# VIENNA

## FO 7/347: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 32, Vienna, 1 March 1848

*Interview with Metternich about the consequences of the revolution in Paris and Austria's position in Italy*

I had a long interview with Prince Metternich this Day. The substance of what He said to me may be divided into three heads.

1st The Prince is intimately convinced that the events in Paris[1] will produce the same impression on the British Government as they have produced on the Imperial Government. The imperial Government find no other qualification for what has occurred, than that of a complete Revolution. An event of such gravity must fall in every direction with equal weight upon every Government whatever may be its constitution.

2ndly The Prince has no doubt but that the British Cabinet will admit that the situation in which the Italian Peninsula now is, greatly increases the difficulties of the Imperial Government. The feelings and opinions of the Prince with respect to the issue of events in Italy were expressed in His Circular Despatch dated August 2nd, 1847, addressed to the Great Powers.[2] He understands that His impression may not have been in accordance with that of some other Cabinets, because the Imperial Government was better acquainted with the internal position of the Italian States than any other Government could well be. The line of conduct traced by the Austrian Government, as that which it would be wise to follow, has now received its complete justification from existing facts, and the Austrian Government must retain that same opinion of policy, now that the evils are aggravated by the late events in France.

3rdly What has taken place at Paris does not appear to the Prince to be a question solely Austrian. The Austrian Government anticipates with confidence what will be the impression made by those events

[1] French February Revolution.

[2] In his dispatch Metternich pointed to Italy's historical and territorial peculiarities, and to Austria's claim to power in the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia. Disregarding the Italian national movement, he asserted that Italy was only a 'geographical concept', and rejected demands for liberal reforms.

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upon its Allies. The Prince said the present state of affairs in France was just what it was in 1793.[3]

I found the Prince tranquil. He said to me that I knew that He had long foreseen what has now taken place. Whilst I was with the Prince the last news of the pillage &c &c of the Tuileries and the burning of the Royal Apartments in the Palais Royal, & of the proclamation of the Republic arrived. He repeated 'This is the exact renewal of the events of 1793.'

I write in the greatest possible haste to be in time for the Post, having been detained by the Prince.

## FO 7/348: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 98, Vienna, 10 April 1848

*Revolutionary events in Vienna from 13 to 15 March*

In compliance with the Instructions contained in Your Lordship's despatch N° 46 I have the honour to transmit the following connected narrative of the events in Vienna during the three days of the 13th 14th and 15th of March.

Monday the 13th was the day fixed for the assembling of the States of Lower Austria and it being well known that the first subject on which they would have to deliberate was a petition from the citizens praying for the abolition of the Censorship, great excitement prevailed throughout the town.

On the morning of the 12th a meeting had been held at the University, at which it was determined to present a petition similar to that of the citizens. I am informed, however, that this petition contained demands for a Responsible Ministry, publicity of the accounts, and a general Austrian Parliament in addition to the freedom of the Press. Be this as it may, the petition was placed in the hands of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor himself in the Evening of Sunday the 12th by two of the Professors.[4]

About 8 o'clock on the morning of the 13th, the Students again assembled in the Hall of the University, from whence they marched in procession to the 'Landhaus' where the States were to assemble at 10 o'clock. On their way they were joined by considerable

[3] In 1793 the French Revolution reached a climax with the execution of Louis XVI, the setting up of the Revolutionary Tribunal and the Committee of Public Safety, and the adoption of a new constitution.

[4] Stephan Endlicher and Anton Josef Hye von Glunek.

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crowds of the people, but the most perfect order and good humour prevailed, and it was remarked by every one that neither Police nor Military were present. As soon as the Members of the States were assembled, a deputation from the Students was summoned to their presence, and desired to lay their wishes before them. These, as I have already stated, were The Abolition of the Censorship, a responsible Ministry, publicity of the accounts and a general Austrian Parliament.

That Your Lordship may be enabled to understand the situation of the Landhaus and of the various streets I shall now have to mention, I enclose a sketch of the ground.[5]

At this time the Herrn Gasse and the Landhaus Gasse, as well as the Court Yard of the Landhaus itself were crowded with people, all in the most perfect good humour. In the Herrn Gasse and inside the court, several popular orators addressed the people, all in the same strain, namely, that an alteration was absolutely necessary in the system of Government, but at the same time fidelity to the Emperor was most distinctly enjoined. These speeches were hailed with repeated cheering by the people.

The States determined to proceed to the Palace and lay the people's wishes before the Emperor. This was about half past ten or eleven o'clock. The Ball Platz, in which the Chancellerie d'Etat is situated, and the Palace Yard were full of soldiers, who had loaded their muskets in the presence of the people; this created considerable excitement and perhaps anger: and in the Court Yard of the Landhaus the first symptoms of violence now appeared in consequence of a report that the deputation of Students had been arrested. The crowd, consisting principally of Students forced open one of the doors, and broke into the Apartments of the Landhaus which look towards the Landhaus Gasse and the Minoriten Platz. The news was brought to the crowd that their demands were rejected; an immense body of people with a Polish Law Student of the name Burian at their head, carried on two men's shoulders then proceeded to the Ballhaus Platz. There Prince Metternich was called for, and some say, but I cannot positively ascertain the fact, that He appeared at the window of the Chancellerie d'Etat and addressed the mob: but at any rate without the effect of tranquillising them for none of their demands were granted. The people who had forced their way into the Landhaus now began to destroy the furniture and break the windows of the Apartments which I have mentioned looking towards the Minoriten Platz. A party of Grenadiers made their

[5] Enclosure: Hand-drawn map of the inner districts of central Vienna.

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appearance in the Landhaus Gasse, and after in some measures clearing the Street, were drawn up in front of the French Embassy on the Minoriten Platz. Troops and cannon were marched on the Bastion; the gates of the Town were closed and no person was allowed to enter.

With the exception of the few Students and people who broke the furniture in the Landhaus, the crowd, though impatient seemed all this time to be in great good humour. The majority of them were evidently respectable persons and a great many well dressed women were to be seen. At this time a body of Chasseurs, the Archduke William at their head, came down the Herrn Gasse. I have already had the honour to report to Your Lordship in my despatch No. 38 the unfortunate occurrence which here took place.[6] I have been since repeatedly informed that the Soldiers fired without waiting for the word of command on seeing the insults offered to the young Arch Duke, but this is a point on which it is difficult to arrive at the Truth. It seemed difficult at the time to account for the fact that only six or seven men were shot out of the immense mass which filled the Herrn Gasse: but it appears that only every fifth man had his musket loaded with ball. A few minutes after this event took place, the company of Grenadiers, which I have mentioned as being stationed on the Minoriten Platz, marched to the end of the Landhaus Gasse, and fired three vollies into the windows of the apartments of the Landhaus, by which I am told one man was killed.

While this was going on in the neighbourhood of the Landhaus, a large crowd had assembled on the Hof, where the War office, and the Burgher Arsenal are situated. Here the Archduke Albert addressed the people, but in very violent language, and symptoms appearing of an intention to attack the Arsenal, a charge of cavalry (3 p.m.) was ordered, and a considerable number of people were wounded. One of the wounded was afterwards paraded about the town, crowned with flowers, and riding the horse of a hussar whom the crowd had dismounted.

With the exception of a slight disturbance on the Glacis, which was speedily put down by the Hussars, everything now remained quiet till about six o'clock. Between this hour and nine several collisions took place between the soldiers and the people on the Michaelerplatz, the Juden Platz, and in front of the Police Office in the Spengler Gasse, from the windows of which shots were fired. One Barricade alone was erected on the Juden Platz from the bricks and materials of a house

[6] In the early afternoon of 13 March the crowd threw pieces of wood at Archduke Wilhelm, which caused his horse to shy.

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which had been pulled down, but in no instance was the pavement taken up.

At nine o'clock the news of Prince Metternich's resignation was proclaimed, the Burgher Arsenal which was not guarded by the Troops was thrown open to the citizens and Students who were all supplied with arms. The town was brilliantly illuminated and processions of armed Students with drums beating and colours flying patrolled the streets in all directions.

In the course of the night an attack was made on the Royal Stables, which were most gallantly defended by a Lieutenant[7] at the head of 24 men: they were however luckily reinforced by the Regiment Vasa, which speedily dispersed of the mob. With this exception the night passed in perfect quiet.

The next day, the 14th, the establishment of the National Guard, and the freedom of the Press were promised to the people.[8] Universal rejoicing was the consequence and nearly every one appeared with a white cockade. The proclamation establishing the National Guard was issued early and was, I am told, a consequence of the unauthorised distribution of arms of the preceding night: but about four o'clock in the Afternoon the report was spread over the Town that the Government had received a fresh reinforcement of Troops and did not intend to grant the freedom of the Press. The National Guard marched to the Palace and were drawn up in front of the Gate on the Michaeler Platz, which was barred by a detachment of Grenadiers and artillery. Things at this moment wore a most menacing aspect. Notwithstanding the dense crowd on the Kohlmarkt and Michaeler Platz, the deepest silence prevailed: but at length a fresh report was brought down from the Palace that the Government could not make up their minds to grant the freedom of the Press. Every man immediately tore off his white cockade and put on a red one – a symbol of blood – and there is no doubt that the consequences would have been most serious, the people being armed, had not the Proclamation granting the abolition of the Censorship been issued about half past 5 o'clock.

From the night of the 13th to the 18th inclusive the entire Garrison bivouacked on the Glacis and in the Courts and round the Palace, by the orders of Prince Windischgrätz who had been appointed Statthalter or Viceroy. The Instructions given to General Wrbna who commanded in the camp were to defend the Palace and prevent any of the disorderly bands which were then committing excesses in the Suburbs from entering the Town. During the night of the 13th

[7] Lieutenant Ridler.

[8] Both measures were officially proclaimed on 15 March 1848.

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and the whole of the 14th and 15th many acts of violence and tumult took place in the suburbs – chiefly those on the road to Schönbrunn, where several manufactories were burnt and plundered. The gate and buildings at the lines where the 'octroi' is levied were also destroyed.[9] The National Guard marched out and endeavoured to preserve order, and an immense number of prisoners were brought into Town during the week. Prince Metternich's villa in the suburb was threatened with an attack, but a detachment of National Guards was placed there and no serious injury was committed.

The Town was again most brilliantly illuminated as indeed it was for four nights consecutively, and everything was perfectly quiet till 3 o'clock A.M., when the National Guard was suddenly called out, it being reported that Prince Windischgrätz was about to place the town in a state of siege, that cannon and fresh Troops had been marched into the Town, and that faith was not to be kept with the people. I can hardly believe that any such breach of faith was really intended by the Government, but the distrust raised among the people was not quite allayed till the following day (Wednesday 15th), when about five o'clock in the Afternoon the Constitution was officially promised.[10] The Members of the Hungarian Deputation which had arrived in the course of the day, were to be seen in all parts of the Town in their National Costume adding to the general enthusiasm by their cries of Eljen (Vivat!). The following day, the 16th, however great excitement prevailed among the Hungarians themselves, who could not obtain the concessions they demanded, and there was during the night a question of attacking the Palace. Kossuth harangued the Viennese from the window of the Hotel and asked them if they would assist their 'Hungarian Brothers' to obtain their rights. An universal cry of 'We will, we will' was the answer: but this storm also luckily blew over; at 12 o'clock Prince Esterhazy appeared at the Club with Kossuth, and announced that the demands of the Hungarians were acceded to, and on the following morning, the Deputation returned to Pressburg.

Your Lordship will have seen by Mr. Blackwell's reports the particulars of the Hungarian demands.[11] I do not therefore think it

[9] The border between the suburbs and the outskirts of Vienna, fortified by the *Linienwall* (glacis), was known as the 'lines' at which the indirect excise taxes (*octroi*) were levied.

[10] In the imperial proclamation of 15 March 1848, Ferdinand I decreed the introduction of a constitution and convened the Provincial Estates to consult on it.

[11] The main demands of the Hungarian opposition were for the cancellation of rates and taxes on land, the imposition of a general liability to pay taxes, the abolition of the Hungarian Chancery in Vienna, and the installation of an independent and constitutional government for Hungary.

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necessary to enter into that subject, and will now close this despatch which has perhaps already become somewhat too lengthy.

## FO 7/348: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 106, Vienna, 11 April 1848

*Reforms granted to the Bohemians*

I have the honour to inform Your Lordship that His Imperial Majesty has issued a rescript[12] addressed to the Minister of the Interior,[13] by which the Bohemian and German languages in Bohemia are henceforth to be placed on a footing of perfect equality. At the next Assembly of the Bohemian Diet all the States of that Country[14] are to be collected, and are there to determine the mode of election and of Franchise, on the broadest possible basis. The Capital Prague will have 12 Representatives and every other Imperial City at least one. Every district of 4000 is to return one member and those of 8000 are to return two.

The University of Prague and every Division of it shall each return one Member.

The remaining Classes of the people are to return two Members for each Vicarial District. Every citizen who pays a tax will have a vote for the province and every citizen without exception will have a vote for the town.

Every voter must have completed his 25th year and every deputy his 30th.

These regulations will remain in force till a new constitutional law shall have been adopted. The release from forced labour on the payment of a certain indemnity has been granted by the imperial Decree of the 28th of March.[15] Toleration of Creeds is also granted.[16] The above are the principal points mentioned in the Imperial Rescript, the other questions, such as the future position of the Jews in Bohemia, the new law respecting the levying of Recruits, the proposed oath to be taken by the Army to the Constitution &. &. are left for the consideration of the Diet.

[12] Imperial rescript of 8 April 1848 (Bohemian Charter).

[13] Franz Freiherr von Pillersdorf.

[14] The Austrian crown lands of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia.

[15] Under the terms of the imperial decree of 28 March 1848, release from forced labour on the estates (*Robot*) on payment of an indemnity was to be granted within a year.

[16] Toleration of Protestantism was guaranteed in the constitution of 25 April 1848, which granted all citizens 'full freedom of religion and conscience'.

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FO 7/349: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 144, Vienna, 7 May 1848

*Resignation of Ficquelmont and appointment of Pillersdorf as president of the Council; state of affairs in Vienna*

Tomorrow Sir Stratford Canning is to leave this for Munich.[17] It has given me great satisfaction to communicate to him an account of my actions and my opinions without disguise, and I shall be glad if he shall think it worth his trouble to report any part to Your Lordship.

Baron Pillersdorf is now President of the Council in the place of Count Ficquelmont, who retired in consequence of two repetitions of what is here called 'Katzen-Music'[18] and of an intrusion made by students and others into the drawing room of his house and the presence of his wife and daughter;[19] An intrusion unchecked by the Authorities and not-prevented by the Ministers, his Colleagues. Mr Magenis at my request made a report of what he himself saw and heard on the occasion, and it has been sent to Your Lordship in a Despatch. I revert to this subject because I think it proper to repeat what I have heard said relating to its having been connected with the present chief Minister, for thereby You will learn what is the opinion entertained by many persons, of one who has been, and is considered to be, the most influential, if not the chief of the liberal party in Vienna.

I have however to add that I myself have no right to form or entertain any opinion whatever upon the conduct of the Baron Pillersdorf, that I think it hard to believe in the truth of what he is charged with having done; namely, the having been a party to the proceedings of the Students and others as above-mentioned against Count Ficquelmont. The Government will be for some time to come in the hands of Baron Pillersdorf, and it is well that Your Lordship should know what is said of him by his enemies as well as by his friends. The Baron who is of a good Country gentleman's family, has been for some years employed in Government offices. He is called a Doctrinaire. The Constitution lately proclaimed by the Emperor[20] is mainly his work, though prepared in conjunction with several of the Chiefs of the

[17] For Canning's mission to the courts of Germany cf. pp. 2–3.

[18] Noisy protests in which unpopular people were publicly pilloried with discordant singing and music were called *Katzenmusik* (cat-music).

[19] Gräfin Dorothea von Fiquelmont and Elisabeth Alexandra Fürstin Clary und Aldringen.

[20] The imposed constitution – drafted by Pillersdorf – was promulgated on 25 April 1848. Its provisions did not apply to Hungary and Lombardy-Venetia. Executive power rested with the emperor; legislative power was to be exercised by the emperor and the Austrian Imperial Diet conjointly. The dual-chamber system introduced (*Senat* and *Volkshaus*) was rejected by the opposition as being insufficiently democratic.

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liberal party. It is asserted that he is now disposed to alter that work in compliance with the expressed disapprobation of the proposed establishment of the two Chambers by the Students and National Guard.

Sir Stratford Canning has desired to have an interview this day with Baron Pillersdorf. I think it better for me not to seek at present any particular Communication with him, not having received from Your Lordship instructions upon those points which will certainly be the chief topics treated by the Baron in conversation with Her Majesty's Ambassador. My particular official duty is communication with the Minister of Foreign Affairs,[21] and there is no formal necessity for my exceeding that now.

Whenever the constitutional Body of the State shall be assembled, I shall think it my duty (unless directed by Your Lordship to act otherwise) to place myself as much as I can in constant communication with those who then shall appear to me to have the most influence in the direction of public Affairs, because the Government being essentially null, it will be necessary to deal with those who are something in the State. I hope Your Lordship will make me acquainted at the proper time with Your views.

I may take this occasion to say that I expect to see the Parliamentary Body take some positive measures to oblige the Archduke Louis to leave the Palace of the Emperor. His Imperial Highness has returned to Vienna.

In various sections of the population there exist a strong desire to attack the Aristocracy as it is called, and to imitate the French in many things which are in vogue in France. I believe there are other portions of the inhabitants who feeling at present the great pecuniary distress which has been occasioned by the late change and the movements in this City and Country, are very much averse to proceedings by which the possessors of property would be driven from Vienna. I am told that the shop keepers and tradesmen are in very low spirits. There are clamorous attacks made upon the Church and demands for the confiscation of the property of the Convents. There is to be a Committee appointed with Count Montecuculi as President to supply the indigents with work, and the report is that the Church property is to supply the pay of those so employed.

The army is still well affected to the Government, its spirit is kept up by the warlike positions of Affairs in Lombardy,[22] but it may be

[21] When the dispatch was sent, the position of minister of foreign affairs was vacant.

[22] After the fall of Metternich in March 1848 the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia, which had been part of the Austrian Empire since 1815, experienced revolutionary uprisings. The revolutionary government in Milan passed a resolution to form a union with the Kingdom

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feared that a change is not unlikely to take place in that feeling, if the Government shall continue to be conducted as it has been.

## FO 7/349: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 167, Vienna, 19 May 1848

*State of affairs after the flight of the Emperor from Vienna*

There is nothing heard of the Emperor up to this hour; Some Students left this in the early part of the day with the hope of persuading His Imperial Majesty to return, and I therefore suppose they had some information that it is not his intention to do so.

The Measures the Emperor has adopted of absenting himself,[23] came like a thunderbolt upon the National Guard and Students. They now feel that they have lost the dominion over the Country which they exercised by coercing the Sovereign. I enclose the translation of an article published yesterday in the Austrian Gazette,[24] wherein are expressed very strongly the feelings and opinions of the Party I allude to. If the Emperor should return to Vienna the same coercion, with some variation in manner, might probably be exercised again, and even were the Parliament assembled, it would be domineered over by the National Guard and the Students, however great the professions of obedience to authority might be, for they would be the Guard of the Parliament, and have all the military and real power in their hands. It is thought by some that the Provinces will not send their representatives to Vienna, and possibly the late event may fortify any such intention if it has already an existence. Vienna assumes to rule Austria as Paris assumes to rule France. If the Parliament should be established in some place, where there is no National Guard and no Students, the Representatives would be free, and the Police for the guarding of the Assembly could be easily provided. There are suspicions respecting the views of the Ministry, but I do not give credit to the things said.

Count Wessenberg has accepted the office of Foreign Minister, however, as he did not know that the Emperor had left Vienna, he perhaps may alter his mind.

of Sardinia-Piedmont. On 23 March Sardinia-Piedmont sent troops into Lombardy and declared war on Austria.

[23] After the turbulent events of 15 and 16 May, known as the *Sturmpetition* (storm petition), the Emperor left Vienna on the evening of 17 May and, with the royal family, fled via Salzburg to Innsbruck.

[24] Enclosure (original and translation): Article from the evening edition of the *Österreichische Zeitung*, 18 May 1848.

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## FO 7/349: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 177, Vienna, 24 May 1848

*Measures to support the authority of the law; effects of violence by students; question of the Emperor's return to Vienna*

The Government is taking measures to reestablish the authority of Law. The Students are no longer to be permitted to form an Armed body,[25] those of them who are twenty years of age, may be members of the National Guard. Strangers who cannot shew that they have some valid cause for being in Vienna, are furnished with Passports and directed to go away. I hear that 2000 have been subjected to this regulation, mostly, I believe, being Poles, and French, but several German; The great elements of disorder, the Students and Strangers are thus diminished in quantity; as to quality, I cannot say how much that may be altered. I am told that the Students are very angry. They submit to superior force, and as their number will be diminished by a regulation to be carried into effect viz to remove from the University all those who are not natives of this Country, it is to be hoped that those who remain will not again listen to the counsels of mischief-seeking men. There is also, I hear, a pretty general feeling that the great poverty which now oppresses all classes, is due mainly to the violence of the Students, which has disturbed trade, and driven from Vienna every great proprietor. No doubt can be entertained that the Students have been most active instruments in the production of evil, but there have been instigators of their acts, who are very much to blame, and who are in a position to do more harm, and what took place for the forcible removal from office of Count Ficquelmont, the then chief Minister of the Crown, is an instance.[26] I repeat the expression of my hope that the Emperor will not return to Vienna at present. His Imperial Majesty might there find himself a prisoner. The troops who were so long exposed to the doctrines and the example of those, who successfully resisted all authority, are not to be trusted as the Guard of the Sovereign, nor with the enforcement of law.

The rest of the army is, I believe faithful to duty, but any portion of it, which should be placed in Vienna now, might be seduced by those who seduced the others. Baron Pillersdorf is, I have reason to believe, desirous of bringing his Imperial Majesty back. The Baron knows how agreeable His Majesty's return would be to the people of Vienna, and the Baron naturally seeks to keep up the popularity he acquired

[25] The *Akademische Legion* (academic legion) was founded on 14 March 1848 by Viennese students, and was nominally part of the National Guard. The ministry's attempt of 25 May to pass a resolution disbanding it failed.

[26] Cf. p. 406.

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with certain classes in this city. The Emperor's presence enfeebles the action of legitimate authority, for those who wish to escape from it, aim at that object by endeavouring to act upon the personal fears of the Court, and hitherto with success.

## FO 7/354: Arthur Charles Magenis to Viscount Palmerston, No 19, Vienna, 15 June 1848

*Account of disturbances in Prague; murder of the Princess Windischgrätz; suppression of uprising*

With reference to my despatch No 17 of the 13th inst, reporting to Yr Lordship that it was generally supposed here that serious disturbances had taken place at Prague, I have now the honour to add, that the rumours which I then adverted to, have proved to be well founded.

It appears that for some days past considerable excitement was observed among the ultra Czec, or Slavonick Party at Prague, and meetings had been held at their Club the 'Swornost',[27] at which it was decided on the 10th inst to demand from Prince Windischgrätz the Commander in Chief in Bohemia, a battery of Cannon for the use of the National Guard, and the withdrawal of troops and artillery from certain commanding positions of the city. These demands were refused by the Prince, and on the 12th inst numbers of the Czec party and Students paraded through the City, singing patriotic songs, in which abusive mention was introduced of the Prince.

On their arrival at the official residence of the Commander in Chief, they were summoned by the Guard to stop their songs, and on their paying no attention to that order, the soldiers with lowered bayonets barred the passage. Princess Windischgrätz who appeared at the window, attracted by the noise, was killed by a shot fired from the window of an Inn opposite. It is said, with what truth, I cannot vouch, that persons had been stationed there to shoot the Prince; be that however as it may, there seems to be no doubt that this act of wanton barbarity was done with premeditation.

Prince Windischgrätz then went down to the Street to address the crowd; he told them that if it was their wish to insult him individually by this demonstration, that they might go before his private residence and that he would not interfere with them, on the contrary that he would send a guard to prevent their being disturbed; if however they

[27] *Svornost*, concord or harmony, was also the name of the Czech national militia, formed after the revolutionary events of March 1848. The objective of the ultra Czech party referred to was a union of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia. The Bohemian crown was to be separated from Germany.

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desired to insult him in his public capacity, and before the residence which he occupied in virtue of his office, that it was his duty to prevent by all means in his power, such insults. He then added that his wife lay upstairs a lifeless corpse, that notwithstanding he addressed to them words of peace, and entreated them not to drive him to measures of severity.

The only result which this appeal produced was a personal attack on the Prince; with it is reported the intention of hanging him to a lamppost close by. He was however, rescued by the Guard, who dispersed the crowd. The Czec party then proceeded to erect barricades; the first of which was made under the windows of the 'Swornost' Club, by throwing out of them all the furniture &c. The barricades were carried by the military, and cannon were used to batter them down. Many lives were lost, and several officers killed and wounded. But in no instance did the people effectually resist the military. The Chief contest appears to have been in the narrow streets of the old town ('Altstadt') which run along the low ground of the right bank of the Moldau.

On the following morning the resistance continuing Prince Windischgrätz, who had posted his troops on the commanding grounds of the left bank, sent a flag of Truce summoning the revolters of the old town to submit, under threat of bombarding that part of the city, and his summons not having been attended to, he bombarded it for some time.

According to the last accounts received by Telegraph, dated the 14th 2 o clock at night, Prince Windischgrätz was complete master of the city.

Count Thun had been arrested (I suppose by the Insurgents, though the reports do not state by whom) but was set at liberty on the 14th.

Many of the Germans [sic] party and Students sided with Prince Windischgrätz, which leads to the belief that the contest was as much one of races or nationality, as of opposite political feelings, though I believe that the 'Swornost' Club push both of these causes of dissension to the most extreme point.

The Ministry here have sent a General officer, Count Mensdorff, and a civilian[28] to report on the causes which led to these lamentable occurrences, and to endeavour to re-establish tranquillity.

I forward these details to Your Lordship, because it is probable that having reached this place by telegraph, you will thus receive them earlier than through Lord Ponsonby from Innspruck [sic].

[28] Joseph Ritter von Klezansky.

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## FO 7/350: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, Confidential, No 212, Innsbruck, 18 June 1848

*Archduke Johann to be sent to Vienna as Emperor's deputy; request to diplomatic corps to accompany him; intentions of ultra democratic party in Vienna; England's interest in Austria as military power*

The Archduke John is to be sent as 'Alter Ego' to Vienna, and I am informed by my Colleagues that we are to be desired to go to Vienna to attend His Imperial Highness.[29] I write to acquaint Your Lordship with the foregoing, and to request Your instructions as to how I am to act. My own view of the matter is, that Her Majesty has been pleased to send me to be near the Emperor, not to attend upon a Personage of inferior rank, and I propose to refuse to leave my Post here, if the proposition be made to me. I believe my Colleagues will do the same. I have in another place informed Your Lordship, through the Messenger, that every thing in connection with this appointment has been done by the Minister Pillersdorf at Vienna, and his immediate associate at Innspruck [sic], Mr Doblhoff for their own ends, which are the establishment of the absolute power of the ultra party at Vienna, and that they mean to bind the Emperor by means of the 'Alter Ego' to measures of which the result will be to put an end to Monarchical power.

The Emperor's immediate family are well aware of what is intended, and they are in great alarm, but too feeble to make resistance beyond that which they have already offered. The Emperor positively refused to go to Vienna, and as positively refused, to allow the Archduke Francis Charles to go there. The Archduke John has consented, and there is, I fear, reason to doubt of his firmness, or possibly of his disposition to resist the party at Vienna.

Your Lordship will, I hope, excuse me for expressing a strong opinion. I believe that Pillersdorf and Doblhoff are the instruments, not the actual mover of the Ultra Democratic Party. That the students themselves, who ape the worst of the French, are also instruments used by men whose designs are not to give liberty and to maintain it in Austria, but to destroy Austrian power. It is palpable that there is no danger of a reaction in Austria against the Constitutional measures which have been taken,[30] but it is not so certain that it may not be the interests of a Party to excite attempts at reaction in order to the more complete success in the object I have alluded to, that is, the destruction of Austrian power. Those who in fact do direct some honest dupes

[29] Archduke Johann was named the Emperor's deputy by imperial proclamation of 16 June 1848. He was given extensive powers to direct the business of government and to open the Austrian Diet. Johann arrived in Vienna on 24 June.

[30] Cf. n. 20 and n. 65 in this section.

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and foolish enthusiasts at Vienna are animated by hatred of Austria and also by a strong interest. They imagine that the total subversion of the Military force of Austria is necessary to their personal superiority in Germany and to the advancement of the Polish Partizans, and to the future extension of the authority of the ambitious portion of the French community.

I think that I know the truth of what I have said, and I believe it to be the interest of England, that Austria should continue to be a considerable Military power: I am therefore anxious to see the Imperial authority preserved so as to be able to afford a point of union for the direction of those Military means which it may be advantageous for England and for Europe to have employed when an emergency arises.

## FO 7/354: Arthur Charles Magenis to Viscount Palmerston, No 46, Vienna, 16 July 1848

*Preliminary sittings of the Austrian Imperial Diet; question of what language to be used; many peasants elected as deputies; democratic party seeks to annul the elections*

The opening of the Constituent assembly remains fixed for the 18th inst, if, which is expected, His Imperial Highness the Archduke John, should have returned from Frankfort by that day. As, however, a sufficient number of deputies had arrived here, to form a house, several preliminary sittings have been held, for the purpose of choosing their temporary president,[31] Secretaries and officers, and agreeing upon the mode and form in which public business was to be conducted.

On the 14th, 237 deputies, from the total of 383 of which the Assembly is to be composed, had arrived, and most of them had taken their seats. None of those for Bohemia were present, the elections having been delayed by late events in that Kingdom, but they are expected here tomorrow.

After the Chair of the Assembly was taken by the oldest deputy,[32] one of the first difficulties which arose, was whether another language than German, as the medium of communication was to be allowed, and in the case that none other was permitted, whether interpreters were to be given to a large proportion of the Assembly, which did not understand that language. It was agreed that German alone was to be used, not, however, by a vote of the assembly, but rather by a sort of concession on the part of the polish deputies, and at the same time, the

[31] Franz Schmitt was elected first president on 20 July 1848.
[32] Josef Kudler.

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impossibility of interpreters was admitted. The deputies have hitherto spoken from their respective places, though there is a tribune as in the French Chambers, and hitherto no speeches have been read from manuscript, a course which for the expedition of business, it is to be hoped, will be persevered in.

A large proportion of the deputies from Galicia are peasants of a low class of Society; most of these are unacquainted with German, many cannot write, and some cannot even read. They, as all the deputies, have been chosen by almost universal suffrage, in elections in two degrees,[33] and are generally very much attached to Austrian connection. It is remarkable, and shows the little confidence which the Polish nobility of Galicia, enjoy in their own country, that scarcely any Person of that Class has been elected; the choice has generally fallen on those attached to Austria, and Count Stadion the late Governor of that Province is among the number. There are also among the deputies from the other Provinces, many peasants. It is said that those from Bohemia, are generally supporters of the Czec party.

It was to be expected that in a country, where the agricultural interest is so preponderating, as it is in various provinces, composing the Austrian Empire, that a large proportion of the deputies, chosen by universal suffrage, would belong to the peasantry. It has not perhaps been kept in mind, that the present assembly is to decide on the future constitution of the Empire, and not at first to make laws. The peasantry are chiefly interested in the solution and arrangements of the Laws, abolishing the feudal charges on their lands, and granting indemnifications to the Proprietors for such changes, and their votes have generally been given with that question in view. The Government too has been precluded from taking any steps, in favour of more enlightened deputies, from the dread of being taxed with improper interference; while the active, intriguing, democratical Party, have completely succeeded in inspiring distrust against the proprietors, and employés, but they have equally failed in inducing the Peasantry to put confidence in themselves. The result has been, that a large proportion of peasants have been elected; and to an assembly thus constituted, devolves the very difficult task of framing a Constitution, suited to the various wants and desires of the heterogeneous parts of this Empire.

It is reported, and many well informed persons believe in the truth of the report, that an intention exists on the part of the leaders of the democratic party, to endeavour to annul all the elections, on the

[33] Elections to the Austrian Imperial Diet were indirect, via delegates. All Austrian citizens over twenty-four years of age were eligible to vote, with the exception only of farmhands, domestic servants, and those in receipt of public relief.

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ground, that so many deputies who do not understand German, have been elected, and if successful in that step, to establish the principle of direct elections by universal suffrage, by which means, they hope to introduce more of their own Party into the Assembly. I hope that such a step would meet with no sympathy in the Provinces, even if it was supported at Vienna.

## FO 7/354: Arthur Charles Magenis to Viscount Palmerston, No 64, Vienna, 30 July 1848

*Imperial Diet's address to the Emperor requiring his return to Vienna*

It has been known for some days past, that an answer had been received by the Ministry from Innsbruck, to their pressing request to His Imperial Majesty to return to Vienna, and it was supposed, that that answer was unfavourable, as, notwithstanding the anxiety on this subject, it had not been published.[34]

In the sitting of the National Assembly of yesterday, the Minister of the Interior, Baron Doblhoff stated, in reply to enquiries that had lately been addressed to him, as to what the Ministry had done to induce His Imperial Majesty to return to Vienna, that he wished to make a communication to the Assembly, to which would be appended a motion. He then informed the Assembly, that the Ministry had received His Imperial Majesty's reply,[35] to their pressing request to return to Vienna, and he read that document to the Assembly. I regret that none of the papers of this day contain it, and I cannot therefore yet forward Your Lordship a copy of it. Its substance was, that His Imperial Majesty had entrusted His Uncle, the Archduke John, with full powers to open the national Assembly; that that Assembly was fully constituted, and did not require his presence; that as soon as he was convinced, that tranquillity and order were sufficiently reestablished at Vienna, to ensure its independent deliberations, that He purposed sending His Brother, the Archduke Francis Charles, as His Representative, however painful it might be to him to be separated from him.

Mr. Doblhoff then proposed to the Assembly, to present an address to the Emperor, in which they should declare their conviction, that their deliberations were perfectly free, and ran no risk of being disturbed by a breach of public tranquillity, and should press in the strongest manner, His Imperial Majesty's immediate return to Vienna.

[34] The ministry resolved to make a request for the Emperor's return on 6 July; it was put before the Emperor on 20 July. On Ferdinand's flight to Innsbruck cf. n. 23 in this section.

[35] The reply was a note handwritten by the Emperor, dated 25 June 1848.

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I must observe, that no mention was made, in the long debates which followed, of the Archduke Francis Charles, whose nomination would evidently meet with no favour in the Assembly. The immediate return of His Imperial Majesty has alone been required, and hints were thrown out, that in the event of non-compliance, it rested with the Assembly to name a Substitute.

It was then decided that a committee should be named, to draw up the address to the Emperor, and that it should be presented to His Imperial Majesty at Innspruck [sic], by a deputation of 9 members, representing the 9 different Provinces, to which two additional members should be added, from the deputation of the Tyrol, by way of compliment.

The Assembly then adjourned, for the first time since its opening, from 2 ° clock, the hour at which its sittings usually terminate, till 6 ° clock, when it was hoped that the committee would have drawn up the address. Several violent speeches were made, in which it was said, that as the free representatives of a free people, they must no longer entreat or pray His Imperial Majesty to return, but must rather require him to do so; ("fordern") and strictures passed against the "Camarilla", by which name, it is the policy of a numerous party to represent His Imperial Majesty's advisers at Innsbruck. At the Evening sitting the address of the Committee was read, to which I need not particularly allude, as it has not been adopted. I will merely quote one paragraph in translation, to shew that it was peremptory enough; after stating that his grateful people through their representatives at Vienna, 'required' His Majesty's immediate return, it adds, 'we must not conceal, that the prolonged absence of Your Majesty, will plunge the State, and the Dynasty, into the greatest danger.'

This address was not, however, considered sufficiently energetic, and the members of the left to prevent its adoption, quitted the Assembly in a body, and the sitting was adjourned to this morning (Sunday) at 9 o clock from their not being sufficient members (one half of the whole) to form a house.

I may add that Dr. Füster, who may be supposed to represent the opinions of Vienna, having alone been chosen for three different districts of the metropolis, made a violent speech, in which allusion was made to Charles 1st and Louis the 16th. No less than 6 different projects of addresses were presented to the Assembly this morning, as amendments to the address of the Committee; but they were all finally withdrawn with the exception of that of Mr. Umlauf, a member of the extreme left, which with some slight verbal alterations, has been adopted. It was debated paragraph by paragraph, and the expression, 'fordern' we require Your Majesty's immediate return was opposed, as conveying a sort of command; it was, however, adopted

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by an overwhelming majority, notwithstanding the endeavours of M. Borosch, one of the deputies of Prague, to have inserted a milder expression. I must observe, that in the project of address of Mr Neuwall, among other inconveniences resulting from His Imperial Majesty's absence, was His being exposed to the uncontrolled influence of two foreign diplomatists; alluding to Lord Ponsonby and Count Medem, the only two members of the diplomatic Body, who have remained at Innsbruck. The whole debate shewed a great absence of parliamentary capacity, and no doubt can exist as to the strongly expressed democratic tendency of the Assembly. It remains to be seen, what effect this address will produce on His Imperial Majesty's decision. Reports from Innsbruck represent Him, as very decided on the point of not returning, and it has always been said, that the Empress[36] who is supposed to have great weight with His Imperial Majesty, is strongly opposed to it. I cannot however, but think that this measure will open His Imperial Majesty's eyes, and those of His advisers as to the dangers of delay. Matters are now come to the point, that H. Imperial Majesty's return, or abdication, or the nomination of a provisional Regency by the Assembly would seem alone possible.

## FO 7/351: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 321, Vienna, 17 September 1848

*Disturbances in Vienna; speech by minister of justice in the Austrian Imperial Diet explaining the government's position with regard to revolutionary events; likely collision between the Austrian and the democratic German parties*

In consequence of some violent proceedings on the 13th inst.[37] of some divisions of the National Guard, and some Students, and a number of the lowest class of the people, Mr Schwarzer (Minister of public works) applied the word revolutionary to the persons engaged in them, a day after, Mr Löhner one of the deputies belonging to the violent party of the left, demanded to be informed, what the Minister meant by the word revolutionary, to which Mr Bach, Minister of Justice, replied: 'I am glad that this question gives me the opportunity of stating the opinion of the Ministers to the Assembly, concerning the events of yesterday, those proceedings were intended to reestablish

[36] Maria Anna.

[37] The disturbances were triggered by the financial problems of a credit co-operative for tradesmen and small businessmen. Provoked by the official security measures, the demonstrations took on a life of their own and, on 12 and 13 September, turned into an anti-government protest.

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the Committee of public safety, which has been dissolved by the Government,[38] and some national Guards and Students and some hundreds of the people, assembled on the Hof,[39] having on their hats printed papers, stating that the immediate reestablishment of that Committee, afforded the only means for saving the Country, and of securing their rights and liberties; it was evident that a power superior to the Reichstag was sought thereby to be formed. The power itself, and the manner in which it was attempted to recreate it were both Revolutionary' – Here there were hisses from the left – Mr Bach continued, 'Gentlemen, Your hisses do not frighten me, I know that what I say to you, will be as poison to you, and a thorn in your side. I tell you: You are the cause of these disturbances, and that while you say, you are the friends of liberty and order, what you do aim at are disorder and anarchy: You state that the majority in this Assembly does not represent the wants and wishes of the people, and that it is only through you the minority; that they can be only obtained by you. You want to act upon the majority by terror. I am the friend of liberty, and am ready to shed my blood in its defence, but I and my Colleagues are resolved to put down all attempts at disorder and confusion.'

This Speech was followed by immense applause in the Reichstag, from the majority, and the left was silent.

I have troubled Your Lordship with this Speech of Mr Bach, because it will shew you the state of contention, in which parties here stand, and because it is probably the forerunner of events, which are expected immediately to happen under other cloaks.

Two Colours have been in use here; the old Austrian Colour, and the new German Colour; A vast association[40] is formed consisting some say of 30 or 40,000 individuals of this city, and having for its declared and real object, the maintenance of the constitutional monarchy.

The members of this association were [sic] the Austrian Colours; the ultra democratic party have adopted the German Colours, and some of them have insulted and attacked the wearers of the national Austrian Colours. A violent state of feeling is the result, and it is said, that on tomorrow, there will be a collision between the two parties, which may lead to bloodshed.

[38] The *Sicherheitsausschuß* was set up after the uprising of 26 May 1848 and was an instrument of the radical party. In its concern for social questions in particular it exceeded its authority, and set itself up as a revolutionary alternative government. It was dissolved on 24 August 1848.

[39] The square *Am Hof* in central Vienna.

[40] Ponsonby is referring to the movement known as *echtes Österreichertum* (true 'Austrianness'), which grew out of the *Konstitutionelle Klub*. Its members were called the *Schwarzgelben* (black and yellows) after the Austrian colours.

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If the collision shall take place, it is probable the Government will interfere, and with force, and many people think it will be a critical moment. I am not apprehensive of the success of those who are for confusion, I believe the great majority of the people are strongly for the support of order, but it seems certain, that the turbulent persons have been encouraged by the Party in the interest of the democratic Hungarians, and have received money from that Source. The object of the Hungarians is to overthrow the Government at Vienna, in order to obtain means to oppose Jellachich the better, whose success in Hungary they believe will lead to consequences in Vienna, which the democratic Ultras disapprove, as being a control upon their power &c.[41]

The numbers and the quality of the persons engaged in this dispute, make it, in my opinion, worthy of attention, and I have troubled your Lordship with this long story, that if anything in the way of riot should take place, you may have some notion of the particular cause of it, & the motives.

## FO 7/352: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 378, Vienna, 18 October 1848

*State of revolt in Vienna (October Revolution); involvement of Polish officers and role of Poles in current events; arrival of deputation with Robert Blum from Frankfurt; report on Hungarian army's withdrawal to Hungary*

Although nothing decisive has occurred here since my despatch of yesterday's date, I think it right to detain the Messenger no longer.[42]

A Camp has been formed within the lines,[43] in the position abandoned by the Imperial Troops to be occupied by a corps mobile of the National Guard which has been organized; and the command given to General Bem, a Polish officer who served with great distinction during the campaign of 1831 in Poland,[44] and, as I am

[41] Croatian troops under the leadership of General Jellačić crossed the Dráva river on 11 September 1848 and marched on Budapest. On 19 September a majority in the Austrian Diet, in agreement with the Austrian government and against the vote of the radical minority, rejected Hungary's request for assistance.

[42] The events of the October Revolution described here began on 6 October 1848. They were set off by an army unit's refusal to go to war against Hungary. On 7 October Emperor Ferdinand fled to Olmütz. The Austrian Imperial Diet, whose numbers had been decimated, declared itself in permanent session and appointed the *Sicherheitsausschuß* (Committee of Public Safety) to replace the scattered government.

[43] For 'lines' (border between the suburbs and the outskirts of Vienna) cf. n. 9 in this section.

[44] Polish uprising against Russian rule from November 1830 until it was suppressed in September 1831.

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informed commanded the Polish artillery on several occasions. Many other Polish officers have also arrived here, to offer their services and advice, and I have reason to believe that one[45] of them who had served in Algiers expressed the opinion that the City and Suburbs might be defended, even if attacked by considerable forces, but that all the National Guards and armed people would not be able to withstand five thousand Regular Troops in the open Field. It is, however, certain that for several days the people have been exhorted in every way to act strictly on the defensive alone. One of the most striking features in the present state of affairs here is the prominent part which the Poles play. As I have above mentioned, the defense of the City is chiefly under their direction, whilst in the Diet it's [sic] President[46] is a Pole, and the Representatives of Galicia, in the absence of most of the Bohemian Deputies, constitute the majority. I have heard that one of those deputies,[47] who belongs to a family which has always been remarkable for its Polish sympathies, returned here a few days ago, and has blamed the conduct of his Countrymen in associating themselves with the Magyar cause in opposition to the Sclavonick. He added that he looked on such conduct as a political suicide, in which he would take no part, and that he purposed leaving Vienna.

A deputation with Robert Blum at their head has arrived here to present to the Reichstag and the Inhabitants of Vienna, in the name of the small minority of the extreme left of the Frankfort Assembly, the address which they had proposed to that Assembly and which had been rejected by a very great majority.[48]

An address to the Emperor was voted yesterday by the Reichstag, of which I have the honour to enclose a copy in original and in translation.[49]

Since writing the above, the reporter of the permanent committee of the Reichstag, M. Schuselka has made to that assembly his daily report. He informed them that the Hungarian army had retired into Hungary; He added that He did not know what had decided that movement; but that it had been officially announced here by the

[45] Eduard Jelowicki.

[46] Franciszek Smolka.

[47] Not traceable.

[48] The address of solidarity to the Austrian Rump Diet and the people of Vienna was signed by sixty-five deputies of the Frankfurt National Assembly. On 12 October they commissioned Robert Blum and Julius Fröbel to present it in Vienna.

[49] Enclosure (original only): Extract from the speech of deputy Schuselka, 17 October 1848. In its address to the Emperor, the Austrian Rump Diet called for troops to be pulled back to Lower Austria, the Vienna garrison to be reduced to a minimum, troops to be made to swear allegiance to the constitution, and the creation of a popular ministry.

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Hungarian Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs,[50] who had added the advice to endeavour to arrange their quarrel through the mediation of Archduke John.

## FO 7/353: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 395, Hietzing, 1 November 1848

*Renewal of hostilities by Viennese on advance of Hungarians; bad faith of insurgents; bombardment of the town; occupation of Vienna by Austrian troops and end of armed revolt; retreat of Hungarians from Austrian territory*

I had the honour to report to Your Lordship, in my Despatch No. 394. of yesterday, that Prince Windisch-Grätz had been obliged to order a regular attack on the Maria Hilf lines and Fâubourgs,[51] in consequence of the resistance persisted in by the Insurgents in Vienna, founded on the hopes of relief from the advance of the Hungarian Army, notwithstanding their previous submission to His Highness's conditions, which had been agreed to by the Town Council and which had been published on the morning of the 30th Ultimo.[52]

That quarter of the city was soon occupied, and white Flags were in the afternoon of yesterday hung out from the Steeples of the various Churches there. The same emblems of submission were also displayed from the walls and Gates of the Bastion, but notwithstanding, the Imperial Troops were treacherously fired on with Grape Shot, when advancing on the Glacis, which separates the Town from its Fâubourgs. I may add, that the bad faith of the Insurgents or of their Leaders, has been most apparent of late. The Commander of the National Guards, Mr. Messenhauser, published an order of the day, when it was known that the Hungarians were advancing, calling on every one to renew hostilities, although on the preceding night He had been present at the sitting of the Town Council, and in his capacity of Commander of the National Guards, had admitted that they were short of ammunition and that a more prolonged resistance was impossible. The attack made upon his Troops compelled Prince Windisch-Grätz to have recourse to extreme measures against the City; and yesterday afternoon a heavy fire of cannon, accompanied

[50] Ferenc Pulszky.

[51] The Maria Hilf lines formed the border between the suburb of *Mariahilf* and the Viennese outskirts (*fâubourgs*).

[52] The conditions, which had been passed to a deputation from the Vienna town council on the night of 30 October, included the dissolution of the armed corps, the dismantling of the barricades, the raising of white flags, the surrender of weapons, and the handing over of the ringleaders of the revolution.

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by shells and Congreve rockets was directed from the Glacis towards the University. About the same time, a large fire in the City was visible from hence, which unfortunately proves to have been the Augustines Church and the Imperial Library, which adjoin the Palace of the Burg. It was supposed here to have been the work of Incendiaries, but I learn from one of my servants who has just come out here from the City, that it was caused by a Shell directed against the Insurgents, who were firing from the Bastions on the Troops advancing on the Glacis. The same person reports to me, that two chimneys of the Embassy were knocked down by a Shell, and that it was only by the advance of the Troops that the Insurgents were prevented from entering my house to fire from its windows. I learn from him also that the Burg is occupied by the Troops, and I believe, the rest of the City, with perhaps the exception of the University. Should the Students or the Foreigners in Vienna make any further resistance, I anticipate a dreadful carnage of them, as the exasperation of the Troops at the numerous instances of treachery is very great.

About five or six thousand Stand of Arms and three pieces of Cannon were delivered up at Schönbrunn yesterday afternoon, and I hear that the surrender of arms is going on at various points within the City.

I think the armed Revolt may now be looked upon as overcome, but I fear it has occasioned considerable loss of life and a still greater destruction of property.

The Hungarian Army, pursued by the Divisions I mentioned, is no longer upon Austrian soil, but I cannot add whether the pursuit is to be continued.

## FO 7/353: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 409, Vienna, 14 November 1848

*Kossuth cannot rely on Hungarian troops; daily desertions; alleged involvement of president Smolka and deputy Füster in murder of Latour; arrest of actual murderer; executions for high treason*

I have this Morning learned from Good Authority that Kossuth has sent his wife[53] and all his family to Hamburgh; this fact would seem to argue that He dreads the issue of the war: It would seem indeed that He cannot place much reliance upon his Troops. All except the Cavalry being almost entirely undisciplined, and amongst the Cavalry desertions daily take place. Two squadrons arrived yesterday at the Head Quarters of Schönbrunn with all their Arms and accoutrements,

[53] Teresa Kossuth.

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without having lost a single man though they were fired upon by the Hungarian Infantry when it was discovered that they were leaving the Camp. They were received at Schönbrunn by Prince Windischgrätz himself, and it is the opinion of most of the Officers that all the Regular Hussars in the Hungarian service will follow this example.

The President of the Reichstag, Smolka, underwent a very severe examination yesterday, and the Deputy Füster was again arrested; it being supposed that both are in some degree implicated in the murder of Count Latour.[54] It is said that the actual murderer, a workman[55] in one of the manufactories, has been arrested & that the sword of the Count has been found in his house, and the story goes that papers have also been found which prove that this man had been actually bribed by Füster. Professor Füster, to whom I have before alluded, is a Priest, and had been liberated from confinement only two days ago, which was the cause of much astonishment and some dissatisfaction in the Town. I think it right, in consequence of the many absurd Rumours which are abroad, to inform Your Lordship that up to the present moment only three persons, Robert Blum, Colonel Jelowicki, and Mr. v. Sternau have been executed for high Treason.

## FO 7/353: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 421, Vienna, 20 November 1848

*Review of affairs in Vienna; correspondence of events with Ponsonby's expectations in 1847; characterization of opposition; Emperor has no intention of reacting; expedition against Pest*

A year and a half ago Your Lordship directed me to lay before you in a Despatch the view I took of the then situation of affairs in this country, and in obedience to your Lordship's orders, I addressed one to you upon that subject, No 53. of the 15th of June 1847.[56]

The events which have taken place have corresponded very much with what I then imagined to be the views and disposition of the classes of men spoken of. Your Lordship has seen rise up in violent opposition to the Imperial Government those whom I mentioned as likely to do so, and you have seen that the Military class has continued to be attached to The Sovereign, has interfered in affairs and has put down His enemies.

[54] The minister of war, Theodor Graf Baillet de Latour, was lynched in his ministry by a mob on 6 October 1848.

[55] Franz Wangler.

[56] Cf. Markus Mösslang, Sabine Freitag and Peter Wende (eds), *British Envoys to Germany*, Volume II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 529–532.

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This crisis has been produced by men who obtained command over the masses in Vienna; men who assumed the character of friends of liberty, but established Licence by means of Terror. They were not actuated by the love of liberty. They were in actual and quiet possession of more democratical institutions and power, than has been seen anywhere, in even apparent conjunction with a constituted Authority. It is false that the Emperor or those who advised Him meditated a reaction, that is, to deprive the Nation of the Constitutional Government which had been established with the Royal sanction;[57] And the men who raised the cry of reaction, knew that the charge brought was false; They well knew that the very men by whose hands they have now been defeated – The Military – did not desire to overturn Constitutional, legal Liberty, and the fact is, that those Leaders have produced by the extravagant folly of their own proceedings, the shame and the chastisement which have fallen upon them.

It is not my intention to detail facts: the acts of the Leaders – for they are to be found recorded in a hundred places, but I am well able to shew that what I have said of them is the Truth. I desire to deprecate the abuse of the name of liberty by its application to that which was so called here, and which brought upon its Authors and supporters confusion and disgrace.

The same feelings and spirit by which the Military of the Empire have been led to act in Vienna, now prompts them to undertake an expedition against Pesth, where the reign of Democratick Terror is established, and if it shall be successful, Liberty will, I am sure, not be oppressed there.[58]

There are of course many and many of the people of this City exasperated by the fall of their Party from Power, and there are multitudes who rejoice at it, as their relief from very serious distress which has pressed so severely upon Trade and almost every honest industry. The Dissatisfied threaten to renew, in the Spring, the attempts which were successful in March last, and the quieter men look with confidence to the measures taking to put the city in a state for defence by the Military. A watch is kept upon Strangers, and about half of the Arms known to have been in the hands of the Multitude have been got possession of by the Military Authorities.

The City has already nearly the old appearance of a dense population employed in ordinary avocations, and the Shopkeepers

[57] On 21 March 1848, after Metternich's resignation, a ministry of state was formed to replace the *Geheime Staatskonferenz*; on 25 April a constitution was promulgated.

[58] After the break between Austria and Hungary in September 1848, Austria's campaign against Hungary started in mid-December 1848. Budapest was captured on 5 January 1849.

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now sell their goods in tolerable quantities. The Theatres are frequented. Some proprietors who had fled from the Revolution have returned, others are hoped for here; but it is feared that very many will not soon come back, and it is probable that time must be requisite to restore confidence to men whose lives have been threatened.

I do not recollect to have mentioned a fact which is universally known to be true – that the workmen in arms and their friends had resolved upon pillage and had actually begun upon the house of Count Stephen Zichy, our next door neighbour, when a ball from a Howitzer burst amongst them and dispersed the Party, and the forcing of the Gate of the City by the Soldiers occurring also, the pillage could not be effected, and the Houses intended to be plundered, escaped.

## FO 7/365: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 8, Vienna, 7 January 1849

*Proceedings in the Austrian Imperial Diet at Kremsier; election for the circle of Tarnow invalid; discussion of the principle 'All power originates with the people'*

I have the honour to communicate to Your Lordship an account of the proceedings at the last sittings of the Reichstag at Kremsier[59] and the substance of the speech of Count Stadion, Minister of the Interior, expressing the opinion of the Imperial Government and the determination which would guide them in their acts, upon a question of the highest importance; namely, the proposal to proclaim by a solemn declaration of the Legislature a Principle which has been misused in this Country, and may be so again, 'That all Power originates with the People.'[60] The Constituent Assembly resumed its sittings after the Christmas Holidays, on the 3rd Ulto [sic] at Kremsier.

On the President Strobach announcing to the Assembly the election of three new Deputies,[61] one of whom was Waguza for the town of Tarnow in Galicia, who had been elected in virtue of a decree of the Assembly on the 21st of October,[62] the Minister of the Interior rose, and declared in the name of the Government, that they could not acknowledge the validity of this election, inasmuch as the decree of the Assembly had not received the Imperial sanction. A debate ensued,

[59] The Austrian Imperial Diet, which had met in Vienna since July 1848, was relocated to Kremsier on 22 October. It re-opened on 22 November.

[60] This principle was part of the statement of basic rights in the draft constitution which was drawn up by the constitutional committee and debated by the Austrian Imperial Diet in a first reading on 21 December 1848.

[61] Deputies Scheucher for Voitsberg and Rosypal for Winterberg.

[62] On 21 October 1848 – during the October Revolution – the Austrian Diet granted the request of the town of Tarnów to be permitted to send its own deputy.

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and the deputy Schopf, having previously observed that Tarnow was already represented in the Assembly before the decree of the 21st of October, moved that the election of the newly chosen deputy be declared invalid. This motion was carried by a majority of 150 to 76.

On the 4th instant, after the Protocol of the previous sitting had been read and passed, the Minister of the Interior, Count Stadion, rose and read a declaration, the substance of which is as follows:

That as the Constituent Assembly was about to discuss the Declaration of Rights, (a sort of preface to the future Constitution), the Ministry deemed it its duty to declare openly the position which they had determined on taking in this discussion, and particularly with respect to the important principle laid down in the first paragraph of those Rights, namely that All power originated with the People. If the principle laid down in that paragraph was purely theoretical, it ought not to be inserted where the object was clearly to define by a constitution the particular relations in the State; that the Ministry did not deem it its duty to discuss a purely theoretical question, when the People of Austria were expecting the fruits of the future Constitution. If, however, this principle was to be placed at the head of the Austrian Constitution, the Ministry must protest against a principle which was neither in harmony with the position de facto or de jure of the State, and which had already lead to deplorable results; under the banner of this Theory, the laws had been violated, opposition had been made to the executive, the opinions of the people led astray, the Streets made the theatre of wild excesses, and the blood of noble Count Latour been shed.[63] Wise and practical laws did not require the assistance of vague and deceitful dogmas to win favour. Hereditary Monarchical Right appeared in the constitutional Monarchical form of Government to be a sacred and inalienable Right of the supreme Power. The Ministry had already declared, when they first appeared before this Assembly, that they were attached to the principles of constitutional Monarchy: they would neither be true to their duty nor their principles were they to allow the precise relations of the Crown to the People and their representatives to be perverted. His Imperial Majesty the Emperor Ferdinand had decided in March to grant a Constitution,[64] and consented to divide with the Representatives of the People the absolute right of making the Laws, which had devolved upon him from his Ancestors; by this consent, Austria had become a Constitutional State, but this change had neither suspended, nor for one moment effaced the monarchical

[63] On Latour's murder cf. n. 54 in this section.
[64] Cf. n. 20 in this section.

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form of Government. The inviolability of the monarchical principle had been maintained in all Imperial Acts since March last; particularly in the manifesto of May 16th, which announced the Imperial decision of submitting the Constitution published on the 25th of April to the previous deliberation of that Assembly, which in consequence was declared to be Constituent.[65]

The Ministry would take a willing part in the discussion of that constitution, being convinced that an open and mutual understanding was the best means of attaining that desired end. It must however declare that that end can only be attained under the presupposition and guarantee that the constitutional monarchical principle should remain inviolate, and the Right of the Crown be unquestioned by that Assembly. He was convinced that the principles laid down in the 1st paragraph would not receive the sanction of that Assembly, but the Ministry deemed it their duty to declare openly, that they regarded the expressed or implied admission of the above named principle as an attack on the inalienable rights of the Crown.

It was then proposed by the Deputy Szabel to adjourn till the 8th instant the further discussion of the question, on account of the importance of the Ministerial declaration and the necessity of the members taking it into consideration. This proposal was adopted and I will report to Your Lordship the result of the debate on the 8th as soon as I am in possession of an account of it.

## FO 7/365: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 47, Vienna, 31 January 1849

*Violent principles of the deputies at the Austrian Imperial Diet incompatible with monarchy; ministry has no desire to destroy representative government; increase in number of troops; Austrian government cannot admit French ambitions in Italy; decreased influence of the democratic party*

What I had the honour to report to Your Lordship sometime ago, respecting my belief in the eventual Dissolution of the Reichstag receives everyday, in my opinion, confirmation from the proceedings of that Assembly. The principles supported by the Deputies in their speeches and embodied in their Acts are, (many of them), incompatible with Monarchy, and will be rejected by the Crown. I have a strong belief that the feeling prevalent in the Country generally, is contempt for the Deputies, accompanied with many doubts of several of those

[65] In addition to the resolution that the constitution of 25 April 1848 was to be submitted to the Austrian Imperial Diet for revision, the imperial manifesto of 16 May 1848 laid down the principle of a single chamber and universal elections on the basis of universal suffrage.

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doctrines which, not very long ago, were imagined by the Masses to be indisputable wisdom. The Ministers are acquainted with the present notions of the Nation, and they are certain of the unqualified support of the vast Austrian Army. The Ministers can therefore at pleasure put an end to the farce now enacting at Kremsier, but are probably induced to allow it to proceed, that time may be obtained for the more complete preparation of the National mind to act upon sounder principles, when called upon for new Elections of Representatives. I am of opinion, that the Ministers have no desire to destroy or to disfigure Representative Government, but wish to construct it so, that it may rest upon bases which experience has proved to be solid, and not upon theories derived from the French school of political writers. I believe that the Ministers comprehend the value of the Aristocratick Principle as a component part of a free Government, and that when the time shall come the Ministry will incorporate it in the Constitution of the Empire.

The situation of affairs in France[66] is a subject of disquietude to the Administration, and all care is taken to provide the military means to support the rights and dignity of Austria, should they be attacked. The number of the Troops is encreased every day, and the organisation of the whole Military system is carefully attended to.

The Finances are under a temporary difficulty, but, as I before said to Your Lordship, they rest upon the foundation of great National Resources, which can be made available when circumstances require it.

It is indubitable, that the Austrian and the Russian Governments are perfectly in accordance as to the necessity for union between them in defensive opposition to every attack. Austria is victorious in Hungary.[67] The Imperial Government therefore is now able to assume a part in the politicks of Europe, with at least as much influence as it enjoyed in older Times, and possibly with greater still, because there is not now any strong reason to induce a suspicion that Austria aims at new aggrandisement.

It is for the interest of Austria, that Italy, proper, should be left wholly to itself – but Austria cannot submit to the establishment of French dominion in that Country, even if the Italians wish it. The Austrian Ministers are alive to the dangers that may arise in that quarter, and I have myself called attention to the facility with which a French attack might be directed from Algiers upon Italy, should the British Fleet no longer be a protection.

[66] Ponsonby is referring to France's intention to intervene in Italy.

[67] The Austrian army's initial successes included the taking of Budapest on 5 January 1849.

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The Ultra Democratick Party, which had spread its fever over a large part of this Empire, infecting weakly constituted men, has now lost its power – few believe in the wisdom of the pretended Legislators. Idealism is replaced by Materialism, and more is said about the loss of trade than the loss of political supremacy. Many however, who have been defeated are not converted. Both in Vienna and in other towns numbers are to be found ardently desirous to overturn established order, and are restrained only by fear from attempting to [do] so, and it is asserted that the chiefs of the most violent Parties in Paris, in the cities of Germany and in Vienna are in very constant communication.

## FO 7/366: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 82, Vienna, 1 March 1849

*Proceedings in Austrian Imperial Diet; violent attitude of deputy Kaim towards the Emperor; measures of Diet inconsistent with principle of monarchy*

The question whether the person of deputies to the Reichstag are inviolable or not, having lately been the subject of considerable discussion and excitement, I think it right briefly to report to Your Lordship, the details of a case, which has during some time past, occupied the attention of the Diet; and more particularly as this case was looked upon as a sort of preliminary step to more serious matters.

On the 5th of Nov. last, the Deputy Kaim indulged in the most violent abuse of the Emperor, Prince Windischgrätz, and Prince Schwarzenberg, in a public house at Krumau, the chief town of the district which he represents. This came to the knowledge of the civil tribunal and was there investigated. But in consequence of the ideas generally existing, that in a constitutional state, the person of a deputy is inviolable, and this principle having been also laid down in the sketch of the constitution, granted on the 25th of April last,[68] the Central Criminal Court was obliged to have recourse to the intervention of the Minister of Justice,[69] to procure the consent of the Diet to the prosecution of Kaim. A committee was appointed, and the result of a deliberation of 4 weeks has been that the Reichstag has decided Kaim should not be prosecuted.

I have troubled Your Lordship with these details, because, as I observed above, matters of a graver nature were involved in this case. It was supposed that several members of the Reichstag were

[68] The immunity of deputies was laid down in article V § 42 of the constitution of 25 April 1848.

[69] Alexander Freiherr von Bach.

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to be immediatly [sic] impeached, if in Kaim's case the principle of inviolability was overthrown.

Smolka, the President, and other leading men, such as Borrosch and Füster, were, it was said, even to be accused and tried for participation in the murder of Ct Latour.[70]

How far this notion may have been justified by facts, it is not for me to say, but its existence appears to have been the cause of the refusal of the Reichstag to allow Kaim to be given up to the civil Tribunal.

The opinion gains ground that the existence of the Reichstag is rapidly drawing to a close. The deputies themselves at Kremsier, I am told generally entertain this conviction, and from what I can learn, whenever the day of their dissolution may come, it will be received with approbation by all the well disposed. Since the Insurrection of October last, endless votes of want of confidence have been addressed to the various Representatives by their constituents: Complaints and accusations innumerable against members of the Reichstag have been circulated, and have appeared in the Newspapers, but to all these a deaf ear has been turned, and the sole object of the Assembly seems to have been to thwart and embarrass the Government by all the means in its power. It has passed resolutions totally inconsistent with the principle of Monarchy, and it has arrogated to itself the power and functions of a legislative Assembly, forgetting that it was called together for the purpose of forming a constitution, in which task it has as yet scarcely made any progress whatever. Under these circumstances, I do not think that the Government can intend to allow the Reichstag to go on much longer, and the general opinion is, that the dissolution will take place as soon as the rebellion in Hungary is completely extinguished.

## FO 7/366: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 105, Vienna, 20 March 1849

*Proclamation by General Welden after an attack on a sentinel; Emperor's return delayed; murderers of Count Latour executed*

I have the honour to transmit herewith the copy in original and translation of a proclamation,[71] issued yesterday by the Governor

[70] Cf. n. 54 in this section.

[71] Enclosures (original and translation): Proclamation of 19 March 1849. The proclamation decreed that if weapons were discovered, no further petitions for clemency were to be accepted.

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General Welden, in consequence of a sentinel upon duty at the Powder Magazine beyond the lines[72] having been again fired at.

It was hoped that a good spirit was gaining ground in the town, or rather in the suburbs, for no such attack had taken place for some time, and the citizens had combined to assist the military authorities, in searching for arms and preserving order; the severity of the 'State of siege'[73] too had been relaxed, General Welden stating that he was happy to be able to do so in consequence of the improvement that was visible.

The Emperor also, in his reply to an address from the Municipal Council,[74] thanking Him for the new Constitution,[75] said that the reports which reached Him from Vienna, led Him to hope, that He should soon be able to return there.

The attack on the sentinel on Sunday night will, however, necessarily delay His Imperial Majesty's return. If the general opinion entertained in the town is correct, namely that these attacks are made by an organised band of ruffians, who are not natives of Vienna, it would be rashness on the part of the Emperor to expose himself till they have been discovered. Up to the present moment, none of the authors of these murderous attacks have been captured.

The sentence passed on the murderers of Count Latour, was this morning carried into effect. Three were publickly hanged on the Glacis at 9. o.c, and the two others were condemned to 20. years imprisonment in irons.[76] Among the immense crowd assembled to see the execution, the general feeling evidently was, that they merited their fate.

[72] For 'lines' (border between the suburbs and the outskirts of Vienna) cf. n. 9 in this section.

[73] The state of siege was imposed by proclamation on 1 November 1848.

[74] Address of thanks from the municipal council of the city of Vienna, 7 March 1849; it was read to Emperor Franz Joseph in an audience on 9 March.

[75] The constitution of 4 March 1849 (announced on 7 March) was imposed without the agreement of the Austrian Imperial Diet, which was dissolved on 7 March. The constitution laid down the legal unity of the German and non-German areas in an indivisible and indissoluble hereditary monarchy, thus making it impossible for Austria to join the German federal state as debated by the Frankfurt National Assembly. For the Austrian state as a whole, the constitution provided a two-chamber parliament. The Emperor's far-reaching powers included the right to impose an absolute veto, the right to declare a state of emergency, and the right to dissolve parliament.

[76] Carl Brambosch, Thomas Jurkovich and Franz Wangler were hanged. Franz Kohl and Johann Johl were given a prison sentence. On Latour's murder cf. n. 54 in this section.

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The Military Governor has suspended the 'Oesterreichische Allgemeine Zeitung' in consequence of it's [sic] continued attacks on the Government.[77]

## FO 7/367: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 144, Vienna, 12 April 1849

*Affairs of Germany; Archduke Johann requested to stay at Frankfurt; administration of central power*

Your Lordship will have received from Berlin the account of the King of Prussia's proceedings and declarations with regard to the Affairs at Francfort[78] and I think it may be proper to repeat what is the view of the Austrian Government.

The Imperial Government considers the National Assembly as defunct, but the Central Power, that is the Executive, as still existing. The Imperial Government has requested the Archduke John to continue to administer the functions of his office for the present, which will prevent the assumption by the King of Prussia of the administration of that power.

The Imperial Government will not consent to its exercise, by any Individual, should the Archduke retire, but will require that it be exercised by the Delegates of the States composing the Germanic Nations.

I have endeavoured to be brief and to give the substance of the matters I speak of.

## FO 7/367: Arthur Charles Magenis to Viscount Palmerston, No 41, Vienna, 22 May 1849

*Canitz's mission regarding future federal government of Germany; opposition to Prussian proposals; proposed provisional direction of central power by an Austrian and a Prussian prince*

General Canitz, formerly Prussian Minister at this Court, and subsequently Minister for Foreign Affairs at Berlin, has been some time in this Capital on a special Mission from His Government.

He has been sent here to endeavour to come to an understanding with the Imperial Government, as to the establishment of the future Federal Government of Germany. Very little has been divulged of

[77] The ban was announced on 19 March 1849 by the military governor, Franz Ludwig Freiherr von Welden.

[78] For the election of the Prussian King as emperor and the Frankfurt Imperial Constitution, cf. n. 81 in Frankfurt section.

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the details of his proposals, even to the Representatives of those Governments more immediately interested in their solution; but it is generally understood that what He has proposed on the behalf of the Prussian Government has found no favour with the Imperial Cabinet. I have had but a very short conversation with General Canitz in which He told me, that though He had not made much progress, he still hoped that an understanding might be come to with Austria.

I have learned from, I believe, good authority that the first proposal of the Prussian Cabinet,[79] namely the formation of a confederation (engerer Bund) of all the purely German States, to be governed by the King of Prussia in connection with a Chamber of Representatives from all those Countries, and to be bound by subsequent Treaties for offensive and defensive German purposes with those States not purely German, such as Austria, Holstein and Limburg, was at once rejected by this Government, on the ground that Austria formed a part of the German Confederation founded by the Treaty of Vienna,[80] which had not been abrogated, and that She could not forego the Rights conferred on Her by that Act, for any contingent advantages to be secured by Treaty with a Power which did not as yet exist.

The Prussian Cabinet was then desirous to obtain the provisional direction of the Central Power, until a new order of things was established, a proposal which His Prussian Majesty had already made, as Your Lordship will recollect, and against which this Government had entered a protest when there was a question sometime back of the Archduke John's resignation.[81]

The Prussian proposal[82] was grounded on the urgent necessity of suppressing the Revolutionary tendencies which have manifested themselves in Baden, Wirtemberg, and the Palatinate,[83] and the unity of direction which was necessary at a time when possibly the Central Power might be at the Head Quarters of an Army: and it further

[79] Prussian circular note of 23 January 1849, in which the Prussian government endorsed Gagern's plan of 18 December 1848 (cf. n. 68 in Frankfurt section) for a narrower and a wider alliance.

[80] The Act of the German Confederation of 8 June 1815 was formally a part of the Act of the Vienna Congress, 9 June 1815. Schwarzenberg's rejection, referring to the principle of indivisibility, was made in his dispatch of 4 February 1849 to the Austrian plenipotentiary in Frankfurt.

[81] Ponsonby is referring to the Prussian circular dispatch of 3 April 1849. Schwarzenberg rejected the Prussian proposal in his dispatch of 8 April to the Austrian envoy in Berlin. Archduke Johann was to retain his position as Vicar of the Empire, thus working against Prussia's ambition of taking over as the central power.

[82] The Prussian government's memorandum of 9 May 1849, and a proposal about the main features of an act of union, were conveyed by a special envoy, Canitz, and rejected by Schwarzenberg in two memoranda to the Berlin government of 16 May 1849.

[83] Cf. pp. 322–327 and 377–379.

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enforced the necessity of putting such power into the hands of Prussia, by stating that at this moment Austria was so much engaged with the suppression of the revolt in Hungary, and by the continued necessity of keeping a large Army in Italy, that none of her military resources were available for German purposes. I am told that Prince Schwarzenberg met this argument, by replying, that the Austrian Government had, or were about to send 10,000 men from their Italian Army by the Stelvio pass in to the Vorarlberg, to act if necessary against the federal fortress of Rastadt.

General Canitz as I understand, foiled by this reply, then proposed to delegate the provisional direction of the Central Power to an Austrian and Prussian Prince,[84] and the proposal was not unfavourably received though I cannot positively state that it has been finally accepted. Both Governments as I am informed, agreed that the time was come when the Archduke John should resign the Vicarship of the Empire.

I must, however, add that though I have reason to think the above report in the main correct, yet I cannot vouch for its entire accuracy. I venture to submit it to Your Lordship rather as an account of this negociation which has come to me from a good source than as a statement of what actually occurred.

I cannot, however, doubt that this Government will oppose every arrangement except of a provisional and temporary nature, until the rebellion in Hungary be put down, and it may have a disposable force at its orders, which may give due weight to its pretensions in the future settlement of the German Confederation.

## FO 7/368: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 165, Vienna, 24 July 1849

*Austria's reaction to Prussian proposals for the arrangement of Germany (Erfurt Union); extinction of the minor sovereignties; revolutionary spirit very much lowered*

[. . .] The Austrians will do nothing at present as to the proposed arrangement of Germany.[85] They will remain inert and they think that time will defeat the apparent objects of Prussia; That many or most of those Parties which are supposed or said by the Prussians to be favorable to Prussian projects, are in reality opposed to them, and by not acting in favour of Prussia will cause their proposed plan to fail.

[84] The plan of dividing the central power was based on Schwarzenberg's counter-proposal of 16 May 1849.

[85] On the Erfurt Union project cf. n. 115 in Prussia section.

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Your Lordship will see that Austria will not yield the right she asserts, to be a German power more or less great.

I cannot pretend to say what will be the substance of the settlement of German Affairs, when the time shall come for an arrangement, but I think it probable that if Prussia shall fail in the execution of her supposed intentions, the Austrian Government will heartily concur in measures which may promise to maintain Unity of action amongst the German Powers for acknowledged German Interests.

I believe that Austria will consent to some great change, such as the extinction of many of the minor Sovereignties and their absorption in the territories of the Greater Princes – not in Austrian territories. It is here thought that the minor Sovereign Princes are too feeble to maintain their Governments against the assaults of Revolutionary Parties and that Germany will continue to be disturbed so long as those feeble Governments remain.

In another despatch I forward to Your Lordship the best founded reports we possess of the state of affairs in Hungary.[86] Some people expect that it may be long before the war there is terminated. Others hope for its conclusion at no distant period. Nobody believes in the ultimate success of the Hungarians.

In so far as I can judge of things in this Empire, I am of opinion that what is called the revolutionary spirit is very much lowered by the disrepute into which the principles upon which it lived, have fallen and the universal poverty to which their adoption condemned the People.

There are ambitions, there are interest, there are honest opinions, existing in many parts of the Empire and able to produce action, but the maps of convictions and the public force are, I am confident, quite powerful enough if properly used, to preserve the integrity and the moral and physical force of this Empire.

## FO 7/369: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 211, Vienna, 28 August 1849

*Insurrection in Hungary; major part of Russian troops to quit Hungary; conduct of Russian officers; remarks on future government of Hungary; Austria's continued disapproval of Prussian plans for the settlement of Germany*

Your Lordship has been informed that Marshal Paskiewitch has returned to Warsaw, and that the major part of the Russian Troops

[86] Cf. the following dispatch.

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now in Hungary are immediately to leave that country. The Emperor of Russia is about to return to St Petersburgh.

The opinion I ventured so long ago to give that the Russian Emperor did not act from any impulse of a design to profit by the aid he had afforded to the Austrians in any other way than by the defeat of the revolutionary Party, has, I think, been verified by the conduct adopted by His Imperial Majesty at this moment. I was sure that it was not the interest of the Russians to enfeeble Austria, because I was certain, that if they had entertained that design, they would not have committed the absurdity of relieving the Austrians from the danger of the Hungarian insurrection.[87] If the Hungarians had been victorious, Hungary must have been separated from Austria, and must have constituted a State essentially feeble, because not based upon the power of the masses of the population of that country, but exposed to the hostile feelings of the vast majority of those tribes and races which compose the people of Hungary.[88] If Austria had been defeated and had lost Hungary, and thereby had lost the reputation justly enjoyed of being so great a military power, Austria would have been much weakened, and Russia of necessity would, in that situation of affairs, have possessed the means of influencing in the greatest degree the councils of both Hungary and Austria; but the victory which Russia has aided Austria in obtaining, has placed the latter in a position of real power, which leaves the Austrian Government the complete arbiter of its conduct.

There will be assuredly be a close connexion between the Russian and Austrian Governments, arising from a community of interests, but not from compulsion on the one side, and feebleness on the other.

Your Lordship no doubt has heard that some feelings of dissatisfaction were created in the Austrian officers, by the conduct of the Russian General Rüdiger towards the prisoners (Hungarians) who were in his power.[89] The facts were made known here: and it is my belief that recommendations were immediately sent from hence by the Grand Duke,[90] Heir to the crown of Russia, to the Russian Officers, to put an end to all cause for such dissatisfaction. The Grand Duke was at Vienna on a visit to the Emperor of Austria to congratulate His Imperial Majesty on his Birthday. I hear that the young Emperor and

[87] On 1 May Emperor Franz Joseph officially asked Russia for military assistance. After some heavy fighting starting in June, the Hungarian revolutionary troops were defeated in August 1849.

[88] The population of the Kingdom of Hungary included, in addition to Hungarians, Bulgarians, Croats, Germans, Ruthenians, Serbs, and Slovaks.

[89] The complaint concerned the fact that the Russian officer corps displayed sympathy and a liberal attitude towards the Hungarian revolutionaries.

[90] Ivan Feodorovich Paskevich.

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the Grand Duke have shewn respectively a great liking and esteem one for the other.

The time is not come for me to offer any opinion fit to be submitted to Your Lordship respecting the measures that will be adopted by the Austrian Government for the settlement of Hungary. I will take the best means in my power to obtain early information. I have before told you that it was not intended at the time I wrote, by Prince Schwarzenberg and his Colleagues to give to the Hungarians, (if they should be subdued), the same constitution as that which it had been previously intended to establish.[91] I have also lately said that I do not think the Austrians will ever consent to place it in the power of the Hungarians to repeat the attacks upon the Imperial dominions, which have been made of late; It may be difficult to know in what way the Austrians will provide for the security they will seek to obtain against future danger from Hungary, but I presume that all the Fortresses will be kept in the hands of the Imperial Government, that the Army will be in great part composed of Hungarian soldiers as heretofore, but completely under the order of the Austrian Minister of War;[92] that a certain portion of the Revenue will be appropriated to Imperial purposes, and raised from Hungary, independent of any Diet or other Body that may be established in the country – but I do presume that the above mentioned things being done, there will be endeavours made to give to the Hungarians as much self government, as may be thought to be compatible with those arrangements. I do not know what may be feasible in that way.

With respect to the affairs of Germany, I believe I may repeat that Austria will continue the policy of declining to concur in the plans of Prussia for the settlement of Germany.[93] Your Lordship will know, (which I do not) if Prussia has any intention to take steps in defiance of Austria, of such a nature as will oblige the latter to depart from her present inaction. There are appearances in the proceedings of the Prussians of a disposition to insist upon carrying their own plans into execution, but it may be doubted if it will be found that Prussia has in fact the power to justify, politically speaking, an appeal to force. So far as I have information, I have reason to believe that those Kings on whose support the Prussians appear to rely, (the Kings of Hanover, Saxony, and Wurtemberg) are not likely to side with Prussia, if things

[91] The constitution imposed on 4 March 1849 was also expressly applied to Hungary, which forfeited its special position and was put on an equal footing with the other Crown Lands. From now on the crown lands included Croatia, Banat, and Transylvania, which had previously belonged to Hungary.

[92] Franz Graf Gyuali von Máros-Németh und Nadaska.

[93] On the Erfurt Union cf. n. 115 in Prussia section.

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are actually pushed to the extremity of military contest. It may also be questioned if Prussia has good ground to think that France will see with tranquillity the aggrandisement of Prussia, or that Russia will not oppose it. I hear from well informed men that the Prussian Army is not by any means adequate to maintain a war against such force as would perhaps be brought against it, if Austria should be attacked by the Prussian Government, and if that should be the case, it may be hoped that angry notes and hostile speeches may be the extent of the evil.

## FO 7/370: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 275, Vienna, 4 December 1849

*Preparation for carrying into effect the constitution of 4 March; constitution not applicable to Hungary; military force of Austrian Empire*

The Austrian Ministers are constantly occupied, in preparing and maturing the numerous and important arrangements, necessary for the carrying into effect the Constitution, promulgated by His Imperial Majesty on the 4th of March;[94] The Austrian Government has not deviated from the declared intention, that the Emperor's engagement should be fulfilled. It may perhaps be my duty to state my opinion, however little worth it may be, and I therefore will say, that I do not think it probable the Constitution to be established will work. I fear that no assembly however framed, and representing in the Capital, the various Countries which form the Empire, will afford the means for good Government, or for stability. I think there necessarily will arise contests between the assembly and the Sovereign, but I think also, that it is necessary it should be tried, so that if there shall be a miscarriage, all the world may see that faith has been kept by the Emperor and that the effect of honesty may be, to facilitate the arrangement of some system of Government, which will be more feasible, and more advantageous to the Country at large.

I have before acquainted Your Lordship, that it has not been intended to apply to Hungary, the Constitution of March 4th without many considerable alterations in it. The Rebellion in that Country has produced a state of things, most essentially different, from that which existed there previously. The Imperial Government will not place power in the hands of those, who exercised it before, with a view to the destruction of the Emperor's Authority, but I hope and believe, it is intended to endeavour to establish there, an administrative system,

[94] Cf. n. 75 in this section.

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which will give to all the population of Hungary, the same degree of enjoyment of civil rights, as will be possessed by the population of other parts of the Empire. I speak very generally, because I cannot pretend to know what will be, and have too often seen that what Governments have proposed to do, they have been unable to perform.

I believe there is not any intention, to diminish the military force of this Empire. The State of Europe is considered to be such, as not to justify any reduction. I am told that 600,000 men will be maintained. Great bodies of troops are placed, so as to be ready to meet any emergency in the North, I am confident that no aggression will be made from hence, for political passive resistance is the system. It is to be hoped and presumed that no active hostility will come from another quarter.

Monsr de Brignolles is here, and I believe there has been a satisfactory understanding established between the Austrian and Sardinian Governments, respecting the Treaty,[95] which appears to have been attacked by the opposition in the late assembly at Turin.

## FO 7/379: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 14, Vienna, 17 January 1850

*Feeling with regard to provincial constitutions; political state of the Empire; state of relations with Prussia and other foreign powers; situation in Hungary*

I believe that the Constitutions lately given to the Provinces are generally regarded with more favour than disfavour by those who are subjected to them.[96] The Constitutions prepared for the other Provinces are based upon the same principles, and will be put into action as soon as possible.

The time when the Central Representative Body will be installed in the Capital cannot be exactly fixed as yet; Many difficulties are expected to arise, when it is in action; The Government is prepared to meet them, if they come[;] It will resist all demands which are not in accordance with the perfect preservation of the monarchical Power.

The army is numerous and well provided in every respect. It is highly disciplined, and animated with the strongest 'Esprit de Corps'.

[95] The Peace of Milan, concluded between Austria and Sardinia (Piedmont) on 6 August 1849, confirmed Austria's possessions in Northern Italy and committed Sardinia to paying a war indemnity of 75 million francs.

[96] Imperial patents of 30 December 1849 granted constitutions and electoral regulations to Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Salzburg, Carinthia, Carniola, Silesia, Styria, Moravia, Bohemia, and the Tyrol with Vorarlberg. The rest of the provinces followed suit by September 1850. With the exception of Trieste, the constitutions, which were strongly modelled on earlier estate structures, never came into effect.

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The Funds for the expenses of the State, can be provided.

There are many discontented and ill affected people in the Capital, who, however, are not at all likely to incur personal danger, they like better to talk and write.

The lowest class of the people would be ready to fight for money or for plunder, but there is nobody to pay them now, and property is well guarded.

The Imperial Government is desirous to settle matters peaceably with Prussia, and in Germany; it will continue to temporize and avoid as long as possible, all offensive measures, but I do not think the Austrians will yield any thing, they consider to be a right. The Treaty of Vienna[97] is the ground on which they take their stand.

I see no reason to fear that affairs with Switzerland will be serious.[98]

The Piedmontese are distrusted, but the Imperial Ministers feel it is a national interest, that Piedmont should be independent and strong and a barrier against the French.

The King of Sardinia personally is well esteemed. The Italian Princes connected with the Imperial Family, will be firmly supported by Austria, until it shall appear that the political State of Italy rests upon some solid ground of security.

I have only to repeat here what I wrote long ago, that the Austrian Governmt. wishes the French to remain in the Roman State. The Austrians would not occupy Rome, and it is thought to be necessary, that the Pope should be protected[;] The Austrians will continue to occupy Bologna &c &c.

The relations between the Governments of Austria and Russia are intimate. I do not believe that there is on the part of Austria, an undue submission to Russia. I see no ground for believing that the Emperor of Russia has now an intention to aggrandize himself at the expense of Turkey. The Emperor has another object, and it would be a great fault on his part, to attempt to possess himself of the Danubian Provinces, for the Austrian Ministers are fully aware of the importance to their own country, of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and disunion might be the consequence.

The Austrians are in possession of all Fortresses in Hungary, and the warlike resources of the Country. The Magyars themselves are divided by Party feelings. The other Tribes composing the great majority of the Country Inhabitants are some of them distracted with domestic quarrels, and more of them are bitter foes to the Magyars. The power therefore of Hungary to resist Austria is much diminished, and possibly the will to make the attempt may be lessened, if the commercial

[97] Act of the Vienna Congress, 9 June 1815.

[98] Cf. n. 101 in this section.

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advantages are given to the Hungarians, which I am informed it is the intention of the Government to extend to them.

If I am not misinformed, the dissatisfaction or disloyalty existing more or less in the States and Provinces of the Empire, is not likely to break out so as to create serious danger to the Government; The question of Power has in these Countries been decided by the sword. It may again arise when the Representative body meets in Vienna. The Emperor is a soldier, his Crown has been preserved by the army, and in case of need, he will rely upon it, and probably will be firmly and zealously supported by it.

I think it my duty at the present time, to say something of the situation of affairs in this Country. I have endeavoured to be brief to save the Government trouble, therefore I have only touched upon topics very generally. I have presumed to add the expression of an opinion as to the future; It is in part formed from my experience of the past, corroborating what I had the honour to lay before Her Majesty's Government in my despatch No 53 dated Vienna, June 15th 1847.[99]

## FO 7/379: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 29, Vienna, 26 February 1850

*Belief that differences with Prussia will be settled peacefully; no force against Switzerland; internal state of Empire with regard to the revolutionary party and the constitution*

Affairs remain much in the same state as when I had the honour to address to Your Lordship my last despatches; Every thing is doing to complete the means to meet difficulties or dangers, from whatever source they may come, and demand military resistance. I am happy to say that I continue to believe the affairs with Prussia[100] will be settled by controversy with the Pen.

I am satisfied that the Imperial Government will not attempt to use force against Switzerland, and I have cause to believe, that the Government of that Country will shew its readiness to adopt such measures, as may be justly desired by that of Austria.[101]

The internal state of this Empire requires vigilance and energy on the part of the Government. The revolutionary Party has been beaten down, but is far from being destroyed, the embers of a social war exist here as elsewhere, though more smothered.

[99] Cf. Mösslang, Freitag and Wende, *British Envoys to Germany*, Volume II, pp. 529–532.

[100] Cf. pp. 157–159.

[101] In view of the anti-governmental agitation abroad, Austria pressed Switzerland to expel the German revolutionaries who had fled to Switzerland.

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The great majority of the people undoubtedly prefer domestic peace, to the promises and prospects held out by the Agitators, but audacity enables a minority to overpower and command despotically the timid masses who yield to fear, and it is necessary here still to maintain authority by the sword. There exists a social war, in its essence, a war of those who have nothing against those who have something.

The Austrian army is steady, and from its particular composition, will no doubt continue to be so. The binding principles of this Empire, are the Dynastic and the Military; The Emperor and the Soldier.

The Imperial Government is proceeding with the work of the Constitution[102] with sincerity, and with as much despatch as is consistent with careful attention to the execution of the vast work. Criticism, objections and censures, arise on all sides. I am certain that the Government intends to complete the task; but I retain the opinion, I have before expressed, that a central Representative Body will not last.

## FO 7/380: Viscount Ponsonby to Viscount Palmerston, No 64, Vienna, 7 May 1850

*Right of Emperor of Austria to convoke the 'Plenum' at Frankfurt; Austria will endeavour to avoid a quarrel with Prussia*

The Prussian Government as I am informed, does not admit the Presidency of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Austria and His right to convoke the Plenum to meet at Frankfort;[103] but, as I understand it, The Prussian Government will speak clearly as to the measures it will adopt, having previously communicated with the German Princes who are to meet on the 8th of May.

It is considered here that a denial by Prussia of the authority of the Emperor to convoke the Plenum, will be a denial of the authority of the Treaty of Vienna, and it is also asserted that the Treaty can only be legitimately altered by the joint act and consent of the Parties who signed it.[104]

I do not think that Prince Schwarzenberg knows what exactly are the intentions of the Prussian Government, nor has he, so far as I know, a clear opinion of the part which the greater number of the German

[102]Cf. n. 75 in this section.

[103]Cf. n. 143 in Frankfurt section.

[104]The contracting partners to the Act of the Vienna Congress of 9 June 1815 were the eight congress powers: Austria, Prussia, Britain, France, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, and Spain.

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Princes about to meet will adopt. Your Lordship will no doubt learn from Berlin the issue of these affairs and I have only to report what is known of it here.

I continue in my belief that the Austrian Government will endeavour to avoid a quarrel with Prussia. I do not think that Austria would make any serious opposition to the union of the possessions of the German Princes with the Kingdom of Prussia. Prince Schwarzenberg however spoke of the absorption of Brunswick in Prussia as a matter of great importance, as a thing much to be objected to, and as imminent.

## FO 7/380: Arthur Charles Magenis to Viscount Palmerston, No 19, Vienna, 18 June 1850

*Abolition of custom house line between Austria and Hungary; means of communication between Hungary and other Austrian provinces*

I have the honour to transmit herewith for Your Lordship's information in original and translation copy of a report addressed by the Minister of Finance Baron Krauss, to the Emperor recommending the Abolition of the Intermediate Custom House Line between the Kingdom of Hungary and its former dependencies[105] and the other Provinces of the Austrian Monarchy, followed by His Imperial Majesty's Patent sanctioning that measure, which is countersigned by the entire Ministry.[106]

Your Lordship will perceive from this document that the Im- and Exportation duties on Cattle are to cease at once, and that the remaining Duties are to expire on the 1st of next October. The Government Monopolies of Salt and Tobacco are alone to be subject to duty for a short period of time which the Minister of Finance adds in his report, he 'will do his best to shorten as much as possible', so that a perfect unity of Customs may be established throughout the whole Empire.

It is difficult to overrate the Importance of this measure, or the results which it is likely to produce on the material prosperity of the Empire; it will probably tend more to develop all the immense resources of Hungary and thereby to heal the wounds which the late Civil War has inflicted, than anything which has been done as yet. The mutual jealousies were such, and the distrust so great with which all measures proposed by the Austrian Government were viewed by

[105]Transylvania, Banat, and Croatia.

[106]Enclosures (only in translation): Report of the minister of finance, Baron Krauss, relative to the abolition of the intermediate custom house line, Vienna, 1 June 1850; Royal resolution, signed Schönbrunn, 7 June 1850; Royal patent, 7 June 1850.

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the Hungarian Diet, that it is hardly too much to say that such a change could alone have been effected after a Revolution.

It is the intention of the Government to make Roads which are so wanting to facilitate communications in Hungary, and in that respect the other Provinces of the Empire are certainly on a par with any Continental State. The Government has also purchased all the shares and taken upon itself the completion of the Railway connecting Vienna and Pesth, and they expect that a continuous Railway communication from Vienna to Szolnock on the Theiss will be opened at about the period in November when the Danube navigation usually closes.

The expense of keeping up the Intermediate line of Customs till some arrangement is come to respecting Salt and Tobacco, which are to be continued as Government Monopolies, while the previous source of Revenue arising from these Custom Houses amounting to 3,500,000. florins is stopped, will stimulate the endeavours of the Finance Minister to complete their entire Abolition.

I learn from Prince Schwarzenberg that no great difficulty is anticipated respecting tobacco which is only cultivated in certain Districts of Hungary, limited in number, as a Crop for sale; the Government at present is the chief customer for such Tobacco, and it will reserve to itself the right of purchasing the entire crop. Tobacco is, however, grown in small quantities and of an inferior quality by every Hungarian Peasant for his own use, and I understand that they are still to be allowed to grow enough for their personal consumption.

## FO 7/381: Arthur Charles Magenis to Viscount Palmerston, No 85, Vienna, 10 September 1850

*Conversation with Schwarzenberg about the withdrawal of the Holstein troops from Schleswig and the role of the German Confederation in settling the crisis; question of reconstitution of the Confederation and its recognition by European powers*

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Your Lordship's despatch No 59 by Post on the 5th Instant and of that marked No 60 by the Messenger Poignand yesterday.

In conformity with the Instructions contained in Your Lordship's despatch No 59, I represented to Prince Schwarzenberg this morning the expediency that all the German Governments should unite in employing their utmost influence to prevail on the Holstein Government to withdraw its Troops from Schleswig and to reduce its Army to a Peace establishment; I mentioned to His Highness the reports which had reached Your Lordship of the reinforcements

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The Holstein Army had received, and pointed out to him the embarrassment which their success against the Danish Army might produce, inasmuch as the Emperor of Russia might deem himself bound by his guarantee of Schleswig to Denmark to assist the Danes in expelling the Holstein Army from Schleswig.

Prince Schwarzenberg answered that the only means of arriving at the pacification of Holstein was through the German Confederation, and instead of supporting the power and adding weight to the efficiency of that Body, that every thing which we did had an exactly opposite effect. The Treaty of Peace of the 2nd of July[107] which had been negotiated by Prussia, in the name of the German Confederation, with Denmark, to acquire validity required the ratification of the German Confederation; and at a moment when Austria and the German Powers who partook of her views were endeavouring to reconstitute according to the legal and prescribed forms the Central Power of that Confederation, which alone was competent to ratify the Treaty in question, England had insisted on and obtained a separate exchange of ratifications between Prussia and the States which with Her were using every endeavour to prevent the reconstitution of the Confederation.[108] His Highness added that Denmark perceived the false Step She made by acceding to that mode of ratification, and that it was only when pressed by England, and at her instance as mediating Power that the Danish Government had consented. He stated that Austria as an European Power had little or no interest in the Danish question; that she had withstood the popular cry against Denmark two years ago even when a revolutionary Government had the direction of affairs here, and that if She now interfered in that question it was solely as a German Power, member of the Confederation. He enquired if I believed that Prussia was desirous of maintaining the integrity of Denmark, if that Power sincerely wished for the reestablishment of Peace in the Duchies, if her views with regard to them were disinterested? Well then if you believe the contrary and if England desires those objects, let her put herself on the side of those who are of the same way of thinking – let Her support and strengthen the German Confederation founded by Treaties[109] to which She is a Party, now legally reconstituted, and which alone is competent to ratify the Treaty of Peace and cause a cessation of hostilities in the Duchies.

[107]Cf. n. 176 in Prussia section.

[108]For the Federal Diet reconvened on 2 September cf. n. 163 in Frankfurt section. The Berlin Peace of 2 July 1850 was ratified by the Frankfurt Rump Diet on 3 September 1850.

[109]Act of the German Confederation of 8 June 1815 and Act of the Vienna Congress, 9 June 1815.

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His Highness proceeded to argue that the German Confederation had never ceased to exist, though its functions had been temporarily suspended two years ago, that Austria had no views of aggrandisement, and that she would decline any such offer even were it made to her; He added that the knowledge of Her disinterestedness was the reason of the support which She met with from other German Powers; and the contrary feeling was the reason that Prussia was regarded with so great suspicion. He said that he had no objection to Prussian aggrandisement, if any of the small limitrophe States felt that they were incapable of Self-Government and preferred being under Prussian Sway, but that He opposed her views of supremacy. That all endeavours of coming to a solution of the difficulties which had existed in Germany for the last two years having failed, it was clear to him that the legal reconstitution of the German Confederation was the only mode of solution; and that He thought that it would be wise policy for the great European Powers to support and strengthen and not to weaken that Confederation.

I do not believe that in the above summary I have omitted any of the arguments used by Prince Schwarzenberg being in my conversation with him this morning, which I promised to report without loss of time to Your Lordship.

I am told that Prince Schwarzenberg expresses himself well satisfied with the result of his interviews with Count Nesselrode, and says that the Policy pursued by the Austrian Cabinet on German Affairs had been approved of by His Excellency; I have reason to believe however that Count Nesselrode's approval was accompanied by the advice to use every endeavour to come to an amicable understanding with Prussia.

## FO 7/381: Arthur Charles Magenis to Viscount Palmerston, No 92, Vienna, 17 September 1850

*Conversation with Schwarzenberg about the attack on General Haynau in London*

Prince Schwarzenberg alluded today, for the first time, to the late attack on General Haynau in London,[110] and enquired what Her Majesty's Government intended doing to discover and punish

[110] On 4 September 1850, during a visit to England, General Haynau, who had been involved in the suppression of the Hungarian revolution and was notorious for his brutality, was attacked by indignant workers at a London brewery.

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the instigators and perpetrators of that wanton and cowardly assault.

I replied, that the only information which I had on this subject was derived from the Newspapers and that as yet I had received no Instructions on the subject from Your Lordship. I expressed on my own account, a very sincere regret and the strongest disgust for what had occurred, feelings which I was happy to see appeared to be partaken of by the great majority of Englishmen.

Prince Schwarzenberg then proceeded to say, that he was glad to see that most of the Newspapers in London, even those which habitually were opposed to Austrian policy, had united in stigmatizing this disgraceful breach of our national hospitality in the person of an Austrian Subject of a very high position; he said that Baron Koller had addressed to Your Lordship a note on the subject; though General Haynau had declined making any personal complaint, and that He, Prince Schwarzenberg, had since addressed a temperate but firm Instruction to the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires on the subject; he said that the present moment when Your Lordship was probably absent from London or only came there for short periods, was unfavourable for a speedy answer, but he concluded that as Great Britain sent her fleets to demand redress for insults offered to her own subjects,[111] alacrity be shewn in granting satisfaction where insult had been offered to the Subject of a foreign Nation in England.

With the exception of this latter expression, I must do his Highness the justice to state that He spoke with great moderation on this subject. He said he was convinced that it would be found that foreign Refugees in London were at the bottom of this attack, and he added that He had learned from Leipzig that a Doctor Frank who had taken an active political part in Germany in 1848, and was notorious for his democratical opinions, and who now is a refugee in England, was employed in the Brewery of Messrs Barclay and Perkins.

General Haynau has arrived here, and I learn from a person who has seen and conversed with him on this subject, that he does not speak with any acrimony. He says, upon what grounds I know not, that He is convinced that the late attack upon him was not got up by the Hungarian Refugees.

[111] Schwarzenberg alluded to the Don Pacifico Affair of 1850, when Great Britain sent the Royal Navy to Greece to blockade Greek ports.

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## FO 7/381: Arthur Charles Magenis to Viscount Palmerston, No 102, Vienna, 1 October 1850

*Conversation with Schwarzenberg about Prussia's attitude towards the planned armed intervention in Electoral Hesse and Holstein by Frankfurt Rump Diet; war between Austria and Prussia in interest of neither of them*

[. . .] Your Lordship will have learned from Mr Howard the decided tone used by M. de Radowitz the newly appointed Prussian Minister for Foreign Affairs, respecting the contemplated armed interference on the part of the lately constituted Diet of the Germanick Confederation in the affairs of the Electorate of Hesse and Holstein.[112] The reply of this Cabinet to those communications was despatched to Berlin as I understand on the 28th Ultimo, and I have been informed by a person who perused Prince Schwarzenberg's note, that His Highness has declared that the Diet at Frankfort would pursue the course which it had laid down on those questions, and interfere, if necessary by force of Arms to support it, notwithstanding the Prussian menace to oppose by Armed Force such interference. I have not seen myself the note in question, but the information which has been given me respecting it, was confirmed by Prince Schwarzenberg in a conversation which I had with him this morning.

His Highness observed that Prussia had commenced by declaring, that She did not acknowledge the Central Organ of the Diet as at present constituted at Frankfort, and consequently that she could not recognise the Resolutions emanating from that Body as binding either on Her, or the Governments which participated in her views with regard to its legitimacy; She now went further, and declared that the Resolutions of the Diet were not binding even for such Governments as recognised its competency, and invoked its aid and assistance; that it was impossible to admit such a doctrine, and that M. de Radowitz wished to lay down the law, as if he were the Duke de Bassano publishing the will and decisions of the Emperor Napoleon in the plenitude of his power. Such a course of proceedings could not or would not be tolerated.

The Glove which has been thrown down by Prussia, has been taken up by Austria, and a contest would appear to be inevitable if both parties persist in their intentions; A war between these two German Powers, notwithstanding their antagonism, appears, however to be so much opposed to both of their interests, that I trust some means of averting that calamity may be found. Some of my German Colleagues are of opinion that General Radowitz will not be supported by His

[112] Cf. n. 160 in Frankfurt section, and n. 85 in Hanse Towns section.

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Prussian Majesty if his wish be to push matters to extremities, and to seek a solution of difficulties in an appeal to Arms; I cannot pretend to give an opinion on a point with which I am entirely unacquainted; but I must observe if the Prussian Minister supposes that He is playing at Brag, and that He has only to bid high to cause this Cabinet to throw up their cards and give up the Game, He is much mistaken: for I see no disposition on the part of Prince Schwarzenberg to allow himself to be intimidated or to decline the issue.

I could not avoid remarking to His Highness that if they were to enter the Lists, I regretted that it was not in support of a worthier cause than that of Hesse Cassel, and that it appeared to me that there was nothing unconstitutional on the part of the States of that Country refusing the Supplies, when the Government in the first instance had ceased to conform to the Constitution.[113] He answered the Hesse Cassel cause was far from a bad one, that the States had no Right to refuse the supplies, and that it was a contest between democracy on the one hand, and the monarchical principle on the other; and that unless they wished and were prepared to see democracy prevalent in Germany, they must support that cause. His Highness on the other hand said he neither justified the Elector of Hesse nor his Minister M. Hassenpflug.

I cannot pretend to decide whether the Decree of the Diet in 1832,[114] declaring that no States had a right to refuse the supplies necessary for carrying on the Government, places, as many of my German Colleagues here assert, the States of Hesse Cassel in the wrong; but it admits of no doubt that Prussia declared when a similar course was proposed to be pursued in her own Country, that it was illegal, and that its Authors were Traitors to their Country.

## FO 7/381: Arthur Charles Magenis to Viscount Palmerston, No 120, Vienna, 19 October 1850

*Conversation with Schwarzenberg about the appointment of an Austrian minister in London*

I availed myself of the earliest opportunity which Prince Schwarzenberg's absence from Vienna has permitted to fulfil the Instructions conveyed to me in Your Lordship's despatch No 81 of the 8th Instant, and to enquire from His Highness what the intentions of the Austrian Government were as to naming a Minister to the Court of Her Majesty.

[113] Cf. n. 156 in Frankfurt section.
[114] Article II of the Six Articles of 28 June 1832.

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I observed to Prince Schwarzenberg that Her Majesty's Government had for some time past done more than diplomatick etiquette and strict reciprocity required; that Her Majesty had continued to be represented at this Court by an Ambassador[115] for two years, during which period the Austrian Government had never been represented by a Diplomatick Agent of a higher Rank than an Envoy, and that at the present moment I had the character of Minister Plenipotentiary while their Representative was merely Chargé d'Affaires; we took in the present instance the initiative in addressing this enquiry, though Count Colloredo had left London long before Lord Ponsonby had been recalled from Vienna, and in conformity with Your Lordship's Instructions, I stated that if The Emperor of Austria appoints a Minister to London, that The Queen will appoint a Minister to Vienna.

Prince Schwarzenberg replied: 'The Emperor will certainly appoint a Minister to London', he admitted what I had stated as to our having done more than diplomatick reciprocity required, but added that in my own case the difference arose from the organisation of our diplomatick service. Upon my pressing him to know when he would carry out the intention of His Imperial Majesty in this respect, he said 'I have not got a Minister ready in my sleeve' (dans ma manche), and confessed to me that at present he had no idea who that Minister would be. He enquired from me whether I knew whom it was proposed to name here, to which I answered that I had no knowledge of Your Lordship's intentions on that subject; He then asked if Your Lordship was not satisfied with Baron Koller to which I pleaded a similar ignorance; and he added 'We are perfectly satisfied with You'.

I replied that however grateful I might feel for the expression of that favourable opinion, my first duty was to endeavour to fulfil Your Lordship's Instructions, and that I must consequently in candour tell him that I thought it would be for the advantage of our mutual good relations, that he should quickly name a Minister to London, by which Her Majesty would be enabled to manifest to the world a similar proof of good understanding.

Before leaving Prince Schwarzenberg I said, 'Do you authorise me to declare to Lord Palmerston that it is the Emperor's intention to name a Minister to London shortly?' (sous peu) to which His Highness answered 'Yes, bientôt'.

[115] Viscount Ponsonby; he left Vienna on 31 May 1850.

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FO 7/382: Arthur Charles Magenis to Viscount Palmerston, No 134, Vienna, 10 November 1850

*State of affairs between Austria and Prussia with regard to the conflict in Electoral Hesse; attack on Austrian troops at Neuhof (Bronzell); conciliatory policy of Austria*

I very much regret that I have been unable to see Prince Schwarzenberg these last two days, although I have waited a long time at the Chancery of State for that purpose; His Highness was so much occupied with business that he was unable to receive me.

It would have been satisfactory to me to be able to acquaint Your Lordship with the resolutions of this Government at a moment when the grave question of Peace or War must be decided on. Though I am unable to acquaint Your Lordship with the decision which has been come to from any communication direct from Prince Schwarzenberg to myself, I nevertheless believe that I can entirely depend upon the accuracy of what I am about to report.

Intelligence was received here yesterday afternoon by telegraph from the Austrian Minister Count Thun at Frankfort, that five soldiers of the 14th Austrian Battalion of Chasseurs forming the advanced guard of General Taxis' division had been wounded by the fire of the Prussian Troops on the morning of the 8th Instant at Neuhof, between Schlüchtern and Fulda.[116] Prince Taxis then concentrated in position his force, expecting a general attack, and the Prussian General appears to have adopted the same manoeuvre. I ought to add, that Prince Taxis so little expected an attack that the Austrian Chasseurs had not even loaded their Rifles when they were fired on. Some time after (the exact interval I cannot state) a Flag of Truce arrived from the Prussian General[117] informing Prince Taxis that He had received Instructions from his Government to evacuate the Province of Fulda, which is not included in the Prussian military line of communications, and to withdraw to Hersfeld which is. I am told that Count Thun announced that He was about to assemble the members of the Diet, in order to conform with previous Instructions, to declare War against Prussia upon the first Shot being fired by the Prussian Army against the Federal Corps in the Hesse Electorate; it thus appears that in the event of war, the declaration is to emanate from and in the name of the Diet, and not from Vienna.

I am informed that Prince Schwarzenberg has shewn the most praiseworthy forbearance and spirit of conciliation on this occasion, which had he acted up to previously declared intentions must have

[116] For the incident at Neuhof or Bronzell cf. n. 169 in Frankfurt section.
[117] Karl Graf von der Groeben.

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been regarded as the commencement of war. His Highness has, as I am told, instructed Count Thun by Telegraph, to stop the any [sic] Declaration of War on the part of the Diet at Frankfort, until he should be made acquainted with the explanation which the Prince had required from the Cabinet of Berlin. His Highness has instructed Baron Prokesch[118] to demand explanations from the Prussian Government on the lamentable occurrence which had taken place at Neuhof, and further, whether it was decided to withdraw the Prussian Troops from those parts of the Electorate of Hesse which were not included in the Prussian military line of communication. Baron Prokesch is to regulate his conduct by the answer which he may receive to the above demands, and to remain at Berlin, or to ask for his passports according as that answer may be favourable or the contrary.

The Austrian Corps of 15000 men from the Vorarlberg under the command of General Legedics was ordered not to pass the Hessian frontiers when it was learnt here – before however the arrival of the above mentioned telegraphick despatch – that directions had been forwarded by the Prussian Government to evacuate Fulda; this Government has thus shown a desire to meet conciliation by conciliation.

I have learned from more quarters than one, and from sources which I have reason to believe to be perfectly trustworthy, that Prince Schwarzenberg has shewn a spirit of conciliation and a desire to maintain Peace, if possible, which was not expected by at least one of my informants. If then he be met in a corresponding spirit by the Cabinet of Berlin, and if he can be prevailed on to allow some short time to M. De Manteuffel to bring about the change of policy which it is believed he wishes to effect, the imminent perils of these last days may still be avoided. It was my wish to speak to His Highness in this sense and to press upon him the expediency of supporting as far as he could, without sacrifice of principle, the Ministry of M. de Manteuffel, which induced me to try to see him these two last days; I shall however see him before the departure by Berlin on the 12th of the next Messenger, and I hope I may then be enabled to confirm to Your Lordship what on the whole may be considered as a more favourable report of the present crisis than I could have ventured to anticipate.

[118] Schwarzenberg's instructions were sent to Prokesch by cable immediately after the incident of 8 November.

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FO 7/382: Arthur Charles Magenis to Viscount Palmerston, No 148, Vienna, 3 December 1850

*Convention agreed on at Olmütz; interview with Schwarzenberg about the convention and the state of Austria's military*

[. . .] The Prussian ratification of the convention agreed on by Prince Schwarzenberg and M. de Manteuffel at Olmütz,[119] was received here yesterday by telegraph. I obtained a perusal of that convention, but have not as yet been able to procure a copy of it to forward to Your Lordship. As it is probable, however, that Your Lordship will have received a copy of it from Berlin, I hope that my having failed to obtain one will be of less importance.

It provides for the settlement of the questions of Hesse Electorate and of Schleswig Holstein by the joint action of the Troops under the orders of the Diet at Frankfort, and of Prussia: and fixes on Dresden as the seat of the free Conferences to be convoked by Austria and Prussia conjointly, for the future settlement of the German confederation; the Plenipotentiaries to these Conferences are to meet if possible by the 15th of this month.

The Prussian Government engages to transmit immediately orders to its Generals in Hesse to offer no impediment to the advance and passage of the Federal Troops by its military Roads; and the two Governments undertake to endeavour to obtain the consent of their Ally the Elector of Hesse, that Cassel should be occupied for the present by an Austrian and by a Prussian Battalion of Infantry to maintain order there.

The two Governments are to address conjointly a Summons to the Stattholderate of Holstein to withdraw its Troops behind the Eider, and to reduce the Holstein Army to one third of its present amount. They are to use at the same time their influence with the Cabinet of Copenhagen to reduce the Danish force in Schleswig, and to leave there only the amount of Troops considered requisite for the maintenance of order and tranquillity.

I had a short conversation with Prince Schwarzenberg today on the subject of this Convention, and congratulated him on the ratification of an Act which I hoped would enable the two Powers to come to an understanding on present differences, and to escape the unfortunate alternative of a War which before the Conferences at Olmütz appeared so imminent.

His Highness did not appear to me to be so sanguine in his hopes as I had expressed myself. He said until Prussia commenced disarming,

[119] For the Punctation of Olmütz cf. n. 177 in Frankfurt section.

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he should not feel satisfied with her intentions; he added that decisions come to and promises made by that Government had been so often and so quickly changed, that he could not feel sure even now, that such might not again take place. As yet he had received no notification that Prussia had begun to disarm, although it had been agreed on at Olmütz. He answered in reply to my enquiry, whether Prussia was to take the initiative in disarming, that it might be done by both Powers simultaneously, and he appeared to apprehend difficulties from the warlike propensities of a majority of the Second Chamber at Berlin, a fact of which He told me He was informed from private and undoubted sources.

I enquired from him whether the question of Schleswig-Holstein was to be treated by the free Conferences at Dresden; and I learned from His Highness that Prussia desired that it should be treated there, but that he did not think it possible.

The impression produced on me by my interview with Prince Schwarzenberg of this day, was that he seems to attach less importance to the convention of Olmütz, than is generally felt for it. He appeared to be persuaded of M. de Manteuffel's personal desire of Peace, and of his endeavours to prevent its disturbance. On the other hand his feeling of uncertainty and distrust as to what may happen at Berlin is undiminished; and he seemed to prefer the risk of actual war, to the uncertainty and expense of an armed Peace. He laid stress on the efficiency and state of discipline of the Austrian Army, and its being prepared for every eventuality; he praised the absence of excitement on the part of the Army and Publick against Prussia, but felt persuaded of the efficiency of the one, and of the support of the other in case of War. He felt no apprehensions either for Italy or for Hungary, which He knew were regarded by Prussia as the weak points of Austria, and from whence in the event of War a diversion in her favour might be looked for. In the former country he said there still remained an Army more numerous than that with which Marshall Radetzky had successfully overcome the efforts of the whole Italian Peninsula, and he had no fears. In the latter country there remained a very considerable force, 46,000. I think he said, and it was so organised that any partial movement would be promptly suppressed, should any such occur, and that the promptitude and vigour with which they would act in such a case, would, he thought, prevent its repetition.

I may add that the communication by Railroad with Pesth and Szolnock from this Capital will be completed in a few days, and will very much increase the military power by the great facility which it offers of transporting Troops there. It also will facilitate the provisioning of the large Army in Bohemia, which is beginning to press heavily on the resources of that Country. As an instance of

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this new element in War, I may mention that 76,000. men and 120. pieces of cannon with their horses have been transported by Railroad from this to Prague; and that the Directors of the Railroad have calculated that they could on an emergency and by interrupting all other communication, transport 20000. men from hence to Prague in twenty four hours.

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