

**BISMARCK'S DILEMMA: GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY  
FROM 1870 TO 1882**

by

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the point at which German foreign policy became an unstable influence within European international relations between 1870 and 1882, as well as the structural and personal factors which influenced the decisions of German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck. Bismarck's motivations are crucial to understanding European international relations in the late 19th century because he had to contend with the geographical and diplomatic difficulties which were inherent in the creation of the very powerful (yet vulnerable) Second Reich. It is the position of this thesis that it was Bismarck's policy of flexible non-commitment to any single European power which most effectively guaranteed Germany's safety. Consequently, the abandonment of this policy, summarized in the Bad Kissingen Memorandum, was a decision based on Bismarck's panicked and irrational response to unexpected Russian hostility towards Germany following the Congress of Berlin in 1878.

It is necessary to understand Bismarck's initial policy of non-commitment in order to determine the reasons behind his sudden shift towards a fixed alliance with Austria-Hungary. This requires a detailed analysis of German foreign policy documents contained within *Die Grosse Politik*, and a variety of memoirs from key figures within the German foreign office during this time period. This study in European foreign affairs provides another interpretation of the varied historiographical positions currently in existence. By accepting aspects from many of these positions, it makes use of the traditional focus on the individual actors who helped to shape late 19th century European diplomacy; in addition, this thesis examines the more contemporary perspectives which focuses on the possible influence of economic and domestic socio-political factors on international relations. Through a reassessment of the existing primary sources, this study seeks to resolve the controversy concerning the reasons behind Bismarck's actions, and how much power he had as foreign minister to influence events.

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## INTRODUCTION

One day on the Pomeranian estate owned by German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, a prized Mastiff strayed away from his master. The dog was gone for the night and returned early in the morning. His master was enraged at the sight of the disheveled dog, who had obviously been out to visit a local bitch in heat. Bismarck, without thinking, acted purely on emotion; in a rage, he picked up a cane and beat the dog to death. In the days that followed, the remorse over the willful murder of one his most beloved pets was nearly impossible to bear. He wept openly like a child and went on endlessly about what kind of horrible beast he had become. This situation would not be the only occasion when Bismarck, in a moment of emotional distress, would quickly destroy something he had prized and then regret it later. This action would repeat itself in his response to the Bad Kissingen Memorandum. The consequences of that action would have a profound effect not only on Bismarck and his foreign policy, but also on Europe for the next few decades.

The field of foreign policy has been a much studied topic for historians. German foreign policy under Chancellor Otto von Bismarck is no exception. This topic has been explored thoroughly, and many varying methodologies and theories have been devised to explain the events and the motivations of the prime movers of European international relations in this period. The intent of this thesis is to present yet another interpretation of his policies. Attempting to understand Bismarck's motivations and decisions is a complex process. It is a combination of the institutional/systemic realities in which Germany existed, as well as the idiosyncrasies of Bismarck himself. It is impossible to gain an accurate understanding of German foreign policy without a detailed analysis of both. Often, historians have ignored one or the other; this has caused diverging and misinformed accounts of this period of history.

Many questions must be answered in order to gain a basic understanding of German foreign policy between 1870-1882. Among these include: what was the crucial turning point which led Germany, and the rest of Europe, from a flexible system of cabinet diplomacy to a fixed system

of mutually hostile alliances? Was this the inevitable result of systemic changes within the sphere of international relations, or due to the personal miscalculations of Chancellor Bismarck? In addition, what were some of the other crucial changes which occurred in the direction of German foreign policy between 1870 and 1882, and what impact did these changes have on European international relations during this time? These are just a sample of the questions which will be asked and answered in this thesis.

In order to grapple with these and other questions, it is important to make the intent of this thesis clear. This thesis will be an exploration of German foreign policy within the framework of European international relations between 1870 and 1882. Within this period, there was considerable diplomatic tension due to the emergence of Germany as a new industrial and military power at the centre of Europe. This significantly altered the previous balance of power when France and Russia were the two premier land powers, while in contrast, most of the German territories remained composed (as they had been for centuries) as a loose collection of small, squabbling, and mostly insignificant political units. For Bismarck, the primary task after achieving unification was to safeguard this satiated state and prove to Europe that Germany was not a pariah which sought domination of the continent.

A critical element towards understanding Bismarck's policies is the Bad Kissingen Memorandum (15 June 1877); it must be determined whether this memorandum is the key to understanding Bismarck's policies between 1871 and 1879. The Bad Kissingen Memorandum is a rather brief document which outlines Germany's delicate position within Europe and the possibility of a "nightmare of coalitions" which could lead Germany into a two-front war. It rules out a military solution, especially since the European powers made it clear during the "Is war in Sight?" crisis of 1875 that Germany would not be permitted to extend further its power on the continent militarily. Bad Kissingen called for a flexible and non-committed policy in which Germany would try to foster limited rivalry among the other European powers over peripheral (colonial) disputes; these disputes would not only distract the other powers away from Germany but would allow Bismarck to act as a mediator and encourage the other powers to be dependent on German

diplomacy. Conversely, Germany would also try to encourage an atmosphere of cooperation between Russia, Britain and Austria in order to prevent open conflicts and remove the temptation for any one of these powers to turn to France for support. It was a delicate situation in which Germany could not allow the other European powers to engage in open conflict, nor allow them to cooperate too closely. The bottom line was that Germany was left in a diplomatically disadvantaged position due to French hostility. As a result, France must remain politically isolated. Focusing on this document provides a very different perspective on subsequent events and dramatically challenges the belief that Bismarck was generally a clear and calm European statesman who always made decisions based on a close analysis of long term trends.

If the concepts described within the Bad Kissingen Memorandum were so critical to German survival, one must ask, why did Bismarck abandon it and was he justified in doing so? This is where the historiography begins to radically diverge. In the wake of the Congress of Berlin (13 June to 13 July 1878), Russia was forced to abandon its military gains solidified in the treaty of San Stefano; Tsar Alexander II was outraged at what was really his own diplomatic blunder and made Bismarck a scapegoat (despite Bismarck's role as an "honest broker"). Due to this Russian hostility and de-facto German isolation, did Bismarck make a rational and logical choice which recognized that the Bad Kissingen plan after 1878 was no longer applicable? Moreover, was the Dual Alliance with Austria the best alternative to protect Germany? Historians such as Lothar Gall and Michael Stürmer would answer yes to both questions. William L. Langer, Erich Brandenburg, Raymond J. Sontag, and Imanuel Geiss go even further by generally accepting Bismarck's own hindsight at face value; they tend to endow Bismarck with an almost omnipotent ability to understand long term trends and some even believe that the Dual Alliance (signed in 1879 between Germany and Austria-Hungary) was originally conceived back in 1876. Furthermore, W.N. Medlicott argues that the Dual Alliance was not only inevitable, but was the soundest policy for Germany in 1879; in addition, Medlicott states that the Bad Kissingen Memorandum never worked from the start. Bruce Waller contends that this alliance may have been problematic, but it could have regulated Russo-Austrian rivalry if Bismarck had been a better statesman. Conversely, A.J.P.

Taylor argues that Bismarck's nerves got the better of him, and resulted in a panicked decision which he spent the rest of the 1880s trying to undo. However, Taylor makes no mention in any of his books of the Bad Kissingen Memorandum as a key document in Bismarck's foreign policy. Finally, others such as Mihailo D. Stojanovic and Wolfgang Windelband believe that neither the Bad Kissingen plan nor the Dual Alliance worked well in reality.

Contrary to the previous positions, one argument of this thesis is that the roots of the Bad Kissingen Memorandum can be found in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian war. Bismarck had accurately diagnosed Germany's predicament. First, Germany was in a geographically central position in Europe, and thus vulnerable to a multi-pronged attack. Second, the defeat of France in 1870 was a severe humiliation; it resulted in the loss of Alsace-Lorraine and France's leading position as a continental power. All this created a permanent enemy on Germany's western border which would not accept the loss of its two eastern provinces. Third, Bismarck had to bind the eastern conservative monarchies (i.e. Austria-Hungary and Russia) to Germany in order to prevent their independent cooperation which might lead to a possible two, or a much less probable, three way alliance with France; such an occurrence would be fatal for Germany both diplomatically and militarily (precedents include the Kaunitz Coalition in the Seven Year's War, and the Prussian diplomatic defeat at Olmütz in 1850). Fourth, Bismarck also could not allow tensions and disagreements between Russia, Austria-Hungary and Great Britain to rise to the point of open conflict; a general war would undoubtedly involve Germany (even if it tried to remain neutral) and would destroy its gains. Fifth, (and related the fourth point) the rise of radical national and democratic movements throughout Europe threatened to destabilize the European equilibrium and thus had to be neutralized. The growth of nationalism had a destabilizing effect within both the Russian and Austrian empires. Further exacerbating this situation was the continued deterioration of the Ottoman Empire which caused the forces of Pan-Slav nationalism to grow throughout the Balkans. Moreover, the power vacuum existing in the Balkans also represented a new avenue for imperial expansion for Austria and Russia.

In the light of these aforementioned factors, it is the position of this thesis that the Bad Kissingen plan was the best solution available given Germany's problems. This plan could have continued to work as long as the German leadership had the nerve to endure brief periods of isolation in order to maintain the loose cooperation of three or more powers. Despite its problematic qualities, this plan was the only path which did not guarantee a Russo-German rift. An exclusive alliance between Germany and another power would cause the other powers to eventually seek out France in order to counterbalance it. Although it is a risky venture to simplify as complex a topic as German foreign policy to a single document, with corroborating sources, it is possible to demonstrate that Bismarck realized fully that diplomatic flexibility was the best way to survive in post-1870 Europe. In fact, Bismarck summed up this strategy in the Bad Kissingen Memorandum by stating that it is "not the acquisition of lands but that of an overall political situation in which all powers except France have a need of us and are as far as possible kept from forming coalitions against us by their relations with one another."<sup>1</sup>

This need for diplomatic flexibility was even more evident in the wake of constant Austro-Russian rivalry in the Balkans. Given the rise of a more pronounced nationalist consciousness within Russia, Austria and the Balkans, it was imperative for Bismarck to undertake a policy of neutrality in order to manage such pressures and thus prevent a general destabilization of European diplomacy. Up until 1879, no fundamental (or permanent) differences or hostility existed between Germany and Russia; however, once Germany took sides, Russia had no choice but either eventually to counterbalance this, or give up all Balkan ambitions. Moreover, if France attacked Germany, Austria, under the terms of the Dual Alliance, would maintain a position of benevolent neutrality instead of being obligated to render active military support. Overall, the Dual Alliance made Bismarck's ability to appear neutral in the Dreikaisersbund of 1881 (The Three Emperor's League) impossible. The Dual Alliance was, as A.J.P. Taylor states, the product of a panicked response, but in contrast to Taylor, Gall, Waller, and Langer, it is the argument of this thesis that it was the Bad Kissingen plan which represents Bismarck's most accurate general assessment of European affairs; this assessment should not have been changed after 1878. In the 1880s,

Bismarck's improvised and contradictory alliance system was an attempt to reestablish the greater freedom of action Germany still had in the 1870s. As William Carr argued: "So enmeshed were the powers by this time in the web of commitments spun by Bismarck that an obscure local war might easily have developed into a major conflagration."<sup>2</sup>

A close examination of these events as well as the diplomatic correspondence and documents between 1870 and 1882 will be used to prove the importance of the Bad Kissingen Memorandum, as well as show the reasons why Bismarck ultimately abandoned this plan. As a consequence, this thesis will be divided into four chapters. The first chapter will examine the Bad Kissingen Memorandum itself as well as related documents. This will include an analysis of the motivations of Bismarck and the overall feasibility of this document. In addition, this chapter will argue that although the Bad Kissingen Memorandum was written in 1877, many of Bismarck's foreign policy initiatives between 1870 and 1877 were based upon beliefs which were outlined in this document. This chapter will also explain the function of the Dreikaisersbund of 1873, and its failings. Chapter two will examine the events leading up to the Congress of Berlin. Chapter three will analyze the general impact of the Berlin Congress and Bismarck's role in it, as well as whether these events posed a serious threat to Germany. Chapter four will analyze the events immediately after the Congress, and leading up to and including the Dual Alliance in 1879, the signing of the Dreikaisersbund in 1881, and the Triple Alliance in 1882. It is important to determine the impact of such alliances on Germany in the 1880s and beyond. Finally, it is important to demonstrate how the Bad Kissingen Memorandum is related to these events, and whether it was still feasible in the wake of the changing trends within the European state system during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

## CHAPTER ONE

### A NEW ERA: THE DIPLOMATIC POSITION OF THE NEW GERMAN REICH BETWEEN 1870 AND 1874

In the wake of the Congress of Vienna, and the nationalist excesses of Napoleon I, Austria, Russia and Prussia formed the deeply conservative "Holy Alliance". Under the leadership of the Austrian Chancellor Metternich, this alliance was used to stifle nationalism, maintain the stability of monarchical power, and bolster the sociopolitical status quo. Due to the deeply rooted conservative ideology shared by these three monarchs, Metternich's appeal to monarchical solidarity was usually effective in maintaining international order; by contrast, Chancellor Bismarck would have to use more devious methods since these old beliefs would soon be surpassed by other concerns. As David Harris writes of Bismarck, he had to resort to less explicit methods to maintain his policy goals: "One can well point out that he had no great flame of postwar idealism, that his ways were at times devious..."<sup>1</sup>

An important aspect of the pre-1870 period was the division of central Europe between Austria, Prussia and the smaller states known as the "third Germany"; this represented a power vacuum in this region. Rivalry with Prussia for dominance over this area focused Austria's primary interests away from the Balkans, which was of greater importance to Russia. This rivalry also placed Russia in the advantageous position of being able to offer support to either Prussia or Austria. On the other hand, cooperation between the three was facilitated by the fact that Russia remained relatively secure on its western border due to Prussia being the weakest of the European Great Powers. Due to an insecure position in relation to Italy, as well as continuing problems with France, Austria needed Russian support (for example, Russian help to put down the 1848 Hungarian uprising). In addition, Russia and Prussia enjoyed strong dynastic ties. This made Russia, Austria and Prussia stable allies rather than mortal enemies. All these factors facilitated a sense of mutual strategic necessity.

Most of these factors broke down completely after 1866. With Prussia's military victory over Austria at Königgrätz, it gained ascendancy over the third Germany. Austria thus turned its energies towards the Balkans. The final step towards German unification was accomplished during the Franco-Prussian War in 1870-71. Not realizing that victory over France would transform Prussia into the most powerful state in Europe, Russia remained benevolently neutral. According to A.J.P. Taylor, Sedan forever changed the European balance of power: "Before 1866 the French had counted on a balance between Austria and Prussia in central Europe...Similarly, Great Britain and Russia had always counted on a Balance of Power on the Rhine."<sup>2</sup> Significantly, Prussia's flexible relationship with France was permanently lost with the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine; this fueled French public enmity towards Germany up to the First World War. All these aforementioned occurrences gave rise to new hostilities between Germany, Russia and Austria. In essence, Russia, France and Austria were now confronted with the most militarily, economically and politically powerful state in Europe.

British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli stated that German unification had ushered in a whole new era which in a stroke swept away the old diplomatic traditions. Bismarck was aware of this and thus felt it was imperative to convince Europe that Germany was no threat to the European political status quo. Europe in the 1870s consisted of five powers each bidding for domination; consequently, the golden rule of diplomacy in this era was for each particular state to be in a group of three and not become a minority of two or one; as Bismarck commented to Russian diplomat Saburov: "You forget the importance of being a party of three on the European chess board. That is the object of all the Cabinets, and above all of mine. Nobody wishes to be in a minority."<sup>3</sup> However, this did not necessarily mean being in the type of fixed alliances which became prevalent during the 1880s. Rather, being in a loose relationship of three powers would allow Germany to remain in a strong position of influence over the various powers, but without sacrificing the much needed flexibility required to adapt to changing circumstances and alignments.

This shift in international relations after 1870 had unique properties; the period between 1815-70 was a search for an equilibrium within the two forces of nationalism and democracy

caused by the French Revolution and Napoleon I; this search for national unity culminated in the German and Italian states. During 1870-1914, there were no major wars, and the population surged in tandem with the 2nd Industrial Revolution; Germany was at the forefront of both of these movements. There was a greater dependence on more complex economic relations (commerce, banking, trade, industry) while commercial rivalries began to rise. Pre-1870 nationalism, along with foreign economic investment, was an integrating force; however in the post-1870 period, nationalism had become disruptive, especially in large empires such as the Austrian and Ottoman states, and became a catalyst for imperial competition.<sup>4</sup>

Despite Germany's large size, population, military, industry, and unparalleled success on the battlefield, according to Imanuel Geiss, it was still not a World Power, as defined by the Russian and British Empires. The position of Germany was one of a "latent hegemonial power in Europe", so it had two choices: 1) it could move to an open policy of hegemony, or 2) remain satisfied with its current position as one of the European Great Powers; the former choice would have been more difficult. A Großdeutschland solution (i.e. the German acquisition of Austria) would never have been accepted by the other Great Powers; therefore Bismarck had to accept a limited hegemony over the third Germany (i.e. the Kleindeutschland option).<sup>5</sup> Geiss elaborates:

It is only thus that Bismarck's formula is to be properly understood, that Germany was 'satiated' after 1871. On the one hand he certainly wanted to appease Germany's suspicious neighbours...On the other...Bismarck's formula was intended to serve as a warning to German chauvinists who expressed for even more expansion by including, if possible, Germans in Austria and the Baltic Provinces. Bismarck saw that his achievements 'could only be jeopardized by pressing for further expansion of 'German power.'<sup>6</sup>

What was to be Germany's place within the international framework was an important issue in this period.

Beyond the emergence of this new German Reich, the diplomatic scene by 1871 was altered further by a permanently resentful France; in addition, increasing disintegrating of Ottoman dominance in the Balkans led to increasing hostility between Russia and Austria. These factors became very troublesome for Germany primarily due to its geographic position between France and Russia, as well as its complete lack of any natural frontiers. As a result, Bismarck's aim was

to maintain a flexible foreign policy which avoided any permanent alliance; an exclusive alliance with any one of the Great Powers could cause the possible formation of hostile combinations in response and thus leave Germany vulnerable to being forced into a two-front war. Bismarck had to create an equilibrium among the European powers in order to maintain an "invulnerable" position in Europe.<sup>7</sup> To further strengthen his position, Bismarck had to bolster the deteriorating relationship between Austria and Russia. Due to a now hostile France, which by 1873 had paid its war indemnity and begun to rearm, it was essential for Bismarck to create a relationship with Russia and Austria (even if it was somewhat less formal than the Holy Alliance).

The story of Franco-German relations since 1871 is characterized by France's endeavor to regain its lost position as the preeminent European power. France's decline over the 19th century was sharp and drastic; the Franco-Prussian War was a disaster which "demoted" France within the European power balance. France's isolation and impotence were difficult realities that could not be ignored; these realities would naturally determine how the French conducted their foreign policy. Essentially, France's main goal was to recover as much of its former position as possible; in this light, the Peace of Frankfurt (1871) made normalization of Franco-German relations impossible.<sup>8</sup>

To complicate the aforementioned situation further, Bismarck was convinced that France would, unlike Austria, seek revenge and thus used the French territories of Alsace-Lorraine to create a more secure military position for Germany. G.P. Gooch states: "in the moment of victory the Iron Chancellor committed the greatest blunder of his life. After vetoing the annexation of Austrian territory in 1866 and thereby rendering possible a speedy reconciliation, he allowed the soldiers to have their way in 1871."<sup>9</sup> Raymond J. Sontag suggests that since the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine acted as such an overwhelming symbol of French defeat and humiliation, reconciliation was beyond the realm of possibility. From the end of the Franco-Prussian war to the declaration of war in August, 1914, no French statesman could or would concede that Alsace-Lorraine was forever gone because this was a sentiment that the French people themselves refused to consider. In fact Germany's ambassador to France, Henry von Arnim, stated that only three percent or less of the French people accepted the post-1870 border as permanent.<sup>10</sup> Bismarck

worried that the principal task of any French government was a war of revenge; once the army was rebuilt, and new alliances in place, this would occur. However, Taylor argues: "No doubt Bismarck miscalculated the depth of French resentment...a hereditary monarch can lose provinces; a people cannot as easily abandon its national territory."<sup>11</sup>

By 1873, alarm grew as France paid its indemnity in two instead of four years, increased the army, and its public continued to reject the Treaty of Frankfurt. To exacerbate matters, Bismarck was embroiled in the Kulturkampf so the protests of French Bishops greatly agitated him. He feared that these bishops could encourage southern German Catholics to revolt which would weaken Germany at a critical moment. These new realities are one example of the new importance of nationalism and its effect on foreign policy in this period. Bismarck had now steadfastly to adhere to a policy of diplomatic flexibility since Germany's survival depended on it.

The preoccupation of the German foreign office with France is clear by the early 1870s. The German ambassador to Paris, von Arnim, kept Bismarck informed as to the situation in France. Among the numerous correspondence, within the German foreign office, recorded in *Die Grosse Politik*, the 19 September 1873 excerpt outlines the fear of an ultramontane government emerging in France, as well as the Bishop of Nancy's public attempts to force the French government to retake Alsace-Lorraine. In addition, such letters reveal German concerns over the French press campaign. The German ambassador to St. Petersburg, Prince Heinrich VII Reuß Schleiz-Köstnitz, on 12 January 1874, feared possible connections between Russian General Zimmermann and French army officials; moreover, rumblings among French officials in Germany of a war of revenge correspond with the time of the unexpected recovery of the French military. However, were these fears of a potential Franco-Russian alliance justified? This will be explored later.<sup>12</sup>

Bismarck's awareness of the new international order was revealed in 1872 when he wrote to Kaiser Wilhelm I: "Our chief danger for the future will begin the moment France is once again regarded by the royal courts of Europe as a potential ally."<sup>13</sup> As a result of Germany's geographical position, by 1875 Bismarck realized that Germany had to avoid all aggressive behavior in order to

keep open all possible combinations of European powers. This was designed to isolate France and insure that Germany retained its all-important "freedom of action" and avoid any dependence on any one particular power. Bismarck's preoccupation in his responses to Reuß revolve around either attempting to preserve the peace between Germany and France, or finding methods to effectively isolate France. Examples include 23 January 1874, in which Bismarck wishes for peace and fears that the Catholic element in France are the key agitators for a war against Germany.<sup>14</sup> On 28 February 1874, Bismarck believed that if the Thiers government gave way to Gambetta, that the effect on the rest of Europe would be similar to that of the Paris Commune; such a government in France would be a severe threat to peace in Europe according to Bismarck, who even went on to state that, if France were to reestablish a new Catholic monarchy, it would possibly facilitate a closer union with Austria.<sup>15</sup> It is clear that the fear of a resurgent France was pertinent, but Bismarck extended this to such unrealistic possibilities as the Kaunitz coalition.

Among the other changes occurring in Europe by 1870, the Ottoman Empire had undergone considerable decay and was unable to reform itself. Thus, it had to exploit the prevailing divisions among the Great Powers in order to insure its survival. As René Albrecht-Carrié points out: "Given the conditions of the Ottoman state it followed that the politics of the Christian communities of the Balkans, whether already free or in hope of achieving that state, assumed unusual importance on the international scene of Europe."<sup>16</sup> Since the European Great Powers could not agree whether the Balkan nationalities should be liberated, or in what manner, the Porte hoped to exploit the tensions in order to ensure some guarantee of their survival from one of the European powers. After 1870, this proved problematic for Bismarck because any conflagration in Europe threatened this sated German state, and thus it was imperative that Germany should counteract anything which might serve to inflame hostilities among the European powers. As a result, the first Dreikaisersbund's chief purpose was to diffuse any Balkan rivalry between Austria and Russia.

Before an analysis of the Dreikaisersbund can be undertaken, it is necessary to examine Germany's partners in this association (i.e. Russia and Austria). For Russia, its key policy after

1856 was to undo the Treaty of Paris (especially the neutralization of the Black Sea and the ceding of Bessarabia, both of which were designed to protect the Ottoman Empire); despite the rise of Pan-Slavism, most Russian diplomats in the 1860s wished to undo the Treaty of Paris primarily by diplomatic means.<sup>17</sup> The Straits (i.e. Bosphorus and Dardanelles) were vital for Russian commercial interests, and under the provisions of the treaty, merchants were granted free passage; perhaps more crucial was the Russian wish to prevent enemy navies from steaming into the Black Sea. Unfortunately, in addition to Ottoman objections, Britain believed that if the Russian navy had access to the Mediterranean Sea, then its communication routes to India would be threatened. Despite all of this, Alexander II and especially Chancellor Gorchakov still wanted to undo the humiliation of the Treaty of Paris.

After 1870, Gorchakov would come to believe that an opportunity to undo the defeat of 1856 was considerably diminished due to the creation of the powerful German Reich. According to Barbara Jelavich: "it had become apparent that the united Germany under Bismarck was not the compliant Prussia of the earlier period. The faithful friend and true ally of the days of Alexander I and Nicholas I had become the greatest single military power of the continent"; Germany's new position made it a "worse" ally for Russia due to the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine; Germany had a permanent enemy on its western flank so as a consequence they "could not afford to estrange Austria" due to its strategic position.<sup>18</sup> It is argued that Germany could not allow Austria to be seriously defeated and eliminated as a great power since it would, given French hatred, leave Germany dependent exclusively on Russia; as Jelavich states: "German policy in the Balkans, which was thus determined by considerations of general European interest, led in the future to aid Austrian attempts to confine Russian power and to prevent the acquisition by Russia of significant gains in the area. This was not the role that Russia had envisioned for the unified Germany."<sup>19</sup>

By contrast, it is argued by certain historians that Russo-German relations in the early 1870s were still rather cozy. Nicholas der Bagdasarian emphasizes in his book, *The Austro-German Rapprochement (1870-1879)*, the long-standing historical significance of Russo-Prussian relations. He argues that the bond between the Romanov and Hohenzollern empires were still very

strong, and it was only when Austria succeeded in becoming Germany's closest ally that this bond was severed. Further verification of Russo-German solidarity can be found in Kaiser Wilhelm's telegram on 27 February 1871 to Alexander II communicating the terms of the Treaty of Frankfurt: "Prussia will never forget that it is due to you that the war did not assume larger dimensions. God bless you for it! Your eternally grateful William."<sup>20</sup> In fact, Russia was so ecstatic due to these events that they published this telegram without the German government's permission. In addition, Bismarck is considered to have always been favourable towards Russia. In his memoirs, Prince Bernhard von Bülow (German chancellor between 1900-09) writes: "Bismarck never ceased to be concerned with the relations between ourselves and Russia...Without the benevolent neutrality of Russia Bismarck could not have carried out his policy, either in 1866 or in 1870 and 1871."<sup>21</sup> Bagdasarian argues that at no time was Bismarck, given any other option, predisposed to renounce Russia for Austria; Austria was viewed by Bismarck as less than reliable in its foreign policy.

Bagdasarian and Jelavich both have some credible points; however, Jelavich tends to overstate the break between German and Russian interests in foreign policy during the 1870s. The historical record is apparent. Despite blustering about being "stabbed in the back" by Bismarck during the Congress of Berlin, the Russian government, even under the noted Germanophobe Alexander III, was still inclined to seek support from Germany; it was only when the full extent of Germany's conflict of interest due to its commitment to the Dual Alliance was revealed by the late 1880s, that Russia moved towards France. It is true that Germany was not the trustworthy ally that Prussia was, but the Russians still needed Germany in order to avoid total isolation; France was truly a second rate option due to its removed geographical location, inferior military capability, its place in the sociopolitical spectrum (i.e. Republicanism), and its lack of any meaningful historical or dynastic ties. Certainly, in the period between 1870 and 1875, Russo-German relations had not yet begun to deteriorate

Pan-Slavism was one manifestation of the aforementioned nationalist phenomenon which continued with renewed vigor after 1870. The main goal of the Pan-Slavists was to liberate all the Slavic peoples of Europe, and for Russia to act as their leader. Foreshadowing 20th century

ideologies, the emphasis shifted from religious unity to the "racial tie with Russia"; consequently, it is argued that a Pan-Slav program stressing a single policy for all Slavs could now be employed by Russia as a practical foreign policy weapon.<sup>22</sup> In fact, Bismarck wrote in his memoirs:

If the monarchical governments have no understanding of the necessity for holding together in the interests of political and social order, but make themselves subservient to the chauvinistic impulses of their subjects, I fear that the international revolutionary and social struggles which will have to be fought out will be all the more dangerous and take such a form that the victory on the part of monarchical order will be more difficult.<sup>23</sup>

These are all valid points, however, it will be demonstrated in chapters three and four that despite Jelavich's conclusions and Bismarck's fears, the Tsarist government was not exclusively concerned with nationalist sentiment.

The Austrian *Ausgleich* of 1867 shifted the emphasis of Austria's foreign policy. In the 1860s and early 1870s, Austria was still careful not to provoke the Russians since they could not win a war against Russia without German support. However despite this, Barbara Jelavich writes that the new Magyar influence was decisive in Austrian foreign policy; consequently, Austria was about to undertake a more active policy in the Balkans at the expense of Russia. This placed Austria and Russia in a contradictory position within the Dreikaisersbund.<sup>24</sup>

The growing hostility between Austria and Russia made continued loyalty to both increasingly difficult. In the light of the Ottoman disintegration and Austrian abandonment of the "third Germany", Habsburg policy turned towards the Balkans. The triumph of the national principle in Germany, Italy and Hungary had an impact in the Balkans. Such examples could inspire the Balkan Slavs (including those within the Austrian Empire) to revolt. As a result, Austria wanted to keep the integrity of the Ottoman Empire and Balkan status quo, but with limited economic expansion in the Balkans. Austria did not like the idea of partition of the Balkans with Russia because this would mean adding more south Slavs to the empire, which was opposed by Magyar leaders; dividing the Balkans into autonomous national states was also dangerous since a Greater Serbia would be able effectively to control the rest of the Balkans and inspire nationalism among the south Slavs in Austria.<sup>25</sup>

Austrian foreign policy in the 1870s was in the hands of Count Julius Andrassy. Unlike the previous foreign minister, Beust, Andrassy was not bent on revenge for the defeat to Prussia in 1866. Like many Austro-Hungarian statesmen of that period, he viewed Russia as the primary threat to Austria; because of this, Jelavich argues that Andrassy thought that an alliance with Germany (eventually extending to Britain and Italy) would effectively safeguard Austria. Such an alliance would also enhance Austrian policies in the Balkans. One of Andrassy's key policies in the early 1870s required turning towards the newly emergent Germany for support, instead of a weakened France. Austria had lost the struggle for the "third Germany", had been defeated in Italy, feared the emerging Pan Slavic threat, and thus had little choice but to pursue this new direction.<sup>26</sup> This move began in early 1872 with Andrassy's visit to Berlin to secure an alliance with Germany and whenever possible a free hand in the Balkans against Russia. This occurred as Bismarck indicated his interest in maintaining the connection between Austria and Russia.<sup>27</sup>

Bagdasarian does not completely disagree with Jelavich concerning Austrian foreign policy goals; however, he correctly acknowledges the existence of the close Russo-German relationship by arguing that it is the general consensus of most historians that Andrassy's primary foreign policy aim was to undermine the Dreikaisersbund and replace it with an exclusive Austro-German alliance; however Bagdasarian feels that this interpretation needs some modification since Andrassy may have been very interested in excluding Russia from this current tripartite diplomatic arrangement, but he was too adroit a diplomat to attack the Russo-German friendship head on until assured of success. F. Leidner echoes this sentiment by stating that the factors working against Andrassy's policy goals were the friendship and familial ties between Wilhelm and Alexander, as well as Wilhelm's opposition to a war with Russia under almost any circumstances.

Now that a general outline of the state of European international relations in 1870s has been established, it is important to explore Bismarck's analysis of this situation and corresponding solution for maintaining Germany's security. The Bad Kissingen Memorandum (15 June 1877) is the key indicator that Bismarck was indeed aware that the most effective escape route from his current nightmare was to maintain a strict neutrality and freedom of action (despite its precarious

nature). This document provided the essential blueprint to prevent Germany from becoming embroiled in an Austro-Russian rivalry and thus become vulnerable to France. However, it is a complex plan which required steady nerves, even in the face of total isolation, in order to carry it out. In addition, it is far from being a foolproof plan and was not without certain inadequacies, as the first Dreikaisersbund amply demonstrates.

The Bad Kissingen Memorandum is a brief overview of a policy which was designed to safeguard Germany's position in the current European power constellation by using its central position to balance off the peripheral powers. This would turn a geographical disadvantage into an advantage. Basically, the memorandum outlined Bismarck's intention to exploit the fluid and unpredictable nature of European foreign relations. Bismarck believed that Germany could intercede in issues such as Anglo-Russian split over central Asia in order to prevent France from exploiting the situation; above all, Germany must avoid too close a relationship with Austria since it would compromise Germany's freedom of action. Not only was this policy designed to maintain the status quo in the region, but it also was intended to prevent an anti-German coalition among both powers, thus effectively isolating France.<sup>28</sup>

Coalitions in general were acknowledged as the main threat, especially a Russian, Austrian, French combination which could effectively "squeeze" Germany. As a result, the Bad Kissingen Memorandum involved reconciling, or directing all rivalries away from the Balkans; for example, Bismarck could encourage greater Russian interests further eastward (this would require the Russians to retain German support in order to maintain a strong defensive position in the Far East). This plan also involved promoting a balance between Britain and Russia in the Eastern Mediterranean region so that both powers would be required to seek the support of Germany (perhaps territorial agreements granting Britain Egypt and Russia control over the Black Sea); Bismarck argued that British and Russian dependence on German support would create a mood of friendship towards Germany. In addition, Britain had to be kept away from an alliance with a hostile France.

Overall, the Bad Kissingen policy was designed to promote a situation in which every power, except France, was dependent on Germany, and thus effectively preventing France from creating any hostile coalition.<sup>29</sup> For Bismarck, it was "stability" which would keep Germany from losing the gain brought by unification; Bismarck summarized this policy by stating that it was "not the acquisition of lands but that of an overall political situation in which all powers except France have a need of us and are as far as possible kept from forming coalitions against us by their relations with one another."<sup>30</sup> In addition, a close association with both Russia and Austria was critical since, as Bismarck himself acknowledges: "The choice could only lie between Austria and Russia, for the English constitution does not admit alliances of assured permanence, and a union with Italy alone did not promise an adequate counterpoise to a coalition of the other three Great Powers..."<sup>31</sup>

Beyond the cooperative elements of the Bad Kissingen Memorandum, Bruce Waller comments that Bismarck did not want the European powers to become so close that they had no use for Germany. Waller sums up this approach with the phrase: "balanced tension"; he argues that Bismarck's approach was far more imaginative and dynamic since he not only used formal agreements but also strategies like direct or indirect threats of force; if allies were getting too close, he would create suspicion between them. This interpretation of Bad Kissingen is supported by Klaus Hildebrand who argues that the only way Germany could legitimize its existence, and keep a 'free hand', was, for example, to manage Anglo-Russian hostility without it either turning into open conflict, or the rather unlikely case that these two powers may collaborate too closely; if either possibility was to occur, German neutrality would be almost impossible to maintain. Prince Bernhard von Bülow in his memoirs states:

Bismarck always wants a free hand. He says himself that states and their leaders can only bind themselves, even by the most solemn agreement, for so long as the effects and repercussions of such an agreement do not conflict with the interests of their own country. Certainly, of all other alliances, Bismarck would prefer under terms of a mutual guarantee the status quo of both countries.<sup>32</sup>

It was a pessimistic, yet active, scheme since Bismarck wished to guide rather than overcome these tensions; moreover, this policy, which required constant balancing of the tensions, required continual vigilance and effort.<sup>33</sup>

The Bad Kissingen plan was committed to paper in the summer of 1877. However, it is obvious that this was Bismarck's strategy beginning with the Peace of Frankfurt and culminating in the Congress of Berlin. By 1 January 1871, Germany was a satiated state, which although powerful, was in a geographically vulnerable position. Any bilateral fixed alliance would indeed carry the risk of a two-front war given France's ceaseless hostility, as well as Russo-Austrian competition over the Balkans.

The first Dreikaisersbund of 1873, despite its flaws, follows the reasoning behind the Bad Kissingen plan: i.e. it was not really a written agreement but instead focused on the cooperation and friendship among the three eastern courts (Germany, Russia, Austria) in international affairs. In some ways it was an attempt to rekindle Metternich's conservative Holy Alliance; Bismarck believed that since both Russia and Austria feared revolution, this association would help Germany to maintain the status quo both internationally and domestically. Bismarck wanted to use the Dreikaisersbund to combat the forces of the republican social order, protect the sound monarchical base, and restrain the forces of nationalism and revolution; in essence the monarchs had to band together to face the greater threats than quarrels over "the fragments of nations which people the Balkan peninsula."<sup>34</sup>

This alliance placed Germany in a position to mediate. The Dreikaisersbund was designed to preserve the dynastic connection between Russia and Germany, but without Germany becoming diplomatically dependent on Russia alone. It also was intended to mitigate any potential flare-ups over the Balkans, and thus cause both Austria and Russia to depend upon Germany for diplomatic support. In addition, it was the purpose of both the Bad Kissingen Memorandum and the Dreikaisersbund to isolate France diplomatically by fostering cooperation among the powers. During the period between 1870-77, there had been a noticeable continuity within Bismarck's approach to European international relations. The Dreikaisersbund had less to do with the Holy

Alliance and more to do with Bismarck's attempt to maintain a rough balance of power, with Germany in the centre of things. According to Bülow: "Neither to sacrifice Austria-Hungary nor let ourselves be entangled by her in war with Russia seemed to Bismarck by no means an easy task, but possible of achievement by quiet and skillful German policy, especially if we were clever enough not to oppose Russia in the Dardanelles, but to leave that to others"; Bülow explains that Germany would not take part directly in any Russo-Austrian negotiations, but instead "lend moral support" to a peaceful solution in the Balkans.<sup>35</sup>

The origins of Bismarck's great mistake are evident in the contrasting positions of Russia and Austria during the early negotiations in 1872 for the Dreikaisersbund. In fact, Austria refused to sign a military convention with Germany and Russia. Both the Austrian and Russian governments wanted to secure Germany exclusively for their own advantage. Another factor which hampered Bismarck's policies was the attitude among the Russians that Germany was indebted to them for their benevolent neutrality in 1866 and 1870. In addition, fear of revolution no longer sufficed as a basis to bind these three powers together; increasing ambitions over the Balkans made the Dreikaisersbund delicate and difficult to maintain. Among these competing ambitions, Russia wished to control of the Straits, secure a predominant influence among the south Slav population in order to be in a position to take full advantage of the possible collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Austria wished also to attain significant political and economic influence in the Balkans, and although they preferred the Ottomans to remain intact (thus facilitating regional stability), they were ready to take control of the area if that was not possible; the Austrians wished to quell nationalism among the Slavic populations (especially the Serbians) in order to prevent an internal Slav uprising. Bismarck's only escape was to maintain a policy that would keep Germany neutral in the face of ever growing Russo-Austrian hostilities; for Germany to opt for one power over the other would further inflame these tendencies which France could then possibly exploit.

Some of the more negative historiographic positions concerning the effectiveness of the Dreikaisersbund must be outlined at this point. According to Norman Rich, the Dreikaisersbund "was based on little more than a presumed mutual interest in preserving international peace,

suppressing revolution at home, and preventing the formation of hostile coalitions against any one of its members. It worked as long as the interests of the conservative powers were in harmony; it cracked the moment their interests began to diverge."<sup>36</sup> This sentiment is echoed by A.O. Meyer and George Kennan, who believe the Dreikaisersbund only worked as long as there was peace. In fact, Kennan states that a new Balkan crisis would eventually give France its opportunity to encircle Germany. Geiss goes one step further to state it was the conflicting political interests between the three eastern powers which would eventually destroy any solidarity between them.

There is much to be said about the Dreikaisersbund containing incompatible alliance partners, and the fact that the Conservative ideology could no longer bind these powers together. Bismarck's beliefs may have been conservative, but in foreign policy, he was more Machiavellian in approach. This pragmatic flexibility is indeed the key to the Bad Kissingen Memorandum. Thus, the Dreikaisersbund was not a rigid, fixed, military alliance, but rather a close association used to foster cooperation in foreign affairs. As stated in this memorandum, Bismarck was aware of the possibility of retaining an independent position, even in the Balkans. Because the Balkan region was of no direct interest to Germany, Bismarck had a legitimate position of neutrality which could be used to effectively aid Germany's allies and inhibit its enemies.<sup>37</sup>

As long as there was no exclusive alliance commitment between Germany and either Austria or Russia, it is doubtful the Dreikaisersbund would have been rendered ineffective for an extended period of time. Austria was too weak to pursue an aggressive policy in the Balkans alone, while Russia was too close to Germany, and too different from France, to switch allegiances easily. As long as Germany remained uncommitted, it is highly doubtful that any provocation could exist which would cause Russia and Austria to abandon the most powerful state in Europe (at least not permanently). In periods of heightened tension, Germany could use its connections with other powers like Great Britain to gain temporary support.

Moreover, systemic interests did not make the Russo-German rift inevitable. Geiss' point that Russian interests were divergent with those of Germany is not exactly accurate. Geiss' interpretation stresses the inevitability of Bad Kissingen's demise and the formation of fixed

alliances due to the changing nature of European international relations. However, it is important to realize that Germany was the key to this transition due to its immense power and its central geographical location. Without Germany's lead, no other power was likely (except France) to initiate an anti-German alliance. In fact, it is important to stress that a new Balkan crisis, which Kennan describes, was only an 'opportunity' for France. It is only when Bismarck abandoned Bad Kissingen that permanent resentments began to form from Russia which forced it to enter into an alliance with France.

Geiss de-emphasizes the fact that, during the 1870s, Alexander II and Wilhelm I shared very close personal and dynastic ties, and both wished to pursue close diplomatic ties. An example of this is contained in a letter from the ambassador in St. Petersburg, Prince Heinrich VII Reuß to Kaiser Wilhelm I on 16 July 1872. In it Reuß relates to Wilhelm that although Alexander wanted to make sure he is at least getting equal time with Franz Joseph, the Tsar also discussed the proposed Dreikaisersbund which was hoped to strengthen peace in Europe, prevent a vengeful France, keep Russo-German borders secure, and above all, that he and Wilhelm remain good friends. This friendship, while strained at times in the 1870s (especially during the Congress of Berlin), was never severed by either monarch.<sup>38</sup> Such factors should have been more carefully considered by Bismarck when he significantly changed the direction of German foreign policy in 1879.

## CHAPTER TWO

### BISMARCK'S DELICATE BALANCE OF POWER: GERMAN POLICY LEADING UP TO THE CONGRESS OF BERLIN

In this chapter, it is important to investigate the effects that the unexpected events leading up to and including the Congress of Berlin had on Bismarck's foreign policy. Among the important questions which need to be asked: were there any fundamental changes in the international power structure between 1875 and 1878? In addition, what were Bismarck's options during this time period, and how viable were they? Consequently, it is necessary to begin with a look at the details of the "Is War in Sight?" crisis of 1875 and what message it sent concerning the limits of maneuverability among the Great Powers. This will facilitate an understanding of the European climate leading up to the Congress of Berlin.

Benedict H. Sumner comments on Bismarck's position in the early to mid-1870s:

The psychological reactions of the strain of the *Kulturkampf* on Bismarck redoubled his nervousness and suspicions of France and magnified his exaggeration of possible combinations against him, especially on the part of (Russian Chancellor) Gorchakov, whom he came to believe was consumed by personal jealousy and was heading the Tsar away from his loyal past in the direction of a Francophile future.<sup>1</sup>

This was greatly worsened by Gorchakov's role in the "Is War in Sight?" crisis. In the winter of 1874-5, while Bismarck was engrossed in the *Kulturkampf*, Gorchakov would not follow these anti-Catholic initiatives since he was trying to patch up relations with the Vatican over the issue of Roman Catholic Bishops in Poland; in addition, there were renewed signs that Gorchakov was becoming more cordial towards France. Bismarck sent one of his diplomats, Joseph Maria Radowitz (a senior member of the German Foreign Office), to Russia in March 1875 in order to obtain an alliance with Russia which would allow Germany to have a "free hand" against France, while Russia would receive a free hand in the Balkans. However, this was probably an attempt by Bismarck to clear up relations between these two states and to understand the nature of Russia's new interest in France.<sup>2</sup> This interpretation is backed up by Radowitz's memoirs, German archival

records, and is consistent with Bismarck's diplomatic policies after 1870. Given that the very basis of the "balance of power" system within Europe precluded any one power from destroying another, for Bismarck to seriously consider such an initiative would have placed Germany in a dangerous two-front situation; after all, such a scenario would automatically place France in a constellation of three power (something Bismarck wanted to avoid at all costs).

Adding to Bismarck's unease was the mood of the German general staff which was obsessed with French rearmament; they produced a series of memoranda which emphasized the formation of an anti-German coalition as well as "the certainty of French revanche in the near future."<sup>3</sup> In addition, the press campaign in France and Germany caused unbearable tension. The article, "Is War in Sight?", appeared in the *Berliner Post* on 8 April 1875. This article was more threatening than Bismarck intended since it hinted at a preventative war with France, which gave the French an opportunity to pose as the victims of intimidation. This gave Gorchakov a chance to deal his rival, Bismarck, a blow by backing British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli in his vocal opposition of such potential German aims. According to Norman Rich, this reveals Germany's precarious position in Europe at that time, and demonstrates the unreliability of the Dreikaisersbund as a device for German security.<sup>4</sup> This conclusion is only partially correct; Germany's position was precarious at times, but Germany only compromised when Bismarck used blatant intimidation instead of being Europe's neutral arbitrator.

It is clear from the German diplomatic correspondence that Bismarck was very worried in February 1875 that the French were gearing up for a campaign given the recent sale of hundreds of horses to France; this is made clear in Bismarck's letter to the German ambassador to Paris, Prince Choldwig zu Hohenlohe on 26 February 1875. This fear by Bismarck appears to be reaffirmed by Hohenlohe's report to Bismarck from Paris on 2 March 1875; he wrote that the French favoured regaining their lost provinces and developing anti-German alliances. Yet, further correspondence from Hohenlohe revealed that France was neither a military nor a financial offensive threat to Germany. State Secretary Bülow, in a letter to Hohenlohe on 3 May 1875, agreed that France was not presently a military threat, but as long as the French press was allied with "Ultramontanists",

they were a disturbing influence in France; this analysis was reinforced by the German ambassador to Britain, Count Münster, in a letter to Bismarck on 9 July 1875.<sup>5</sup>

According to his memoirs, Bismarck stated that he would have rather resigned than start a war with France: "A war of this kind could not, in my opinion, have led to permanently tenable conditions in Europe, but might have brought about an agreement between Russia, Austria, and England, based upon mistrust of us, and leading eventually to active proceedings against the new and still unconsolidated empire"; any misuse of power by Germany would cause all the powers of Europe to combine against Germany; Bismarck states: "It was just the peaceful character of German policy after the astonishing proofs of the nation's military strength, which induced foreign powers and internal opponents...to tolerate the new development of German power."<sup>6</sup> All this corresponds with the historical record and formed the basis of the Bad Kissingen plan. However, it is clear from the correspondence in the previous chapter of this thesis that Bismarck was very concerned with France's striking capability and the belligerence of the French press. The crisis of 1875 was a reminder to Bismarck what the limits of German freedom of action were.

In the "Is War-in-Sight?" crisis, Britain and Russia made it clear that Bismarck would not be allowed to destroy France. Germany had to respect the limits imposed by Britain and Russia, otherwise intervention could threaten its existence; according to Klaus Hildebrand, Germany was constantly reminded that it owed its existence "to a specific international situation and that it was dependent on Britain and Russia. Its existence could therefore be traced more to its compatibility with the interests of the world powers than to its own character and power."<sup>7</sup> Bismarck realized that the events of May 1875 solidified the central European status quo of 1871; a change in Europe along the lines of 1866 and 1870 was no longer possible.<sup>8</sup> France for its part hoped that with the help it received from Britain and Russia, it too could consolidate a more powerful position in Europe.

All of these aforementioned factors forced Bismarck to abandon his attempt at coercing France into dropping its rapid rearmament through a policy of intimidation; Germany would not be permitted to use military might to extricate itself from the current system of international relations.

Some historians argue that the "Is War in Sight?" crisis was one of the early indicators that Bismarck was considering an Austrian alliance. Some historians, such as R.J. Sontag, conclude that this crisis demonstrated that a new balance of power was forming in Europe in which Germany was now being forced to remain within its present diplomatic position (i.e. nothing dramatic could be done to eliminate France as a great power); as a consequence, Germany would have to look towards Austria in order to bolster its military security and diplomatic leverage. However, this statement has little basis in fact. The 1875 crisis did not indicate a new balance of power, but instead reaffirmed the five power equilibrium established after 1870. In reality, despite Bismarck's actions towards France, this does not discredit Bad Kissingen as a solution; instead, due to the current diplomatic context, no great power (even Austria) was willing to let Germany use its military might to intimidate or destroy another great power. A policy of neutrality and caution was the best approach to prevent the possibility of a two-front war.

To understand the complex and hazardous nature of Germany's position in the mid-1870s, it is important to briefly explore Bismarck's options if he had decided to abandon Bad Kissingen for a fixed alliance. Among the choices available, Britain was not considered a viable member of an alliance combination because it was not inclined to act as a continental power due to its geography, or remain in a long term alliance due to its constantly changing parliamentary governments. This left Austria, Russia and Italy. Andrassy wanted an alliance with both Germany and Britain to further Austrian Balkan ambitions; as for Russia, Gorchakov wanted an acknowledgment in 1876 that Germany owed its development to Russian neutrality during 1866 and 1870, and thus wished to attain a guarantee that Germany would support it in a war with Austria over the Balkans.<sup>9</sup> According to Andreas Hillgruber, the dilemma for Germany was that while it did not want to be part of a coalition which would undercut the Russian power position, the integrity of Austria as a European power could not be threatened; thus since 1875, Bismarck wanted to divide the Balkans into spheres of influence. As for Italy, besides Bismarck's personal distaste for the Italians, they were clearly inferior to the five European Great Powers in order to be used as an effective counter-

balance to either France, Austria or Russia. Once the situation in the Balkans became more unstable, to enter into any of these alliance options would be extremely dangerous.

With the rebellion in Bosnia-Herzegovina, in the middle of 1875, Russia saw an opportunity to take advantage of the Ottoman's weakness and shift the power balance in the Balkans. Bismarck hoped it was a chance to influence international relations positively; however, Germany's position between France, Austria, and Russia during the Balkan crisis also brought a renewed fear of the "*cauchemar des coalitions*."<sup>10</sup> Bismarck wanted to be open to the western powers and have a choice so that in case of a Russo-German war, Britain could keep France neutral. Due to this, while Bismarck did not trust the parliamentary system for long-term alliances, at least the Anglo-French agreement concerning Romania's opposition to Russia helped to hinder any possibility of a Franco-Russian alliance.

Deep divisions emerged between Russia and the Western Powers (especially Austria); the Russians viewed themselves as the protectors of the Balkan Slavs who should be freed from Ottoman tyranny. As Mihailo D. Stojanovic states: "Unlike the Western Powers, who believed that administrative reforms could remove the causes of conflict between the Christians and the Moslems, Russia held the view that national and religious differences between them were too great to make an equalization possible and that Turkey should develop herself in the direction of provincial autonomies suited to local needs and conditions."<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, Russia wished Bosnia-Herzegovina eventually to become neutral like Romania.

Austria's position was directly opposed to Russia's, and like Russia, viewed itself as the "national heiress of European Turkey, and did not wish to see Russia preponderating in the East"<sup>12</sup>; in addition, with the Hungarians receiving a greater share of power at the expense of the Slavs within the Austrian empire, these Slavs soon became unhappy with their status and looked to Serbia who promoted the idea of an enlarged independent South Slav State. If a greater Serb state was created, it would attract Austrian Slavs, thus threatening Austria's southern possessions such as the Dalmatian coast, and cause a general destabilization within the empire.

Despite the structural problem concerning Austria and the Balkans, Stojanovic stresses that the Hungarians did not want more Slavs in the empire, so instead of conquering this area, Andrassy wished to preserve the Ottoman Empire as an administrative force in the Balkans: "In this desire to maintain the integrity of Turkey the Hungarians found their chief opponent in Russia, who worked for her dissolution, and from whom the Balkan peoples expected support for their own aims. To counteract her plans, they endeavoured to increase Austria's prestige among the Balkan Christians and separate them from Russia."<sup>13</sup> In order to accomplish this, Stojanovic states that it was crucial for Andrassy to win over Serbia and drive a wedge between them and Russia; thus, as the leader of the Balkan alliance, Serbia was a pivotal factor in the Eastern Question. If Bosnia-Herzegovina revolted and threatened to end Ottoman rule there, Austria needed to be ready to occupy these provinces in order to prevent Serbian occupation. Andrassy had confidence that within the Dreikaisersbund, Austria could, with Germany's passive support, thwart all troublesome Russian proposals and lead Austria's allies towards policies compatible with Austrian aims and interests.

The Bad Kissingen plan was a tightrope which required Germany to balance inter-power rivalry and cooperation very carefully. With a variety of incompatible interests within the Dreikaisersbund, Stojanovic explains that Bismarck was interested in continuing the Austro-Russian rivalry since it caused them both to seek help from Germany (thus giving it a predominant position); however, Bismarck knew that Russia would not accept Austrian occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Austria refused to let Russia gain a hegemony in the Balkans; therefore, Bismarck wanted to compensate Russia for Austria's acquisitions: Russia would receive Bessarabia, Britain would receive Egypt, and perhaps France and Italy could acquire North African territory.<sup>14</sup> Bismarck approved of this policy if it facilitated a settlement between Austria and Russia. Germany would ask nothing for itself, except to act as a neutral mediator, which was hoped to create a certain diplomatic dependence among the Great Powers for German support; such a dependence would hamper the formation of hostile coalitions against Germany.

Based on the reasoning that inspired the Bad Kissingen Memorandum: "Bismarck calculated that his plan would push Russian and Austrian interests and rivalries farther East and...separate England from France by her acquisition of Egypt, and create for Russia and England a satisfying status quo (according to Bismarck) "which gives them the same interest in maintaining the present state of affairs as we have ourselves.""<sup>15</sup> Bismarck adopted an attitude of amicable detachment concerning discussions between Austria and Russia over various reform plans which could not be agreed on. The significance of this is illustrated by Bismarck's comment to Odo Russell on 2 January 1876: "Germany could not well afford to let Austria and Russia become too intimate behind her back-nor could she let them quarrel with safety to herself"; as for Bismarck, W.N. Medlicott argues: "He had no bias in favour of Turkish independence, and he found partition a useful topic of conversation on occasion; if in the course of time it really took place he would perhaps gain advantages as a mediator, and there was something to be said for the idea of diverting his neighbours' attention away from central Europe."<sup>16</sup>

With the Bosnian uprising erupting in 1875, followed by the brutal massacre of Bulgarians by the Turks in April and May 1876, Russian Pan-Slavists became outraged, while Austrians continued to worry over how this would affect their "ramshackle empire". At the onset of this uprising, Bismarck was not interested in the Balkans and resisted the idea of getting Germany involved. On 30 December 1875, the sketchy Austrian plan for reforming Turkey, known as the "Andrassy Note" was issued; it was the result of the amicable discussion between Andrassy and Gorchakov. However, the situation became worse due to the Bulgarian massacre which horrified both the Russian and British public. Consequently, Serbia and Montenegro declared war. In July 1876, Russia and Austria discussed what to do with the Balkans if the Ottoman Empire collapsed. However, the Ottomans not only remained intact but also suppressed the uprisings and defeated semi-independent Serbia. This stirred the Pan-Slavists into a frenzy. As for Austria, Andrassy became alarmed by the possible Russian intervention in the Balkans. Kaiser Franz Joseph and his general staff were in favour of outright annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina; Austria and Britain wanted to check any Russian advances in that area. Germany for its part would not promise to

keep Austria neutral during a Russo-Turkish war, but instead would remain neutral in order to avoid altering the current balance of power.

Despite the argument among many historians that the Dreikaisersbund was doomed, it was not completely dysfunctional between 1873 and 1878. For example, according to Sumner, the Russo-German friendship could not stand in the way of Bismarck's friendship with Andrassy. This statement is correct, especially after the Dual Alliance was signed. For example, Bismarck also echoes such sentiments to von Schweinitz, ambassador to Russia on 17 March 1876; he still believed in the traditional friendship between Germany and Russia as well as between himself and Gorchakov, but they could not completely overcome their mistrust in these matters.<sup>17</sup> In addition, Gorchakov rejected Bismarck's plan for a Balkan division since he suspected that Bismarck had ulterior motives. However, there are significant periods of diplomatic cooperation among the Dreikaisersbund partners. During the 1870s, Russia shared a close monarchical connection with Germany, and mutual concerns over Poland, while France was too weak and isolated to be an effective alternative. Consequently, Russia had little choice but to seek better relations with Austria via Berlin (Gorchakov initially got along with Andrassy very well, and they agreed in 1873 over topics such as Poland, Serbia and Turkey).<sup>18</sup>

Although the Dreikaisersbund did not create a permanent alliance against France as Bismarck had hoped, at least for a time, it helped to create an atmosphere of reconciliation between Austria and Russia after twenty years of hostility; for example, a series of agreements between Russia and Austria were concluded over the Balkans. On 2 June 1873, the Schönbrunn convention was signed in order for Austria and Russia to act jointly in Balkan affairs. Although this convention was somewhat vague, it captured the spirit of cooperation among the three conservative powers.<sup>19</sup> By 1875, Austro-Russian relations were cordial for the first time since 1854. As a result of Russo-Austrian cooperation and Ottoman actions, Russia sought Austrian permission to go to war with the Turks. Continuing in this direction, Russia and Austria signed a secret convention at Reichstadt on 8 July 1876, which anticipated the various outcomes to a Balkans conflict.

All this culminated in the Budapest Convention of 1877. In this convention, Russia allowed Austria to administer Bosnia-Herzegovina in exchange for Austrian neutrality and opposition to collective mediation. In addition, the Budapest Convention stated that Austria would remain neutral in the event of a Russo-Ottoman war as long as Russia did not attempt to create an enlarged Slav state in the Balkans. This is another excellent example of how two adversaries could cooperate as long as Germany refused to aid one side or another exclusively. Although the European situation would soon prove difficult due to Russia's diplomatic overreaching, this still does not explain why Germany should have abandoned its Bad Kissingen policy. It is precisely when relations became strained between Russia and Austria that there was an even greater need for Germany to remain neutral. Any exclusive support of one rival over the other could have caused a polarization among the Great Powers and facilitated mutually hostile alliance blocs; it was evident that only German neutrality could force Austria and Russia to cooperate with each other.

Bismarck thought of offering support to Russia and then to Britain if they would guarantee Alsace-Lorraine. In the case of Bismarck's approach to Britain in 1877, he offered the British benevolent neutrality if they were still interested in restraining Russia; in return, Bismarck asked for British neutrality if France should attack Germany. However, these possible alliances would have to be anti-French; neither Russia nor Britain would commit to such an arrangement. Thus, given these structural realities, the Bad Kissingen Memorandum was the wisest path if Bismarck wished to retain the appearance of neutrality. Later a myth developed, fostered by Bismarck, that Germany had offered to support Russia unconditionally but Russia refused, and this caused a "decisive estrangement" between these two powers; in reality, Bismarck stayed out of the Eastern Question.<sup>20</sup> If no power would be willing to let Germany eliminate France, Bismarck's primary interest was to keep peace and cooperation among the powers by using the Dreikaisersbund as a mitigating instrument.<sup>21</sup>

The Eastern Question took on a new twist with the Russo-Turkish war (1877-78). Once the Ottomans rejected the joint "Protocol of the Powers" drafted in London, concerning Russian reform attempts in the Balkans, Russia declared war on 24 April 1877. As Russia began to win,

the British became increasingly pro-Turkish due to fear of what Russian access to the Mediterranean would mean for British India. The war ended in February 1878 with the defeat of the Ottoman Empire; Russian occupation of Constantinople appeared imminent. Britain, determined to preserve the Ottoman Empire, sent a naval armada to the Straits; if tensions could not be resolved, war would be only a matter of time.

The conclusion of this war did not end the tensions due to the notorious treaty of San Stefano which was dictated by Russia in March 1878. This treaty broke the Budapest Convention since it created an enlarged Bulgaria which extended to the Aegean coast. This predictably outraged Austria and alarmed Britain. San Stefano was an unqualified mistake by Russia since it lacked both skill or consideration for the interests of Austria or any other European power: "It is difficult today to regard the treaty as anything but a blunder of the first magnitude".<sup>22</sup> Medlicott also adds that while Russia realized that San Stefano was too bold and had to pull back, to surrender was still dramatic and humiliating. This period leading up to the Congress of Berlin was marked by extreme tension among the European powers due to Russian diplomatic overreaching. E.L. Woodward argues in his book, *The Congress of Berlin*, that San Stefano was a particular threat to the European peace due to its one-sided solution to the Eastern Question.

Bismarck's interpretation of San Stefano can be found in his memoirs. The Russians were attempting to deflect internal criticism of the failure of San Stefano onto the disloyalty of their German ally. As Bismarck explains: "It was a dishonest fiction; we had never let them expect anything but a benevolent neutrality, and the honesty of our intentions is manifested by the fact that we did not let ourselves be disturbed by the demand of Russia that the Reichstadt agreement should be kept secret from us, but readily acceded to the desire communicated to me at Friedrichsruh by Count Shuvaloff to summon a congress at Berlin."<sup>23</sup> Bismarck blamed Gorchakov for Russia's position in 1877-8, and wished that Russia had expressed its wishes plainly so he could have been more helpful; instead, Bismarck was left guessing:

Even in cases where we could assume that we were completely certain of Russian interests and intentions, and where we believed ourselves able to give a voluntary proof of our friendship towards the Russian policy without injuring our own interests, instead of the expected acknowledgment we

received a grumbling disapproval, because, as it was alleged, in aim and degree, we had not met the expectations of our Russian friends.<sup>24</sup>

Finally, Bismarck concludes that since Russia was willing to participate in a congress in order to make peace with the Ottomans also proved its military vulnerability after a year of combat.

This portion of Bismarck's memoirs appears to be valid since he was genuinely surprised by Russia's reaction to the outcome of the Congress of Berlin (as will become clear later in this chapter). Perhaps the Germans should have been more aware of the Russians' wish to call in the debt of 1870, but the primary documents in the next chapter do not demonstrate such an awareness. In addition, German policy in the 1870s makes it clear that there was nothing to be gained from Germany favouring one eastern power over another, so Bismarck's comments on this subject are accurate. As E.T.S. Dugdale states: Bismarck's "chief efforts were, as expressed by Bülow, Secretary of State, in a dispatch of December 8th, 1875...centered in the maintenance of the Drei-Kaiser-Bundniss, with its basis of freedom of action, and in adherence to the joint decisions and actions of Russia and Austria combined"; Bismarck reinforced this commitment to both powers in a letter to Bülow on 10 November 1876: "...we are gratified at the peaceful intentions of Russia towards Austria...and ready to offer services at Vienna; that we still hold as firmly as ever to the Three Emperors Treaty..."<sup>25</sup>

In general, Bismarck viewed the Eastern Question as an opportunity to focus the attention of the Great Powers onto the Balkans. He also believed that this was an area "in which we can help our friends and harm our enemies without being inhibited to any great extent by direct interests of our own"; the Congress was meant to achieve a settlement since Bismarck admitted that although he could not afford to lose Germany's relationship with Austria and Britain, the termination of Germany's relationship with Russia would be far more devastating.<sup>26</sup> Bismarck pledged to Russia that under no circumstances would Germany be hostile towards them, but this did not mean actively supporting Russia either. At the Congress of Berlin, Lothar Gall suggests that Germany had to walk a tightrope in order to avoid giving the impression that it wanted a biased settlement. This was outlined in the Bad Kissingen Memorandum; this document indicates that Bismarck was

indeed aware that the safest policy was to maintain a strict neutrality and freedom of action, despite what he has written after the fact. However, it was a complex plan which required steady nerves, even in the face of total isolation.

Moreover, J.V. Fuller goes further by stating that Bismarck was responsible for Russian hostility and the destruction of the first Dreikaisersbund since the Dual Alliance was already being considered back in 1876; Fuller argues that Bismarck confirmed his new Austrian bias when he informed Russia that Germany would allow neither Austria nor Russia to suffer a "decisive defeat" if conflict came between them. Fuller argues that Bismarck made sure that Austria gained Bosnia-Herzegovina (which Russia agreed to), while Russian gains were completely minimized. In essence, Bismarck used the Bad Kissingen inspired neutrality as a diplomatic smokescreen.

The question which must be examined at this point is whether there was a fundamental shift in the relationships among the Great Powers after the Russo-Turkish war? Did this make Bad Kissingen obsolete? As the Eastern crisis is studied, historians such as Medlicott contend that the Bad Kissingen policy: "carried caution to the point of abdicating any real attempt to influence events. The problem that faces the historian is to decide whether, as the Russians came increasingly to believe, this reserve was not in itself an act of hostility towards them."<sup>27</sup> In other words, Bismarck made vague promises but none of the Great Powers could gain his support for any of their objectives. Similarly, according to Wolfgang Windelband, Bad Kissingen was simply an "ideal program" that did not work well in real life during the Eastern Crisis. For example, the San Stefano treaty between Russia and Turkey which provided Russia direct access to the Mediterranean Sea, via an enlarged Bulgaria, was a severe setback to Bismarck's plans to balance the power's interests in the Balkans; Bismarck did not foresee Austria's siding with Britain, so under this circumstance went to the Congress of Berlin in order to work out an understanding.<sup>28</sup>

Medlicott and Windelband raise some interesting points, but these arguments assume that diplomatic alignments in 1877-8, as well as Russian hostility were going to be permanent fixtures after the Congress of Berlin. As will be explored in greater detail in chapter three, this thesis makes the point that the formation of permanent Russian estrangement during the 1880s and 90s was due

to the Dual Alliance rather than Bismarck's refusal to exclusively commit to a single Great Power during the late 1870s. It is necessary to understand the importance of Bismarck's wish to get all the powers to compromise on a settlement; many historians do not truly appreciate how dangerous a firm commitment to one power or another was for Germany, since this could act as a catalyst for war in such a tense situation. This is outlined in Bismarck's Varzin Memorandum of 16 September 1876, in which he states that he is fearful of the dangers to peace the Eastern Question poses, and the need to negotiate a friendly agreement from both sides (thus Germany is repaying the debt that it owes Russia by being a good neighbour since Russia was simply not going to make any gains with so many powers opposing it).<sup>29</sup> He knew that staying neutral was nearly impossible in a general war; thus the only way to secure peace was to have all negotiations be supervised by Bismarck, and maintain the connection with both Russia and Austria through the Dreikaisersbund.<sup>30</sup> Thus in this period, no permanent changes in European diplomatic relations had taken place. The Balkans were more of an issue (but this had been developing for decades), and like the events of 1875, Bismarck was reminded of what he had understood back in 1870: Germany could not extricate itself through war, and only continual mediation of Austro-Russian rivalries would mitigate the chance of a two-front war. In contrast to Fuller's position, Bismarck's actions make it clear that he could not support Russian ambitions just as Russia could not support German motivations in 1875.

The Congress of Berlin signified that while Germany was the dominant power in Europe for the first time since Charles V, many powers were unhappy with this new status and the outcome of the Congress; as Nicholas Mansergh states: "Bismarck had done much to advance Russia's claims, but that weighed little in the balance with a Power who, having dictated her own peace at San Stefano had seen the settlement it imposed undone with German connivance."<sup>31</sup> In his memoirs, Bismarck justifies German policy during the Congress by stating that his actions averted a general European war, and still acted in Russian interests as much as possible. This position was articulated by Bismarck in his famous "honest broker" speech on 19 February 1878, in which he emphasized his lack of interest in the Balkans. In practice this meant that Bismarck attempted to

further Russian interests by acting as a mediator; for example, Germany favoured Russia in their dispute with Austria over Bulgaria and the Montenegrin-Albanian frontier.

C. Grant Robertson is very suspicious of German motives and policies. He asks at what point did Germany take a direct interest in the Balkans? He does not accept Bismarck's public denial of interest in the "Pomeranian Grenadier" speech. Grant argues: "It is, however, not necessary to pick locks of the German and Turkish archives to prove that for some years prior to 1878 German diplomacy had been working with stealthy and steady persistence at displacing British, Russian, and French influence with the Sublime Porte..."<sup>32</sup> In other words, Robertson has not examined the primary evidence, which at the time of his book's publication was locked in the German foreign office archives; in addition, Robertson wrote this during the First World War when suspicion of German motives were at their zenith.

The fact is, German actions were very consistent with the Bad Kissingen plan going back to 1870; the Balkans was an area which had to be managed in order to calm competition among the powers which had concrete interests in the area. Getting involved in the Balkans would simply risk both Russian and Austrian hostility towards Germany (given Bismarck's fear of a Kaunitz Coalition, such actions by Germany were unlikely). As Bülow explained in a letter to Count Münster in London on 27 November 1876: "In conversation with Lord Salisbury, the Chancellor first mentioned that Germany had but little personal interest in the fate of Turkey, but a very great one in her own enduring friendship with England, Russia and Austria...The object of German policy...was to get over the present crisis, without disturbing the existing good relations with these our friends."<sup>33</sup>

Robertson also claims that Bismarck was actively trying to secure Austrian gains at the expense of all other powers. Again, he offers no documentary proof. In fact, in the face of evidence to the contrary (i.e. the Russo-Austrian agreements allowing Austria to occupy Bosnia-Herzegovina), he still views this as part of a nefarious German conspiracy worthy of Kaiser Wilhelm II. On the contrary, it cannot be said that Austria secured Bosnia-Herzegovina due to Bismarck's intervention: "At the congress he worked on the assumption that the preliminary

discussions had indicated spheres of interest and advantage which would satisfy both his allies, and his object was to support both powers to the best of his ability in their respective spheres."<sup>34</sup> In fact, according to Bülow: "Prince Bismarck vigorously supported the Russian demand for Bessarabia."<sup>35</sup> Bismarck still was suspicious of Tsar Alexander and Gorchakov, and was aware of the need for an Austrian connection, but this is far from any contemplation of an exclusive alliance with Austria.<sup>36</sup> In fact, it is obvious that attempts to mediate a settlement between Austria and Russia occurred throughout the 1875-8 period.

Bismarck's views on this subject are apparent in a letter to Bülow on 14 August 1876. In it Bismarck makes it clear that no conference should be undertaken that would further exacerbate hostilities between Russia, Austria and Britain, and that a congress, like the Dreikaisersbund, would act as a mediating device; in Bismarck's memorandum from Varzin on 30 August 1876, he wrote that Germany was not an enemy of Russia and would make no diplomatic maneuvers against them, but instead wished to see Austria and Russia more united in their goals.<sup>37</sup> In Bismarck's next memorandum in Varzin on 12 October 1876, he stresses that despite the difficulties in maintaining Russo-Austrian relations, he feels the need to settle the differences between them, and still has confidence in Wilhelm and Alexander's relationship.<sup>38</sup> As has been stated previously, exclusive alliances with any European power was dangerous, especially during the Congress of Berlin.

Bismarck later explained:

for no Great Power can place itself exclusively at the service of another. It will always have to keep in view not only existing, but future, relations to the others, and must, as far as possible, avoid lasting fundamental hostility with any of them. That is particularly important for Germany, with its central position, which is open to attack on three sides.<sup>39</sup>

In the wake of outright Russian hostility, Bismarck attempted to put Bad Kissingen into action by smoothing away misunderstandings between Russia and the Anglo-Austrian bloc. The problem was trying to make Russia concede that they had gone too far in their attempt to dominate the Balkan area; the Russians did not believe that this was appropriate repayment of the debt of 1866 and 1870.<sup>40</sup> This misunderstanding began with Field Marshall von Manteuffel's visit to Warsaw in September 1876. It was meant to reassure Alexander that Germany would remain

benevolently neutral and not join an anti-Russian coalition. The Russian government took this to mean that Germany would be supportive of Russia in the same manner as they had supported Prussia in 1866 and 1870. They felt Germany should be a "grateful dependent". This was exacerbated by Britain's determination to drive the Russians out of the Balkan region, and insert their presence in the deteriorating Ottoman Empire. A coalition made up of Britain, Austria and France was formed to oppose Russia in 1878.

The Congress of Berlin revealed that there were still some distinctions between the theory behind the Bad Kissingen Memorandum and the reality of international relations. However does this mean that Bismarck's role as an "honest broker" was a great mistake? He was after all fulfilling his strategy as outlined within Bad Kissingen: maintaining the strict position of a mediator, and attempting to play-off and reconcile the various powers (in order to foster a dependence on Germany). Actually Bismarck's position of neutrality was the only possible option for Germany when one considers Germany's dangerous foreign policy situation. The problem lay in Russia's hostile reaction. This was somewhat surprising and difficult to calculate for the German leadership, especially since their anger was primarily directed towards Germany, rather than directed towards its Balkan rivals, Austria and Britain.

This crisis was originally a welcome chance for Bismarck to put his new policy into action and to influence the European Balance of Power; all of which was supposed to be accomplished without perceived self-interest because Germany lacked any connection to the Balkans. Bismarck had hoped that a congress would: 1) end the Eastern crisis; 2) revive the Dreikaisersbund; 3) secure sufficient gains for Russia in order to insure that the Germanophile Peter Shuvalov (the Russian delegate at the Congress) became Gorchakov's successor. Unfortunately, despite the gains attained by Bismarck and Shuvalov, these were not enough to prevent Gorchakov from shifting blame for Russian humiliation on to their shoulders.

Meanwhile, there was controversy over Russian presence in Bulgaria since Britain was adamant that Russia must leave the area near Constantinople, as well as agree to accept the division between Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia. With some compromises, Russia agreed to let the

Ottomans occupy Eastern Rumelia, while Russian occupation of the rest of Bulgaria could only last another six months. To add to Anglo-Russian tensions, Shuvalov wanted control of the Straits internationalized, while Britain preferred Ottoman control as long as the Royal Navy could cross the Straits at will. Moreover, controversy brewed over Cyprus since Britain wanted to use the island as a base just in case Russia decided to advance further into the region.

The Congress was a total triumph for Britain (especially for Disraeli and Salisbury); as William L. Langer states:

The powerful continental combination known as the Three Emperors League, which always threatened to leave England isolated and to throw her back on the support of a weakened France or a struggling Italy, had been rent asunder by the rivalry of two of its members...The victory of England spelled the defeat of Russia, and Russia had never since the time of Catherine the Great suffered so terrible a diplomatic set-back.<sup>41</sup>

However, it is important to acknowledge that Russia is to blame for its own defeat. Alexander believed that the Dreikaisersbund would protect Russia, or at least allow Russia to secure German support to the detriment of every other power. Alexander allowed himself to get carried away with Pan-Slavism in order to divert attention from domestic problems. Russia tried foolishly to evade its obligations to Europe. As a result, it was not Bismarck's fault that Alexander created an enlarged Bulgaria which no one agreed to; in fact, Russia retained as much as it did thanks to Bismarck's support, mediation efforts, and neutrality (for example, Russia gained Bessarabia in 1878). Langer is correct when he emphasizes that Germany, Britain, and even France would not accept Russian actions. Like Germany in 1875, Russia could not supersede the European power balance without the other powers acting as a force for restraint.

More importantly, the Congress of Berlin had both positive and negative results for Bismarck. It preserved the peace because of its emphasis on mutual compensation. It also placated the nationalism issue by creating an independent Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro. On the other hand, it also undermined the Dreikaisersbund since it placed Germany in opposition to many Russian aims. The diplomatic complications which caused Bismarck to enter into the Dual Alliance with Austria in 1879 will be expanded upon in greater detail in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE ABRUPT CHANGE OF COURSE**

This chapter will explore the reasons why Bismarck opted for the unilateral Dual Alliance between Germany and Austria during the period between July 1878 and October 1879. As has already been established, the Bad Kissingen plan may not have been a foolproof policy for securing Germany within the multi-polar framework of European international relations in the 1870s, but it was the only policy which did not create the threat of a two-front attack. In the aftermath of the Congress of Berlin, was there any fundamental change in the structure of European diplomacy at this time? Related to this question, was Bismarck's decision to abandon diplomatic flexibility by entering into the Dual Alliance a decision based on a rational analysis of Germany's long range position within Europe, or was this due to a miscalculation based on Bismarck's stress and nervousness in the wake of unforeseen Russian hostility? Furthermore, this will require an analysis of both Bismarck's mental state at the time, as well as diplomatic, economic, and domestic factors which may have influenced his decisions. At this point, it is important to state that since Bismarck has been dead for over a century, historians must be careful in assessing the man's mental state; however, it is possible, through the use of Bismarck's own written statements, his actions, as well as the written observations of many of those who knew Bismarck, to reconstruct his state of mind during late 1870s. To begin, it is necessary to provide an account of the historical context as well as outline the key arguments of those historians who believe that the Dual Alliance was either inevitable or beneficial.

The position of this thesis is that the Bismarck made his crucial mistake when Germany formalized closer ties with Austria. The Congress of Berlin and its aftermath severely strained relations between Germany and Russia. Bismarck did not seem to understand Russia's hostility since he was Russia's strongest advocate before and during the Congress.<sup>1</sup> George F. Kennan states that deprived of its rewards in the Russo-Turkish war, the Russian leadership found it useful to cast the blame on Bismarck, whom they felt, owed them for the victories of 1866 and 1870;

creating a scapegoat deflected nationalist hostility away from the Tsarist government. Moreover, although Alexander was loyal to his uncle Wilhelm, he also was not insensitive to Russian nationalistic desires and often vacillated between these; above it all, he disliked Austria. The Congress also wounded the pride of Chancellor Gorchakov. According to Kennan, Gorchakov harboured a "resentful jealousy" of Bismarck during this time and actively promoted anti-German attitudes.<sup>2</sup>

Despite Bismarck's efforts to secure as many gains as possible during the Congress, Alexander was not entirely convinced that Germany did not lead a European coalition against Russia. This was outlined in a letter from Radowitz to Bismarck on 8 August 1878 which was later published in *Die Grosse Politik*. W.N. Medlicott and J.V. Fuller both argue that there is validity to this suspicion because, during of winter 1878-9, the "informal understandings" which bound Germany, Austria, and Britain to openly support each others' ambitions, effectively isolated Russia and allowed for the execution of the Bulgarian clauses of the Treaty of Berlin. Medlicott concedes that Bismarck's position still was one of friendly neutrality towards Russia, but with the smooth functioning of the western powers, this was a decisive factor for Bismarck's decision to approach the Austrians.<sup>3</sup> All this, by the late summer of 1878, signified the end of the Dreikaisersbund of 1873.

Russian resentment was not simply limited to the government, but manifested itself in newspaper attacks on Germany which certainly annoyed and alarmed Bismarck. Kennan argues that the nationalist Russian press began with unprecedented vigor to criticize the western powers in general, and Bismarck in particular, for preventing Russia from benefiting from a hard fought victory. The outcome of the Congress outraged both the Russian public and the Pan-Slavists. The Pan-Slavs viewed Russia as the natural protector of all Slavic people and a force for their liberation; thus, Austria, and all of its perceived supporters, were the main obstacle to these aspirations. Russia's loss of prestige during an era which placed a greater emphasis on popular nationalism revealed how dissatisfied many were with Bismarck's status quo.<sup>4</sup> Nationalism, which was an important aspect of the new foreign policy situation, had been underestimated by Bismarck.

In a letter to Wilhelm on 15 September 1879, Bismarck commented that underneath the conservative Tsarist structure, Russia was revolutionary and unstable, therefore Austria was a more suitable ally; he stressed that Alexander was misled by revolutionary advisors and therefore prone to make unreliable long-term policy decisions.<sup>5</sup> In the 4th memorandum at Gastein, Bismarck attempted to convince Wilhelm how Tsarist policy was being used for Pan-Slavist revolutionary aims in 1877-78, and that these forces were very powerful in both Russia and the Balkans; as a result, R.J. Sontag builds a case for a pro-Austrian policy: Austria could not go against the wishes of its people and go to war with Germany, but with Russia, war was possible at any time. According to Imanuel Geiss, Germany may have been able to deal with this resentment but further provocation due to the 1877-78 Balkan crisis led to the break with Russia which permanently destroyed the Dreikaisersbund.

By mid-1879, Austro-German cooperation developed to the degree that Bismarck and Andrassy both wanted an entente. Bismarck still wanted to revive the Dreikaisersbund, but Andrassy was determined to force Germany to choose between its two eastern neighbours. Bismarck was aware of Germany's precarious position; therefore, he did not want to join a western alliance in order to force the Russians to carry out the Congress' provisions, nor offer unequivocal support to the Russians. The Dual Alliance according to W.L. Langer was based on Bismarck's fear of an eventual coalition between France and Russia, which he believed could extend to another Kaunitz coalition, rather than an immediate Russian attack (the eventuality of either option will be explored later in this chapter). Moreover, Bismarck did not want to antagonize Russia any further; yet, he also recognized the need to maintain the integrity of Austria, which if it collapsed, he felt, would leave Germany in an isolated and precarious position between Russia and France.<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that Fuller endorses this interpretation as well.

Langer comments that due to Anglo-French cooperation over Egypt, and Anglo-Austrian cooperation during the Congress, Andrassy had hinted to Bismarck that the Dual Alliance could cement all these powers together; Bismarck wanted to use Austria's friendship with Britain to restrain France. In addition, having a tangible connection to another central power would allow

Germany to bolster its precarious position in central Europe and keep an eye on both its eastern and western flanks.<sup>7</sup> According to Langer, Bismarck realized the danger of getting involved with Austrian policy in the Balkans, but believed that because Austria was weaker, he could control them; consequently, the Dual Alliance was merely a precaution and was not intended to appear hostile. Following this logic, it was a weapon of protection against a demented Russian friend and formed the basis of the entire "Bismarckian System".<sup>8</sup>

In the wake of the Congress of Berlin, Geiss argues that Germany really had no choice at all; Austria was chosen for its historical, structural, and ideological compatibility (i.e. the Holy Roman Empire). This historian considers Russian disappointment in 1878 and the Dual Alliance of 1879 as a logical sequence of events. In addition, Lothar Gall asserts that the events of 1878 "seemed to have destroyed the fundamental assumption of Bismarck's foreign policy plan as laid down in the Kissingen Dictate", and ended Bismarck's "free hand in foreign affairs"; the nightmare of coalitions was inevitable, thus Bismarck had to take action in order to directly influence events.<sup>9</sup> Mihailo D. Stojanovic reinforces this assessment by stating that the Bad Kissingen Memorandum would not have been any use at this time: "Based on the system of playing one Power against another, it could not be played with safety to the end. Sooner or later those Powers and states would realize the identity of their interests against Germany and would unite to defend them."<sup>10</sup> Of course this statement assumes that Austria, Russia, Britain and France all had common anti-German interests.

Bismarck provides his own justifications for entering into an alliance with Austria. In his memoirs, Bismarck attempts, after many years, to make his position clear: "In the face of the attitude of the Russian press, the increasing excitement of the great mass of people, and the aggregation of troops all along the Russian frontier, it would have been levity to doubt the serious nature of the situation and of the Emperor's threats to the friend whom he had formerly so much honored"; Bismarck explains what he believed would be the ultimate result if there was no Austro-German alliance:

If no such understanding is come to, Austria will be not to blame if, under the influence of Russian threats, and uncertain of the attitude of Germany, she

finally seeks an entente cordiale with either France or Russia...Germany, unless prepared for isolation, would be forced to unite with Russia alone, and, as I fear, to follow in the mistaken and perilous course of Russian domestic and foreign policy.<sup>11</sup>

Bismarck hoped that the Dual Alliance would secure a peaceful and conservative policy from Austria and still rekindle the connection between Vienna and St. Petersburg through Berlin; he argued that the Dual Alliance was necessary for the stability of the European power structure. Bismarck also explained how the alliance would be an extension of the Holy Roman Empire tradition (which was a very popular option for both Germans and Austrians), keep Austria away from other Roman Catholic states like France, and cement monarchical ties among the eastern powers. In addition Bismarck felt that such an alliance, given Germany's close connection to Austria, was inevitable.<sup>12</sup>

These historiographical positions which favour the Dual Alliance make certain assumptions about Bismarck's reasoning as well as the general diplomatic situation within Europe in the late 1870s. Consequently, it is important to explore the fundamental flaws behind this perspective. To begin, despite the tension which existed between Germany and Russia at this time, it is difficult to believe that Alexander was ready to join a French alliance and become embroiled in hostilities with its very powerful western neighbour. As shall be demonstrated in the next chapter, even after the Dual Alliance was signed, Russia's sense of vulnerability convinced it to enter into another Dreikaisersbund in 1881. Going to France was an absolute last resort. Also, the chances of Austria joining France and/or Russia were astronomical given the situation in Europe during the late 1870s.

Many unexpected complications which increased Russo-German tensions broke Bismarck's nerve. Bismarck made some very critical miscalculations in 1878-9. For example, at the end of 1878, Russia (which already felt isolated) became suspicious of German quarantine regulations to prevent the spread of the plague from Russia in January 1879. In addition, Bismarck's anti-Gorchakov campaign was intended partly as a bullying tactic to gain a more pro-German Russian foreign minister. Bismarck also erected protective tariffs designed to aid the Prussian landowners; these tariffs, it was hoped, would also adversely affect Russian exports and

frustrate their rearmament program. Finally, the February, 1879, Austro-German agreement to abrogate Article V of the Treaty of Prague further upset the Tsarist government. It appeared as though Austria bought German support during the Congress; this greatly offended Alexander who was related to the Danish Royal Family.<sup>13</sup> All of these actions were designed by Bismarck to persuade Wilhelm of Russia's hostility towards Germany.

There is little evidence that the Dual Alliance was being planned as early as 1876, or that it was inevitable. According to William Carr, no evidence exists which proves that Bismarck had made plans for this alliance before 1879; instead, it was a spontaneous move in order to adapt to an evolving situation for which Bismarck was primarily responsible. Bismarck reinforced this assessment in a 30 August 1876 memorandum; he believed that a British-Russian-German alliance would be preferable in the long term (but he concedes that this a very unlikely possibility).<sup>14</sup> Although Andrassy had wished to sign Germany to an exclusive alliance since he took office, it was Bismarck who was the catalyst for this alliance in 1879. Up until early 1879, Bismarck still hoped for a revival of the Dreikaisersbund, but the continued difficulties with Russia caused Bismarck to seriously think about Germany's own possible isolation. Medlicott argues that the Dual Alliance was of little interest to Bismarck until the "War of the Chancellors in 1879"; moreover, the Dual Alliance's primary intent in 1879 was to force Russia into a more accommodating position.

Bismarck's inability to view events impartially is seen in his mishandling of relations between the Tsar and the Kaiser. As has been stated before, Russia's collective rage was at a fever pitch as the Russian press portrayed the Congress as a Bismarck-led coalition designed to betray Russia. Given Bismarck's aforementioned provocations, Alexander, who was rather unaccustomed to German hostility, wrote privately to Wilhelm on 15 August 1879; Bismarck dubbed it the "*Ohrfeigenbrief*" ("Slap in the Face letter").<sup>15</sup> Charlotte Sempell writes that Wilhelm did not see this letter as the vicious attack on Germany by an erratic Russian government, but rather a communication based on concern, as well as on the hope of smoothing out their current difficulties.<sup>16</sup>

The general tone of this letter is friendly and familial. It begins with "Dear Uncle and Friend", and Alexander inquires as to Wilhelm's health and his recent wedding anniversary. This letter may be a serious complaint against German policy towards Russia after the Congress, but it never loses its friendly tone: "Since I am encouraged by the friendship which you have never ceased to show me, please allow me to speak quite openly on a delicate subject which never ceases to preoccupy me." In fact Alexander is quite hurt and surprised by Bismarck's actions: "I can perfectly well understand that you want to maintain good relations with Austria, but I do not understand what interest Germany has in sacrificing the friendship of Russia." Alexander is unhappy about the hostility of German agents towards Russia in Turkey, and believes that Russia has carried out the stipulations of the Congress of Berlin in good faith; however, Turkey (supported by Austria and Britain) has continued to occupy Bulgarian and Montenegrin territory. He is incredulous as to why Germany tends to support Austria without question, "which is the absolute opposite of the tradition of friendly relations which had been the guiding principle of the policies of our two governments which were in complete agreement about their common interests."

In his memoirs, Radowitz agrees that this letter was of a friendly and polite tone overall, yet Bismarck recounts later that it was proof that Gorchakov was the author of this and other letters.<sup>17</sup> By contrast, Bülow suggests that Wilhelm's view is closer to reality: "Bismarck, ever suspicious and imaginative, saw in the Imperial letter the proof that on the Russian side they were working to bring about his downfall".<sup>18</sup> Bismarck interprets this letter as threatening since he undoubtedly focuses on such passages as: "...this might lead to dire consequences with regard to our neighbourly relations and might turn our two nations against one another", (and) "I should not allow myself to remind you of this, but the circumstances are becoming too serious for me to hide from you the fears which preoccupy me and the consequences of which could become disastrous for our two states."<sup>19</sup> What is key in the August 15 correspondence, however, is that Alexander appeared to be implicitly indicating his displeasure towards Bismarck: "Is it worthy of a true statesman to allow a personal quarrel to enter into a question of the interests of two great states destined to live sensibly together..." (this may be a reference to the "Two Chancellor's War"), and:

"How can one explain the attitude of these German agents who are increasingly hostile to us in the Orient when Prince Bismarck himself says that Germany has no interests to protect whereas we have some very important ones." However, it should be noted that nowhere in this letter does Alexander explicitly lash out at Bismarck.

Based on the tone of this letter, Alexander seems to be genuinely surprised and hurt by Bismarck's anti-Russian policies in the Balkans, and explicitly outlines to Wilhelm his fears of what a Russo-German rift could mean for both states. Conversely, Alexander never wavers in his confidence towards Wilhelm: "My dear uncle, do not bear me a grudge because of this letter, and please believe that I am deeply attached to you with sincere feelings." Clearly, Alexander is concerned, but this letter reads less like a threat and more like an expression of shock and sorrow.

To follow up on the 15 August letter, Wilhelm went to Alexandrovo, Russia on the 3rd and 4th of September to meet with Alexander in order to clear up Russo-German misunderstandings; Bülow remarks that the Alexandrovo meeting went very well; Kaiser Wilhelm writes: "The Tsar has said that two monarchs can manage to understand one another if Bismarck 'avec son temperament frileux' (his chilly temperament) will not always keep picking quarrels with old Gortchakov."<sup>20</sup> It appears that Wilhelm managed to smooth over the problems with Alexander and obtain his apologies much to Radowitz's amazement. This was confirmed by German General Edwin von Manteuffel who stated at the time that Russia still had a friendly connection with Germany; in addition, he indicated the pro-German Russian diplomats, Miliutin and Giers were in the process of replacing Gorchakov's (who is viewed as a "homme mort") position in the Tsarist government, and that apologies were articulated among the monarchs, while Russian offensive tendencies were denied.<sup>21</sup> In contrast to the arguments that perhaps Alexander was forced to take an anti-German stance to deflect internal criticism, these events demonstrate that the Tsar did not let domestic considerations undermine Russia's long standing relationship with its most powerful neighbour; his reactions were based more on Bismarck's policies.

Instead of accompanying his Kaiser to Alexandrovo, Bismarck went to Gastein to meet with Andrassy for exploratory talks. Despite the positive results of the Alexandrovo meeting,

Radowitz states that Bismarck, between the 7th and 9th of September, continued to take the initiative in meetings with Andrassy and Kaiser Franz Joseph, while Foreign Secretary Bülow along with Crown Prince Frederick were sent to convince the Kaiser of the need for an Austrian alliance. Bismarck used some rather insignificant Russian diplomatic feelers in France (see page 52) to persuade the Crown Prince, as well as the German ambassador in Paris, Hohenlohe, and Military Chief of Staff Helmuth von Moltke, to pressure Wilhelm to allow him to continue his meetings with the Austrians in Vienna. Due to the Russian political climate, Bismarck implored Wilhelm not to be fooled by his friendship with Alexander, and that a defensive alliance with Austria was vital because war appeared imminent.<sup>22</sup>

In a letter to Wilhelm on 24 August 1879, Bismarck emphasized the breakdown of monarchical relations and how such connections meant even less in these dangerous times; Bismarck believed that Alexander was under Gorchakov's influence which accounts for the new troop concentrations along the border. Apparently Bismarck believed that Russia and Prussia's fifty year friendship was being undone by the Tsar and thus created an increased possibility of a Franco-Russian alliance. In this letter, he wrote that Russia might even try to turn Austria against Germany, and he also placed more emphasis on Austria and Germany's common history and language. Bismarck continued to belabour these points in a 31 August letter to Wilhelm, in which he discussed Alexander's continued threats, and the possibility of a Kaunitz coalition that could form if Germany did not enter into an alliance with Austria; in addition, he stressed that the 1000 year community of Germans (i.e. the Holy Roman Empire) was a more effective basis for ensuring German security than the Hohenzollern-Romanov connection. This is extremely out of character for Bismarck since he was such a staunch supporter of Prussian interests over those of Austria and the smaller German states. This was the only time in his career that he espoused such *Großdeutscher* (Greater German) ideals; never before nor since would he make take such a position. Furthermore, Bismarck explains his fears that if Germany remained neutral, Austria may seek an alliance with France.<sup>23</sup>

The themes within Bismarck's correspondence are strikingly consistent in the months of August and September 1879. In a series of letters to Wilhelm, Bismarck portrays Austria as stable compared to Russia's internal revolutionary ferment, which had infected parts of the Balkans. During his meeting with Andrassy and Franz Joseph, Bismarck wrote Wilhelm from Vienna on 24 September emphasizing the Dual Alliance's usefulness in restraining French aims, and thus avoiding any altercation between Germany and Russia.<sup>24</sup>

By contrast, it is important to note that Foreign Secretary Bernard Ernst von Bülow, in a 7 September 1879 letter, recounts how useful the Alexandrovo meeting was for solidifying monarchical solidarity; Bülow also has many reservations about an alliance with Austria, especially given Bismarck's previous opposition to such a move was based on his belief that Austria was "untrustworthy".<sup>25</sup> Instead, Bismarck's attitude towards Russia in 1879 was being motivated more by personal grievances: "He started by working up a rage about the military threat from Russia...Bismarck's attempt to unseat Gorchakov in favour of Shuvalov was becoming an international joke, deeply resented inside Russia."<sup>26</sup> Bismarck himself confirms this in 1879 in the memoirs of Dr. Moritz Busch: "Gortschakoff is not carrying on a Russian policy, which takes us into account as friends, but a personal policy..."<sup>27</sup> Given the apparent success of this summit in resolving so many key points of contention, then why was Bismarck undermining initiatives which would render an exclusive Austro-German alliance unnecessary?

It is claimed by Sontag, among others, that Bismarck was simply raising the spectre of a Russian invasion and a Kaunitz coalition to convince Wilhelm to abandon his deep loyalties to his nephew, Alexander. However, it becomes clear through a variety of primary sources that Bismarck was repeating these ideas to many important individuals within the German government. In a letter to Foreign Secretary von Bülow on 1 September, it becomes clear that Bismarck was rather agitated over this Russian "invasion army" poised on the eastern border, as well as the threat of a Kaunitz coalition if the Dual Alliance is not signed; these sentiments were repeated to the German Ambassador in Vienna, Prince Heinrich VII Reuß on 12 September.<sup>28</sup> In addition, Bismarck displayed his fears in graphic terms to Busch on 9 March 1880: "They are making immense

preparations in Russia, have increased their forces by 400 000 men, as much as the peacetime footing of the German Army. They can now put twenty-four new divisions in the field...And a mass of cavalry is stationed near the western frontier which could pour in upon us in three days."<sup>29</sup>

Bismarck calculated that the Dual Alliance would strengthen both German and Austrian frontiers and check Russian aggressive tendencies. He attempted to justify his inability to endure temporary isolation by claiming that an Austrian alliance would, in war or in peace, prevent Germany from being isolated, as well as impede France's ability to form an alliance with another power.<sup>30</sup> However, given Russia's diplomatic isolation, the Tsar was still interested in maintaining a good relationship. Despite considerable Russian bluster, it was in no position to attack Germany. After all, Russia's military performance was rather dismal during the Russo-Turkish war, therefore it was not about to attack the most powerful military, industrial state in Europe. If Russia had been able to defend its position militarily, there would have been no Congress of Berlin. Bruce Waller argues: "Conceivably, the other powers could run rings around a stationary Germany, but the likelihood of this was virtually non-existent."<sup>31</sup> Simply stated, having been considerably weakened, both diplomatically and militarily in 1878, there was no possibility of a Russian military strike at this time for any reason.

Beyond the immediate causal factors for Russian antagonism in 1878-79, the facts do not support the interpretation that Russia and Germany were destined by their structural differences to become hostile towards each other. Given the lack of other causal factors, all indicators suggest that Bismarck lacked the nerve to weather this storm. It has been made clear that Alexander's anger was not a prelude to an attack or a hostile alliance. Russian friendship could still be salvaged if the German government remained calm in the wake of Russian belligerence. B.H. Sumner stresses that it was the strong dynastic ties, long term history of good relations and cooperation, as well as the need to administer Poland, which fostered Russia and Germany's close friendship in the early 1870s. In essence, it was only after Germany made its loyalties clear with the Dual Alliance that the Russians reluctantly decide to distance themselves from Germany. Only then was Russia truly convinced that Germany was committed to working against its long term interests (and even with

this realization did it take Russia fifteen years to secure an alliance with France). Had Pan-Slavism or fear of internal revolution been the key motivators for Russian foreign policy, a serious initiative towards a Franco-Russian alliance should have been undertaken in the Summer of 1878, given that Germany would not accept the treaty of San Stefano.

Wolfgang Windelband viewed the Dual Alliance as a catastrophe and believes that Wilhelm's account of the German situation was more accurate than Bismarck's; Austrian security interests were not those of Germany's since Andrassy preferred to elicit British, rather than Russian, support. Bismarck's view of Austria being stable and thus a more secure alliance partner, unlike the supposedly restless Russia, is fundamentally flawed: "It was a remarkable illusion, perhaps more the product of conservative wishful thinking than of anything else, to assume that Austria-Hungary would be a more stable partner to Bismarck's conservative foreign policy, only because there were, at the time, no revolutionary forces in sight."<sup>32</sup> In fact, it should have been apparent that, compared to its neighbours, Austria was a far more ramshackle empire with a wide mixture of mutually hostile ethnic groups. The *Ausgleich* of 1867 makes this clear. Based on all this, Bismarck's rebellion against the productive meeting at Alexandrovo, and the need for Austrian security in the light of these close family ties were complete nonsense.

According to Taylor, the Dual Alliance did nothing to increase German security, but rather made war more possible; in the end Bismarck never explained the necessity of such a liability. He failed to consider the long term results, and instead, given his inability to deal with the unforeseen consequences following the Congress, acted impulsively in order to find a quick way to ease the Balkan tensions; in fact it gave Austria the security to stop cooperating with Britain.<sup>33</sup> Prince von Bülow and his father Bernard Ernst von Bülow (who was the head of the German foreign office between 1873-79) both believed the move to Austria was "too abrupt". The elder Bülow states:

I repeat that I consider it right to be friends with Austria, but I could have wished it to be done in a less spectacular way. Now, it is precisely the man of genius whose mistakes are as excessive as his merits...Bismarck lets himself be so carried away with his wrath as to believe that Alexander II, prompted by Manteuffel, has been trying to blacken him in the eyes of William I and, to some extent, actually succeeded. As though our good old Emperor were not loyalty itself towards his great Chancellor!<sup>34</sup>

In regards to the Franco-Russian connection, in 1879, were the French a viable alliance partner compared to the Germans from the Russian point of view? According to Barbara Jelavich, Bismarck's feeling of isolation obfuscated the fact that, after the Congress, France was still unacceptable on military and ideological grounds for the Tsarist state, despite Russia's feelings of weakness and isolation. The French were far inferior to Germany since they were separated by geography, did not have any significant economic links, had no long-standing historical relationship, and due to its Republican leanings was wholly incompatible with autocracy. In addition, there was no guarantee that France would side with Russia in the Balkans since it certainly did not during the Congress.

Russian support for France was based on the encouragement of French recovery in order to act merely as a counterweight to Germany. Sumner argues: "Gorchakov himself talked much in the vein of a balance of power which would involve a recovery of French weight, but there were other factors shaping Russian policy in the seventies...And Gorchakov, despite his desires for France to be a greater make-weight, was at the same time committed to...Berlin and Vienna." <sup>35</sup> There was nothing inherently threatening about a counter-weight given the European "Gleichgewicht" (Balance of Power) system which would not allow one power's strength to upset this balance. Examples include the "Is war in Sight?" crisis and the Congress of Berlin.

In contrast to Bismarck's arguments, Langer states that Russia was not ready for war and Franco-German relations were actually better than they had been since 1871; despite this, Bismarck could not divest himself of the fear of an eventual Russo-French alliance. As for a possible Franco-Russian alliance, Radowitz states that on 11 September 1879, an interesting report surfaced out of Paris from the German ambassador Hohenlohe that a new initiative was advanced for just such an alliance, but French Prime Minister Waddington had found no success in this endeavor; Wilhelm was apparently aware of the report and had assurances from Alexander in Alexandrovo that he was not interested in attaining a French agreement.<sup>36</sup>

All this begs the question, had anything fundamentally changed in the structure of European international relations since the Congress of Berlin to warrant Bismarck's sudden desire

to abandon a decade long policy in order to enter into an exclusive alliance with Austria? It is the argument of this thesis that no permanent alterations had occurred. Taylor states that after the Congress of Berlin, Bismarck was no longer in a position to afford the loss of either Austrian or Russian support, or tolerate open hostilities between them. All this is basically true throughout the entire post-1870 period. It does not make sense that these circumstances suddenly forced Bismarck to jump into an exclusive alliance with Austria; after all, Austria would not be so intent on angering Russia if it did not have the support of Germany.

A flexible approach was the most likely way that any long term settlement could be created between Austria and Russia. Certainly an exclusive alliance would not accomplish this. Considering the timing of the Bad Kissingen Dictate, Bismarck knew full well which was the proper course to take. This 1877 memorandum made it clear that Bismarck was very aware at the time what the consequences of a fixed alliance would mean for Germany. Certainly the Congress should have made this fact obvious; once Germany appeared to be biased, Russia became suspicious.

It is necessary at this point to examine the social, economic, and political forces within Europe and specifically within the very unstable political structure of the German Reich, which had not fully integrated its population to this new political reality. Is it likely that these forces were not merely one of a myriad of factors which influenced Bismarck's decisions, but instead, dictated Bismarck's choices at this time and were his primary consideration? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to briefly outline the position of Germany in the 1870s. By the late 19th century, the advance of industrial society preceded a pace as the number industrial nations grew in Europe; the late 19th century was the era of the Second Industrial Revolution which concentrated on heavy industrial products such as steel. Germany in particular invested in mass production processes and as a result there was an unprecedented growth in engineers and industrial workers in electrical and chemical industries. Overall there was considerable growth of industrial factories and a greater concentration of workers than ever before. As a result, new political parties addressed working class issues in order to tap into this growing sector of support; in Germany, the Social

Democratic Party (SPD) took the lead in these matters. This alarmed European political and business leaders who witnessed the growth of strikes, unrest, as well as the popularity of Marxist concepts.

In a modern industrial state such as Germany, the increased activity of the population in economic affairs extended into party politics. The Reichstag (the legislative body of Germany) contained a wide political spectrum in the 1870s. Bismarck had a better relationship with the National Liberal Party which was the strongest party in the Reichstag in 1871. The Liberal party was in support of unification in 1870, but they also wanted to create a British style parliamentary government; these Liberals favoured a laissez-faire style economic policy which emphasized free trade. The Conservative parties were mostly East Elbian Junkers who were well represented within the Prussian army and bureaucracy. However, Frederick Hertz suggests that many within this group were personally jealous of Bismarck's success; they criticized Bismarck for the Austro-Prussian war and for the anti-Catholic campaign known as the Kulturkampf since they were opposed to state interference in religion. The target of this campaign was the Catholic Centre Party which had grown in power and was very influential among the Reich's Catholic populations along the Rhine and in Bavaria (these areas had resisted a political union with Prussia, and the Centre party had championed the plight of Catholics in Poland and Alsace-Lorraine). Since the creation of the German Reich was a "revolution von oben" (revolution from above) rather than the confluence of popular social and political forces, Bismarck wished to eliminate any group which sought to exploit these inherent divisions within the new Reich.

The National Liberals commanded the Reichstag between 1867 and 1877; however this situation began to change when hard economic times set in after the crash of the Vienna Stock Market in May of 1873; this crash and ensuing crisis was due to the emergent and hyper-productive industrial economy's inability to function within the limits of current markets. Unemployment, bankruptcies, and negligible growth within the agricultural sector followed. From 1875 onwards, the agrarian sector experienced a drop in cereal prices due to Russian and overseas competition; East Elbian farmers began to turn away from Liberal free trade ideals in droves.

Coinciding with the agricultural downturn was a depression in industry which left its elites hard hit.

Over the course of the 1870s, due to this depression, votes for the Conservative party increased at the expense of the Liberals; consequently, Bismarck began to seek the support of both the Conservatives and the Centre party. This led to the waning of the Kulturkampf, and eventually led to a more protectionist policy which emphasized tariffs over open markets. Between 1871 and 1877, Germany pursued a free trade policy, but given the Liberal's significant losses in the 1877 general election, Bismarck sought a new economic direction. Those in favour of protection were landowners, large farming operators, iron founders, and other manufacturers. Duties on iron and rye were approved, and the Reichstag elections of 1879 further solidified the Conservative's gains. With the passage of the Tariff Bill in July 1879, Bismarck sought to unite the support of conservative East Elbian landowners, as well as industrialists who dominated heavy industry in the Ruhr; this became known as the "Alliance of Steel and Rye." Hertz comments: Bismarck "considered agricultural and the iron industry vital in the event of war if the Reich were to be as little dependent as possible on imports. The farmers of the Elbe, who were those most interested in corn duties, dominated the conservative party on whose support Bismarck particularly relied. The Centre, too, which he would gladly have won over, was predominately protectionist."<sup>37</sup> Hans Ulrich Wehler comments that Bismarck formed this alliance in order to stave off a social crisis that could possibly lead to the growth of socialist political influence (i.e. the SPD).

Due to these factors, historians such as Wehler and Hans Rosenberg contend that these social, economic, and political phenomena had a tremendous impact on the direction of foreign policy in general, and for propelling Bismarck towards the Dual Alliance specifically. Wehler comments that rapid economic growth produces acute economic, political and social instability, especially in the German context. Bismarck, in order to solidify the precarious German social integration, felt the need to expand the economy to preserve the social hierarchy, and create enemies in order to encourage a negative political consensus within Germany; Bismarck used imperialism to find an outlet for industrial over production, and to integrate conflicting domestic

social forces by diverting attention away from internal problems and thus create a unity of purpose.<sup>38</sup> Wehler argues that Bismarck's wish for Germany to remain a satiated state which would pursue a corresponding foreign policy was thwarted by the growth of this industrial economy; the *kleindeutsches* concept within the centre of Europe was not enough of an outlet for this powerful economic state. Thus the creation of the Dual Alliance, the Austro-German customs union, and growing interest of imperial policy in the 1880s were all due to these forces.

Hans Rosenberg agrees primarily with Wehler, but has more to say about the change of direction of German foreign policy in 1879. This change in direction, according to Rosenberg, cannot be explained simply on ideological or psychological grounds, but instead it is economics which was the driving force. For example, the Bad Kissingen policy was an attempt to avoid war due to Germany's internal social instability, as well as for economic interests. Rosenberg comments: "It is, therefore, much more than a coincidence that the year 1879, the decisive turning-point in German and Austrian internal politics and in the domestic balance of power, also involved a reorientation of the foreign policies of both countries."<sup>39</sup> The building of a new conservative domestic alliance apparently corresponded with this new central European bloc; Rosenberg argues that all this was an attempt to create a long term social and political "equilibrium", bolster dynastic solidarity, and quell divisive interests.

These historians make a compelling argument for social-economic phenomena being the primary influence on Bismarck's foreign policy decisions. It is important to state that these aforementioned factors within Germany undoubtedly made their presence felt on Bismarck when he weighed his options within the international arena. However, there are some inconsistencies within the arguments of Wehler and Rosenberg which invalidate their claim for the primacy of domestic factors. Concerning the issue of protectionism, as well as the idea that Bismarck buckled under pressure and used the Dual Alliance to further this new economic direction, it is equally plausible that Bismarck used the tariffs to intimidate and provoke the Russians due to his personal animosity for Chancellor Gorchakov. As has been established earlier in this chapter by the various primary sources available, Bismarck was honestly afraid of a Russian military attack (no matter

how unlikely the possibility). Grain tariffs would have thwarted Russia's ability to export more grain, which was the most efficient manner to build up its economy and thus its military.<sup>40</sup> In addition, given the series of actions against Russia (i.e. quarantine regulations, Article V), it is equally likely that Bismarck timed this new economic direction in order to further frustrate and intimidate Russia. That is not to say that the Tariff Bill of 1879 had no key domestic political and economic advantages, but it was one of a host of factors which Bismarck considered.

In another example, both Rosenberg and Wehler stress that Germany's growing interest in overseas colonies represented a new social imperialism caused by industrial overproduction. However, according to Gall, it is equally possible that Bismarck was attempting to court France due to his concern over the less stable Dreikaisersbund (1881); therefore, he instituted a colonial policy to stimulate cooperation with France. It was hoped that the Berlin Congress on Central Africa (1884-5) could help extricate Bismarck from his nightmare of a two-front war.

There has been considerable emphasis placed on this sudden shift towards the conservative parties in 1879 and the Dual Alliance in the same year. This suggests that political and economic factors were the prime indicators of which direction German diplomacy should move. However, Rosenberg in particular reveals that he has little precise knowledge concerning the specifics of European international relations at this time. Considering that the economic crisis started in 1873, and the agrarian sector began to seriously decline in 1875, why did Bismarck not suddenly change his foreign policy direction immediately to shore up the domestic economy? Why was he instead committing the Bad Kissingen Memorandum to paper four years into this downward economic cycle? If economics and domestic political factors were Bismarck's primary focus, he should have sought an alliance with Austria in order to placate economic interests during the mid-1870s.

Rosenberg views the Dual Alliance as the cornerstone of a new system of alliances:

...in line with one of the most outstanding and permanent economic results of the Great Depression, affecting business organization, business methods and business spirit. The desperate drive to overcome the risks of cutthroat competition and to establish a more even level of business security and stability was in the direction of combination, co-operation and joint action through the formation of trade associations, collective lobbying agencies, cartels, syndicates, amalgamations, co-operative societies, and trade unions.<sup>41</sup>

If Bismarck was motivated by the need for long term economic stabilization, it seems unwise to base it on the Dual Alliance; after all, he was forced to create an unstable and contradictory system of alliances after 1879 in order to bolster Germany's vulnerable position due to being allied to a power with aggressive designs on the Balkans (thus opening up the possibility of alienating the Russians and increasing the possibility of a Franco-Russian alliance). If Bismarck had primarily economic considerations on his mind, why was he not content with placating the agrarians by signing the Dual Alliance and shutting out Russian grain? Why was it so important to reestablish the Dreikaisersbund, which according to Wehler and Rosenberg was a diplomatic relic from the free-trade liberal era prior to the 1873 stock market crash? In addition, the Russians had heavily invested in German money markets, while the Reichsbank routinely dealt in Russian securities. If economic influences were paramount, why was this link not a factor in Bismarck's new foreign policy initiative towards Austria?

Rosenberg argues that Bismarck's swing to the conservative parties was an effort to establish a viable and stable socio-political equilibrium between the classes; as a result, the Dual Alliance was the international extension of this policy because it was hoped that this alliance would create a conservative bloc among the Great Powers in order to minimize western democratic principles and Pan-Slavism. However, if this was the true motivation, neither historian adequately explains why Bismarck endeavored to create social stability by aligning Germany with a multi-ethnic empire which already had been forced to give the Hungarians an equal share of power in 1867, and, due to fears of internal Slavic uprisings (and economic interests according to George Hoover Rupp) was driven to extend its power in the Balkans to control Serbia, and thus antagonize Russia.

If the economic-social situation was not the key influence on Bismarck's decisions, and the basic structure of European international relations had remained intact after the Congress of Berlin, then what accounts for Bismarck's decision to drop a problematic, yet workable system of diplomatic flexibility for a fixed alliance which was bound to drive a long time ally into the arms of a committed enemy? It is important to emphasize that the German political system did not allow the

Reichstag any executive control over foreign policy during the late 19th century; this power was completely within the Kaiser's discretion. Firstly, the Bundesrat (essentially a council of ambassadors from the preexisting states which comprised Germany) was completely incapable of taking executive control of German administration; this council actually obscured the fact that Prussia governed the Reich, and that "the Imperial Chancellor who was also President of the Prussian Council of Ministers formulated German policy."<sup>42</sup> Author Rosenberg states that the Reichstag was unequivocally excluded from any political control of the army and foreign policy which fell within the jurisdiction of the Emperor and the Chancellor; the Reichstag could refuse to pass a budget, but given the previous struggle between the Prussian king and the Prussian parliament prior to unification, it is clear that the German government could still carry out executive functions without parliamentary approved sources of funding. Given Wilhelm I's advanced age and less formidable personality, Bismarck had almost sole control of Prussian and German foreign policy between 1862 and 1890. Thus, it is important to explore what influenced his decision making process during 1878-79.

Much can be said of Bismarck's psyche and personality. In fact, Bismarck was suffering from considerable nervousness and anxiety between 1879 and 1881. The written descriptions by Bismarck, and many of his close associates, concerning his actions and attitudes are used to define the psychological descriptions found in this thesis; these sources attest to the growing erratic tendencies within Bismarck's behavior. At this point, it is imperative that a brief outline of Bismarck's personality be undertaken. According to Taylor, Bismarck grew up in the aftermath of Post-Napoleonic Prussian Junker society which was extremely fearful of any social and revolutionary upheaval: "Bismarck, despite his appearance of titanic calm, was always aware of the revolutionary tide that had threatened to engulf the antiquated life of Schönhausen."<sup>43</sup> Charlotte Sempell argues that Bismarck was overall a dissatisfied and restless youth who did not feel at home anywhere and had a hard time conforming to the rigors of a Junker life, the army, his mother's expectations for his education, or becoming another drone in the civil service.<sup>44</sup>

Among Bismarck's more positive characteristics, he placed emphasis on "caution and patience" according to Gordon A. Craig. In an evolving situation, Bismarck believed that committing oneself too soon was a serious mistake, yet both Radowitz and Bülow also admired him for his "decisiveness" and "resourcefulness"; since certain opportunities only appeared once, Craig states that Bismarck had the ability to act quickly, authoritatively, and even brutally.

Bismarck also had a sense of religious duty and faith that influenced his approach to foreign policy. His conversion to Pietist Lutheranism was not really a religious experience, but was rather the act of his will to "reconcile him(self) to the limits of man's power"; simply stated, he did not believe that Christian ethics had any place in politics.<sup>45</sup> Taylor furthers this analysis by stating that Bismarck's religion was of the Old Testament variety which de-emphasized the more liberal "Sermon on the Mount" beliefs; moreover, Lutheranism stressed that duty to a ruler was an important religious purpose. Bismarck believed that by making Prussia strong, he was doing God's work, and thus he could disregard the opposition of other men: "His religion gave to his unstable personality a settled purpose and a sense of power."<sup>46</sup> Ultimately, Bismarck viewed himself as God's representative, which bolstered his courage and strength in difficult periods; however, it is still important to note that these convictions did not cause him to become a megalomaniac because he still recognized Germany's limitations within Europe.<sup>47</sup>

Under his tough exterior, he was an extremely emotional man, who in his youth was drawn to the Romantic Movement: "he was much given to tears at any public or private crisis...He broke down sobbing after his first public speech and again after the battle of Königgrätz. He wept when he became Prime Minister and even more when he left office. William I and he often sobbed together, though Bismarck always got his way." In addition, his great policy ideas came after long periods of brooding alone; he often had to fight his own contrary impulses; Bismarck once commented: "Faust complains of having two souls in his breast. I have a whole squabbling crowd". This is important in attempting to understand how such a devoted, yet emotionally unpredictable leader could, at times, act methodically and logically, and at others, erratically and capriciously. Bismarck admits these aspects of his nature after someone asked him if he really was

the "Iron Chancellor"; he replied: "Far from it. I am all nerves, so much so that self-control has always been the greatest task of my life and still is."<sup>48</sup>

In order to fully examine Bismarck's statesmanship, one must look at his less admirable personality traits. Despite Craig's rather sanguine assessment of Bismarck's psyche, he does have to admit that although wholeheartedly committed to his duties, Bismarck could be very vindictive towards those whom he hated. To illustrate this, Taylor emphasizes that Bismarck had a tendency to serve various masters, be they Wilhelm, Germany or God (these were actually symbols of his own will), but would ruthlessly turn against them when they no longer served his purposes. According to Count Julius Andrassy: "Bismarck's nature was suspicious; he had a contempt for mankind in general; he suspected ill-will in everyone holding opinions different from his own, or who thwarted him; he was constantly seeing intrigue, envy, malice, and hatred. In the political arena he was unrelenting."<sup>49</sup>

This assessment is reinforced by Bruce Waller who suggests that Bismarck's nerves were so bad at times that his intellect could not always check them; his loathing for enemies (both real and imagined) "blinded him" to the reality of a given situation. In his memoirs, Friedrich von Holstein, who was one of the Chancellor's subordinates, and later directed and planned German foreign policy between 1890 and 1906, writes:

It was a psychological necessity for Bismarck to make his power felt by tormenting, harrying, ill-treating people. His pessimistic view of life, which had long since blighted every human pleasure, left him with only one source of amusement, and future historians will be forced to recognize that the Bismarck regime was a constant orgy of scorn and abuse of mankind, collectively and individually. This tendency is also the source of Prince Bismarck's greatest blunders. Here his intellect was the slave of his temperament and justified outburst of which there was no genuine cause.<sup>50</sup>

Holstein's assessment is supported by Bismarck's actions during his anti-Gorchakov campaign; by 1879, it had escalated into a "personal cold war" that had little to do with furthering German gains. The anti-Gorchakov campaign, which followed the Congress of Berlin, was designed partly to bully the Russians into replacing this anti-German foreign minister, but in reality was based on Bismarck's growing personal hatred of this man. Because Chancellor Gorchakov was a rather elderly man at the very end of his political career, "the futility of Bismarck's vendetta

is especially striking."<sup>51</sup> Apparently Gorchakov became jealous due to Bismarck's success in unifying Germany and could not stand seeing a person he considered a subordinate surpass him in fame; Gorchakov had the opportunity during the 1875 "Is War in Sight?" crisis to show Europe Russia's importance. Holstein states: "Bismarck never forgot this insult. From that moment his Russian policy changed. He no longer thought of the gratitude Germany owed the Tsar, in fact Russia for him ceased to exist except in the person of Prince Gorchakov"; the ultimate result of this policy was to impair Germany's ability to appear neutral: "Prince Bismarck's Russian policy after 1875 was governed by emotion and therefore unsound."<sup>52</sup> However, this policy was more apparent after the Congress. Holstein emphasizes that the Prussian royal family and army did not have a better friend than Alexander II, while French sympathies for Catholic Poland were a consistent annoyance for the Russians. Although some of Holstein's comments seem overly harsh, this assessment of Bismarck's mental state makes it clear that he did not always have a calmly reasoned strategy for every situation.

After the Congress, Bismarck gained little satisfaction over its result: "His nerves were on edge and the physical symptom of this was a nettle rash which appeared almost immediately after the congress was over."<sup>53</sup> In response to an inquiry by Busch in May 1879, concerning the state of the Chancellor's health, Bismarck replied: "Not good. It was better, but the overwork and worry!"<sup>54</sup> Radowitz, in his memoirs, learned on 11 September 1879, from Bismarck's son William, that the Chancellor's state of health was "*erschuttert*" (shattered), which caused the Chancellor complete upset. Bismarck, himself, confirms this on 9 March 1880: "I must not walk or stand for any length of time, as it brings on neuralgic pains. That comes from the overwork of last year, and from the violent excitement."<sup>55</sup>

Given Bismarck's personality, in combination with the unforeseen events after the Congress of Berlin, it is quite clear that he panicked. Bismarck was aware of Russia's belief that Germany cheated them in 1878, and he feared that this was causing an anti-German shift within the Tsarist government; although it has been claimed that Bismarck exaggerated the unlikely possibility of Russian aggression to frighten Wilhelm, it has been proven, through his own statements cited in

this chapter, that Bismarck actually believed that Russia was ready to attack. Bismarck's correspondence in this period reveals his wide ranging fears of a possible Franco-Russian alliance and a Kaunitz Coalition. In Busch's memoirs, Bismarck explains on 9 March 1880:

At that time I was extremely anxious on account of Russia, and feared an alliance between her and Austria, which the French would also have joined. Latterly the Russians had written us brutal letters, threatening us in case we did not support them in the Eastern question, and I thought they could never act in that way, unless they had in Austria as a good friend, who might become an ally...They began with imperious and arrogant warnings, and finally proceeded to threats. I could only explain that by the supposition either that an understanding had already been arrived at between Vienna and St. Petersburg, or being negotiated. Andrassy's Russian journey and various other circumstances seemed to confirm these apprehensions, and so last summer I was in a state of great anxiety. France would doubtless have soon joined the other two.<sup>56</sup>

There is nothing that explains why Bismarck would jump to such a bizarre conclusion given the state of Austro-Russian relations in 1878-9, which has already been outlined.

The next chapter will explore the Dual Alliance itself, the second Dreikaisersbund, the Triple Alliance, and their effect during the 1880s. Bismarck's hope that the Dual Alliance could form a middle European power structure which Britain and France would grow to depend on does not follow because Bismarck failed to explain how this could nullify French hostility after its defeat in 1870-1. Bismarck also asserts that Austria would prevent the Russians from signing an agreement with Britain. Since Britain was an arch enemy of Russia's Balkan policy, was this really likely? It will become clear that Bismarck was desperately attempting to apply the logic of the Bad Kissingen Memorandum to the Dual Alliance. It is also an admission of his mistake in 1879.

## CHAPTER FOUR THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE DUAL ALLIANCE

This chapter will explore the fruits of Bismarck's mistakes. With the abandonment of the Bad Kissingen Memorandum as a the key to German foreign policy, the Reich's position was more defensive and reactive to events instead of being flexible and proactive. Germany could no longer appear neutral since it was committed militarily to protect Austria from the one power likely to attack it, i.e. Russia. Some of the key questions which must be asked are: 1) What was it about the nature of the Dual Alliance which placed Germany, and the rest of Europe, in such a perilous position? 2) If Bad Kissingen was no longer relevant, and the Dual Alliance was such a formidable defensive position capable of securing European peace, then why did Bismarck find it necessary to create a contradictory web of alliances to keep each of the powers mutually at bay? 3) Is this "cauchemar des coalitions", which characterized Europe in the 1880s, in fact Bismarck's attempt to reinstate Bad Kissingen in the only avenue left to him (and thus demonstrates his realization of his own mistake in 1879)?

It is important to first analyze the historiographic positions favourable towards Germany's new course and understand the flaws within the reasoning of such arguments. There are many historians who believe that this move towards a system of fixed alliances in 1879 was a necessary step in the evolution of European international relations after the Congress of Berlin. Imanuel Geiss and Michael Stürmer both illustrate that it became obvious that the Bad Kissingen plan could not maintain a favourable constellation of powers indefinitely, and thus Germany's need to commit itself to one of these European powers could not be avoided. Geiss' interpretation stresses the systemic inevitability of the formation of fixed alliances such as the Dual Alliance.

The Dual Alliance contained both economic and military connections and formed a power block in central Europe; this alliance was not meant to antagonize Russia but to defend both Germany and Austria.<sup>1</sup> The Dual Alliance was the base of the new diplomatic system since all other relationships centered around it. W.L. Langer states: "There is really little use in applying hindsight

to problems of this kind. For Bismarck the alliance of 1879 was not only logical, but necessary. That he built upon it an imposing system of international agreements which preserved the peace of Europe for many long years is a fact that cannot be argued away."<sup>2</sup> Stürmer insists that the Dual Alliance represented no enduring hostility towards the Tsarist state; instead, this alliance eventually formed a bridge by which Russia could consolidate and join a new Dreikaisersbund in 1881.

Count Julius Andrassy explains the motives behind Bismarck's actions and the apparent short-term diplomatic advantage which the Dual Alliance placed Germany in regards to their relations with Russia:

he had in his pocket the assurance of the Dual Alliance; he had no longer any cause for fear from any quarter. To run after the Russians would be construed at St. Petersburg as a sure sign of his weakness. He knew that he could accomplish his object of restoring the Alliance of the Three Emperors if only the Czar had learnt his lesson from the past...feared the spread of revolutionary spirit in Russia, and looked for aid to his two great and conservative neighbours.<sup>3</sup>

To Andrassy, the Dual Alliance had placed Germany in a seemingly invulnerable position from which it could intimidate Russia into doing its bidding.

Bismarck supplies his own justifications for the Dual Alliance in his memoirs. In a letter to King Ludwig of Bavaria on 10 September 1879, he mentioned the souring relationship with Alexander II in the last three years leading up to the Dual Alliance, the intensive Pan-Slavic agitation, as well as the Russian troop concentrations in Poland; this alliance was to be defensive and act as a counter-weight to the Russian threat, as well as to isolate France. In contrast, Bismarck argues that an exclusive Russo-German alliance could not only fail to isolate France, but would leave Germany vulnerable to Russian domestic and foreign politics. Moreover, he argued that this Austrian alliance was a better choice than a Russo-German alliance since if Austria was to break up, Germany would be without any support in central Europe.<sup>4</sup>

It is true that the maintenance of Austria was very important in preserving the current European power balance. If Austria was to disintegrate, this would have completely unforeseen ramifications because it would leave a power vacuum in the centre of Europe. The predominance of Slavs and Germans in this area could possibly cause increased competition between Germany and

Russia. Erich Brandenburg states that Bismarck viewed the maintenance of Austria as exceedingly important because if the Habsburgs collapsed it was feared that the Slavic population in those lands would automatically turn to Russia; Bismarck could not afford to see Russia's power grow and viewed it as an ominous development overall. Thus, due to this fear over Austrian integrity, the Dual Alliance was geared towards guaranteeing Austria's existence through restraining its ambitions: "By the treaty of 1879, Germany was pledged only to defend the Austrian population against a Russian attack, not to support Austrian ambitions in the Balkans, not to hinder Russian aggression in Bulgaria and Constantinople which no account of sophisticated explanations could construe into an attack on Austria."<sup>5</sup> Brandenburg argues that it was ultimately Bismarck's successors who did not actively hold to his policy of keeping out of Austrian designs and holding back its ambitions.

Bruce Waller expands on Brandenburg's position by stressing that a conflict with Russia would not be inevitable, since Russia could still make use of German support to deal with its other rivals. Although the Dual Alliance gave Austria advantages which Bismarck could not easily prevent and of which the Russians were all too conscious, Waller contends that skillful diplomacy could have mastered the difficulty of reestablishing relations with Russia; after all, the Dual Alliance was designed to bring the Russians to terms and give Germany greater security if the Russians failed to cooperate. However a critical problem was Bismarck's approach to diplomacy: "The alliance could give Bismarck added security only if he followed a more indulgent line towards Russia and this he intended to do once she had come round, but the legacy of struggle and his combative approach to politics were troublesome obstacles to his ingenuity on which he heavily relied."<sup>6</sup> For Waller the key problem was that Bismarck was not inclined to do much in order to keep such necessary allies; European statesmen lost confidence in Bismarck and his liberal use of warnings and threats to maintain the compliance of other powers. This interpretation is also shared by W.N. Medlicott.

Finally, Norman Rich, like many of the aforementioned historians, tends to follow Bismarck's memoirs far too uncritically and thus has formed the opinion that if France and Russia

were to create an anti-German alliance, Austria might join in order to regain its lost predominance in central Europe; therefore the Dual Alliance effectively decreased that possibility. In addition, it provided Bismarck some degree of control over Austrian policy, especially in the Balkans, since the Austrians needed German support against Russia.

Now that the key historiographical positions which support the creation of the Dual Alliance have been outlined, it is necessary to analyze why this alliance was a critical mistake. This will require revealing why the theoretical perspective and methodology of the previous historians are flawed. To begin, it is important to examine critically what Bismarck writes in his memoirs; it is the lack of skepticism concerning this particular topic which has led to a general misunderstanding of the true nature of Germany's position within European international relations. For example, since Austria was not willing to let Russia into the Dual Alliance according to Rich, this contradicts his earlier statement validating Bismarck's fear that it was likely that Austria would join a Kaunitz coalition with Russia and France. Therefore, it is crucial to view what Bismarck writes (especially his post-1890 memoirs) with all due suspicion; he often contradicts himself in his attempt to portray his role in history in as favourable light as possible. J.V. Fuller states:

But it is a notorious fact that from the Chancellor's utterances alone can be constructed no clear, or even truthful, picture of his actual policy. They often conflict with each other and with the facts. Particularly undependable are the explanations and justifications of his conduct of affairs which date from the period after his retirement. Bismarck's memoirs are far from supplying a reliable key to his career, and frequently only confuse and distort the "issues"...It is only by scrutinizing his actions carefully, by weighing his words against his deeds, by bringing the two together in their proper temporal context, that this kernel of verity can be revealed.<sup>7</sup>

By contrast, it is important to note that of the other memoirs cited in this thesis, not only do these various individuals corroborate each other, but they also do not contradict the historical record.

Consequently, it is more useful to explore the text of the Dual Alliance in order to illuminate the real intentions of German and Austrian diplomats during 1879; this will require a close reading of the text of this alliance in comparison to the diplomatic situation at the time. Bismarck's lofty goals for peace are revealed in the "Joint Memorandum...outlining the purposes of the Alliance"; it states that both governments view the preservation of peace in Europe as paramount: "They (the

German and Austrian governments) are resolved not to let themselves be diverted from this purpose by passing divergences with other Powers, and they are convinced that such differences of interest as may yet exist must be subordinated to the higher considerations of the world's peace."<sup>8</sup> This intention is reinforced by Bismarck in a letter to the Foreign Office on 10 November 1879: "We merely considered the maintenance of a defensive peace, designed to free both Empires from the fear of attacks by Russia, but, certainly not to support anyone's Eastern policy."<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, it is stated repeatedly that the intention of this alliance is to be defensive, non-menacing, and to act as an agent for preserving the general European peace: "inasmuch as, finally, an intimate cooperation of Germany and Austria-Hungary can menace no one, but is rather calculated to consolidate the peace of Europe as established by the stipulations of Berlin."<sup>10</sup>

Notwithstanding this noble aim, it is clear from the alliance's text that it is blatantly at the expense of Russia. It is difficult to comprehend how Bismarck failed to realize why Russia would feel "menaced" by witnessing its most powerful neighbour enter into an alliance with its greatest Balkan rival in order to carry out the Treaty of Berlin stipulations. This treaty was the result of the Congress of Berlin, Russia's most recent diplomatic humiliation. Despite wishing to remain friendly towards Russia, Germany and Austria stressed that adherence to these treaty conditions were of the utmost importance. An alliance based on the humiliation of another power (no matter how richly deserved) does not bode well for future relations among these states. In fact, many of the statements within the text of the Dual Alliance are based on disingenuous diplomatic platitudes and wishful thinking:

The two Governments for their part affirm it to be their common intention that neither of them shall take occasion, through the differences still pending regarding certain points of the Treaty of Berlin, to attack or to menace the Russian Empire, either by themselves or in alliance with other powers. In this matter both Governments are acting on the presumption that the Russian Government also will be guided by the same aims.<sup>11</sup>

It will become clear in a few paragraphs that this passage never reflected Austrian intentions during the 1870s, 80s, or beyond.

In reality, this treaty was the fruit of Bismarck's fear during August and September 1879. Despite all indications that the Alexandrovo meeting had reaffirmed Alexander's friendship towards Germany (despite the threats of the Pan-Slavist Press), the text of the Dual Alliance included this passage:

The two High Contracting Parties venture to hope, after the sentiments expressed by the Emperor Alexander at the meeting at Alexandrovo that the armaments of Russia will not in reality prove to be menacing to them, and have on that account no reason for making a communication at present; should, however, this hope, contrary to their expectations, prove to be erroneous, the two High Contracting Parties would consider it their loyal obligation to let the Emperor Alexander know, at least confidentially, that they must consider an attack on either of them as direct against both.<sup>12</sup>

In general, the Dual Alliance was designed more to guarantee Austrian integrity, and mollify Bismarck's fears of a Russian attack. In Article I, it is stated that if one of the two parties is attacked by Russia, then the other will come to its defense. In other words, if Russia attacked Austria, Germany was obligated to come to its defense. However in Article II, if one party was attacked by the another power, the other party pledged to not support the attacker and instead would assume a "benevolent neutral attitude" towards the defending party; if the attacker was supported or assisted militarily by Russia, then Article I would go into effect and each party would assist the other with full military means. Simply stated, if France attacked Germany, then Austria was obligated only to refuse to provide aid to the enemy, unless Russia joined France militarily. It is here that the flaw of this treaty is revealed. While Germany had to pledge itself to support Austria at all costs, Austria could merely remain neutral if Germany was under siege. Moreover, the chances of such a two-front attack on Germany outside of a close association with Austria was next to nil. Thus, the Dual Alliance was designed to defend against a scenario that was made possible only by Germany abandoning its neutral diplomatic policy; it was this close association between Germany and Austria that could cause Russia to seriously consider France as a viable alliance partner. Finally, it is important to ask the question: if the Dual Alliance was so benign, then why was it necessary to keep many of its articles secret?

It should be stated at this point that the collapse of the Austrian empire was completely within the realm of the possible; it is also equally possible that if Austria did collapse, Germany and Russia could have worked out an agreement to divide the area along ethnic lines, and thus extricate Germany from its current Balkan dilemma. In contrast to Brandenburg's argument, the alliance between Austria and Serbia in 1881, as well as the difficulties between Russia and Bulgaria throughout the 1880s proves that the Balkan Slavs did not think only in nationalist terms, and thus would not automatically follow Russia. Furthermore, as long as Germany was not vitally linked to Austria (at the expense of its connections to other powers), it had less to fear from such a collapse. Despite Bismarck's rationalizations that the breakup of the Austrian Empire would make Russia too powerful and would give rise to nationalism and destabilize Eastern Europe: "The truth was simpler. He had come to desire peace for its own sake. In earlier days he would have faced the reconstruction of eastern Europe...Now he shrank from the turmoil that this reconstruction would involve...All he wanted was a quiet life."<sup>13</sup>

According to William Carr, Bismarck could not satisfy both Russia and Austria indefinitely due to the deeply rooted hostility between these two powers which could not be summoned away; it was hazardous to maintain peaceful co-existence in the short term, and nearly unachievable over the long run. This may very well have been the truth but the Dual Alliance made this scenario inevitable. As Mihailo D. Stojanovic argues in reality this alliance involved Germany tying its fate to Austria, promoting Austrian interests at the expense of Russia, and ultimately being connected to a multi-ethnic power which was inherently unstable. A Russo-German alliance may have made Germany dependent on Russian policy and left it open to a possible Franco-Austrian alliance, but Rupp argues: "In deciding to protect Austria, Bismarck was thus also forced to some extent to support her Balkan policies. Bismarck's support for Austria was however limited by his necessity to maintain Russian friendship...To keep the Dreikaisersbund alive, Bismarck had constantly to prove to both allies the advantages of the alliance with Germany, an increasingly difficult assignment."<sup>14</sup> Because of Austrian restlessness, the Dual Alliance not only decreased German security, but, for the first time, placed Germany in immediate danger. Austria used this alliance to

oppose the Russians even more vehemently than before. Now that Austria possessed a guaranteed existence, Germany was in constant danger of being embroiled in its conflicts. To the Austrians, this alliance was a positive signal to continue pursuing an aggressive Balkan policy. When this alliance was formalized, Andrassy telegraphed Franz Joseph this message: "Now the road to the Balkans is open to the monarchy."<sup>15</sup>

Stojanovic argues that the real winner of the Congress of Berlin was Britain, since it successfully prevented a Balkan partition; such actions made a strengthened Dreikaisersbund designed to secure German predominance extremely difficult. A key indicator of this was when British Prime Minister Salisbury publicly greeted the news of the Dual Alliance as "good tidings of great joy"; he realized that now Britain would no longer have to take the lead in opposing Russian actions in the Balkans. Austria could do this with automatic German backing. In a memorandum by Bismarck on 10 November 1879, he was apparently nervous about the British government's enthusiastic support of the Dual Alliance, and feared it would be used to support British Eastern policy at the blatant expense of Russia. Bismarck believed that it would be extremely imprudent to do this, and it was not his intent to create an anti-Russian coalition; according to Bismarck, it was his desire to quell Russian aggression, not spur on Britain.<sup>16</sup> It is obvious that the Dual Alliance did nothing to control British restlessness, but rather emboldened them to further provoke the Russians.

The Dual Alliance, in a single stroke, unraveled the logic of the Bad Kissingen Memorandum. As Russia moved closer to France, Germany grew more dependent on this alliance for whatever security it could provide. Taylor argues that unlike wartime alliances which tend to end at the cessation of hostilities, the Dual Alliance was designed to prevent war and thus lasted as long as peace continued (and in this case, until the surrender of the Central Powers in 1918). Barbara Jelavich endorses this position by stating that: "From 1815 to 1879 there had been few formal alliances in existence...After 1879 the powers of Europe came to base their security more often on regular treaties. The grouping of the powers and their formation into rival camps were to

contribute greatly to the change in atmosphere in international relations after the turn of the century."<sup>17</sup>

After 1879, Bismarck had to do exactly what he had always wanted to avoid: create alliances instead of adapting to changing circumstances. All of Bismarck's diplomacy, from October 1879 to the end of his career, was designed to prevent what became unavoidable. Lothar Gall argues that his Austro-German alliance was the beginning of many foreign policy expedients; this developed into a system which sought to maintain the increasingly endangered European power balance. However, the Dual Alliance was neither designed to achieve, nor did it maintain a lasting equilibrium. For example, Bismarck's gamble to use the Dual Alliance to isolate and intimidate the Russians into joining a renewed Dreikaisersbund ultimately failed. Julius Andrassy recounts that the very fact that Bismarck sought to renew the Dreikaisersbund in 1881 indicates that the Dual Alliance was not sufficient for Bismarck to safeguard Germany. Serge Goriainov supports this assessment by stating that Bismarck had no confidence in the Dual Alliance's long-term stability, and thus it was necessary to secure Russia in order to keep it away from France. Furthermore, as soon as the Dual Alliance was signed, Bismarck became its critic and refused to make it permanent.

Both conciliation and force were used to push Russia into being more accommodating (and thus join a renewed Dreikaisersbund), but Bismarck's diplomatic position remained strong only as long as Russia continued to be isolated. In reality, this policy of intimidation eventually made the Russians even more suspicious of German motives. Bismarck hoped that both the Dual Alliance and the Dreikaisersbund of 1881 would restore the lost trust, halt the Pan-Slavist party, and allow the conservative influence to take over. Russia wished to have a bilateral agreement with Germany at first but Bismarck insisted that Austria be a part of it. The reason Russia joined the renewed Dreikaisersbund was due largely to their feeling anxious and isolated since the Congress. With Gorchakov's retirement in 1880, his successor, Nicholas de Giers, was more conciliatory. Also, Tsar Alexander III joined the Dreikaisersbund partly because of the turmoil created by the assassination of his father Alexander II in March 1881. Conversely, it was clear early on that

Chancellor Andrassy's primary goal was to secure a German alliance; once accomplished, Austria wished to undermine the Dreikaisersbund at every opportunity.<sup>18</sup> Now that Germany was fully committed to Austria, any effort to maintain a balance between Austria's and Russia's contradictory interests was extremely difficult, while failure to do so would antagonize one side against the other.

The Dreikaisersbund was a strictly practical agreement over the Balkans. Bismarck's guiding principle was that the Balkans be divided fairly into Russian and Austrian spheres of influence. Austria recognized the neutrality of Bulgaria and Russian security in the Black Sea; in return, Russia recognized Austria's annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Despite its earlier belligerence, Russia would accept this new agreement and even consent to be a third partner if this treaty was defensive. Russia wished to prevent British occupation of the Straits, as well as Ottoman territorial changes without Russian consent; as for Bismarck, he simply wished to prevent a war with France primarily by keeping it isolated. The basis of the agreement consisted of Germany being neutral in the event of an Anglo-Russian war, and Russia remaining neutral during a Franco-German conflict.

Julius Andrassy still insists that Bismarck had achieved a master stroke with the Dreikaisersbund and the series of alliances which followed during the 1880s:

By such a complicated structure Bismarck constituted himself master of Europe...Not only the unchallenged superiority of the allies and the absence of any counter-alliance, but also the fact that Germany was the most favourably situated Power within the Triple Alliance, gave that Power and its Chancellor the decisive voice in the affairs of the continent. Germany formed the connecting-link in the chain of alliances, she being nearer to all the others than they to each other.<sup>19</sup>

This rather sanguine account of Bismarck's foreign policy is also shared by both Brandenburg and Langer. As Langer explains:

It is easy to point out its fatal weakness—the continuation of Austrian-Russian rivalry in the Balkans...but one must not leave out of account the fact that the treaty helped to take the edge off this antagonism. Thereby it served not only the interests of the three parties, but the cause of general peace. Its conclusion was an achievement of real statesmanship and an important step in the evolution of the Bismarckian system.<sup>20</sup>

The question that must be asked of this assessment is, could the Dreikaisersbund be sustained in the long term? Although hindsight makes it clear that Bismarck's previous system made it difficult enough for Germany to avoid a conflict of interest in a time of a crisis (i.e. the Congress of Berlin), what made him think that this cumbersome diplomatic monstrosity would be more effective in safeguarding Germany from a two front war? For example, Austria's response reveals the contradiction Bismarck was now fully committed to. Austria's new foreign minister, Baron H. von Haymerle (1879-1881) wanted an alliance with Britain, which was still one of Russia's principal rivals; however, it was Gladstone who resisted this. In fact, it was only when Britain's activities near Austrian territory (following the controversy between Montenegro and Turkey) were not to Austria's interest that Haymerle decided that there were some temporary advantages to be gained from the Dreikaisersbund.<sup>21</sup> According to Taylor, Bismarck viewed the Dreikaisersbund as a conservative triumph; however, both Austria and Russia saw it as merely another foreign policy maneuver.

To maintain the new Dreikaisersbund, as has been mentioned, Bismarck hoped that his old trick of dividing the Balkans into two spheres would minimize the hostility between Austria and Russia. However, it is difficult to believe that Bismarck really thought that the Dreikaisersbund could reconcile the differences between these two rivals indefinitely: "The reluctance of Austria and Russia to consider schemes of self-limitation...jeopardized the success of the plan to divide the peninsula into spheres of influence"; this resulted in a paradox since Bismarck based the stability of Europe on an alliance which linked together two "restless powers."<sup>22</sup> If the original Dreikaisersbund was difficult to maintain in the 1870s when Germany retained an uncompromised position of neutrality, then the addition of the Dual Alliance effectively doomed this unstable three power agreement. For example, there were inherent difficulties concerning the status of the Dual Alliance within this tripartite agreement. In a Ministerial Declaration on this subject, it is obvious that despite Bismarck's keen interest in reestablishing the Dreikaisersbund, the Dual Alliance would supersede it in the event of a crisis: "that the prospective Triple Agreement can under no

circumstance prejudice their Treaty of Alliance of October 7, 1879; the latter, on the contrary, remains binding, as if the former did not exist, and shall be executed according to its contents and the intentions of the two treaty-making Powers".<sup>23</sup>

Austria's economic imperialism in the Balkans was bound to alarm the Russians who were primarily concerned with the security of the Straits and the Black Sea. As B.H. Sumner states, the one difference between the Dreikaisersbund of 1873 and that of 1881 was Austria's new position in the Balkans with the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the garrisoning of the Sanjak of Novi Bazar which kept Serbia and Montenegro apart. In addition, the emergence of an anti-German component in Russian nationalism after the 1877-8 Balkan Crisis became more prominent. Unlike the 1870s, given Austria's new position in the Balkans, Germany's commitment could only exacerbate any emergent anti-German sentiment among the Russians. The Russian foreign office reported in 1887 that although a tripartite entente between the three Eastern powers was preferable to a separate alliance between two of them, the growing Austrian initiatives to control Serbia and Montenegro (while Russian influence in Bulgaria was currently diminishing due to Austrian intrigues), caused general public disapproval aimed not only at Russia's Balkan rival, but at Germany because Austria's policies rested upon its alliance with the Reich.<sup>24</sup> Austria's enhanced political and economic position in the Balkans made Pan-Slavist goals very difficult to attain in the short run.

This is a study of the perplexing redirection of Germany's post-Congress foreign policy. Russia was willing to pay a high price for security against the "Crimean Coalition," including accepting a German alliance with Austria. Taylor states that Bismarck forged this alliance by cheating both Russia and Austria; he promised Austria that the Dreikaisersbund would control Russian extremists, while he assured the Russians that it would restrain Austria in the Balkans more effectively than the Dual Alliance alone.<sup>25</sup> To suggest that Bismarck cheated these powers is unfair since Bismarck did everything he could to accommodate them, but was unable to accomplish much due to the contrary aims of Austria and Russia, as well as the contradictory terms of the Dual Alliance and the Dreikaisersbund. For example, Andrassy, in a memorandum in 1886, prodded

Franz Joseph to develop an Austrian sphere of influence encompassing the entire Balkan region and therefore act as a bulwark against Russian claims of leadership over the Slavs. Moreover, after 1879, the Russians were forced to recognize that Germany would not remain neutral if a serious Austro-Russian conflict erupted, especially if such a conflict threatened Austrian integrity. Unlike the 1870s when Germany (along with the remaining Great Powers) would not let Russia destroy Austria, it was clear by the next decade that Germany's growing diplomatic dependence on the Dual Alliance made it appear as though defending Austria was less a matter of maintaining the balance of power, and more about furthering Austrian gains in the Balkans.

Historians such as Stürmer, Geiss and Gall argue that the flexible Bad Kissingen-style approach could not be sustained indefinitely, and that Bismarck had recognized that the Dual Alliance was a more secure basis for a new foreign policy direction. If this is accurate, why did Bismarck create a complex and contradictory web of alliances in order to attempt to reestablish the freedom of action which existed in the 1870s? In addition, there were inherent difficulties with this cumbersome system. If Bad Kissingen seemed to be based on wishful thinking and was vulnerable during a crisis, this new alliance system was lacking in any form of diplomatic logic. As Andrassy explains: "The object of the system of alliances formed by Bismarck in the period 1879 to 1884 was the maintenance of peace, and its character was defensive. But the methods he resorted to were various and even inconsistent. Firstly, the treaties were intended to erect a bulwark against east and west--i.e. against the single or combined attacks of France and Russia; while, secondly, they were to isolate France by winning over Russia."<sup>26</sup> In contrast to Bad Kissingen's inherent freedom of action, Germany's multiple and contradictory commitments seriously curtailed its policy options in any given situation.

Bismarck's system was based on five separate treaties which expired on different dates, and involved six different sovereigns (Germany, Austria, Russia, Italy, Romania, and Serbia) with contradictory obligations. The two key contradictory alliances were the Dreikaisersbund which was designed to be pro-Russian and to maintain a friendly connection between Russia and Austria, and the Triple Alliance (1882) which essentially brought Italy into the Dual Alliance; the latter treaty

was designed to be an anti-Russian alliance in case of an attack or of a Franco-Russian coalition. The Triple Alliance was formed after Italy sought Austrian support due to its hostile relations with France over Tunis. Along with resurgent Pan-Slav rumblings, which culminated in General Skoblev's visit to Paris, Bismarck wanted insurance against a possible Franco-Russian understanding. Thus the 'pro-Russian' Dreikaisersbund led to the 'anti-Russian' Triple Alliance in which Italy would remain neutral in the event of an Austro-Russian war. Conversely, Germany, gained little from the Triple Alliance because it was once again allied with another ambitious power.

Busch of the German foreign office admits that the Triple Alliance was anti-Russian in nature in a letter to Prince Heinrich VII Reuß on 28 February 1882:

I admit that Italy's military weakness and her limited ability to act outside her frontiers make the comparative strength and the hoped for mutual services very unequal. But it would be an advantage not to be despised if, supposing France in alliance with Russia undertook a war, Italy were on our side, even though it were but nominally and without her doing much. We should thus be free to employ elsewhere the troops, which we should otherwise have to place in or near the Alps.<sup>27</sup>

Thus the Dreikaisersbund of 1881 had bound Russia to its eastern neighbours, but these same neighbours were also in the Triple Alliance which clearly stood in absolute opposition to Russia; this conflict of interests and lack of trust in each other really nullified the value of the Dreikaisersbund.<sup>28</sup>

Bismarck fully realized his nightmare of coalitions when he entangled Germany in this contradictory web of alliances which impeded his freedom to maneuver. Serbia signed a secret agreement in 1881 which was designed to bolster the Dual Alliance (and reduced Serbia to the status of an Austrian protectorate). Later, Romania was added in 1883 in order to provide a greater military defense against any Russian aggression. The results of this system were: 1) if France attacked Germany only Italy would help Germany; 2) if Russia attacked Germany, Austria would provide assistance and Romania would remain neutral, 3) if Austria was attacked by Serbia, Germany and Romania would be obligated to assist; in fact, Romania was best protected, since if attacked, it would gain the support of both Germany and Austria. Finally, if two or more powers

were to attack Austria, Italy or Germany, each state would be obligated to assist the defending party. Andrassy states: "Some of these rulers, though they had concluded no treaties with each other, found themselves in a certain relationship, merely by virtue of their agreements with third parties!"<sup>29</sup> Taylor accurately argues that Bismarck's system was not only contradictory, it was a "tyranny" designed to preserve the peace; following 1879, he used alliances in order to take his allies prisoner, and thus, instead of cooperating with them, Bismarck attempted to control them.<sup>30</sup>

Another Balkan crisis, which began in September 1885, demonstrated the impotence of the Dreikaisersbund. Due to Prince Alexander of Bulgaria's seizure of Eastern Rumelia without Russian consent, Serbia declared war out of fear of Bulgarian ambitions. Austria soon warned Bulgaria to cease hostilities after they began to prevail over Serbia. This strained relations between Austria and Russia to the limit. In order to prevent a war, Bismarck informed Austria that Germany would not fight Russia over this issue. A temporary settlement was achieved, but Austria now opposed the Dreikaisersbund's Balkan partition and wanted to control the entire region. This episode demonstrates that Bismarck's system of alliances was ineffective in dealing with the growing problem of Russo-Austrian antagonism over the Balkans.

After 1885 (if not before), Bismarck was fully aware of the position he placed Germany in; in a letter to Count Hatzfeldt, the German ambassador to Britain, on 30 June 1889, he writes:

All our differences with Russia...(rest) solely on the fact that we are ready to protect Austria against Russian aggression, because Austria's continued existence as a strong and independent Great Power is essential to the balance of power in Europe. Hence our refusal to leave Austria in the lurch against Russian attacks remains the sole reason for Russo-German differences. If these came to an end through Austria's junction with Russia, we should find it much easier than Austria to come to an agreement with Russia.<sup>31</sup>

Even Bismarck had to realize the truth of Wilhelm I's statement ten years before that there was no fundamental danger from Russia as long as Germany did not move too close to Austria. Moreover, in the same letter Bismarck realizes the futility of the Dreikaisersbund in the 1880s given that an emboldened Austria, backed by the security of the Dual Alliance, would oppose Russia openly. Without the Bad Kissingen policy, Germany's ability to foster Austro-Russian cooperation was seriously impaired. As a consequence, Bismarck writes that it was only Britain under Gladstone

(with his committed opposition to Austria's Balkan ambitions) which could drive Austria into the arms of Russia: "But so long as the Gladstone spirit no longer rules in England, I do not believe in an Austrian rapprochement to Russia."<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, Bismarck realized how little protection the Dual Alliance provided for Germany in central Europe. In a letter to Hatzfeldt, on 11 January 1889, Bismarck was very interested in obtaining a defensive treaty with Britain; Bismarck argues that such a treaty would prevent a French attack and preserve the general European peace.<sup>33</sup>

Bismarck's decision to pursue the Dual Alliance as the cornerstone of his foreign policy after 1879 was a serious mistake. This alliance offered no advantages for maintaining German security in the long term, and this was apparent at the time of its signing. Bismarck's subsequent actions indicate that he desperately tried to resurrect the Bad Kissingen policy through the creation of mutually hostile alliance systems. If Germany could not regain its appearance of neutrality due to its exclusive connection to Austria, Bismarck attempted to impede the freedom of action of other powers by spinning a web of contradictory alliances. These were supposed to achieve the same result as the Bad Kissingen plan: (1) isolate France, and (2) keep Russia, Austria and Britain from becoming actively hostile towards each other. In any case, Bismarck realized that a general war was still the greatest danger for Germany, but now the Reich's freedom to act as an independent arbitrator to prevent such an outcome was seriously impaired by the Dual Alliance.

## EPILOGUE

German foreign policy under Chancellor Otto von Bismarck is an extremely complex field of study. It requires a multifaceted methodological approach, a broad range of analytical questions which cannot be answered simply without sacrificing explanatory depth. In order to undertake this study, it was necessary to explore such disparate approaches as psycho-history and economic history, in addition to the more traditional diplomatic centered historiography. It requires an understanding of not only the pathos of single individuals, but also an appreciation of the structural factors within both German and European society which contributed to this rather convoluted diplomatic situation between 1870 and 1890. Changing directions in European international relations during this time period had a profound effect on the entire world. It was decisions made in the late 19th century which, although did not cause the First World War, certainly contributed to a larger diplomatic context which led to such fateful miscalculations among European leaders in August 1914. However, in order to come to an understanding as to what impact this period of European history had on the 20th century, it is necessary to ignore such speculations, and to examine events on their own terms.

There have been many key questions asked throughout this thesis. Perhaps the most fundamental of these is: did the Bad Kissingen Memorandum (15 June 1877) represent Bismarck's long term vision for securing Germany's gains in 1870-1 given its delicate geographic position, growing inter-power rivalry over the Balkans, and the unwavering hostility from France? This of course is an unqualified yes. The pattern of this policy was laid down in the immediate aftermath of the Franco-Prussian war since this event truly was a fundamental shift in the European balance of power. The loose collection of mostly insignificant German states was now transformed under Prussian leadership into the single most powerful military-industrial state in Europe. In order to safeguard this new Reich, Bismarck made use of a flexible, uncommitted policy towards the remaining powers (especially Austria and Russia) designed to maintain a peaceful equilibrium and

avoid becoming associated with one power over another; to do any less would give France an opportunity to create a counter alliance that would increase the possibility of the ever perilous two-front war dilemma. Evidence of the Bad Kissingen policy is found in the problematic, yet nevertheless functional Dreikaisersbund of 1873. This three way alliance between Germany, Austria and Russia was in actuality a loose association intended to keep the two eastern powers diplomatically dependent on German mediation, and prevent each other from working too closely together, or with other powers without German involvement or supervision.

Having established the enduring significance of this diplomatic approach, does the Bad Kissingen policy represent Bismarck's sober judgment for safeguarding Germany? Given that this policy lasted for approximately eight years it is clear that it was not the product of a hasty, panicky, or faulty decision making process. However, it must be stated that this was neither a foolproof nor an easily implemented approach. As it is represented in the memorandum itself, it is wishful thinking to believe that it was possible to indefinitely play-off Great Britain, Russia and Austria over peripheral colonial concerns. But, this policy was far more subtle and complex in its implementation. Bismarck promoted limited tension among the European powers as well as encouraged Austria and Russia to reach an agreement in order for Russia to take military action in the Balkans without inciting a general European war. Bismarck's tireless (and thankless) efforts during the Congress of Berlin, although not turning out as he had anticipated, proves that it was the Bad Kissingen policy which prevented the western powers from employing military force to remove Russia from the Balkans in 1878. Could this non-committal approach have lasted in the long run? This question must remain in the realm of the hypothetical, since it was abandoned long before its feasibility was clearly at an end.

Since the Bad Kissingen Memorandum was the predominant German diplomatic approach for most of the 1870s, it is necessary to understand whether the decision to abandon this policy was forced upon Bismarck due to unmanageable domestic, economic, or diplomatic structural circumstances, or if it was based on Bismarck's unstable psychological state at this time? It is important to clarify here that this is not an attempt to reestablish the traditional "Great Man"

historical approach, but to suggest that although these leaders made their decisions within a constrained context, certain individual actors still had a considerable influence on events due to the sociopolitical realities of this era. This thesis argues that both the diplomatic and German domestic structure had not changed enough to account for why Bismarck made such an abrupt change in policy. Despite the heightened tensions produced by the events of 1878, the diplomatic status-quo established in January, 1871 had not been fundamentally altered. Russia and Austria were still rivals over the Balkans, France was still isolated, and despite considerable bluster, it was acknowledged at the time that Russia was not about to forsake its close and long-standing friendship with Germany for the far inferior French Republic. Furthermore, changes in the economy (i.e. the onset of the Great Depression in the 1870s), and shifting political alliances within Germany (i.e. the "Alliance of Steel and Rye"), do not explain the need to create an exclusive alliance with Austria. These factors (which are useful for illuminating the overall context that undoubtedly had some bearing on Bismarck's decisions) are inconsistent when compared to specific diplomatic events and initiatives, and are also far too over-generalized to explain why the Chancellor pursued the Dual Alliance.

As has been suggested in this thesis, due to the enormous political power invested within the office of the German Chancellor at this time, it is important to explore the personal motives of the individual who occupied this political post. Bismarck's personality has been thoroughly explored already in chapter three so it is not necessary to restate the details of this subject. What is important to understand here is that given this rather unstable and emotional man, whose nerves could be easily frayed in the wake of unanticipated events (i.e. Russia's reaction to the outcome of the Congress of Berlin), the key to explaining the otherwise unexplainable is to investigate the human failings within the Iron Chancellor. In a period of heightened tension, it did not make sense at the time to suddenly align Germany with Russia's bitterest rival. Part of the Bad Kissingen policy involved enduring brief periods of isolation in order to let tensions dissipate and reestablish fluid diplomatic connections with rival powers. Unfortunately, when confronted with the reality of isolation, Bismarck's constitution was unsuited to endure this. As is revealed in the diplomatic

correspondence during 1878-9, Bismarck sincerely believed there would be an impending Russian attack despite the reality that this was clearly not possible nor intended. Bismarck continued to misread diplomatic and social phenomena during this period. Pan-Slav agitation was a concern, but the Alexandrovo meeting should have made it clear to Bismarck that Alexander was still committed to retain cordial relations with his neighbour. In fact, it was Bismarck's tariff policies, plague regulations, and the modification of the Treaty of Prague which did more to perpetuate tensions between Germany and Russia than the Tsarist government's recriminations.

The results of the Dual Alliance and the system of contradictory alliances which arose from it in the 1880s were explored in chapter four. It is clear from the text of the Dual Alliance that Germany was still on its own in the case of Franco-German war, while Austria gained guaranteed protection against Russia. This alliance was supposed to safeguard Germany from both a French and/or Russian attack. However, if Bismarck had such confidence in this treaty, then why was it necessary to create a convoluted set of alliances such as the Dreikaisersbund (1881) and the Triple Alliance (1882) in order to bolster Germany's vulnerable position in the centre of Europe? All this, developed into what was Bismarck's greatest fear (and which Bad Kissingen was supposed to prevent), a "Cauchemar des Coalitions".

This system of alliances committed Germany to the utterly paradoxical position of being formally committed to a pro-Russian and an anti-Russian alliance simultaneously. If there existed the possibility of a Franco-Russian alignment developing from the Bad Kissingen policy, then an Austro-German alliance (and all the alliances centered around it) made this scenario an eventuality. For example, talks between Russia and France over military concerns took place as early as 1882; Tsar Alexander III would not sign another treaty with Austria, and he wished to play Germany and France off against each other. However, the conservatives held sway over the Pan-Slavs and thus Russia opted for an exclusive alliance with Germany in 1887. In the end, Germany would have to come to terms with the contradiction of being a part of both the Dual Alliance and the Reinsurance Treaty with Russia (1887), and make a definitive choice; Germany's unwillingness to abandon the Austrian connection, which it grew very dependent upon, finally forced Russia to turn to a power

that would unequivocally support its foreign policy aims. After Germany severed economic ties with Russia at the end of the 1880s, Russia sought out a new association with France which culminated in a military alliance between them in 1894.

Finally, it is important to point out that through these contradictory alliances, Bismarck attempted to reinstate the Bad Kissingen Memorandum. He still tried, albeit less effectively, to build links with the surrounding powers, divide the Balkans among the various rivals, and reconcile Britain, Austria and Russia whenever possible. This suggests that Bismarck was both aware that he had made a mistake after the madness of 1879 had subsided, and tried to achieve the same ends through this web of formal obligations among the European powers. It also indicates that the structure of European international relations had not changed to such a degree that the Bad Kissingen approach was no longer feasible. In reality, this policy failed during the 1880s because Germany no longer had the freedom to act or appear neutral. In the end, German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck bears some responsibility for setting a new course in European diplomacy which facilitated the development of opposing alliance blocs that finally reached their apogee with the "Guns of August".

## ENDNOTES

### Introduction:

<sup>1</sup>Lothar Gall, *Bismarck: The White Revolutionary, Vol.2 1871-1898* (London: Allen and Unwin Publishers Ltd., 1986), p.52.

<sup>2</sup>William Carr, *A History of Germany 1815-1990* 4th Edition (London: Edward Arnold, 1991), p.32.

### Chapter One:

<sup>1</sup>David Harris, *A Diplomatic History of the Balkan Crisis 1875-1878: The First Year*, 2nd Edition (New York: Archon Books, 1969), p.47.

<sup>2</sup>A.J.P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), p.208.

<sup>3</sup>Nicholas Mansergh, *The Coming of the First World War. A Study in the European Balance, 1878-1914* (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1949), p.18.

<sup>4</sup>René Albrecht-Carrié, *A Diplomatic History of Europe Since the Congress of Vienna* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1958), pp.149-50.

<sup>5</sup>Immanuel Geiss, *German Foreign Policy, 1871-1914* (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1976), p.12.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p.13

<sup>7</sup>Andreas Hillgruber, *Bismarcks Außenpolitik* (Freiburg: Rombach GmbH Verlag Haus, 1972), p.136.

<sup>8</sup>Albrecht-Carrié, *A Diplomatic...*, pp.154-65.

<sup>8</sup>*The Treaty of Frankfurt* (May 1871): This peace treaty between Prussia and France formalized the armistice ending the Franco-Prussian War on 28 January 1871. In this treaty, the defeated party (i.e. France) had to permit the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine to the newly formed German Reich. While this treaty also forced France to pay a substantial indemnity of 5 000 000 000 Francs, no limits were imposed on the French military nor France's ability to conclude alliances with other powers.

<sup>9</sup>G.P. Gooch, *Recent Revelations of European Diplomacy* 4th Edition (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1940), p.4.

<sup>10</sup>Nicholas Der Bagdasarian, *The Austro-German Rapprochement, 1870-79 (From the Battle of Sedan to the Dual Alliance)* (Cranbury, New Jersey: Associated University Presses Inc., 1976), p.146.

<sup>11</sup>Taylor, *The Struggle...*, p.211.

<sup>12</sup>*Die Grosse Politik der europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914 (Sammlung der Diplomatischen Akten des Auswärtigen Amtes (Book 1) (Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1926), pp.211-2, 214-5, 234.*

<sup>13</sup>Lothar Gall, *Bismarck: The White Revolutionary, Vol.2 1871-1898* (London: Allen and Unwin Publishers Ltd., 1986), p.47.

<sup>14</sup>*Die Grosse Politik...*, p.235.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.239-40

<sup>15</sup>*Adolphe Thiers* (1797-1877): French Foreign Minister and President during the early 1870s. He was a staunch Republican and was forced to resign on 24 May 1873. *Leon Gambetta* (1838-1882): He was considered a French national hero who refused to accept the status quo after 1871, and wished to regain Alsace-Lorraine. However, he believed that this could be achieved through an alliance with Great Britain and Russia rather than through a war.

<sup>16</sup>Albrecht-Carrié, *A Diplomatic...*, p.157.

<sup>17</sup>Barbara Jelavich, *The Ottoman empire, The Great Powers, and the Straits Question: 1870-1887* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1973), pp.9-10.

<sup>17</sup>*Treaty of Paris* (1856): This treaty concluded the Crimean war between Russia and a coalition made up of Great Britain, France and the Ottoman Empire. Among the provisions the defeated party (i.e. Russia) had to accept were the ceding of Bessarabia to the Ottoman Empire and the neutralization of the Black Sea. Russian military vessels were also not allowed to cross through the Straits into the Mediterranean Sea. It became the key object of Russian foreign policy to undo these provisions.

<sup>18</sup>Barbara Jelavich, *A Century of Russian Foreign Policy 1814-1914* (New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1964), pp. 172, 176.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, p.176

<sup>20</sup>Bagdasarian, *The Austro-German...*, p.79.

<sup>21</sup>Bernhard von Bülow, *Memoirs of Prince von Bülow (Early Years and Diplomatic Service 1849-1897)* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1932), p.308.

<sup>22</sup>Jelavich, *A Century...*, p.174.

<sup>23</sup>Otto von Bismarck, *Bismarck: The Man and the Statesman, Vol. 2* (London: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1899), p.252.

<sup>24</sup>The *Ausgleich* (1867): In the wake of its defeat to Prussia in 1866, Austria's connection with the rest of Germany was abruptly terminated. As a consequence, the control of this empire by ethnic German Austrians was profoundly and permanently weakened. In 1867, the Habsburgs were thus forced to share control of this empire with the Hungarian population within Austria. Henceforth, this power became known as Austria-Hungary. Cut-off from Germany and Italy, along with Hungarian interest in controlling the Slavic population, Austria shifted its interest towards the Balkans.

<sup>25</sup>Barbara Jelavich, *The Habsburg Empire in European Affairs, 1814-1918* (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1969), p.113.

<sup>26</sup>Fritz Leidner, *Die Außenpolitik Österreich-Ungarns vom Deutsch-Französischen Kriege bis zum Deutsch-Österreichischen Bündnis, 1870-1879* (Halle: Akademischer Verlag, 1936), p.27.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, p.30

<sup>28</sup>*Die Grosse Politik...*, (Book 2), p.183.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, p.183

<sup>30</sup>Gall, *Bismarck...*, p.52.

<sup>31</sup>Bismarck, *Bismarck...*, p.256.

<sup>32</sup>Bülow, *Memoirs of...*, p.393.

<sup>33</sup>Bruce Waller, *Bismarck* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1985), p.44.

<sup>34</sup>Bismarck, *Bismarck...*, p.251.

<sup>35</sup>Bülow, *Memoirs of...*, pp.308, 394.

<sup>36</sup>Norman Rich, *Great Power Diplomacy 1814-1914* (New York: McGraw Hill Inc., 1992), p.220.

<sup>37</sup>Gall, *Bismarck...*, p.48.

<sup>38</sup>*Die Grosse Politik...*, (Book 1), p.197.

## Chapter Two:

<sup>1</sup>*Kulturkampf*: For more information, see Chapter Three, page 54 of this thesis.

<sup>1</sup>B.H. Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans 1870-1880* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), p.93.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p.94

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p.95

<sup>4</sup>Norman Rich, *Great Power Diplomacy 1814-1914* (New York: McGraw-Hill Inc., 1992), p.221.

<sup>5</sup>*Die Grosse Politik der europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914 (Sammlung der Diplomatischen Akten des Auswärtigen Amtes* (Book 1) (Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1926), pp.245-6, 264-5, 267-8, 290-2.

<sup>6</sup>Otto von Bismarck, *Bismarck: The Man and the Statesman Vol. 2* (London: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1899), p.192.

<sup>7</sup>Klaus Hildebrand, *German Foreign Policy from Bismarck to Adenauer: The Limits of Statecraft* (London: Unwin Hyman Ltd., 1989), p.33.

<sup>8</sup>Andreas Hillgruber, *Bismarcks Außenpolitik*, (Freiburg: Rombach Verlag Haus GmbH, 1972), p.144.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p.147

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p.148

<sup>11</sup>Mihailo D. Stojanovic, *The Great Powers and the Balkans 1875-1878* 2nd Edition (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p.28.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.29-30

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p.31

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, p.45

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, p.45

<sup>16</sup>W.N. Medlicott, *Bismarck and Modern Germany* (London: The English University Press, 1965), pp.122-3.

<sup>17</sup>*Die Grosse Politik...*, (Book 1), p.300.

<sup>18</sup>Sumner, *Russia and...*, p.89.

<sup>19</sup>*The Schönbrunn Convention* (1873): This was a Russo-German Military Convention. If a third party attacked one of these two powers, the other power would provide military assistance. In addition, Tsar Alexander II's June 1873 visit to Vienna produced a written compact between him and Kaiser Franz Joseph. This agreement called on mutual consultation even when interests between Austria and Russia diverged on certain issues. Moreover, if a third power was to become aggressive with one of the two signatory parties, a preliminary agreement would be reached to create a common line of conduct without counteracting any new alliances. Russia wanted to add a military convention similar to the one reached between Germany and Russia, but Austria declined.

<sup>20</sup>A.J.P. Taylor, *Bismarck: The Man and the Statesman* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1955), p.170.

<sup>21</sup>*Die Grosse Politik...*, (Book 2), pp.31-4.

<sup>22</sup>W.N. Medlicott, *The Congress of Berlin and After: A Diplomatic History of the Near Eastern Settlement 1878-1880* 2nd Edition (Edinburgh, G.B.: Frank Cass and Co., Ltd., 1963), p.12.

<sup>23</sup>Bismarck, *Bismarck...*, pp.235-6.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, p.238

<sup>25</sup>E.T.S. Dugdale, ed. and trans., *German Diplomatic Documents 1871-1914* (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1928), pp.20, 37.

<sup>26</sup>Lothar Gall, *Bismarck: The White Revolutionary, Vol. 2 1871-1898* (London: Allen and Unwin Publishers Ltd., 1986), pp.48-50.

<sup>27</sup>Medlicott, *Bismarck...*, pp.124-5.

<sup>28</sup>Wolfgang Windelband, *Bismarck und die Europäischen Grossmächte 1879-1885* (Essen: Essener Verlagsanstalt, 1940), pp.48-50.

<sup>29</sup>*Die Grosse Politik...*, (Book 2), pp.49-51.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 31-8, 49-51

<sup>31</sup>Nicholas Mansergh, *The Coming of the First World War (A Study in the European Balance 1878-1914)* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1949), p.352.

<sup>32</sup>C. Grant Robertson, *Bismarck* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1919), p.352.

<sup>33</sup>Dugdale, *German...*, p.41.

<sup>34</sup>Medlicott, *The Congress...*, p.129.

<sup>35</sup>Bernhard von Bülow, *Memoirs of Prince von Bülow (Early Years and Diplomatic Service 1849-1897)* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1932), p.448.

<sup>36</sup>*Die Grosse Politik...*, (Book 2), pp.54-7.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.31-8

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.54-7

<sup>39</sup>Bismarck, *Bismarck...*, p.239.

<sup>40</sup>Michael Stürmer, *Bismarck und die Preußisch-Deutsch Politik 1871-1890* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag GmbH und Co., 1970), p.96.

<sup>41</sup>William L. Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments 1871-1890* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956), pp.161-2.

## Chapter Three

<sup>1</sup>*Die Grosse Politik der europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914 (Sammlung der Diplomatischen Akten des Auswärtigen Amtes)* (Book 3) (Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1926), pp.3-5, 53.

<sup>2</sup>George F. Kennan, *The Decline of Bismarck's European Order (Franco-Russian Relations, 1875-1890)* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979), p.32.

<sup>3</sup>W.N. Medlicott, *The Congress of Berlin and After: A Diplomatic History of the Near Eastern Settlement 1878-1880* (Edinburgh, G.B.: Frank Cass and Co.Ltd., 1938), p.140.

<sup>4</sup>Kennan, *The Decline of...*, p.39.

<sup>5</sup>*Die Grosse Politik...*, (Book 3), pp.78-83.

<sup>6</sup>William Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments 1871-1890* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956), p.176.

<sup>7</sup>Michael Stürmer, *Bismarck und die Preußisch-Deutsche Politik 1871-1890* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag GmbH und Co. 1970), p.96.

<sup>8</sup>Langer, *European Alliances...*, p.196.

<sup>9</sup>Lothar Gall, *Bismarck: The White Revolutionary, Vol. 2 1871-1898* (London: Allen and Unwin Publishers Ltd., 1986), p.58.

<sup>10</sup>Mihailo D. Stojanovic, *The Great Powers and the Balkans 1875-78* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p.282.

<sup>11</sup>Otto von Bismarck, *Bismarck: the Man and the Statesman Vol.2* (London: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1899), pp.240, 264-5.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.265, 274-5, 277, 282

<sup>12</sup>Otto von Bismarck, *Bismarck: Gedanken und Erinnerungen* (Berlin: J.G. Cottaische Buchhandlung Nachfolger, 1898), pp.520, 529-31.

<sup>13</sup>*Article V of the Treaty of Prague* (August 1866): This treaty ended the Austro-Prussian War. In this treaty, Prussia did not annex any Austrian territory; however, Austria's influence in the "Third Germany" was permanently severed. Article V involved the eventual retrocession to Denmark of northern Schleswig after a plebiscite held by its inhabitants. This plebiscite was never carried out. Bismarck wished to abandon Article V and consulted with Andrassy in order to retain this territory. An Austro-German agreement to revoke Article V was ratified on 11 October 1878 and published on 4 February 1879. This outraged the Russians since it appeared as though the Austrians had paid Germany for its support during the Congress of Berlin. In addition, Alexander supported the Danish King since the Romanovs had familial connections with the Danish royal family.

<sup>14</sup>E.T.S. Dugdale, ed., *German Diplomatic Documents 1871-1914* (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1928), p.26.

<sup>15</sup>*Die Grosse Politik...*, (Book 3), pp.14-6, (Translation provided by Dr. J.M. Kitchen).

<sup>16</sup>Chalotte Sempell, *Otto von Bismarck* (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1972), p.144.

<sup>17</sup>Joseph Maria von Radowitz, *Aufzeichnungen und Erinnerungen aus dem Leben des Botschafters Joseph Maria von Radowitz* (Zweiter Band 1878-1890) (Osnabruck: Biblio Verlag, 1967), pp.86-7.

<sup>18</sup>Bernhard von Bülow, *Memoirs of Prince von Bülow (Early Years and Diplomatic Service 1849-1897)* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1932), p.508.

- <sup>19</sup>*Die Grosse Politik....*, (Book 3), pp.14-6, (Translation provided by Dr. J.M. Kitchen).
- <sup>20</sup>Bülow, *Memoirs of...*, p.508.
- <sup>21</sup>Radowitz, *Aufzeichnungen....*, p.92.
- <sup>22</sup>*Die Grosse Politik....*, (Book 3), pp.26-35.
- <sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.16-20, 26-35
- <sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.39-43, 52-8, 76, 79-83, 93-4
- <sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.47-9
- <sup>26</sup>Edward Crankshaw, *Bismarck* (London: Macmillan Ltd., 1981), p.370.
- <sup>27</sup>Dr. Moritz Busch, *Bismarck (Some Secret Pages of his History) Vol. 2* (London: MacMillan and Co. Ltd., 1898), p.393.
- <sup>28</sup>*Die Grosse Politik...*, (Book 3), pp.25, 129-32, 69-72.
- <sup>29</sup>Busch, *Bismarck...*, p.404.
- <sup>30</sup>*Die Grosse Politik....*, pp.17-8, 26, 30-4, 39, 58-9, 68-9.
- <sup>31</sup>Bruce Waller, *Bismarck* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1985), p.48.
- <sup>32</sup>Raymond James Sontag, *European Diplomatic History 1871-1932* (New York: The Century Co., 1933), p.38.
- <sup>33</sup>A.J.P. Taylor, *Bismarck: The Man and the Statesman* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1955), p.189.
- <sup>34</sup>Bülow, *Memoirs of...*, p.511.
- <sup>35</sup>B.H. Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans 1870-1880* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), p.85.
- <sup>36</sup>Radowitz, *Aufzeichnungen....*, pp.93-4.
- <sup>37</sup>Frederick Hertz, *The German Public Mind in the Nineteenth Century (A Social History of German Political Sentiments, Aspirations and Ideas)* (Totowa, N.J.: Roman and Littlefield, 1975), p.354.
- <sup>38</sup>Hans Ulrich Wehler, "Bismarck's Imperialism, 1862-1890", *Past and Present* (Vol. 48, 1970), pp.122, 132, 140-3.
- <sup>39</sup>Hans Rosenberg, "Political and Social Consequences of the Great Depression of 1873-1896 in Central Europe," *Economic History Review*, (Vol.13, 1943), p.70.
- <sup>40</sup>Bruce Waller, *Bismarck at the Crossroads: The Reorientation of German Foreign Policy After the Congress of Berlin 1878-1880* (London: University of London, the Athlone Press, 1974), p.106.

<sup>41</sup>Rosenberg, "Political...", p.71.

<sup>42</sup>Author Rosenberg, *Imperial Germany (the Birth of the German Republic 1871-1918)* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), p.5.

<sup>43</sup>Taylor, *Bismarck...*, p.9.

<sup>44</sup>Sempell, *Otto von ...*, pp.15-27.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>46</sup>Taylor, *Bismarck...*, p.21.

<sup>47</sup>Gordon A. Craig, *From Bismarck to Adenauer: Aspects of German Statecraft* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1958), pp.18-22, 23-6.

<sup>48</sup>Taylor, *Bismarck...*, pp.22, 12-3.

<sup>49</sup>Count Julius Andrassy, *Bismarck, Andrassy and their Successors* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1927), p.46.

<sup>50</sup>Friedrich von Holstein, *The Holstein Papers (The Memoirs, Diaries and Correspondence of Friedrich von Holstein 1837-1909)* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1955), p.118.

<sup>51</sup>Waller, *Bismarck*, p.46.

<sup>52</sup>Holstein, *The Holstein.....*, pp.118-9, 116.

<sup>53</sup>Werner Richter, *Bismarck* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1965), p.244.

<sup>54</sup>Busch, *Bismarck...*, p.399.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, p.408

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.408-10

## Chapter Four:

<sup>1</sup>Andreas Hillgruber, *Bismarcks Außenpolitik* (Freiburg: Rombach GmbH Verlag Haus, 1972), p.158.

<sup>2</sup>William L. Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments 1871-1890* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956), p.196.

<sup>3</sup>Count Julius Andrassy, *Bismarck, Andrassy and Their Successors* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1927), p.83.

<sup>4</sup>Otto von Bismarck, *Bismarck: Gedanken und Erinnerungen* (Berlin: J.G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung Nachfolger, 1898), pp.524, 532-4.

<sup>5</sup>Erich Brandenburg, *From Bismarck to the World War (A History of German Foreign Policy 1870-1914)* (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), p.14.

<sup>6</sup>Bruce Waller, *Bismarck at the Crossroads: The Reorientation of German Foreign Policy After the Congress of Berlin 1878-1880* (London: University of London, The Athlone Press, 1974), pp.199-200.

<sup>7</sup>Joseph Vincent Fuller *Bismarck's Diplomacy at its Zenith* 2nd Edition (New York: Howard Fertig Inc., 1967), p.4.

<sup>8</sup>Alfred Franzis Pribham, ed., *The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary 1879-1914 Volume 1 (Texts of the Treaties and Agreements)* (New York: Howard Fertig Publishers, 1967), p.23.

<sup>9</sup>E.T.S.Dugdale, ed., *German Diplomatic Documents 1871-1914* (London: Methuen and Company, Ltd., 1928), p.104.

<sup>10</sup>Pripham, *The Secret...*, p.27.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p.25

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.29-31

<sup>13</sup>A.J.P. Taylor, *Bismarck: The Man and the Statesman* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1955), pp.189-90.

<sup>14</sup>George Hoover Rupp, *A Wavering Friendship: Russia and Austria 1876-1878* (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press Inc., 1941), p.217.

<sup>15</sup>Nicholas Der Bagdasarian, *The Austro-German Rapprochement, 1870-79 (From the Battle of Sedan to the Dual Alliance)* (Cranbury, New Jersey: Associated University Presses, Inc., 1976), p.304.

<sup>16</sup>*Die Grosse Politik der europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914 (Sammlung der Diplomatischen Akten des Auswärtigen Amtes)* (Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1926), (Book 3) pp.129-32.

<sup>17</sup>Barbara Jelavich, *The Habsburg Empire in European Affairs, 1814-1918* (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1969), pp.124-5.

<sup>18</sup>Andrassy, *Bismarck...*, pp.80, 52.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, p.95

<sup>20</sup>Langer, *European...*, p.212.

<sup>21</sup>In 1879, the new Austrian foreign minister Heinrich Freiherr von Haymerle (1828-81), a committed Russophobe, sought an alliance with Britain. However, in Britain, the pro-Austrian and anti-Russian Conservatives were defeated in 1880; Austria's great enemy, William E. Gladstone, became British Prime Minister. As a result, Haymerle hesitantly decided to join the Dreikaisersbund in June 1881.

<sup>22</sup>Waller, *Bismarck...*, pp.227-9.

<sup>23</sup>Pribham, *The Secret...*, pp.39, 41.

<sup>24</sup>Serge Goriainov, "The End of the Alliance of the Emperors", *American History Review*, (Vol. 31, January, 1918), p.330.

<sup>25</sup>A.J.P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934) p.269.

<sup>26</sup>Andrassy, *Bismarck...*, p.92.

<sup>27</sup>Dugdale, *German...*, pp.114-5.

<sup>28</sup>Andrassy, *Bismarck...*, pp.96-8.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, p.93

<sup>30</sup>Taylor, *The Struggle...*, p.280.

<sup>31</sup>Dugdale, *German...*, p.386.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p.386

<sup>33</sup>*Die Grosse Politik...*, (Book 4), pp.400-2.

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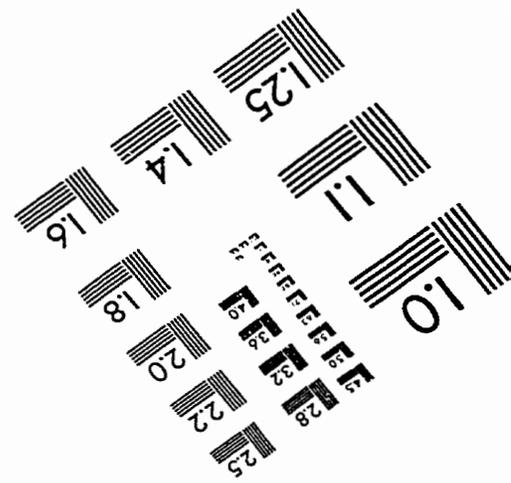
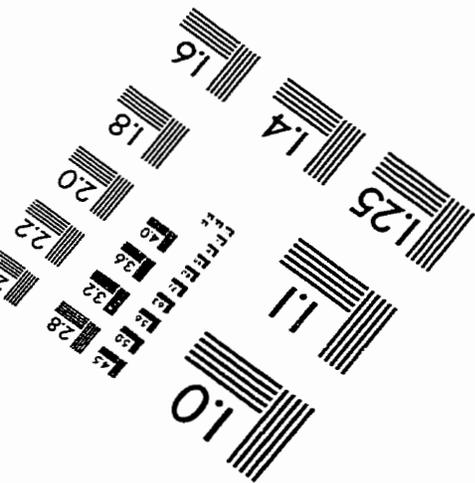
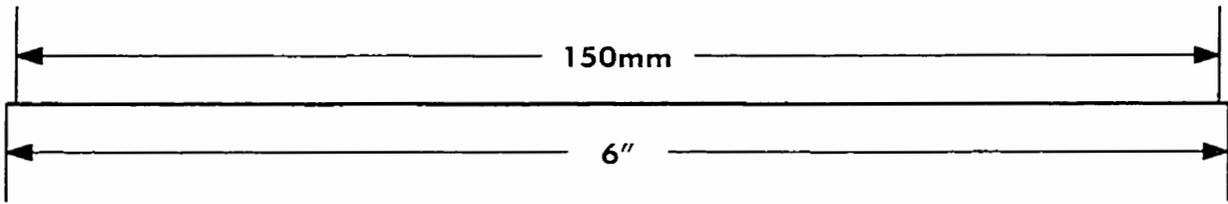
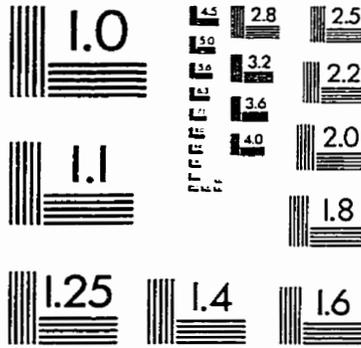
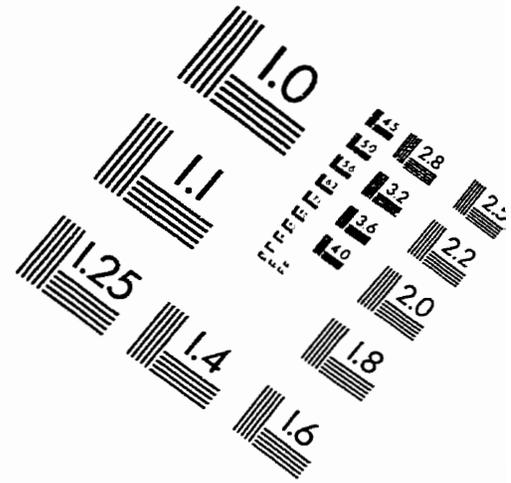
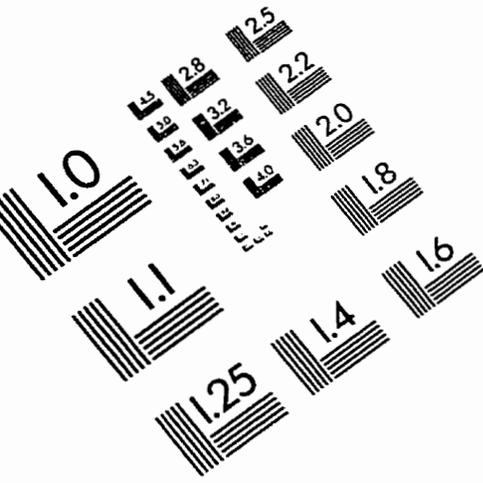
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