief of staff to Duke Hohenlohe and Scharnhorst chief of staff to the Duke of Brunswick. Each headquarters acted independently and the royal entourage provided only conflicting guidance at best.[156]

Scharnhorst's plan for concentrating Prussia's inferior forces was ignored and Hohenlohe's First Army was defeated by Napoleon at Jena while Marshal Davout defeated Brunswick's superior numbers at Auerstädt. Blucher's reserve Third Army arrived too late to assist Hohenlohe. Scharnhorst's insistence on the folly of the "plan" being executed by this command menagerie led to his banishment by Brunswick to the left wing.[157]

Taking command Scharnhorst "managed for a moment to maintain the fate of the day in the balance" but the lack of reserves inevitably led to retreat. Wounded and having taken a position in the line with musket after giving his mount to the king's brother, Prince Heinrich, Scharnhorst left the field on foot with the last stragglers. Eventually linking up with Blücher, who at the time was attempting to save what remained of the Prussian artillery, Scharnhorst assisted Blücher in the diversionary engagements and successful retreat across the Harz Mountains to Mecklenburg. Eventually surprised by French cavalry at Lübeck, Blücher capitulated and sent Scharnhorst to the king with the news. Reassigned to Marshal L'Estocq, Scharnhorst

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[156]Writing of Scharnhorst's impossible conditions, Clausewitz asked his reader "if one realizes that three commanders-in-chief and two chiefs of staff serve with the army, though only one commander and one chief of staff ought to be there....How much must the effectiveness of a gifted man be reduced when he is constantly confronted by obstacles of convenience and tradition, when he is paralyzed by constant friction with the opinions of others." Clausewitz to Marie v. Bruehl, 29 September 1806, Correspondence, p. 65. Quoted in Paret, Clausewitz and the State, p. 124.

[157]Rosinski, The German Army, p. 60, has Scharnhorst "sent by the irritated Duke half in disgrace from central direction to the left wing." Paret, Clausewitz and the State, p. 124, has Scharnhorst using a "pretext of attending to affairs on the left wing" and calls this a "renunciation of responsibility on Scharnhorst's part that makes it easier to understand the moral exhaustion of many lesser men."

again distinguished himself at Preussisch where he "deprived Napoleon of an almost certain victory."[158]

Gneisenau, Blücher's later chief of staff, also distinguished himself by holding the Pomeranian seacoast fortress of Colberg until the armistice, one of the very few examples of a "vindication of the honor of the Prussian arms" in the entire campaign. Gneisenau had refused to surrender with Hohenlohe at Prenzlau and this stark differentiation between the new Prussian honor of the reformers and the old Prussia of the defeated Frederickian remnant which surrendered forces and fortresses across Prussia, often without a fight, made an impact on Frederick William.[159]

Thus the first precondition for reform was fulfilled by the reformers' performances in battle. They demonstrated the type of valor, leadership and honor heretofore held by Frederickian tradition to be the sole province of the East Elbian caste. More to the point, in the mind of Frederick William III his favored courtiers had dishonored the name of Prussia surrendering fortresses without a shot being fired and offering not leadership but futility in operational planning and command.

Even the hesitant Frederick William had known since 1795 that his Army was a "diseased body which must be helped back to health."[160] Hintze wrote that "Frederick William III was a long way from sharing that blinding optimism so common in Prussia before Jena." And that he held with some certainty the knowledge of what should be done, "the reforming mood that he showed from the beginning came from a conviction that he often expressed, that prevailing conditions both in the army and in the civil service would spell ruin for the state unless something were done."[161]

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[158]Rosinski, The German Army, p. 60. Goerlitz, History of the German General Staff, p. 28, ascribes surrender to "lack of ammunition and supplies." Scharnhorst's relationship with Marshal Blücher became the precedent for the "military marriage" of the "naturally gifted commander and a scientifically trained Chief of Staff."

[159]For Gneisenau's own summation of his experiences of 1806, see Anderson, E.N., Nationalism and the Cultural Crisis in Prussia, 1806-1815, p. 179, Octagon Books, 1966.

[160]Rosinski, The German Army, p. 17.

[161]Hintze, The Historical Essays of Otto Hintze, p. 68.

But to force his hand to action required the profound humiliation of the very existence of Prussia and the Hohenzollern dynasty being completely at the mercy of Napoleon's will and Czar Alexander's beneficence to persuade Frederick William to turn to the only source of energy left in his domains--the reform party, Stein and Scharnhorst. The two "Jacobins" seemed to offer the only prospect for "mutilated Prussia" to reassert herself and recover all that was lost. As Golo Mann has written, "It was an extraordinary time and it gave extraordinary men a chance."[162]

Frederick William had good reason to fear these men. Their intention was to transform the Prussian state into a nation. A nation of individuals expressing their moral freedom through service to the state was not in the best interests of the autocratic Hohenzollern dynasty nor could it be seen as anything other than the death knell of the Junker nobility's hold on the Prussian officer corps. For implicit in the service of free men to a nation was their stake in the life of a nation.

Heretofore Prussia had been a "machine state" where the reformers saw that "the individual was to function as a cog in a mechanism...a mere means to an end, and his moral energies were suppressed."[163] The reformers' intent was to release those moral energies for the benefit of the state, but the heavy hand of Hohenzollern history left neither the Prussian peasant nor the emerging bourgeois with either enthusiasm or outlet for the individual spirit now dormant in the disinterested Prussian populace who seemed not to share in the defeat of their king. That the people should feel no share in the affairs of the Prussian state is amply demonstrated by the detached advice they received after Jena from the king's chief minister, Count Schulenburg, "His Majesty had lost a battle and the citizen's first duty was to remain calm."[164]

The reformers "clearly recognized the deeper causes of Prussia's collapse--the gulf which existed between the state machine and the Prussian people, which made it

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[162]Mann, G., The History of Germany Since 1789, pp. 34-35, Frederick A. Praeger, 1968.

[163]Holborn, H., A History of Modern Germany 1648-1840, p. 393, Yale Univ. Press, 1964.

[164]Goerlitz, History of the German General Staff, p. 28.

impossible for the people to identify themselves with their government and which deprived the state of popular support in time of crisis."[165] The fact that the reformers were able to overcome the disinterest of a conquered people, a hostile nobility, a frightened king and perhaps the most able conqueror in history "must forever rank as perhaps the proudest page in [Prussia's] history and one of the most memorable instances of the triumph of the spirit over all material obstacles as well as human malice and indolence."[166]

That Frederick William turned to these "extraordinary men", Stein, Scharnhorst and their collaborators, is best understood in light of the dire circumstances in which he found himself, the contempt he felt for the old school officers who had in many instances acted reprehensibly in the campaign of 1806-1807, and the new battle-tested credibility of the reformers who had performed superbly in the losing effort. It was clearly time to try the new approaches of the reformers lest all be lost, there was no alternative. The clear defeat of the Frederickian system opened the way for reform for "if decline begins at the zenith recovery starts at the nadir."[167]

France had let the genie of nationalism out of the bottle and now that its power was apparent Napoleon could not put back the cork and declare empire. The dynamic effects of the French example were not lost on the Prussian reformers, but their program was not to be simply imitation. The Prussian reforms "were also an independent, imaginative reaction against the misery of the defeat which necessitated them....It attracted ideas and their originators, men of enthusiasm and ability who came to the rescue from different parts of Germany."[168]

The chief reformer was Freiherr vom Stein.

> He was what many think they are but only few manage to become: a patriot. For him Germany was something noble and precious. For the liberation of Germany from French rule he was ready to sacrifice his money, his possessions and his life.

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[165]Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 38.

[166]Rosinski, The German Army, p. 53.

[167]Mann, The History of Germany Since 1789, p. 26.

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

> The reforms which he was allowed to make in Prussia in 1807-8 were in the last resort intended to serve the cause of liberation.[169]

Liberation was then the cause of both civil and military reform in Prussia. The civil reforms of Baron Stein supplied the second critical precondition for the success of Scharnhorst's military reforms. Stein believed that the "purpose of good government was to educate citizens to educate themselves, or at any rate to take an organized part in public life so that the state lived from within and so that there could be no repetition of the deplorable collapse of 1806."[170] His supreme objective was to "arouse a new patriotic spirit among the people by founding the state on the nation's moral energies."[171] Scharnhorst desired to harness this new spirit by bringing "the army and nation into a close union."[172] Stein and Scharnhorst understood the critical links among the civil status of the Prussian middle class and peasantry, the political life of the community and the willingness of the Prussian populace to answer a call to arms to throw out the French invader. "Without the personal liberty of the peasants, without the abolition of the political separation of the social classes, and also without the new organization of the governmental structure, the building of a new army would have been impossible."[173]

After accompanying the royal party to Königsberg after the Jena debacle, Stein, then minister of the excise and factory department of the General Directory, became the most outspoken of those calling for reform. In April of 1806 Stein sent the king a memorandum calling for establishment of five ministries with complete responsibility for their respective areas of military affairs, foreign affairs, national police, public finance and legal affairs, unifying state administration and replacing the king's

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[169]Ibid., p. 32.

[170]Ibid., pp. 32-33.

[171]Holborn, A History of Modern Germany 1648-1840, p. 416.

[172]Ibid.

[173]Ibid.

cabinet.[174] Stein's insistence on ministerial independence and responsibility led to what Hajo Holborn calls "a revolt of the high bureaucracy against the autocracy of the Prussian monarchs."[175] Stein was dismissed by Frederick William in January of 1807 as a "'recalcitrant, truculent, obstinate, and insubordinate servant' for his insistence upon the abolition of autocratic rule and irresponsible cabinet-councillors and the establishment instead of a joint and independent council of ministers."[176]

Frederick William recalled Stein and named him his chief minister, ironically at Napoleon's insistence, in the aftermath of the Treaty of Tilsit. The man Stein replaced and the object of Napoleon's concern, Count Hardenberg, had smoothed the way for Stein's ministerial reform and Frederick William quickly assented. Within a week of Stein's recall to office on 4 October 1807 the reform program of ministerial responsibility, liberation of the peasantry, municipal government reform, and national representation began to take form. Though the plan for national representation was never enacted the rest of Stein's program was implemented.

Liberation of the peasants was effected by the Royal Edict of October 9, 1807 which proclaimed: "After St. Martin's day of 1810 there shall be only free people, as is already the case on the domains in all our provinces."[177] On 19 November the Stadteordnung, the new order for the cities, created a system of divided legislative and executive power in the cities. A city assembly of popularly elected deputies elected a mayor and town council which together formed the Magistrat which governed the city. The assembly had budget approval authority and supervised the Magistrat. Though Stein's plans for a national assembly on this model were thwarted, these two reforms provided the absolutely essential basis for military reform.

Stein's civil reforms filled the second precondition for military reform by placing the individual's freedom and limited right to (municipal) self determination in balance

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[174]White, The Enlightened Soldier, pp. 125-6.

[175]Holborn, A History of Modern Germany 1648-1840, p. 398.

[176]Rosinski, The German Army, p. 56.

[177]Holborn, A History of Modern Germany 1648-1840, p. 406.

with the state's need for his service in the coming crisis of national survival. Credibility for the reformers had to come in battle and it was at Jena and in its aftermath that the reformers demonstrated to the crown both their personal worth and the complete collapse of the operational doctrine, planning and tactics of the anti-reform cabal. Boyen described the deficiencies of this Prussian army as "1. the leadership which thought in terms of concessions and prestige values; 2. the overconfidence of the army officers; 3. the unwillingness of the civil officials to grant more money to the army; 4. the neglect of all that had to do with real preparation for war."[178] The first two deficiencies point to the weakness of the crown and the Junker officer nobility and implicitly the potential strength of the reformers while the third is a timeless complaint of military officers. The fourth deficiency establishes the reformers' claim to a new professionalism in war fighting, an understanding of "war as it really it," which will lay at the center of their efforts to reform the Prussian army.

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[178]Boyen, H. v., Erinnerungen aus dem Leben des General-Feldmarschalls Hermann von Boyen, ed. F. Nippold, Leipzig, 1889. Quoted in Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, pp. 86-87.

VIII. PRUSSIA REFORMS

Johann Fichte delivered his Addresses to the German Nation in occupied Berlin late in 1807. He declared to the once proud German people, "We are conquered, the clash of weapons is ended. If we will it, a new struggle of principles, of morals, of character now begins."[179] The Prussian reformers, Stein, Scharnhorst, Gneisenau, Grolman, Boyen and others, were already well on the way to answering Fichte's clarion call to a new beginning.

The significant work of the Prussian Reform Movement had three major components and lasted merely eighteen months, from July, 1807 to December, 1808. These major reforms were largely the work of the Commission for Military Reorganization and included the purging of the officer corps by the Commission offshoot, the Superior Investigating Commission, reorganization of the army and the reform of the army which included reorganization of the army schools, the new Articles of War, the Access to Commissions Order, and the establishment of a central War Ministry.

King Frederick William III initiated the "period of the reforms" when he appointed the Commission for Military Reorganization on July 25, 1807.[180] The work of the Prussian Reform Movement is often called reform from above[181] to distinguish it from the revolution in France and this can best be understood by the chief instrument and method of reform. The king appointed and provided detailed instructions for the Military Reorganization Commission. This reading of the events of 1807 is much at odds with the view of the reformers as radicals subverting the

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[179]Quoted in Meinecke, F., The Age of German Liberation, p. 44.

[180]Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 38.

[181]The origin of this idea, repeated in nearly every work on the period, is related in Hintze, The Historical Essays of Otto Hintze, p. 69, "The Prussian Minister Struensee in describing Prussian social reform plans to the French charge d'affaires [in August, 1799]: 'The creative revolution was made in France from below; in Prussia it will be made slowly and from above.'"

royal prerogative. Although the king's actions, particularly as regards his appointments and continued reliance on his cabinet, denied the reform party clear victories in many cases, it is hardly clear that they were working at odds with his will.

The original membership of the commission included Major General Scharnhorst, Major General von Massenbach,[182] Colonel von Gneisenau, Lieutenant Colonel von Bronikowsky and the soon to be appointed (August 18) Adjutant-General, Lieutenant Colonel Count von Lottum. On July 15, 1807 Frederick William had ordered Scharnhorst and Lottum to arrange for release of officers taken prisoner during the preceding campaign and begin demobilization of the army. On the twenty-fifth the additional members were named and the new and broader mandate evident in the commission's title added to their work.

The Commission was Frederick William's creation and as was his wont he exercised the Hohenzollern habit of balancing the commission's membership between the reformers and the anti-reform party. "He felt it was his duty to hear both sides before deciding what was best for all."[183] The original membership was balanced in favor of the conservatives, Massenbach, Bronikowsky and Lottum, with Scharnhorst and Gneisenau representing the reform party. Lieutenant Colonel von Borstell, another conservative, was added in October, 1807. Recognizing the possibility of impasse, in early 1808 the king appointed Scharnhorst head of the Commission and replaced the most obstinate of the conservatives, Borstell, with reformers, Count Gotzen and Major von Boyen, and reduced the participation of Bronikowsky and Massenbach.[184] At the same time Major von Grolman, another reformer, was added giving the reform party

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[182] Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, p. 102. This is not the Colonel Christian von Massenbach of the earlier pre-Jena reform era who had been disgraced as Chief of Staff to Hohenlohe for advising capitulation at Prenzlau.

[183] Anderson, Nationalism and the Cultural Crisis in Prussia, 1806-1815, p. 281.

[184] Simon, W.M., The Failure of the Prussian Reform Movement, 1807-1819, p. 152ff., Cornell Univ. Press, 1955. Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, p. 125, points out that Bronikowsky and Massenbach were not dismissed but eased out of much of the Commission's work. Borstell was replaced after Scharnhorst threatened to resign.

clear leadership of the Commission. Captain Clausewitz, Scharnhorst's personal adjutant, also brought his considerable talents to the work of the Commission as did Freiherr vom Stein, the newly recalled chief minister.

The king provided the Commission[185] with his "Guiding Principles for the Reorganization of the Army." This initial "charge" contained nineteen points which required the Commission to "investigate the recent campaign, to cashier and punish those officers whose conduct had been improper, and to propose changes in army organization, supply, service regulations, selection of officers, and education and training"[186] and secure "the end of foreign recruiting, the admission of non-aristocratic officers, a new method of educating officers, organization in divisions, better uniforms [a particular interest of Frederick William], reform of the supply system, reduction of baggage, prohibition of Freiwachter, a new organization for the cavalry, revised Articles of War, and new regulations for each branch of service."[187] Thus the king provided a fairly comprehensive outline of what was to come. However, both his placement of officers opposed to these reforms on the Commission and his continued adherence to the administratively convoluted system of cabinet counsel and competing ministers acted as a brake on the reform program he had outlined.

A. THE PURGE OF THE OFFICERS' CORPS

That the reform party was able to accomplish anything at all is perhaps due solely to the fact that the Commission reached agreement that those officers found guilty of dishonorable conduct during the past campaign should be severely punished. The king then established a separate "Superior Investigating Commission" on November 27, 1807 "to investigate the capitulations of the fortresses and the field armies and determine in each case the strength of the enemy, the capacity for defense, and the

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[185]Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, p. 103, makes the distinction between the king's "recommendations rather than his commands."

[186]Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 38.

[187]Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, p. 103.

preparations of the commanding officer....to determine whether the officers' conduct had been completely honorable."[188]

The work of this separate Commission dragged on right to the eve of the Wars of Liberation and never addressed the events of 1807. Had the issue of the conduct of officers not been diverted from the program of the Reorganization Commission no significant reforms could have been addressed, for the king and the Prussian public and press were most interested in this one issue. The main focus of the Investigating Commission work was the twelve cases of surrender in the field during 1806. Due to often contradictory testimony and the lack of significant documentation--most of the army's plans were lost during the retreat--the Commission's work proved extremely difficult, but in the end, except for Blucher who held out until lack of food and ammunition forced him to capitulate, each commanding officer who capitulated was found guilty.

In the final accounting this process cannot easily be called a purge. Only 208 of the 7,166 officers in the Prussian Army of 1806-7 were found guilty and many of these, tried in regimental tribunals, were not harshly dealt with. Furthermore, efforts to remove all "incompetents and cowards" were even less successful. Over one-half of the officers who served in the Wars of Liberation in 1813-14 had served in 1806-7, including "almost all the officers of the field armies and most of the officers in responsible posts."[189] During the period 1806-1813, 4,933 officers left the service, leaving 1,791 who had served in 1806. But many of these officers were furloughed on half pay receiving "quarters, bread, and charcoal from the government until the outbreak of war brought then back to active duty." Thus at least 3,898 officers who had been held corporately responsible for the debacle of 1806 fought in the Wars of Liberation and became the new victors of 1813-1814.

Perhaps the most important result of the work of the Superior Investigating Committee was the standard of accountability it proclaimed. The officer owed his state more than parade polish, the demand now made was for bravery and constancy with

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[188]Ibid., p. 105.

[189]Ibid., p. 108.

the people. That this process was closely followed in the press added a new dimension to the relationship of people and army. The result of the Commission's work was less a purge than an "act of self-purification" which rid the army of its worst elements and better suited it for the "requirements of modern war" an achievement "wholly without historical precedent."[190]

B. REORGANIZATION OF THE ARMY

In a state whose very social, political, economic and geographic existence was wholly dependent on its military superiority, it should not be surprising that a Hohenzollern king would upon defeat turn his immediate attention to purging the officers corps of those "responsible" for its defeat but the immediacy with which Frederick William III, often labelled the most irresolute of Prussia's Kings, turned to his armies deficiencies is remarkable.

In the immediate aftermath of Jena and Auerstädt and before the year 1806 was out, Frederick William issued four decrees which outlined his program for changing the "tactics, discipline, and organization of his remaining armed forces." Frederick William's Instruction for the Generals with the Army in East Prussia, his memoir from Osterode issued in November 18, 1806, a third memoir issued on December 1, 1806 and a fourth undated memoir attempted to impress upon the army still in the field the urgent requirement to change its tactics. He recommended "vigorous warfare" and "energetic and bold" tactics, avoiding "artful maneuvers" which had proven useless. The reconnaissance earlier denied Scharnhorst was now encouraged so that "the attack could be made at the most favorable moment" and "scattered dispositions were to be avoided!" The cherished line formation was abandoned for the column and greater use of skirmishing and tirailleur tactics was encouraged.[191]

The December 1 memoir outlined the intended purge of the officers' corp, dismissing all officers involved in the capitulation at Prenzlau, cashiering all commanding officers who had capitulated without resistance and ordering the

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[190]Goerlitz, History of the German General Staff, p. 30.

[191]Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, pp. 94-96.

commandant of Custrin to be shot. Again presaging the reforms to come, Frederick William wrote that as "long as the war lasts, the non-commissioned officer and man, when distinguished by cleverness and presence of mind, will make as good an officer as the noble." It was of course far too late to undue the years of decline and the tactical petrification of the army but these memoirs set the tone for what was to come and clearly undermine the argument that the reformers lacked royal support.[192]

The first six months of the Reorganization Commission's work was spent on the question of officer conduct and, in line with the Commission's title, not reforming but reorganizing the army. In the main this was "the reconstruction, on paper, of the Prussian army."[193] The first step was a demobilization and reduction of the size of the army for political and economic reasons. No one knew how large an army Napoleon would tolerate and until the September 8, 1808 Treaty of Paris set the army's manpower limit at 42,000 the reformers' work was largely a guessing game and an effort to live within the greatly restricted means of the much reduced Prussian state. State revenues would not allow an army in excess of 70,000 men even though Prussia's population of five million would support an army of 150,000 men. The result was a paper army of sixteen infantry regiments and eighty cavalry squadrons.

The army was reorganized into three corps areas, Silesian, Prussian and Brandenburg-Pomeranian, each with a recruitment population of 1,600,000. This plan, outlined in a memorandum of September 25, 1807, would provide from each area two divisions, "totalling eight infantry regiments, four cavalry regiments, four batteries of six-pound unmounted artillery, two batteries of six-pound mounted artillery, and as reserves a battery of twelve-pounders and another of mounted artillery." Although establishing change only on paper, the Commission was clearly establishing the precedent for combined arms divisions. Over the next few months the Commission had to reduce the size of regiments, squadrons and companies to accord with the fiscal realities of defeated Prussia. By November, 1807 the strength of the Prussian army was 54,180 officers and men: Infantry, 37,754; Cavalry, 12,060; Artillery, 4,366; total

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[192]Ibid.

[193]Ibid., p. 109.

officers in the combat arms, 1,696. By September of 1808 at the time of the Treaty of Paris the army had reached approximately 50,000 men of which nearly one-half were furloughed. Seen in this light Napoleon's limit of 42,000 was roughly all that Prussia could afford and did not severely hamper the efforts of the Reorganization Commission.

During the Commission's first year the issue was not how to increase the size of the standing army--the finances of Prussia and to a lesser extent the provisions of the Treaty of Paris precluded that--but how to organize and recruit a reserve force available for the final contest with the French forces of Napoleon then occupying the state. The work of the Reorganization Commission in its first six months was largely void of meaningful change and resulted in the king's Cabinet Order of December 21, 1807 recalling the measures he had originally suggested and requiring a more "systematic presentation of the commission's reports."[194] The real stumbling block was the reserve. All understood its vital relationship to Prussia's reemergence, but there was bitter disagreement on what form it should take and what basis it should have in law.

The idea of universal service was formulated and discussed, but remained unresolved. The question of exemptions for the previously privileged nobility and the middle class appeared insurmountable. Divisions within the Commission largely revolved around the questions of privilege based in the old canton system and Scharnhorst's attempts to align his proposals with the Frederickian past were unsuccessful. Scharnhorst's refusal to link the reserve with the standing army was, at this point, merely a reflection of his understanding that there was so little support for the military in the popular mind that to invite the citizen to service with that army, with its brutal traditions of discipline, would ensure failure for any efforts at broad-based recruitment or any national appeal for volunteers.

Universal service with no exemptions as proposed by Stein was vigorously blocked by the conservatives and none of the militia projects advanced by the reformers were approved by Frederick William. Walter Simon provides four major

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[194]Ibid., p. 126.

sources of resistance to universal service: (1) "objection of the large cities to being subject to any form of military service at all"; (2) resistance of landed nobles to "their employees' service in the new egalitarian force"; (3) from the more radical reformers, which "denounced Boyen's creation as half hearted and stunted by compromise"; and (4) the "intrigue against it at court" by the king's cabinet.[195]

Stopped by this resistance to universal service, yet still aware that the need for a larger army was critical, in July, 1807, Scharnhorst proposed the Krümper system. This system gave leave to trained soldiers and then provided a few months training with the army for raw recruits followed by release from active service. The Krümper system succeeded only in providing a marginal increase in the available reserve manpower pool. As compared with the 42,000 allowed by Napoleon's terms, 65,675 officers and men were available by March of 1813.[196]

The first instance of the reformers' real goal of universal service being implemented was in the call for an East Prussian Landwehr to support General von Yorck's actions in support of the Russian Army, implemented by the convention of Tauroggen on 13 December, 1812.[197] On February 9, 1813 universal service came closer to becoming a reality throughout the Prussian state when all exemptions to military service were cancelled. On March 17th, Frederick William called forth the creation of a Landwehr of all men 17 to 40 years of age and followed this on April 13th with the Landsturm edict which made all men not previously called to service liable to service as an emergency defense home guard of "guerrilla bands."[198]

In technical matters the reformer's were less constrained. The Reorganization Commission effected important tactical changes, reequipping and reorganizing the army.

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[195]Simon, The Failure of the Prussian Reform Movement, 1807-1819, pp. 189-190.

[196]Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, p. 178.

[197]For a full account of Yorck's actions see Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, pp. 192-193.

[198]Simon, The Failure of the Prussian Reform Movement, 1807-1819, pp. 161-169, and 181ff. Simon points out that even with this "total" victory of universal service, Scharnhorst allowed substitutions in East Prussia.

Without these changes Prussia would have been totally unprepared for the coming battle for liberation. Technical improvements in the production and efficiency of small arms and artillery were accomplished along with the establishment of new foundries.[199]

The reformers recognized the necessity of coordinated action of the infantry, cavalry and artillery, but were unable to field the division-sized elements which the Napoleonic example provided. Their response was to introduce the brigade organization in place of divisions. Six brigades were formed and training in line with new training manuals which emphasized the use of tirailleurs (light infantry), skirmishers, columnar battle formations and coordinated operations of the combat arms. The brigade replaced the regiment as the largest administrative unit and equipment, quartering, conscription and supply became brigade responsibilities.[200]

The past campaign had shown the hopeless confusion of Prussia's supply service and on August 1, 1808 field supply administration was placed under a new War Commissariat with representatives, war commissars, at each of the six brigades. This important reform brought to an end the old system of company and regimental commanding officers treating their units as personal fiefs and placed all army "housekeeping" on a national basis. The War Commissariat was responsible for the completely overhauled supply services and made centrally accountable for all distribution and accounting for supplies.[201]

These important tactical and technical improvements were all made in 1808. The only real progress made by the Reorganization Commission in 1807 was to substitute grey for white trousers, shakoes for hats and to order the training of sharpshooters and scouts for the third rank. The king's nineteen point program was met, the army was reorganized and new manuals were written, but it was only a paper reorganization not true reform. Frederick William understood the impasse on real reform and acted to support Scharnhorst in early 1808. Replacing Scharnhorst's chief antagonists, Borstell

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[199]Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 50.

[200]Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, p. 141.

[201]Ibid., pp. 141-143.

and Bronikowsky, with the reform-minded Count Gotzen and Major von Boyen, Frederick William gave Scharnhorst a clear reform majority on the Commission and set the stage for a year of reform of the reorganized army.[202]

C. REFORM OF THE ARMY

With Scharnhorst's newly solidified royal support and Stein's continued ministerial backing, the path was clear for the program of reform originally worked out in the Military Society. Scharnhorst clearly stated his program: "to raise and inspire the spirit of the army, to bring the army and the nation into a more intimate union and to guide it to its characteristic and exalted destiny."[203]

The internal logic of the reform program followed in 1808 is undeniable. Prussia could not throw off Napoleon's yoke without a large army. Due to the Paris restrictions on the size of the standing army, the diminished geographic holdings of Prussia and the resultant reduction in Canton districts, and the reformer's own success in accomplishing their goal of ending the system of mercenary hire, the only avenue left to achieve a large army was the Prussian people. Since the reformers believed that the French model of the levée en masse could be applied in Prussia only after the rights and liberties of the Prussian people were respected. The Prussian people, especially the middle class but also the peasantry, had to be assured that their sons would be serving an army both devoid of the hated discipline of the corporal's cane and the gauntlet and one which could match the legal rights of the civil code with an equally just military code. Given that this new mass army could be raised, the officers who might lead the more educated middle class soldier would necessarily be an educated officer and the only way to attract significant numbers of educable officers was to open commissions to all and provide the education necessary for modern war. Given the energies of the people selected for service by lot on a universal basis and led by officers educated for the reality of modern war it was also necessary that the

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[202]Simon, The Failure of the Prussian Reform Movement, 1807-1819, p. 152, and Shanahan, The Prussian Reform Movement, 1786-1813, p. 143.

[203]Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 41.

state administration for support of this new army be rationally organized with centralized decision making and a chain of command linking the army with the monarch through a single minister of war. It is certainly dangerous to place upon a different time a logic drawn nearly two centuries later but the consistency of the Prussian reform program of 1808 seems to have its own logic clear in both its intent and its execution.

Throughout the spring and early summer of 1808 the Reorganization Commission worked on these interconnected reforms and in August a series of orders accomplished the great bulk of necessary reforms of the Articles of War and the Ministry of War, and of access to commissions, and the education of officers. We have already seen the prerequisites for reform, the liberation of the peasants and the municipal reforms, which taken together laid the basis f the desired connection of the people and the army. The next step was to dissolve the harsh system of discipline and justice so injurious to public good will.

1. The Articles of War

As Shanahan points out, "if universal service were to be obtained, and this might be conceived as the ultimate though not the immediate goal of Scharnhorst and his followers, the conditions of service would have to be made more tolerable to the vast numbers of subjects who had not previously been called into service."[204] The king had tasked High Chancellor von Goldbeck and General Auditor von Konen to revise the old Articles as early as September, 1806 and now these officials, along with Boyen and Gneisenau and in concert with Stein, worked out the final revisions of Konen's draft. There existed agreement on eliminating the Gassenlaufen, the running of the gauntlet, but conservative opposition to the ban on caning was only overcome by Gneisenau's eloquent appeal for Freiheit des Ruckens, Freedom of the Back.

The new Articles of War, Orders on Military Punishment and the Orders on the Punishment of Officers were all issued on August 3, 1808, Frederick William's birthday. The articles abolished the gauntlet and corporal punishment for minor disciplinary infractions and instituted a system of penalties more in line with civilian

[204]Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, p. 135.

sensibilities. Severe punishments had to be the result of military court decrees and the death penalty could only be issued by the king. Confinement replaced caning and instead of facing a firing squad a deserter could be sentenced to ten years of fortress arrest. By these actions the basis for the open repugnance of the people to military service seemed to be overcome.[205] As a further sign of change the wording of the military oath of obedience required of soldiers with the publication of the new Articles of War was changed so that the soldier swore his allegiance not to the Kriegsherr, War Lord, but to the Landesherr, the Sovereign.

2. Access to Commissions and Selection of Officers

The next step in the reformer's program was to open the avenues to commissions to all classes and ensure that selection for a commission were based on talent as opposed to class. Grolman, the most radical of the reformers, wrote that:

> In order to fight it is not necessary to belong to a special class. The melancholy belief that one must belong to a special class in order to defend the fatherland has done much to plunge it into the present abyss, and only the opposite principle can pull it out again.[206]

It is largely owing to the king's antipathy to the Junker nobility's singularly bad showing in the last campaign and Stein's surpassing contempt for "the inhabitants of these sandy steppes--these artful, heartless, wooden, half-educated men"[207] that the reformers desires for a truly open officer corps were realized.

The "Regulation for the Appointment of Cornets, and the Choice of Officers in the Infantry, Cavalry, and Artillery," written by Grolman and issued on August 6, 1808, stated that:

> A claim to the position of officer shall from now on be warranted, in peace-time by knowledge and education, in time of war by exceptional bravery and quickness of perception. From the whole nation, therefore, all individuals who possess these qualities can lay title to the highest positions of honour in the military establishment. All social preference which has hitherto existed is herewith

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[205]Ibid., p. 135-136. See also Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 48.

[206]Quoted in Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 43.

[207]Ibid.

terminated in the military establishment, and everyone, without regard for his background, has the same duties and the same rights.[208]

This Fundamental Order of 1808 "meant that Bildung and personal stamina, in place of the accident of birth, constituted a claim to the position of officer" and this "new principle blasted a trail for enduring modifications of old-style noble privilege."[209]

Henceforth all candidates for commissions would enter the army at seventeen years of age and serve a minimum of three months as a soldier before being eligible for regimental examinations for the rank of cornet. Examinations were also required for higher grades and advancement to lieutenant was by a centralized examination committee in Berlin.[210] The Gefreitekorporal system of twelve and thirteen year old sons of the nobility serving as corporals until commissioned was abolished.[211] This reform was greatly resented by the Junker nobility and is reflected in the remark of General Yorck to Prince William that "if your royal highness deprives me and my children of our rights, what foundation is left for your own?"[212] It is important to note the continuation of the requirement that candidates "still needed to be approved by the officers of the units they wished to join--a condition that preserved the exclusive and unified character of the corps, though its ethical base would slowly change from the personal relationship between king and nobility to that of a patriotic, national-minded, and professionally competent order of knighthood."[213]

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[208]Ibid.

[209]Rosenberg, Bureaucracy, Aristocracy, and Autocracy, The Prussian Experience 1660-1815, p. 215.

[210]Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, p. 132.

[211]Holborn, A History of Modern Germany 1648-1840, p. 418.

[212]Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 44.

[213]Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, p. 130.

3. Officer Education

A necessary corollary to the new system of selection of officers was some means of providing the education required by the new system of examinations which would also instill in the students the qualities Scharnhorst sought--Bildung. An increase in the number of schools and the quality of education of cadets and officer candidates was essential if the system was to succeed. As we've seen, Scharnhorst was the Director of the Berlin Institute before 1806 and it was in the reform and elevation of the standards of army education that he made his most lasting concrete contribution to the Prussian army.

Prior to 1806 the military education system was an "haphazard and disorganized." The four Cadet Institutes and the Military Orphans' Home School trained boys for a few years prior to their entry into the army as cornets. Their curricula were neither coordinated nor standardized. Scharnhorst implemented a system of military education under the supervision of a single director which provided continuity between the Cadet Institutes which prepared boys for the cornet examinations during a five year prescribed, standardized course (curiously open only to sons of officers), and advanced schools for selected officers with the most potential.[214]

These three advanced courses of nine months duration were offered at "War Schools" at Berlin, Breslau, and Königsberg. At the Berlin school a three year course in "advanced military science" was also offered for fifty selected officers. This became the Kriegsakademie at the celebrated Number 19 Bergstrasse. The upper class provided the Selekta, the best students of each class which formed the recruiting basis for the Great General Staff.[215]

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[214]Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, pp. 133-135.

[215]Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 46.

4. The Ministry of War

The final piece in the reform puzzle was the administration of the military. The labyrinth of competing bureaus and agencies within the Prussian bureaucracy was a major contributory element of the decline of the Frederickian system. Stein's second ministry had pressed the reformers' demands for a more rational system of state administration resulting in the memorandum of November 23, 1807 in which Stein proposed a Staatsministerium of five ministers reporting directly to the king each responsible for their separate spheres of government administration. The fifth ministry of the Staatsministerium was a proposed War Ministry. This ministry was to consist of two sections, one dealing with command and organization and one dealing with administration and supply.

The initial failure of this proposal was due to the bedrock of Hohenzollern rule: royal command and direct control of the military. The personal link between crown and army was seen both by the conservative nobility and Frederick William to be threatened by the interposition of a war minister between the crown and the army. The reformers understood that without this fundamental change no rationalization of military administration was possible. As long as military administration was not rationalized the fate of Prussia would forever rest in the hands of either a great ruler in the Frederickian mold or the cabal of courtiers which would hold sway over indecisive or disinterested rulers such as Frederick William II and III.

At Stein's insistence the November, 1807 draft plan received temporary approval in the Cabinet Order of July 15, 1808 which divided all army matters between two departments. The Allgemeine Kriegs Departement (General War Department), headed by Scharnhorst, and the Militär Okonomie Departement (Military Economy Department) under Count Lottum's direction. Both Scharnhorst and Lottum were granted direct access to the king thereby ensuring Frederick William's continued dominance of all military matters and continuing the division between reformers and conservatives by appointing the two leaders of the opposing factions to co-equal positions. This temporary arrangement was made permanent by royal decree of the Ministry of War on December 25, 1808. All previous arrangements were maintained

but the king refused to name a single minister of war.[216] The War Ministry was to have authority "over everything which pertained to the military and to its constitution, its establishment and its maintenance and...everything which hitherto lay within the jurisdiction of the Oberkriegskollegium, the Militärdepartement of the General Directory, the Provincial Magazine Departments of Silesia and Prussia as well as the Generalintendantur...."[217]

Scharnhorst as the Chief of the General War Department was responsible for all command, organization and administration matters. The Department had three divisions. The First Division under Grolman was responsible for personnel matters such as "promotions, pay, decorations, justice, and dismissal" and replaced the Generaladjutantur. The Second Division replaced the Generalquartiermeisterstab and, although Scharnhorst was also given the largely honorary title of Chief of the General Staff, Boyen's Division became the later Great General Staff and was responsible for "training, education, war plans, and mobilization" as well as the War Commissariat. The Third Division was responsible for supervising "artillery, engineering, fortifications, ordnance, and the testing of inventions." The Oberkriegskollegium and the Militärdepartement also disappeared.[218]

The Military Economy Department under Lottum was comprised of four divisions and was responsible for matters of supply and finance. The First Division was responsible for the Military Treasury, bookkeeping, payments and financial matters. The Second Division provided oversight of the supply of food and forage to the Commissariat. The Third Division maintained control of inspection and supply of uniforms. Management of the Invaliden and their pensions was the responsibility of the Fourth Division of the Military Economy Department.[219]

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[216]Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, pp. 143-145.

[217]Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 51.

[218]Ibid., pp. 51-52.

[219]Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, p. 146.

As with the educational reforms of Scharnhorst the War Ministry reforms evolved only very slowly into something approaching the centralized administrative body desired by the reformers. Although the king refused to appoint a war minister, Scharnhorst acted as de facto Minister of War and during the period 1808-1813 these structural changes did allow the reformers to take over administrative control of the military.[220] When the War Ministry began to function in March of 1809, the Military Reorganization Commission was dissolved. The army was reorganized, the reform program nearly complete. Time was now needed to allow the reforms to work in the education of officers, the training of troops in the new tactics, and the workings of the new administrative apparatus; and time was granted by Napoleon's desire to enjoy his empire.

But the resistance of the king and his former cabinet continued[221] and though the reform party was clearly victorious and the last vestige of the Frederickian administrative melange was officially dissolved, it continued to function as the old adjutants were appointed to positions throughout the War Ministry and also within the hearts of the great majority of the old line waiting for the sure fall of the reformers.[222] Yorck provides a vivid representation of the true feelings of the old line when he commented on Stein's fall in November of 1808, "One mad head is already severed, the remaining rabble of serpents will die in its own poison."[223] Thus the influence of the old line Junker nobility remained a continuing though muted force in Prussian military decision making.

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[220]Ibid., p. 224. Only on June 3, 1814 in the aftermath of Napoleon's defeat was Hermann von Boyen named Prussia's first Minister of War.

[221]Resistance was especially strong against the reformers' plans for universal service, the implementation of a militia and the Krümper system. For a full description of these events see Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, pp. 150ff.

[222]Ibid., p. 147.

[223]Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 49. See Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, for a convincing refutation of the normal reaction to Yorck's oft-quoted statement on the reformers. In fact, Paret argues that Yorck was an integral force in the tactical success of the reform movement.

This continuity present in Prussian history even during the turbulent Napoleonic era and the discontinuity obvious in the pre- and post-reform periods should warn us that the reform era was not and could not be a complete reversal of the Frederickian state's raison d'etre. Once the peril of the Napoleonic challenge was met the fate of the reformers was sealed. By 1819 all were gone, either mortally wounded in battle like Scharnhorst, or politically neutralized like Boyen, Grolman, Gneisenau, and Clausewitz. Their work lived on imbedded in the rational structures and traditions of excellence they wove into the fabric of the Prussian army. It is this lasting influence which should concern us most and is so very difficult to explain when it reemerges in the mid-nineteenth century apparently again victorious over the forces of reaction. The key to this lasting influence has little to do with structure and much to do with ideas. It is to those ideas we must now turn to discover the essence of Prussian officership.

IX. THE SYNTHESIS OF MODERN WAR

As early as the War of the First Coalition Scharnhorst believed he understood the secret to meeting France's revolutionary challenge to the military system of the Ancien Régime. Then in the service of Hanover, Scharnhorst recommended universal military service, adoption of the new tactical doctrine on the French model, establishment of a general staff and reorganization of the army into combined arms divisions of infantry, cavalry and artillery.[224] But he also understood that to merely adopt the organizational forms of Revolutionary or, later, Napoleonic warfare was not nearly enough--as Jena and Auerstädt were so conclusively to demonstrate. Scharnhorst saw that the causes of the Allies' defeat "must be deeply enmeshed in their internal conditions and in those of the French nation."[225]

The "internal conditions" of France were the key to the new energy of the French army embodied in the spirit of the Revolution; the "internal conditions" of the Allies caused them to rely on a feudal system unable to respond and a public citizenry apathetic to the fortunes of the regime. Scharnhorst--"equally opposed to radical innovators and to the incurable admirers of the old system"[226]--did not believe the answer was to be found either in the Revolution or the old forms of the Frederickian system but in a synthesis of the two to be accomplished by fundamental reform of the "internal conditions" of the Allies. He wished to release comparable energies in the people of Hanover and later in Prussia and the road to this reform lay in opening up these societies to the full resources of the individual through education. The clearest lesson of the reform era was that the institutional form could not be appended but had

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[224]White, The Enlightened Soldier, pp. 18-20.

[225]Scharnhorst, G., "Basic Reasons for the French Success," 1797, quoted in P. Paret, "Clausewitz and the Nineteenth Century," The Theory and Practice of War, ed. M. Howard, p. 25, Indiana Univ. Press, 1975.

[226]Paret, Clausewitz and the State, p. 64.

to be adapted to the society they were to serve--a synthesis of old and new had to be realized in a more effective use of both institutions and individuals.

When finally Scharnhorst began to implement this synthesis he often used the historical mantle of Frederick the Great to make his reform proposals more palatable to Frederick William and the Junker nobility. Otto Hintze writes of the "historical demonstrations used by Scharnhorst as a means to persuade the King that his bold plans were correct were not merely for show".[227] While the many allusions to Scharnhorst's use of Frederick--and the implicit charge of political deception--are no doubt correct, they leave out an important aspect of the relationship of old Prussia and the new dreams of the reformers. Hintze continues:

> it was just this miraculous blending of old and new that was characteristic of the military reform. The new Prussian army created by Scharnhorst and Boyen still bore, unmistakably, the basic character of the Frederican era...[228]

The greater part of the attraction of Prussia to the large number of non-Prussian reformers was their "admiration of Frederick the Great and of the liberality of the Prussian system, which showed no prejudice against energetic outsiders and offered them responsibility and advancement."[229] As Meinecke wrote:

> Frederick's personality and heroism had far-reaching effects. No matter how strictly we separate the man from his work, gradually his character cast a brighter light even on his state. Prussia could then appear as the personification of political energy itself, and that attracted energetic men from throughout Germany to her service. Prussia, we know, was also the state of a more liberal Protestantism. Heroism, military glory, energy, enlightened Protestantism--these were the forces that made Prussia appealing in Germany, and that brought her many of the great men who later had the task of returning Prussia to the German fold.[230]

It is not trivial to note the certainty of a connection between the decisions of men such as Stein, Scharnhorst, Gneisenau, Grolman and Clausewitz--men either of foreign birth or with tenuous claims to nobility--to seek service in Prussia and a respect for and

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[227]Hintze, The Historical Essays of Otto Hintze, p. 74.

[228]Ibid.

[229]Craig, The End of Prussia, p. 10. Craig is writing of Stein but the quote speaks to the other reformers as well.

[230]Meinecke, The Age of German Liberation, pp. 34-35.

adherence to the traditions[231] of Prussia. There exists a special sense of cherished connection once a man becomes--even as the newest "subaltern"--a member of the same proud fraternity of arms with the great men whose deeds were dreamt of in youth. Certainly these men felt that youthful connection to Frederick the Great and the pantheon of Prussian heroes such as Keith, Schwerin, Winterfeldt, for it "was reality when Frederician Prussia, however machinelike and artificially designed, produced men and heroes who made the heart beat faster."[232]

That the reformers might harbor these feelings and still remain true to their convictions and, in effect, attempt to destroy many of the pillars of the proud past to which they had attached their self-worth is a profound testament of the highest sort of patriotism--a love of the patria strong enough to subsume one's own self-interest and adolescent dreams of belonging to a glorious fraternity. This connection among the Frederickian system, proven unsatisfactory yet still able to stir pride and a desire to conserve, the Napoleonic challenge of the new ways of war, and the reforms necessary to throw out the oppressor and reassert the "glory of Prussia" created a synthesis of the best of the old and the necessary new. From this blending of old and new emerged a synthesis which was to establish the limits of excellence in modern warfare from 1813 to 1945 and define modern officer professionalism as the essence of Prussian officership.[233]

The thesis of the Frederickian system of war developed in this study is that of the aristocratically-led, predominantly mercenary, standing army whose size is limited by the ambitions of the monarch whose royal will is also the controlling element of the army. The soldier serves only a minimal portion of the year and is trained through brutal excess to be an unthinking automaton in a war machine. That soldier has little

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[231]Traditions which must at first appear greatly at odds with the reformers later attempts to "liberalize" Prussia.

[232]Meinecke, The Age of German Liberation, p. 27.

[233]Huntington, S.P., The Soldier and the State, p. 12, Belknap Press, 1957. I have unintentionally borrowed this phrase from Huntington who writes of an "essence of officership...embodied in the traditional admonition to Annapolis men that their duty will be to 'fight the fleet.'"

identification with the citizens of or allegiance to the state he serves. The army is administratively designed to support the Kompaniewirtschaft system. In this "company economy" the company commander receives an annual income[234] and therewith acts as an independent businessman profiting--to the extent that he can decrease costs by furloughing the maximum possible number of soldiers for the greatest amount of time while still meeting garrison commitments--from his role as supplier and pay agent for his company. When operationally deployed, the army is supported by the expansive supply train necessary to support an army prone to desertion if not fed or allowed the freedom necessary for forage. Tactically it acts as an instrument of concentrated firepower delivering that fire in unison from each of the three linearly deployed ranks. Artillery and cavalry units are employed separately from the infantry, but not so independently to bring down upon their commanders the responsibility of "independent command." The whole army acts as the single appendage of (hopefully) the genius at its head, the matter settled in an elaborate series of feints and deceptions designed to bring the affair to an unbloody conclusion at the first sign of advantage. The highest order of generalship was in Lloyd's view "to keep on waging war without ever being under the necessity to strike a blow."[235] As Gerhard Ritter has written:

> It was even possible now to consider the supreme military achievement to be the winning of a war without any major bloodshed....Bellona, the furious goddess of war, was to be rendered tractable, tamed like a kitten on the hearth.[236]

Set against this thesis of the Frederickian system of the limits of warfare in the ancien régime is the antithesis of the Napoleonic[237] model of warfare. These two systems first met in battle at Valmy on September 20, 1792, and on that battlefield for

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[234]In Prussia at the turn of the century this amount was 1500 thalers.

[235]Cited in Ritter, The Sword and the Scepter, p. 41-42.

[236]Ritter, The Sword and the Scepter, p. 41.

[237]As Gunther Rothenberg has pointed out "after [Napoleon] became master, he made changes which increased the striking power of this great war machine, but otherwise he remained faithful to the methods of the Revolution." To differentiate between Revolutionary and Napoleonic warfare is beyond the scope of this study though some effort is made in Chapter 4 to provide the distinction. Rothenberg, The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, p. 124.

the first time a "'people's army' had defeated the old order." Although the immediate results appeared less than noteworthy, Goethe, accompanying the Prussians under the Duke of Brunswick, saw in this short contest that "from this place and day commenced a new epoch in the world's history."[238]

The Grande Armée was a citizen army conscripted by the levée en masse, led by an officer meritocracy promoted from the ranks, and trained not by drill but through a political indoctrination in the ideals of the Revolution. The citizen soldier of the "nation in arms" fought for that nation and not his pay; the connection between soldier and state was complete, the nation was the army and its support. The soldier served "for the duration" and was less commanded than led by fellow citizens, compatriots in the revolutionary spirit of the nation. The army's size had only the limit of the nation's population and grew ten fold between 1789 and 1797 to a million men. Though profit remained the motive of a few, their heads were the price of profit and the system of the condottiere was as dead as the Seventeenth century, replaced by the rationalism of central administration. The soldier's new connection to the army and the state allowed the supply train to diminish and forage supplemented provisioning, for fear of desertion diminished as the supply of replacement soldiers increased. Unable to train this vast mob of citizen soldiers, tactics opened up as "the French used their ill-trained masses en debandade, that is as loose skirmishing swarms."[239] Eventually the skills of the heavy infantry, light infantry and the skirmishers merged into an "all-purpose" infantry capable of the combined arms combat of shock effects of columnar attack and highly mobile pursuit of the new object of war: the enemy army. Combat was now sought out and the conclusion of battle was the bloody, complete defeat of the enemy, his utter annihilation as a possible opponent.

Contraposition of the two systems lends great credence to Jean Colin's judgment that seen from the "military point of view" the "transformation of war" was "the end

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[238]Rothenberg, The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, p. 11.

[239]Ibid., p. 63.

of a world."[240] From the Prussian point of view the challenge was to the very existence of the state. Frederick William entrusted the survival of the Prussian state--and with it the Hohenzollern dynasty--to Gerhard Scharnhorst and the reformers. Their eventual success was due not to replacing the defeated Frederickian system with a hastily built imitation of the outward organizational and tactical forms of the Napoleonic system but to their ability to synthesize the old and the new, replacing what they revered with a new system which combined that which still had value in the Frederickian system, those elements of the Napoleonic system which could be adopted without revolution, and the political reforms necessary to make effective this synthesis of modern war.[241]

To bring into sharper focus the accomplishments of these men as military reformers, and therefore, an object of interest to present day attempts at defense reform, we will attempt to describe the results of the reform era in terms of the Prussian army of 1813 and the means, costs and superstructure of the Prussian society and its military expression, that is, in terms of those constituents of war which had been changed by the forces of revolution in France. The political reforms which emanated from the Military Reorganization Commission are the normal focus of historical interest in the Prussian Reform Era. While these reforms were critical to the survival of the Prussian state they in no way assured a competent and successful army; for an army to be successful in battle its officers and men must be trained, armed, supplied, led and supported both by the citizenry and the idea of the state they fight for or they will eventually become merely the statistics of war--casualties.

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[240]Colin, The Transformation of War, p. 206.

[241]While the following sections may appear to again cover the material presented in chapter 7, that is not the author's intent. Most surveys of this period do not sufficiently delineate the Prussian army of 1813, which is to say the army which resulted from the reform era, from that which came before the period of reform and the results of the period of reaction after 1819. Moreover this section attempts to use the framework established in chapters 1-4 to elaborate the work of the reformers in the postulated synthesis of the Frederickian and Napoleonic systems of war.

A. THE PRUSSIAN ARMY OF 1813

In the aftermath of 1807 the most radical of reformers and the most conservative of Junkers could agree that Prussia's army faced three severe deficiencies: its army was far too small to meet the challenge of the occupying forces of France; its stock of arms was outmoded and severely depleted in the actions of 1807; and its tactics were clearly unable to meet the Napoleonic transformation of war.

We have already seen the reform efforts to circumvent the will of Napoleon and increase the size of the Prussian army through the Krümpersystem which after 1809 enrolled small numbers of men above allowable Paris Convention limits while regulars were on furlough and then after a few weeks training released the minimally trained Krümper to reserve status. The approximately twelve thousand men so trained between 1807 and 1813 were, of course, a welcome addition to the 42,000 man limitation imposed by Napoleon. But the only clear answer to the simple problem of numbers was to call the masses of the Prussian populace to arms. The call of the Landwehr together with the limited successes of the Krümpersystem, in the end, met this first deficiency.[242]

To meet the tactical deficiencies of the Prussian army Frederick William finally, in 1811, appointed two commissions, each under Scharnhorst's leadership, to develop new manuals for the infantry and cavalry; Scharnhorst had already begun work on the manual for the artillery. The outcome and compilation of this work was the Reglement of 1812 which Friedrich Engels, no apologist of Prussia, called "the best in the world. Simple, logical, based on the principles of sound human understanding, they leave little to be desired."[243] This accomplishment was not however the work of one man or one year, rather it was the fruition of five years work by most of the reformers, Scharnhorst, Gneisenau, Boyen, Grolman, and Clausewitz, as well as men such as Lieutenant Colonel Karl von Tiedemann, Major Johann Wilhelm Krauseneck and General Hans D. L. von Yorck, in adapting the French methods which sprang from the

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[242]We will treat the deficiency in quality and supply of arms in the next section.

[243]Engels, F. Ausgewahlte Militärisch Schriften, quoted in Rothenberg, The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, p. 193.

revolution to the Prussian system of Frederick in the cause of overthrowing the Empire of the hated Napoleon.

According to Peter Paret the "major steps in this process of accepting revolutionary methods were the instructions that Yorck issued in 1810 and 1811, the lectures on tactics, given at the War School for Officers by Tiedemann and Clausewitz, and finally the Reglement of 1812."[244] To this list we might add Gneisenau's instruction of March 27, 1809 on the basic elements of skirmishing, Krauseneck's rules for the infantry, Instruction zum Exerciren der Infanterie, approved by Frederick William on July 16, 1809, and Scharnhorst's Handbuch für Offiziere and his Handbuch der Artillerie. Prussian officers during the critical period of preparation after 1807 were encouraged to read the Handbuch für Offiziere which contained "a 'complete course of instruction' in the theory of firearms."[245] Published in 1787, Scharnhorst's Handbuch "was an attempt to explain the various arms of the service and to clarify their interrelationships in war." It provides an early outline of his central message to his fellow officers that:

> Only when the officer understood the theory of his profession would he be able to determine what was essential in war, 'and then to know with certainty what he must do.' In short, 'officers must study war in order to have some idea of what to do in every situation.'"[246]

Gneisenau's instruction on skirmishing, Krauseneck's instructions for the infantry and Clausewitz's War School lectures on the "little war" centered on the third rank of infantry and light troops. Each of these men had combat experience with skirmishing and understood the central role of light infantry in the evolution of Prussian tactical doctrine. Taken together with Yorck's instructions and the compilation of all of these works in the comprehensive but concise Reglement of 1812 we see a complete abandonment of the eighteenth century fascination with an orderly, controllable, and mathematically precise battlefield and the acceptance of war on its own terms as a

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[244]Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, p. 157.

[245]Ibid., p. 159.

[246]White, The Enlightened Soldier, p. 14.

realm of chaos and chance best mastered by officers and soldiers imbued with the few skills necessary and an understanding of the opportunities offered by chance to individuals ready to exercise personal initiative during the mere seconds during which those opportunities could be turned to tactical advantage. The best entree into this uniquely Prussian understanding of "war as it really is"[247] Yorck's "Instruction for the Light Troops for the Maneuvers of the Year 1810" which states in part:

> Nor can this instruction offer a compilation of entirely new opinions, since as already stated its only purpose is to summarize known truths and experiences into a consistent training guide. Still less is it possible to provide precise formulae for all eventualities in an art such as that of war, in which results depend so greatly on chance, the elements, and--to be particularly noted--on free will, i.e., on the intelligence, courage, or cowardice of the individual parts of the machine. Only general rules can be sketched here. Their appropriate application to prevailing circumstances distinguishes the thinking officer from the one who considers his task mechanically, or seeks the perfect picture of war in the fitting together of learned evolutions.[248] [Emphasis added.]

These concepts of chance, free will, and the individual are the bedrock of the opened up form of warfare Prussia sought with its evolving tactical doctrine. The choices to move from close to open order battle, from the linear to the columnar, from the shock of volley fire to the gradual building up of pressure on the enemy through aimed, individual fire, from the single, unitary battalion formation committed to battle in an all or nothing effort to the "gradual escalation of pressure" through echelonment of the new brigade deployment all demanded of the individual a new standard of initiative, courage, discipline and training each raised to a new level of personal excellence encompassed by the concepts of free will and thinking, individual qualities not to be found in the old concept of the machine of war in service of the absolutist statecraft.[249]

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[247]We have come to call this view of war Clausewitzian but the concepts which Clausewitz so ably elucidates permeate all of the tactical doctrine developed during the period of reform.

[248]Quoted in Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, pp. 158-9.

[249]Rothenberg, The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, p. 194.

Yorck's theory of battle centered on the "loss of distinction between the light infantry and the line." He believed that the "whole secret of tactics, regardless of how one looks at it, lies in the intelligent disposition of the impulse"[250] which was to be provided by the "gradual escalation of pressure" in the brigade deployment of two fusilier battalions in skirmish line supported 150 paces back by the skirmish reserve soutiens, followed at 300 paces by the first main combat element of three musketeer battalions, again followed at 200 paces by the second main combat element of the elite grenadier battalion and the fourth musketeer battalion, with the reserve cavalry and horse artillery in the rear or on the flanks.[251]

The requirement for a "thinking officer" was felt especially at the company commander level where initiative could now be shown and, in fact, was now critical. Companies became the focus of energy in the new more open but equally uncontrollable deployments. "Thus the company commander rather than the battalion commander became the man in immediate control of the fire-fight."[252] The Reglement turned the company into the basic tactical unit for the fusiliers, stating that:

> The company commanders use the specific advantages that the terrain affords their purpose, they decide which squads or sections are to skirmish, they reinforce or reduce the skirmish line according to the course of the action, choose an advantageous position for the closed sections from which these can easily support the skirmish line...[253] [emphasis added]

While it can be argued that the qualities of individual initiative and judgement and the new understanding of war as the arena of chance and momentary opportunity applied only to the light troops, the intention of the reformers was clearly to use the lessons of the little war and the tactics of the light infantry as a vehicle to energize the entire army. In 1811 Schamhorst had suggested to Frederick William that 'a measure of tactical freedom" be allowed the line company. While the king refused it is important to note that with the third rank of the line and the 15 (of 46) fusilier,

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[250]Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, p. 161.

[251]Rothenberg, The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, p. 194.

[252]Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, p. 186.

[253]Ibid.

Jäger and Schützen battalions, "over half of the Prussian infantry consisted of troops that were expected to know how to fight in open [and close] formations".[254]

The appeal to the individual as the center of battle is found throughout these documents. Yorck, recalling Gneisenau's instruction, wrote that:

> Tiraillement is an opened-up battle formation, in which man does not cling to man. On the whole is must be led in one direction, but it affords the individual the advantage of moving freely in any terrain, of firing accurately aimed shots, and of benefiting according to circumstances from all possibilities that the ground offers...[255]

Paret writes that Yorck, in enumerating the lessons necessary for skirmishing, points out that the private soldier must learn "how to operate as a member of a unit without losing his individuality"[256] and that "the underlying purpose of Yorck's instructions" was "to show how the individual soldier could be freed from the impediments of formalism and tradition".[257] The Reglement of 1812 states that the "sections of the third rank are to be primarily used for combat in open order, although this stipulation by no means removes the need for every infantryman to know how to fight individually."[258]

In the eighteenth century students of the great captains had attempted to build systems which totally excluded chance, now the Prussians attempted to build around the individual a system which might fully exploit chance by accepting the reality of war that chance and the opportunity it produces is an individual phenomenon which so quickly passes in battle as to exclude all but individual initiative from exploiting it, even to the level of the musketeer. Perhaps the greatest risk in challenging the individuality of the soldier was that the unit could no longer act in unison but here the Prussians held fast to a new doctrine of uniformity which complemented the seemingly conflicting doctrine of individual.

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[254]Ibid., pp. 212 and 186.

[255]Ibid., p. 160.

[256]Ibid.

[257]Ibid., p. 169.

[258]Ibid., p. 185.

Unlike the French the Prussian doctrine required a uniformity of tactics, units and training. The tactics developed above were transmitted throughout the army and each man was expected to learn and observe the new regulations. The six brigades in East and West Prussia, Upper and Lower Silesia, Pomerania and Brandenburg each were stationed in and recruited from the locale from which they took their names. This made mobilization much faster and increased unit cohesion. The brigade was made up of two regiments of infantry each with one battalion of fusiliers, two battalions of musketeers, one elite grenadier battalion and between 10 and 14 squadron of cavalry. The peacetime artillery brigade of 12 and 6 pound cannon and 7 and 10 pound howitzers was apportioned upon mobilization with one light foot and one horse battery going to each infantry brigade. The remaining artillery formed the Corps and army reserve. Initially the corps was made up of two brigades but upon mobilization in 1813 four Corps were established each with four brigades of both regular and Landwehr units.

Training was also standardized but this was not the mindless drill of old. In Paret's words, Yorck's second Instruction of 1811 held that for "all these forces, removed from the center of authority, success lies in the greatest possible exploitation of initiative; at the same time they must always act in conformity with an over-all plan to the extent of sacrificing themselves."[259] Training for initiative and conformity with an over-all plan required that drill should be realistic and even carried out at night. The tough objectivity found in Yorck's view that "the basic principle of fighting in open formation lies in accurate shooting" and that men should practice "creeping and crawling" led Paret to write that:

> The maneuvers of 1810 were the first realistic field exercises on a large scale in the army's history. The troops were instructed to practice patrolling, set ambushes, attempt night attacks, and other ways freely employ ingenuity.[260]

Those maneuvers proved unsatisfactory, largely due to the ingrained "background of barrack-square and close order drill" of the larger part of the army; so Yorck issued

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[259]Ibid., p. 162.

[260]Ibid., p. 166.

more detailed instructions for 1811 which criticized the "erroneous ideas of extended order". The instruction also elaborates "the infantry tactics that were to dominate European battlefields until the advent of the machine gun":

> Often it has even been assumed that the tactics of light infantry were nothing more than firing either standing still or advancing in a schematically formed open line; on the contrary, the tactics of light infantry consist in the ability of **appropriately combining in any given situation, according to circumstances and terrain, movement in close formation with a superior well-aimed fire, which can only be achieved in open order.**[261] [Yorck's emphasis.]

Paret further notes that:

> The training they prescribed was realistic; their own texts were not to be followed word for word, but interpreted in the light of experience and common sense. Tactical differences between fusiliers and the line were minimized....Battles were won by deceiving the opponent, exploiting the unforeseen, keeping reserves in hand; they were neither chivalrous contests nor pertained to the realm of mathematical certainties....a new military attitude. By turning away from the search for absolute laws that had occupied the previous generation of Prussian theorists and tacticians, they opened war to the free play of intelligence of all of its participants.[262]

The reformers understood that there were "no unfailing recipes in the art of war." The Reglement of 1812 pulled together all the strands of independent thought produced by the reform movement and produced a "complete, coherent system" heavily indebted to the methods of revolutionary France but also wholly new in its emphasis on the individual and his free will and initiative.

> Whatever their differences on specific social and political questions, they regarded the common soldier and the subaltern as individuals, who possessed dignity and intelligence, and whose physical energy was related to moral factors. Consequently they sought to introduce the force of free will to the battlefield. The flexibility that the Reglement of 1812 expected in every infantry unit....developed into the most advanced doctrine of the age: the disappearance of specialist tactics, and their replacement by the complete amalgamation of the methods of the light service with those of the line.[263]

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[261]Ibid., p. 167.

[262]Ibid., pp. 169-170.

[263]Ibid., p. 190.

B. MEANS

Clausewitz wrote in 1807 that "we lack all war material and supplies and during the next five to six years we have no expectation of being able to support a considerable army from our own resources."[264] Much of the Prussian supply of arms was confiscated by the French and given over to the German states of Napoleon's creation, the Confederation of the Rhine. What was left to Prussia was an assortment of "modern, obsolete and damaged small arms." Under the auspices of the commissions established to rewrite the manuals for infantry, cavalry and artillery, the Prussian reformers undertook a comprehensive examination of all the basic equipment of the army. "Diligent attempts were made to improve the supply and efficiency of small arms and artillery, and new foundries were established for the manufacture of arms, although the rate of output was always severely limited by the shaky finances of the state."[265]

Stein's reforms of state administration and the resulting five ministries provided the minimum necessary centralization for overcoming the extreme shortages noted by Clausewitz. Workshops reminiscent of the Paris musketry works of Lazare Carnot were established in the garrison towns of each of the six brigades at Neisse, Glatz, Graudenz, Konigsberg, and Berlin and the main factory at Spandau was expanded. The "new Prussian Model" musket was a simplified version of previous models with a straight butt and larger caliber to allow use of all available ammunition. By 1813 however the weapon foundry at Spandau had produced only 55,000 and in the end rearmament of the Prussian army was only possible with English assistance. England supplied over "100,000 stands of arms, considerable quantities of powder, and flint and even Austria contributed some field pieces and muskets."[266]

As might be expected the resulting mix of arms was a "supply officer's nightmare" and required extraordinary ingenuity. Gunners trained on obsolete pieces

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[264]Rothenberg, The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, p. 192.

[265]Craig, Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 50.

[266]Rothenberg, The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, p. 193. See also Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, p. 211.

to save wear on the mere 236 serviceable guns available. After the initial actions of 1813 demonstrated the severity of lack of weapon uniformity, regiments traded out muskets to at least achieve regimental uniformity. To meet the French challenge of speed and mobility the Prussian supply train was severely reduced and cost most officers their personal mount and pack horse. The individual soldier carried only a "blanket roll over the shoulder, the haversack, ammunition pouch, and water bottle".[267] The King had taken special note of the relationship between Prussia's slow movement in the last war and her cumbersome supply train and inflexible supply system. The advent of light troops in the Prussian service caused a general decrease in the amount and types of supplies and impedimenta believed necessary to wage war. The increase of the standard march step to 108 paces per minute (with increased rates by drum command) versus the previous 75 gave the Prussians a much greater chance to move against the French army with its rate of 120 paces per minute.[268]

The new War Commissariat with a representative located at each brigade and recent rationalization of the military economy under Lieutenant Colonel von Lottum in the Military Economy Department of the War Ministry allowed "a complete overhauling of the supply services, and distribution and accounting of supplies were now centralized".[269] It is then fair to say that the Prussian army went to great lengths to meet the changed nature of the means of war as they understood them. Martin Van Creveld has, however, shown that "Prussia's whole doctrine was based on the assumption that Napoleonic warfare was qualitatively different and represented an entirely new departure." Because of that belief they also assumed that logistics also underwent a profound change which led Clausewitz "to invent an army which did without magazines, lived off the country, paid no attention to considerations of supply and sometimes seemed to grow wings in its marches". That Napoleonic logistics did not undergo such a profound change and that it was merely--as were his strategy,

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[267]Ibid., p. 195.

[268]Ibid., pp. 190-6.

[269]Craig, Politics of the Prussian Army, p. 51. See also Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, pp. 141-3 and 179-85.

tactics, organization--the "logical outcome of progressive developments originating in the previous thirty or forty years" does not, however, release the Prussian army of the day from the responsibility, which they ably exercised, of finding workable remedies for the disparities in performance attributable to logistics, even if, in retrospect, the more astonishing accomplishments of the Grande Armée are more attributable to Napoleon's genius than his system.[270]

C. COSTS

The Prussian response to Napoleon's "income of 200,000 men a year" was twofold: they mobilized the entire nation in a manner reminiscent and perhaps more complete than the levée en masse and they paid particular attention to the lives of their soldiers by developing safety as a cornerstone of the new tactical doctrine. The financial and geographic strictures of the Treaty of Tilsit and the Paris Convention meant that Prussia was indeed a second class power and the road to reattainment of its former stature was to be had only a great cost. Frederick William had not either the thalers or the will to pay them; to Prussia's great fortune, men such as Stein and Scharnhorst were willing. Stein had the immense foresight to move the state treasury from Berlin to Königsberg and Scharnhorst reorganized and reformed the army in a manner which cost not thalers but tradition.

In the end, as Herbert Rosinski writes, "Everything was lacking--money, arms, equipment; the front rank of the Landwehr infantry and the whole Landwehr cavalry had at first to be armed with pikes; but with the help of the many officers maintained since 1801 on half-pay, these raw levies were so far drilled into shape that the Prussian army, which had begun its spring campaign with a total strength of 135,000, after the summer armistice was able to take the field again with the imposing total of 279,000 men, later raised to 300,000, or 6 per cent of the total population."[271] The personal costs to those on half-pay and more those cashiered after 1807, officers usually without

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[270]Van Creveld, Supplying War, pp. 72-74.

[271]Rosinski, The German Army, p. 40.

personal funds, led Gneisenau to describe the lot of those who came back to Prussia's service at the call, "Their misery is indescribable."[272]

Throughout Yorck's instructions there appear many allusions to the safety of the individual. He speaks of "combining the greatest possible security of the individual with the greatest possible damage dealt to the enemy", that "the tirailleur should hit, and not make noise", and of "hurting the enemy in safety".[273] It would go too far to attribute this concern solely to some humanitarian impulse,[274] but it seems clear that part of the reason for the repeated references to safety and security was an understanding that this made objective and tactical sense and, above all else, that Prussia did not have "an income of 200,000 men" to squander.

D. SUPERSTRUCTURE

The reformers were in no sense democrats. Though we have seen their efforts as an attempt to break down the rigid class structure of the Frederickian system and open the army to the energies of the whole society this does not imply that they sought the end of monarchy. To the contrary they were attempting to preserve the state by creating a nation but it was to be a nation of men dedicated to the ideal of a just and rational monarchy which might unite all of Germany under Prussia's leadership. This struggle was of course a severe threat to all three estates and the reformers were as much opposed by the middle classes as they were by the nobility and the state clergy.

If we must accept the failure of the reforms to achieve what seems such a limited goal--at least relative to the French Revolution--we should remember that

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[272]Kitchen, M., A Military History of Germany from the Eighteenth Century to the Present Day, pp. 42-3, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975.

[273]Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, pp. 159-161.

[274]Though arguably it existed, I am unable to show any conclusive evidence of a great humanitarian impulse on the part of either Yorck or the other reformers. It is interesting to note how abhorrent each found combat on its own terms, decidedly different in tone are their letters describing their reactions to the wanton destruction of life and property that marked Napoleonic warfare and the common description of Prussian militarism and glorification of war.

Prussia and the Fifth Coalition were victorious, and they defeated not a republic but an empire. Paret writes that:

> They had failed in guiding the state; their achievement was limited to the construction of its new military instrument. But in this circumscribed task they succeeded remarkably well. In every field except conscription the schemes for modernization that were launched in 1807 had been carried forward without meeting crippling defeat. In the development of tactical doctrine, especially, the past three years had witnessed a decisive turning towards the new.[275]

And in the end the accomplishments endured to the extent that by 1871 the goals were largely met, after a period of reaction and restoration and the failures of 1848, but the ultimate goal, a united Germany, a nation under a rational monarchy, was achieved. Gunther Rothenberg describes the difference between the typical Prussian soldier of 1806 and the Prussian soldier of 1815 as the difference between the previous

> mercenary or reluctant conscript, now he was animated...by patriotism [which] expressed itself, as it had in the days of Frederick, by religion. As the Prussian infantry saw the French retreating the evening of Waterloo, the fusiliers began to sing the old Lutheran hymn, A mighty Fortress is our God, the same hymn their forefathers had sung on the field at Leuthen and Kunersdorf."[276]

The religion of Luther was first and foremost an expression of Germany, the original expression of the language, the first stirrings of nationalism and ultimately the focus of the state's moral energy. That in the end that connection of the German religion and the German nation of centuries past should so express itself is the ultimate irony of the Prussian answer to the new superstructure of the French Revolution.

In no single area was the challenge of the Napoleonic transformation of war more daunting than to the Frederickian relationships of aristocracy, bourgeoisie, peasant and king. Forged by Frederick's father, the tradition of the social compact between king and Junker was the foundation of the state. That tradition gave the landed nobility complete dominance of the peasantry on their estates in exchange for the service of their sons in the king's army. From that compact flowed nearly all other relationships in Prussia.

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[275]Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, p. 157.

[276]Rothenberg, The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon, p. 195.

The central core of the reformer's challenge to this system was their demand for an end to the nobility's sole claim to commissions and a system of military justice which put an end to the brutal barracks discipline which was merely a continuation of the manorial justice practiced widely and just as widely understood and accepted. And for what? So that the middle class might be lured into providing their sons for the army and relinquishing their part in the compact--to pay taxes and thus be released from the requirement of service. It seems a fool's bargain, but it worked because the reformers saw beyond the self-interest of the various groups in society to something larger, a love of and willingness to die for a concept not yet even spoken, a German nation.

Prussia produced a synthesis of modern war between 1807 and 1813. The members of the reform movement, in league with other enlightened officers such as General von Yorck, raised the concept of the individual to the center of their agenda and, in so doing, achieved a military tradition which preserved the best of the Frederickian system while creating a new type of officer to meet the challenge of modern war. Out of this cauldron of change emerged a lasting legacy to the profession of arms--the Prussian officer.

X. CONCLUSION

The purpose of history should be to allow us to use our reason and imagination to test our prejudices against the reality of other men, in other times, facing similar circumstances, and, in the testing, to discover the questions which may lead us down right paths. History, however, has become a political weapon wielded to "teach truth" through lessons rather than a traveler's torch which can light our way with informed questions. Our purpose here is the latter. Our subject is confounded by the former.

If we are to believe the collective wisdom of our modern "eminences grises,"[277] we face a turning point in history, comparably as momentous and divergent as 1815. But not even these "wise men" seem to know what is ahead. The questions are compelling. Is the cold war over? What is out there "beyond containment"? Are the two superpowers giving way to a multipolar world politic? What comes after post-war? What sort of military establishment should we have in this new order? Was our 1986 Defense Reorganization Act sufficient to allow us to develop a consistent military strategy[278] to meet the unknown challenges ahead?[279] The best advice we hear is to "keep our powder dry" lest we ignite the world's uncertainty. What lies ahead is

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[277]The political pundits, op-ed page writers and think tankers who fill our newspapers, magazines and television sets with the distilled wisdom of the last twenty-four hours.

[278]Strategic inconsistency seems epidemic. After roundly criticizing Soviet proposals to remove troops and tanks from Europe as a propaganda ploy that would merely remove aging equipment and create a leaner, more effective Soviet threat, our military leadership's reaction to President Bush's proposal to remove troops and tanks from Europe is to "take steps to isolate its newest equipment from cuts while cutting older systems." Gordon, M.R., "Bush Pact Would Affect Only Older Arms, Pentagon Officials Say," The New York Times, p. A6, June 2, 1989.

[279]The furor of our defense reform movement has quelled, happily, and defense reform analysis is today usually of the post-mortem or status-report genre. The implication seems to be that Goldwater-Nichols, given time and adherence, will cure our ills.

known to none of us, but we can be fairly certain that our military establishment, even, especially as presently "reformed," cannot remain static in a time of turmoil.

If history can play a part in helping us find the right questions about the path ahead then surely a logical test case for our reason and imagination is the period of the "transformation of war" when the static world of the two superpowers of the late Ancien Régime, France and England, along with their respective coalitions, dissolved into and out of chaos emerging into the multipolar world of the Concert of Europe. Prussia was caught in the middle of this contest, by necessity forced to immerse the whole of Prussian society--the civil state, the cities, the military, the nobility, the middle class, the peasantry--in an examination of the old order and the relationships by then most comfortably assumed by all. A central element of that examination was the Prussian reform movement and the attempt to deal with the question of civil-military relations in the midst of an uncertain, changing world.

Our study of that movement raises important questions relevant to our times; questions concerning the meaning of "failure" in defense reform, fundamental questions about civil-military relations, the applicability of foreign ideas and institutions to our government, and finally questions about what it means to be a professional military officer in a time of turmoil.

A. THE FAILURE OF REFORM AND CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

The historical judgment of the Prussian Reform Movement can best be summarized in one word: failure. Rosinski has written that

> With the fall of Stein the reform as a whole lost its head and heart--the dynamic personality that amidst the universal despondency had breathed its fiery energy into the hearts of his collaborators and co-ordinated their widespread and manifold activities. Under the weak ministry that followed him, the civil side of the reform stopped almost completely,....As for the military reformers, their work was hardly less affected."[280]

Ritter writes that "the reform efforts came to nought and the old bureaucratic absolutism with its sharp contrasts between subjects and rulers re-emerged".[281] With

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[280]Rosinski, The German Army, pp. 69-70.

[281]Ritter, The Sword and the Scepter, p. 107.

characteristic venom, A.J.P. Taylor's judgment of the "jacquerie organized from above" is that "Prussia came out of the 'years of reform' not freer than before, but with a government harsher, more extensive, and more absolute than ever."[282] W. O. Simon dedicated an entire monograph to his search for the Failure of the Prussian Reform Movement, why Prussia "reverting to the political, social, and military forms of the ancien régime, turned her back on the political heritage of western Europe: on the Enlightenment, on English constitutionalism, and on the French Revolution."[283] Gordon Craig even asks, "why...was this failure so complete?"[284] Friedrich Meinecke might have been correct that when the Prussian Reform Movement died in 1819, the first of three "critical alternatives in the history of Germany", Germany chose "to remain faithful to the twin principles of authoritarianism and militarism."[285] But in the choosing Prussia established a model of reform which, while rejected, can assist us in seeing the possibilities for their "failed" reform, and ours.

The central reason for the failure of the military reformers is then the failure of the civilian reformers. The military reforms were highly dependent on a restructuring of the civil relationships of the estates and the place of the individual in the state. The fall of Stein[286] and the subsequent "failure" of the military reformers to carry through his civilian reform agenda led inexorably to the reestablishment of the previous

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[282]Taylor, A.J.P., The Course of German History, pp. 40-41, Paragon Books, 1979.

[283]Simon, W.O., Failure of the Prussian Reform Movement, p. 4.

[284]Craig, The End of Prussia, p. 19-20. His answer is that "Stein's personal direction of affairs was so short,...Stein's successor, Hardenberg, approached them with a different spirit and set of priorities....(b)ut the most important reason for failure of the reforms was that the old Prussia, the Prussia of clearly differentiated Staende (estates) and dominated by crown and landed nobility and army, was stronger and more resilient than Stein, for one, had imagined, and its recovery stifled the reforming tendency."

[285]Meinecke, F., 1848: Eine Saekularbetrachtung, pp. 8-9 and 27-29, Berlin, 1948, quoted in Simon, The Failure of the Prussian Reform Movement, pp. 3-4. The other two "critical alternatives" were 1848 and 1866.

[286]For a comprehensive examination of the background and effects of Stein's fall see Raack, R.C., The Fall of Stein, Harvard Univ. Press, 1965.

relationships of the estates and the subsuming of the individual in the state. But is victory over the invader and establishment of an entirely new administrative and organizational structure, along with institutions and traditions which would last for the next century and a half to be considered failure?[287] The military officer's search for meaning in the final outcome of the Prussian Reform Movement is better served by Golo Mann's less judgmental observation:

> after a time the reforming movement largely came to a halt. The moments in history in which noble enthusiasm reigns are short and one must be grateful for any lasting achievements from such a period.[288]

There were indeed "lasting achievements" of the Prussian Reform Movement which can provide tests for our own efforts at defense reform and shed light on previously asked questions of civil-military relations. The great captains of pre-modern history--Alexander, Caesar, Gustavus Adolphus, Frederick the Great, Napoleon[289]--all had one thing in common, they combined in their person both military and civil leadership. The advent of modern war can be seen to begin at the moment when the political leader can no longer retain actual military leadership on the field of battle because that battlefield had grown too large and too complex for any individual to control in detail.[290] Once the executing portions of political and military leadership were separated, the issue of civil-military relations was transformed into a question of integrating the two heretofore separate segments of society--united only in the person of the monarch--into a workable whole, henceforth a central issue in all questions of defense and demanded new forms in consonance with the public weal.

To meet this new requirement of war the Prussian reformers instituted rational, centralized management of the war apparatus through a Ministry of War; they initiated

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[287]We have seen the opinion of the historians, it is necessary to ask what the nature of this failure was--did the reformers fail history or the values of those historians who wrote it?

[288]Mann, The History of Germany Since 1789. p. 35.

[289]Before 1813.

[290]In each subsequent instance where tried the result is failure. Napoleon after 1813 and Adolph Hitler are two clear examples.

a system of conscription which gave the citizen a stake in the state and the state a claim on the citizen's service legitimated by an equitable military justice system; they developed a system of command which placed the old and the new side by side--the commander and his chief of staff--supported by a General Staff made up of the most qualified officers in the corps; and they placed the individual at the center of this system by insisting on an educated elite open to all and informed by a spirit of Bildung.

The Prussians were not the first men to face this new reality of civil military relations. Where the Prussians were forced to realize that the king they had was unable to lead as Frederick had and that they therefore needed a system of genius to replace the genius' system, the American colonists had desired simply to be rid of their king[291] and the military system the repugnance of which was part of the decision to break with England. They realized they needed a system of military organization which avoided that which was repugnant yet was able to provide "for the common defense." In facing this new question of civil-military relations in the American Revolutionary War, the founding fathers established the issue as a critical element of our new form of government. Taken together, the American and Prussian experiences mark the beginnings of both modern command and control and the concomitant need for civil-military relations. A comparison of the two demonstrates the questions which still remain today.

The conflict was there from the beginning. The Declaration of Independence charged that King George had "affected to render the military **independent of, and superior to,** the civil power."[292] [Emphasis added.] Simply put, that is the issue: what should be the balance between the civil and military powers? The framers understood the problem, they must "provide for the common defense" for as John Jay noted in the third of the Federalist Papers, "among the many objects to which a wise and free

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[291]Though many were willing to take on a new one if General Washington had been of that mind.

[292]Smith, E., and Spaeth, H., eds., The Constitution of the United States, with Case Summaries, p. 28, Harper and Row, 1987.

people find it necessary to direct their attention, that of providing for their safety seems to be the first."[293] The problem was to provide for their safety without a military independent of and superior to the civil power. Hamilton felt that civil-military relations were not a problem for "if circumstances should at any time oblige the government to form an army of any magnitude that army can never be formidable to the liberties of the people while there is a large body of citizens, little if at all inferior to them in discipline and the use of arms, who stand ready to defend their own rights and those of their fellow-citizens."[294] That Hamilton was on the side of a nationally-controlled militia and lost the argument, is a harbinger of the balance which still endures. Americans distrust--instinctively--military power, whether King George's or their own. The balance established was no balance at all but a long-standing test of a weak standing army, with but little voice in the councils of government, relying on the nation's natural distance from potential enemies and our eventual ability to produce our way out of whatever contest we might face. That this strategy has not held up over the last forty years should be obvious. But the civil-military "balance"--or rather the lack thereof--which flowed from that strategy still maintains.

Samuel Huntington tried thirty years ago to find a new balance which might "reduce the danger of progressive deterioration in American officership." Concerned of the consequences should "the voice of the professional soldier" go unheeded, Huntington wrote that

> Unless a new balance is created, the continued disruption of American civil-military relations cannot but impair the caliber of military professionalism in the future. A political officer corps, rent with faction, subordinated to ulterior ends, lacking prestige but sensitive to the appeals of popularity, would endanger the security of the state. A strong, integrated, highly professional officer corps, on the other hand, immune to politics and respected for its military character, would be a steadying balance wheel in the conduct of policy.[295]

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[293]Hamilton, A., Madison, J., and Jay, J. The Federalist Papers. No. 3, p. 42. NAL Penguin, 1961.

[294]Ibid., No. 29, p. 185.

[295]Huntington, Soldier and the State, p. 464. It is left to the reader to pick the more correct forecast of the current state of American officership, the author finds more

Huntington concludes his study with an idyllic portrait of the military community, "a different world" of "ordered serenity", in stark contrast to the "tiresome monotony and the incredible variety and discordancy of small-town commercialism." His point seemed to be that the proper balance was only to come through a civilian shift toward a military standard and the military values of "loyalty, duty, restraint, dedication" with which the civil society might "eventually find redemption and security".[296]

By 1977, Huntington believed that instead of the civil moving toward--even adopting--the values and standards of the military, "the dilemma of military institutions in a liberal society can only be resolved satisfactorily by a military establishment that is **different from but not distant from** the society it serves."[297] [Emphasis added.] Thus Professor Huntington's view of the proper balance in civil-military relations has moved from national salvation to salvage; the civil must respect the inherent difference from and distance at which the military must exist in a liberal society.

It would seem the professor has taken a page from the reactionaries who brought down the Prussian Reform Movement. There the dilemma of **liberal** military institutions in a **conservative** society could only be resolved satisfactorily by a military establishment that was different from but not distant from the society it served; the reformers presented a conservative society with a military which espoused liberal ideals which could not be fully tolerated in that conservative society. There the "difference and distance" between the military and the civil was intolerably wide and was finally closed by "purging" the reform element while accepting certain seemingly institutional

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evidence of the "political" than the "professional" model.

[296]Ibid., pp. 465-6.

[297]Huntington, S.P., "The Soldier and the State in the 1970's," Civil-Military Relations, A. Goodpaster and S.P. Huntington, p. 27, American Enterprise Institute, 1977. This difference and distance is currently so wide that to find a Democrat in uniform is akin to finding a pro-union Republican. While Republicans might find this natural it is indicative of a deeper problem which explains the current imbalance in civil-military relation, a chasm of political difference between the opinion forming elite and the uniformed officer egalite.

changes: a centralized Ministry of War, citizen conscription[298], and a command system built on an elite General Staff dedicated to professional excellence. All of these changes were designed to meet liberal notions of equality and freedom based on a belief in individuals and their capacity to achieve Bildung through a life-long education, but accepted with an explicit rejection of transference of those notions to the larger society.[299]

In our own case the military values--order, discipline, prescription--are supposedly at odds with the prevalent civil values--freedom, equality, choice.[300] The logic of our "balancing" of these value sets is that the military values are accepted as necessary for the efficient management of the armed forces but shall not be allowed to impinge on the dominant values of the larger civil society. It is a logic strangely parallel to the Prussian case and fraught with the question, how far may the difference and distance be allowed to grow before the society cannot tolerate the chasm?

Our history of civil-military relations suggests the American solution was to retain as weak an Army as possible; to prescribe a citizen-militia so that there existed no threat from the military to the civil society because the military was made up of part time soldiers with a greater stake in the civil community than it had in the military. In the aftermath of World War II we accepted--grudgingly--the requirement for a strong, professional, standing armed force. But we have never accepted the concomitant requirement for a strong, professional military voice in the business of

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[298]For the uneven progress of the concept of the citizen's military obligation see Paret, P., "Nationalism and the Sense of Military Obligation," Military Affairs, v. 34, February, 1970.

[299]If one takes the removal of proponents of transference from power as explicit.

[300]The labelling of these supposedly conflicting value sets as conservative and liberal is a useless venture which Huntington attempts but fails. The Prussian reformers were liberal because they sought to enlarge the share of the citizen in the state, they were equally concerned with conserving those values which we today incorrectly assert conflict. In a correct understanding of the words one can be both liberal--one who advocates civil liberties and legal equality--and conservative, if those political values presently maintain. See Epstein, K., The Genesis of German Conservatism, pp. 3-11, Princeton Univ. Press, 1966, for an excellent typology of the strands of conservatism present in the early nineteenth century.

governmental decisionmaking. Though without historical basis, the fear still exists that some new King George might affect to render the military power independent of, superior to, the civil power.

The example of the Prussian Reform Movement provides a method for balancing the difference and distance between the military and civil by acceptance of military institutions and ideas at odds with prevailing civil values, yet not so onerous to be seen as threatening. The civil was seen to prevail in the period of reaction yet the new military institutions were able to build a system of excellence founded on ideas then alien to the civil society.

Under Napoleon's terms, announced as the Treaty of Paris, the Prussian reformers faced a greatly reduced army; the geographical, and therefore fiscal and population, diminution of the state meant real reductions to the personnel and force structures available to the army. We may also face a period of diminishing forces, personnel strengths and dollars available for defense, and it would seem imperative that we compensate by an enhancement of our planning capability, which is exactly what the Prussian reformers achieved. We must make up for brute strength with intelligent use of what remains, and without jeopardizing the delicate American civil-military balance.

Perhaps the most compelling outcome of the Prussian Reform Movement is one which Peter Paret believes "other societies--both old and new--are still learning: armed forces cannot be relied on as tools for general reform."[301] This statement both provides the best summation of the failure of the Prussian reform movement. The military cannot reform the civil society. But perhaps the converse of Professor Paret's statement is also true: armed forces cannot rely on the general society for specific reform of the military. The defense reform debate of the 1980's came to be centered on the unnecessarily involved question of jointness.[302] Now that we have hopefully settled this issue it is still necessary to address the more fundamental question of how

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[301]Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, p. 244.

[302]That this issue had to be addressed is itself a paean to the power of interservice rivalry. That it is considered reform to admit that we must fight together and therefore will establish institutional safeguards to force us to fight together is a painful declaration that our "reform" movement also was a failure.

we can achieve a dynamic system of national military planning and strategy development--one that doesn't require momentous events to overcome the bureaucratic inertia evident in the latest national security review--and produce, on a continuing basis, reasoned, imaginative ideas on military questions from the very source which should be producing them, the military. Our defense reform movement was a civilian undertaking with very little military participation. The chief reason for this lack of military involvement in the debate was that there exists no military institution of individuals with standing to join the debate. One answer to this void is an American General Staff, but such an undertaking would require a readjustment of the difference and distance between the civil and the military powers and an acceptance of foreign ideas and institutions. Again the Prussian example coupled with our own history provides the basis for the questions we should ask.

B. THE ADOPTION OF FOREIGN IDEAS AND INSTITUTIONS

A hundred years before the conflict between George Washington and Nathaniel Greene over American military strategy, a debate existed in the colonies over adapting Indian methods of fighting to an "American" style of militia warfare or retaining the English-European model.[303] A continuity of conflict has ever since existed between those elements of our armed forces which wish only to find a way of fighting which might allow American forces to win and those elements, equally desirous of victory, who also demand a particularly American style of military organization and operations. This conflict has come to include interservice rivalry and the "not invented here" syndrome. These two institutional biases, along with a germanophobic hostility engendered by two world wars and our continuing concerns about the balance of civil-military relations stand as the primary impediments to our adoption of foreign ideas and institutions such as an American general staff system after the Prussian model.

The genesis of the Prussian General Staff was, as we've shown, not the major focus of the energies of the Prussian Reformers but as Professor Craig has pointed out, "no part of the work of the reformers of 1807 had been more permanent than the

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[303]Millett and Maslowski, For the Common Defense, pp. 6-18.

General Staff system."[304] It is ironic that an institution so thoroughly, if incorrectly, detested by the most (self-proclaimed) liberal of men was in fact based on the most liberal of principles. The General Staff system was a logical outcome of the reformers' insistence on Bildung as a guiding principle leading to a fundamental belief in the essentiality of education and individual excellence within an institutional approach to rational preparation for "war as it really is." A real appreciation of the liberal views of the leaders of that movement can add a dimension often lacking in the debate over adoption of their system. Scharnhorst, Stein, Gneisenau, and Clausewitz believed in a Prussian nation-state and believed that the army could provide the energy, education and equality of individuals necessary to raise Prussia to the level of Great Power. They were drawn to Prussia from all over Europe in the hope of finding in that more tolerant state a home where their education and abilities counted for more than their family name or title. The reformers believed that individuals--regardless of station--had a right to share in the responsibility to defend the state and that, flowing from that right, individual citizens also had a right to full participation in the state.

Though discredited and removed from service by 1819, these men laid the foundation for the "tradition of excellence" which came to be the hallmark of the Prussian General Staff. These traditions did not die even during the reaction and restoration which blocked much of their remaining political program. In the half century after 1813, within the walls of Berlin's Bendlerstrasse redoubt, the Prussian General Staff, at a distance and difference from the prevailing reactionary mood, developed a method for commanding and controlling the means of war unleashed by the French Revolution, what we know as modern war. This "Brain of an Army"[305] came precariously close to perfecting the art of waging modern war. How close is a matter of historical interpretation long muddied by the unstated prejudices of liberal historians. But what is undeniably clear is that the Great General Staff of Helmuth von Moltke was so impressive an instrument that every great power in the late nineteenth century sought to copy its efficiency and power.

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[304]Craig, G.A., The Battle of Königgrätz, p. 22, J.B. Lippincott Co., 1964.

[305]Wilkinson, S., The Brain of an Army, Constable, 1913.

The story of what became of this instrument in the twentieth century is well known. What seems more difficult is an historical interpretation of the bases of the instrument and the example this "institution of excellence" can provide. The Prussian Reform Movement provides a vivid example of appropriating foreign ideas and institutions even from a hated enemy. The question this raises for us is can we afford to reject the example, can we not adapt the institution to our own system when the liberal premises upon which it was founded so closely parallel our own? Furthermore, why have we rejected the traditions and forms of the Great General Staff as tainted by the German leadership of World War I and II and yet not recognized the logical inconsistency of rejecting the instrument because the user is evil?[306]

The false premise of those who argue against adopting the Prussian model is that it is inherently "of" the hated "Prussian militarism" which caused two world wars. A balanced view of history would hold that the views of the Prussian reformers were more in consonance with our own American views of a citizen-militia, e.g., the Landwehr and Landsturm, than with any concept of state militarism derived from this century's historical experience with Germany.[307] The Great German General Staff which served as the model for most Western (and some Eastern) powers in the late nineteenth century was the creation of Scharnhorst, as refined by Moltke; the later General Staff--the "technicians of power" of Ludendorff--became the cause célèbre to which American politicians pointed, aghast at the idea of America taking on such an ominously anti-democratic institutional form, and ultimately rejected the idea of an American general staff system. Our rejection of this foreign institution is founded both on our perception of the reality of twentieth century German militarism and on our

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[306]We might as well have rejected the tank because it served the Third Reich so well.

[307]Additionally, the General Staff's role in World War I and the rise of Ludendorff were the direct result of the failure of the civil government not state militarism. The relationship of Bismarck and Moltke is clear evidence of the historical acceptance by the General Staff of its subordinate role in foreign policy. The German General Staff's role in World War II was, after Hitler's establishment of the OKW, that of a political and military eunuch not the wearer of the militarist talisman.

misperception of the ideas underlying its conceptual foundation. The ideas of the Prussian reformers, though of foreign origin are not foreign to our national values; they are in fact very close to our own ideas of the relationship of the state and the military, the state and the individual, belief in the educability of the common man and his right to a share in both the burdens of citizen responsibility and the opportunities of leadership.

Our general staff debate has taken the end result as the only possible outcome of a noble beginning.[308] We should instead look at the beginning and appraise its merits and possibilities. The earliest historical example of a general staff is the French service d'état-major des logis des armées which, under the leadership of Lieutenant General Pierre Bourcet, sought, in 1766, to right the Franco-Prussian military imbalance following the Seven Years' War.[309] In fact, the most significant imbalance was that Prussia had a military genius, Frederick II. What is truly ironic is that the "enduring development" of the general staff--the French staff disbanded after only five years

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[308]Gordon Craig, in his Introduction to Rosinski, The German Army, p. 8, summarizes the development of the German Army after 1871 as "materialism, glorification of science and technology, and admiration of wealth and power (which) tended to subvert the humanistic values that had characterized German life and thought in the first part of the century. This profound change could not leave the military establishment unaffected. The best officers of the period before 1848--like Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, Boyen and Clausewitz, and all the younger officers who modeled themselves on these heroes--were cultivated men with wide intellectual interests, students of history and contemporary politics, possessing both responsibility and a sense of perspective. But after 1871, and particularly after 1890, things were different, and even the ablest of the army's chiefs were apt to be professionals of a new kind, technicians of power, intent on the problems of their métier, with little or no interest in anything that lay outside the confines of the garrison. . . . . the tragedy of the modern German army might be summed up in the victory of Ludendorff over Scharnhorst."

[309]Irvine, D.D., "The Origin of Capital Staffs," Journal of Modern History, v. 10, p. 162, June, 1938. Irvine admits to many other examples of pre-1766 staffs which could on "the basis of superficialities....be traced back, through somewhat different lines of development in various countries, almost indefinitely."

because of its "great expense"[310]--began in the early nineteenth century as a result of another Franco Prussian military imbalance; only this time the military genius was Napoleon Bonaparte, and it was for Prussia to find an organizational solution to this imbalance of genius. That solution resulted in the Prussian General Staff. Out of this process of attempting to meet the challenges of the birth of the as yet unidentified epoch of modern national warfare we see the general staff system take form as the unique Prussian answer to modernity.

It can be argued--incorrectly--that, while we don't call it a general staff, we in fact already have one. In fact we have several poor imitations of what a general staff might be: the National Security Council Staff, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the respective Army, Air and OPNAV staffs, and the staff of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In this era of jointness we might hold out some hope that this last body might become what it should be the central uniformed planning agency for the armed forces. Unfortunately, even if that were desired by our leadership--which it manifestly is not--current statutory law expressly forbids it. Section 143 of Title 10, United States Code, a restatement of the still active portions of the National Security Act of 1947, states:

> The Joint Staff shall not operate or be organized as an overall Armed Forces General Staff and shall have no executive authority. The Joint Staff may be organized and may operate along conventional staff lines to support the Joint Chiefs of Staff in discharging their assigned responsibilities.

The expressly forbidden general staff has been defined as a "special corps or establishment of officers which provides staffs to assist various commanders of combined arms in exercising the functions of command and administrative control, as distinct from the functions of administrative management within established administrative departments."[311] The general staff performs the following functions: "(1) the systematic and extensive collection in time of peace of specific information which may be important to the future conduct of operations or to proper preparation for future operations; (2) intellectual preparation for the future conduct of operations either

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[310]Ibid., p. 166.

[311]Ibid., p. 162.

through systematic development of skill for the handling of contingently anticipated situations or through the elaboration of specific plans for war, or both."[312] Our defense reform attempted to address these two functions but "failed" to find new solutions to meet the urgent requirements for preparing for war.

"The neglect of all that had to do with real preparation for war."[313] Boyen's fourth deficiency of the Prussian Army of 1806 contains a concept central to understanding what the Prussian reformers attempted: war as it really is. This concept implies that the reformers believed they understood the reality of war. If we have any hope of achieving our goals of a coherent national military strategy and an armed force which can implement that strategy, we must also find in our midst men who understand war as it really is. Our best hope for finding such men is in the armed forces. Our best hope for achieving the stated goal is to give them a voice to leaven the debate with the reality of war. Our best hope for giving such men a voice is an American General Staff.

C. THE ESSENCE OF PRUSSIAN OFFICERSHIP

Our defense reform efforts of the eighties "failed" because they were directed not at the fundamental deficiencies of individuals involved in the "preparation for war" but at superficial institutional power relationships which have very little to do with war. The "appeal of the Prussian reformers was directed not to the political freedom of man, as in the French Revolution, but to his inner, moral freedom as an intelligent and responsible person."[314] That appeal was successful in the most "lasting achievement" of the reform era: their synthesis of the Frederickian and Napoleonic systems in a new understanding of the reality of modern war and the resulting model of the modern

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[312]Ibid., p. 165.

[313]Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813, pp. 86-87.

[314]Rosinski, The German Army, p. 66. For a more complete treatment of the traditions and assumptions of the particular German approach to the concept of freedom see Krieger, L., The German Idea of Freedom, Beacon Press, 1957.

soldier in the emergence of what one writer has called the "enlightened soldier".[315] The qualities of that enlightened soldier can be described as the essence of Prussian officership and must be understood if we are to adapt the forms of Prussian military thought and their institution of excellence.

There are two approaches to institutionalizing performance of groups. One approach may be broadly termed the "great man" approach, its best examples to be found in the Frederickian and Napoleonic systems. In this approach a "genius" establishes the theory and application, sets the rules of how men will act in their facet of group performance. All members of the group follow the great man's admonitions and eventually this approach becomes a system. History seems to demonstrate that these systems named for great men thrive for little longer than the lives of the men from which they take their names, then lacking the energy of the originator they become increasingly bureaucratic, regimented by the supposed "sanctity" of the great man's postulates.

A second approach is centered not on a great man but on a great idea. Systems built on this approach generally do not become personified because they live through the diversity of individuals and acquire their energy from the individual and necessarily change, adapt over time. That there are no references to a Scharnhorstian or Moltkean system is due to the place of the individual in their approach to war. Faith in the individual and the ability of the group to produce an endless stream of men competent through education to reenergize the system--and thus to change it--is the real hallmark of what the Prussian Reform Movement produced and this acceptance of the individual, both soldier and officer, as the centerpiece of their system led inexorably to the essence of Prussian officership--the educated individual. This educated individual is the key to understanding the ethos of the Prussian General Staff.

To transplant this concept to American military soil and institute an American General Staff will require us to accept this ethos. Unfortunately, the concept of civilian control of the military as the driving conceptual framework for American defense organization analysis has resulted in a fundamental distortion of the Prussian

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[315]White, The Enlightened Soldier.

General Staff and flawed interpretation of its meaning as a model for American defense organization. Conceptually, civilian control of the military implies a power relationship. The civilian in civil-military relations must dominate, therefore analysis of reform proposals start and end with the question: who has power? The Prussian Reform Movement was not about power but about excellence--of the individual and, only derivatively, of the institution. When analyzed in light of power relationships the very excellence bequeathed the Prussian military by the general staff system acts as its chief accuser; an "institution of (military) excellence" by its very excellence and its aura of admitted elitism threatens civilian control.

Our societal preoccupation with equality leads naturally to distrust of elites.[316] Unfortunately, the military sub-society must necessarily be a meritocracy led by an elite to produce a vision of future war that might provide "for the common defense." In maintaining the imbalance of civil-military relations we have allowed egalitarianism a foothold in military thinking. This is profoundly dangerous for "egalitarianism means conformism, because it gives power to the sterile who can only make use of old values, other men's ready-made values, which are not alive and to which their promoters are not committed. Egalitarianism is founded on reason, which denies creativity"[317] and it is exactly that creativity which is most desperately needed in today's armed forces.

Unfortunately, our defense reform movement ignored creativity and its source, individuals, and instead began and ended with power relationships. Congressional debate on defense organization analyses devolved to wiring diagrams and hierarchical rank equations. What is the relationship of staff to line, Congress to staff, executive to staff, who has power? This is all irrelevant to the true nature of the Prussian model. The Prussian Reform Movement sought to find a structure which provided a substitute for individual genius, a guardian against royal ("civilian") incompetence--

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[316]For the evolution of military elites see Barnett, C., "The Education of Military Elites," The Journal of Contemporary History, v. 2, July, 1967.

[317]Bloom, A., The Closing of the American Mind, p. 201, Simon and Schuster, 1987.

therewith the real threat to the civil-military balance. But this fear should not threaten a mature democracy. Is our system of government so fragile as to be in mortal danger from a military which is excellent? It would appear some believe so. What is truly alarming is that our system seems to demand a mediocre military rather than possibly upset the cornerstone of our military tradition, civilian control.

If we are to call into question the prejudices of our leadership--and implicitly, errors in thinking about future war--we must begin with a coherent understanding of the past in the light of our probable future. Our military future is unknowable. But we can see a political future taking shape. Several near "unstoppable" trends are at work in the denizens of the "defense thinkers" currently shaping our military future. Our future force structure will continue to be technically oriented towards better machines versus a professional orientation towards better leaders. Our forces will be smaller, quite possibly retrenched to garrisons in the United States versus our present forward disposition of troops. Our manpower will probably remain volunteer--and thus continue the lack of connection between citizen and soldier--because there is no threat which can overcome the apparent unwillingness of our upper and upper-middle classes to accept the responsibilities inherent in freedom.[318] We may return to a pre-World War I militia military, with a cadre of professionals and the bulk of our forces in the reserves. Operational strategy will be joint versus the past service-specific solutions. As our political leadership faces up to fiscal reality the defense budget will tend to tighten versus the possibly too ample defense budgets of the 1980's. Defense policy will tend more toward "consensus" between Democratic Congresses and Republican administrations resulting in less coherence.

It is clear that doing more with less is not an answer but a cliche. It is time for new ideas to solve the fiscal-military conundrum. The answer to our military problems has to be found within the military, not without. One answer yet to receive a balanced

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[318]The recent debate over the Citizenship and National Service Act and the resulting wails of "indentured servitude" from the spokesmen of the upper middle class and the academy would seem to make the point. See C. Moskos, "A Boon for the Poor" and W.M. Evers, "Indentured Servitude" in "A Dialogue on National Service in Exchange for Education, Does America Need a 'G.I. Bill' for Youth," The New York Times, p. 15, April 15, 1989.

hearing is an American general staff. An American general staff could reinvigorate our armed forces and provide uniformed leadership in solving the defense problems of the next century: if we overcome our fear of elites--an egalitarian armed force is necessarily mediocre; if we apply objective criteria to selection of officers to the most important staff positions in the armed forces--the joint, combined and unified command staffs; if we reorder our military priorities from procurement to planning--procurement must follow strategy, not lead it; if we accept the necessity of the defense unification supposedly accomplished in 1947--interservice rivalry may be our greatest opponent; if we accept the military as a full partner in the defense establishment--the military is subordinate to the national command authority, not all civilians in the Office of the Secretary of Defense; if we accept the Prussian model of effective military command and control; then perhaps we can meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. That future may require us to return to simpler notions of defense, with no natural enemy; and this implies both a reduction in our civil raison d'etre and an elevation of the military's moral claim to a place in the political discussion arising in uncertainty. If we don't know the future we must constantly be a part of the daily resolution of tomorrow. We have for forty years had a trusted enemy, as that reality fades so will the stability of civilization we have come to accept. The place of the officer in an uncertain society is arbiter of the end, the final stopgap between civilization and chaos.

It is due to that place of the officer in American society that the vocation of the American officer must be that of a cultured student of history. Cultured because the military officer stands on the ragged edge of the line between civilization and the horror of war. Society may ask him at any time to cross over that line in its defense. Without cultured, educated officers--the Bildungprinzip of Scharnhorst--the real danger exists that the line will become an abyss back from which we will not be able to cross. A student of history because the "lessons" of war can only be studied under the lamp of the past--the immediacy of wartime experience forbids reflection and only after war expires can its lessons by learned. Cultured, educated men are necessary to tame Bellona, for the first requirement is to know who Bellona is. It is the qualities inherent in the essence of Prussian officership which provide the best example for the

American officer, "cultivated men with wide intellectual interests, students of history and contemporary politics, possessing both responsibility and a sense of perspective."[319]

This study has attempted to show how a small group of liberal military officers, facing an uncertain, changing world and at odds with the prevailing ethos of both their military and civil societies, through Bildung--faith in the educability of individuals, the necessity of the lifelong quest of culture, acculturation, in even the most acultural of undertakings, in their belief in the right of all men to an opportunity to achieve true citizenship and therewith both the duties to and fruits of the fortunes of their state, with a tough objectivity and understanding of "war as it really is,"--transformed their state's military instrument from the "dry rot" of the decayed forms of the Ancien Régime into a synthesis of modern war which unleashed the imaginations and reason of generations of their nations' officers. The Bildungprinzip of the Prussian reformers is available as an example to inform our questions and we should not ignore the potential fruits of that example as we look forward to our own uncertain future.

To paraphrase Professor Bloom: this is the American moment in world history, the one for which we shall forever be judged. Just as in politics the responsibility for the fate of freedom in the world has devolved upon our regime, so the fate of western civilization may at any moment devolve upon our military instrument, and the two are related as they have never been before. The gravity of our given task is great, and it is very much in doubt how the future will judge our stewardship.[320]

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[319]Craig, Introduction to Rosinski, The German Army, p. 8.

[320]Bloom, The Closing of the American Mind, p. 382. Professor Bloom was speaking of his profession and its expression, the university, but I believe his eloquence also speaks to the profession of arms.

XI. IMPLICATIONS

This thesis suggests the value of the past in our present command, control and communications analysis efforts. If history is to have value to military officers, it must be found in the simple truth that only history provides the ultimate operations analysis--what real men, facing real problems, actually did and what actually was the result. No computer projection, war game, simulation or academic postulate can provide the precision of reality.

The participants in the Prussian Reform Movement faced a reality which, though distant in time, nonetheless included many of the issues presently confronting our American armed forces. The period of the "transformation of war" with its political, social and economic tumult raised a specter of a future in which the changed constituents of war had to be addressed lest the Prussian state become a permanent satellite of France. Armies, means, costs and the superstructure of war were then, as now, the agenda of the defense reform debate. The recent history of defense reform demonstrates our fundamental inability to address these constituents as anything more than management issues amenable to organizational and institutional readjustments of power relationships.

The example of the Prussian reformers provides a paradigm for defense reform, an approach anchored to a fundamental truth many today deny: war is the realm of violence and chance, subordinated to politics, Clausewitz's "remarkable trinity;" and not our modern apostasy, bureaucratic power and operations analysis, subordinated to management theory. The Prussian reformers sought to understand war "as it actually is;" our American defense establishment has redefined it as war "as we wish it to be." The American image of war is that of a business problem which allows us to comfortably concentrate on that which we Americans do best: manage a business. But the reality of violence, chance and subordination to politics keeps rearing its ugly head and demonstrating--in Vietnam, Koh Tang Island, Desert One, Grenada, Beirut--that war is most fundamentally men trying to kill each other within a chaotic arena dominated by political realities not under their control. This real war cannot be

"managed," however pleasing such aphorisms as "management of violence" might be to American business sensibilities.

Once the reality of war is accepted, it is but a short step, guided by the historical example of the Prussian Reform Movement, to acceptance of the critical link between the nature of war and the centrality of the individual in its execution and the achievement of excellence. If the American people truly desire excellence in our military establishment its uniformed officers must acknowledge that excellence is a personal trait, not an institutional one. Effective institutions of war must be built on individual excellence. Our present course is founded on the opposite, false premise that if "excellent" institutional forms are adopted; that is, forms with the correct (but in the author's opinion, irrelevant) power relationships--"effective" individual will, mirabile dictu, somehow magically be produced. The Prussian example is the necessary corrective. The essence of Prussian officership is that of a cultured, educated, liberal officer alive to the chaotic reality of war and able to deal with the complexity of war precisely because this officer was not shackled to some management theory or checklist mentality but was free to exercise his independent intellect and initiative in the instantaneous evolution of battle.

How then might our behemoth American defense establishment--unimaginable in size and complexity to a nineteenth century warrior--accept the Prussian model? A beginning is acceptance of the concept of an elite, the natural outcome of the pursuit of individual excellence. The example of the General Staff must be reevaluated without the blinkers of historical reductionism. Many would reject the model of the General Staff because it leads to Schlieffen, Ludendorff and Hitler, but this is argument post hoc, ergo propter hoc. We must begin at the beginning--the Prussian Reform Movement--instead of the end. The General Staff emerged as a logical consequence of the Reformer's acceptance of war on its own terms. War is not a democratic enterprise, and the historian's insistence on formalistic purity does a disservice to the practitioner's quest for guidance. It is not beyond our capabilities to find the point at which this evolution--from Frederick to Scharnhorst through Clausewitz to Moltke and then to Schlieffen, Ludendorff and then, finally, Hitler--went wrong. The General Staff concept is not a formulation of Naziism, it is not a natural predecessor of the

dogmatic, technocratic approach of Ludendorff, it is not a logical predecessor of the inflexibility of Schlieffen; but even if it were, are we not capable of seeing the potential, the requirement for an elite to deal with the complexity and uncertainty ahead? Politics must become more uncertain, unstable and complex in the near future as the world redefines itself. War, its subordinate extension, must follow. America needs a new voice at the table which can think, speak, and act, not as a union representing some vested service or military-industrial special interest, but as the nation's defenders willing if need be to step across the abyss to the realm of violence and chance but also able to return fully possessed of the nation's political values.

America's Jena may be at hand. Our checklists do not include chaos and we will be alone on that battlefield, unarmed to meet the violent moments of opportunity which will pass by unnoticed while we consult our Command and Control Nets for guidance. A General Staff with members deployed at every staff level is the absent link between the genius of the commander and the chaos of the battlefield. The presence of an elite staff can provide the missing leadership. For American forces to excel on the future battlefield, we must appeal to our natural, individual desires to be part of that elite. The egalite is comfortable in peace, but it will be lethal in war.

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