# WÜRTTEMBERG

# (STUTTGART)

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# STUTTGART

## FO 82/68: Alexander Malet to Viscount Palmerston, No 28, Stuttgart, 10 July 1851

*Debate over Basic Rights Law; tensions between king and aristocracy; reform proposals*

I have very rarely thought it requisite to occupy your Lordship's attention with any details of local affairs unless they had an influence on, or connexion with, the general politics of the German Confederation. The present condition of Wurtemberg may however appear to deserve some attention as exceptional, and nearly singularly so, for besides Weimar it is the only state which retains the "Grundrechte" as reported to your Lordship in Lord Augustus Loftus's Despatch No 4 of the 2nd instt.[1]

Whether in this matter the Chambers, the Constitutional organs of Government, will be left to their own independent legislation, or whether the Government will receive orders, and in case of non compliance be coerced by the Diet, are questions already mooted.[2]

Lord Augustus Loftus has entered at some length into the question of the state of parties in this Country, and the prospects of their coming to an arrangement of their differences, which he seems to think may be brought about; but I apprehend the grounds of Disagreement are too great, and the Conflict of opposite principles too decided to render a good understanding between the Estates of the Realm at all probable.

That a majority of the second Chamber will support the general Principles of the Ministerial Project of Constitution[3] as reported by Lord Augustus Loftus is quite certain, inasmuch as that Project is pretty well known to have been elaborated with the Concurrence and

[1]The *Reichsgesetz, betreffend die Grundrechte des deutschen Volkes* was adopted by the Frankfurt National Assembly on 20 December 1848 and promulgated on 27 December. Formally a part of the 1849 *Reichsverfassung*, the Basic Rights Law guaranteed individual, civil, and political rights. It was announced in Württemberg by the ministerial decree of 16 January 1849.

[2]On 23 August 1851, the Federal Diet annulled the Basic Rights Law and – in a second resolution (*Beschluß zur Wahrung der öffentlichen Sicherheit und Ordnung im Deutschen Bund*) – called upon the German governments to revise their respective constitutions, laws, and institutions according to federal law. Federal intervention was threatened for cases of non-compliance.

[3]The constitutional project, which had been under discussion since 1849, was presented to the second chamber on 13 June 1851.

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assent of Mr Römer and his adherents, who alone hold the balance, if they do not possess a clear majority in that Assembly but the Provisions of this projected Constitution, especially as regards the first Chamber,[4] are such that without something like suicidical Propensities that Body could not possibly vote their adoption; nor is it likely that the offer of any acceptable Compromise will originate with either Party.

To analyse the state of Parties in this section of the Confederation, it is necessary to go a great deal farther back than to the events of the years 1848 – 1849 or the effects of encroachment then developed on one side, and timid relinquishment of long enjoyed rights and Privileges on the other.

It is notorious that the last and the Present Kings of this Country, so far from calling to their Councils, or placing about their Persons the Representatives of the ancient Nobility, have pursued a systematic Policy of pulling down and lowering the whole Class. Rarely, if ever, has any man possessed of ancient name, and still less if to that advantage was joined independence in point of fortune, enjoyed any Post of trust or emolument, or been the depositary of His Sovereign's Confidence.

Such a system could not fail of its fruits, and when in 1848 the Crown was menaced, not only was the Royal Prerogative found to be without friends in the Ranks of its natural supporters, but they, with few exceptions viewed its humiliation with indifference if not with Complacency.

The strong motives of identical interests, perhaps even of self Preservation, were insufficient to engage the Aristocracy in any Combination to withstand the Encroachments of the popular movement, and resentment for the usage they had endured at the hands of Their Kings, led them to throw themselves without resistance under the Roof of Democracy, which trampled alike on their own Privileges and upon the Prerogative of the Crown.

Thus it was that those whom their own Princes had humiliated and kept aloof, fell an easy Prey to the rapacity of Demagogues, and the administration of Mr Römer which dragged the Crown from Concession to Concession, despoiled the territorial nobility not only of antiquated and undue Privileges but of undoubted Rights, and effected under the sanction of legal forms, irreparable Breaches in the Fortunes of many ancient but impoverished Houses, while none even of the wealthiest escaped without severe losses.

[4]According to the ministerial proposal, the first chamber was to be appointed on the basis of property and tax payments and not – as in the constitution of 1819 – on the basis of feudal privileges. The royal princes, the representatives of the Churches, the university, and ten persons chosen by the king were additional members.

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Mr Römer therefore and his Party, are justly looked upon with fear and hatred by the whole class whom his Policy attacked; whether that Policy was approved by the Crown or not, is immaterial, Mr Römer had probably his own views in acting as he did, and aimed at Republican Institutions; but when the new Government,[5] which replaced that of Mr Römer, gives scarcely an indication of any effort being in Contemplation, either to confer real political influence upon, or restore the material Prosperity of, the Aristocracy by Birth and Property, but on the contrary introduced, with the sanction of the Crown, a project of Constitution which would establish a first Chamber partly dependent on the Crown, and partly Nominees of the same Classes who elect the second Chamber[6] and with no hereditary right of sitting but to Princes of the Blood royal, it is not surprising that seeing themselves wholly abandoned, the members of the first Chamber should at length be driven to concert measures of Resistance.

Your Lordship will, I think, see that Compromise or good understanding of any kind between Parties so exasperated, and apparently intent on mutual ruin must be a matter of extreme difficulty.

Fusion between Classes where the lines of demarcation are so strongly marked as they have long been and still are in Germany, by usage and by legislation, is almost equally difficult, and it seems hardly possible that a new and harmonious order of things should arise, without violent transition, or at any rate till a very considerable lapse of time aided by prudent institutions shall have prepared the way.

## FO 82/68: Alexander Malet to Viscount Palmerston, No 40, Stuttgart, 16 October 1851

*Prussian treaty with Hanover creating ruptures in the* Zollverein*; commercial attitudes in south Germany towards Prussia and Austria*

During my stay in the Grand Duchy of Baden I had my attention frequently called to the efforts made by a portion of the Press, and

[5]The Römer administration was dismissed in October 1849 and a new government was formed under Johannes von Schlayer. In his dispatch, Malet refers to the conservative cabinet under Joseph Freiherr von Linden that followed in July 1850.

[6]In his analysis, Malet conflates the different proposals for reform made by the Württemberg government since December 1849. The scheme proposed in June 1851 (see n. 4 in this section) was based on property qualifications, so the aristocracy would have retained a majority in the first chamber.

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by certain partizans of Austrian policy, political and commercial, to promote the existing tendencies in southern Germany to separate from the Prussian Commercial union and enter on a similar connexion with Austria.

The recent Treaty between Prussia and Hanover[7] has offered a new test for the friends of Austria, and it has been broadly asserted by the Protectionists, that the accession of Hanover to the Prussian Union has been contrived by England and is chiefly intended to act as a counterpoise to the leaning of the southern states towards a more restrictive Commercial Code, in which direction their presumed interests and instances were beginning to have an influence on Prussia.

The treaty with Hanover is generally believed to contain secret clauses which have not been communicated to the several members of the Commercial Union. Their assent to its Provisions, is, as Your Lordship is no doubt aware, requisite before Hanover can be aggregated to the Union: still Prussia has not yet asked for this necessary formula.

As the Case now stands the system of Division of Proceeds of Customs Duties, established for Hanover, is at variance with that laid down for the other states of the Union.[8]

The result, as stated to me by Persons well versed in the question, must be, that Prussia, within the present year, will either have to denounce the original Customs Union, or to abandon the treaty with Hanover.

If the Customs Union is not denounced this year, it remains in force till the end of the year 1865.

Should this be, as I am assured, a correct view of the Case, the matter is of the greatest importance and may reasonably create considerable anxiety as to the Course which Prussia will pursue.

In my own opinion she may fearlessly take her own line of policy. The financial Condition of Austria is too alarming to allow of the rulers of any other states, willingly taking such steps as should involve their Countries in such embarrassments.

I have spoken with many friends of Austria both in Baden and Wurtemberg and I have clearly seen that this is the stumbling block.

They dislike Prussia, they are anti liberals, they are protectionists, but when you ask them how they would like to see a paper circulation of six Kreutzer notes,[9] they have little to say in favour of a connexion which would entail such a contingency.

[7]See n. 9 in Frankfurt section.

[8]See n. 14 in Hanover section.

[9]A low-denomination Austrian banknote. Austrian paper money was inconvertible, and depreciated in value throughout the 1850s in relation to silver.

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Still the advantages of a closer Commercial connexion with Austria than that which now exists, are strongly felt, and any measure which would do away with a line of custom Houses and all their contingent expenses and vexations, reaching from the frontier of France to Cracow, would be of incalculable benefit to both parties.

The new Austrian tariff[10] is looked for with great anxiety, as it may lead the way to some understanding.

But taking a general view of the question, I feel I do not risk much in surmising, that in spite of all the efforts made to detach the southern German states from Prussia, they will not break the connexion, but will be held to it quite as much or more by the risk of financial difficulties in case of uniting themselves with Austria, than by their attachment to the system or even by the real advantages they have reaped from their customs Union with Prussia.

## FO 82/70: Lord Augustus Loftus to Earl of Malmesbury, No 16, Baden, 7 May 1852

*Dispute between Baden government and Archbishop of Freiburg over memorial service for Grand Duke Leopold; wider demands of Catholic Church; religious divisions in Baden*

An incident has occurred here on the occasion of a religious solemnity ordered by the Government in memory of the late Grand Duke, which I deem worthy of being reported to Your Lordship, as offering a striking example of the pretensions of the Catholic Church to exercise an hierarchical Authority independent of the State.

His Royal Highness The Prince Regent had by a public ordonnance commanded a Funeral service to be held in all the Catholic Churches of the Grand Duchy on Monday the 10th Instant[.] The Arch Bishop of Freyburg has so far interposed, as not only to alter the nature of the ceremony, but also to change the day which the Regent had expressly appointed: thus acting in direct disobedience to the ordonnance, and in contradiction with the conduct pursued by his predecessors on similar occasions in 1811. 1818. 1830.[11]

[10]The imperial patent (for all crown lands) of 6 November 1851 had introduced a new tariff from 1 February 1852.

[11]Despite the decree of Prince Regent Friedrich on 27 April, Hermann von Vicari, Archbishop of Freiburg, prohibited requiem masses on 10 May for the late Protestant Grand Duke Leopold. Instead, he ordered that only a funerary oration and Psalm-singing were to be allowed, and this would take place on the evening of Sunday 9 May. The proclamation of the Baden government of 6 May insisted upon the requiem mass, and cited the precedents of full funerary services for Karl Friedrich (1811), Karl (1818), and Ludwig (1830).

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This wilful act of open opposition on the part of the Arch Bishop to a decree of the Regent has called forth an official Proclamation signed by the Minister of the Interior, (of which I annex a copy in original and in translation.)[12] stating that the service as ordered by the Archbishop would not be considered by the Government in the light of that commanded by the Regent, and calling with somewhat of menace, on all the Catholic Priesthood and Burgo Masters of Towns to obey the injunctions of the Regent.

With reference to this incident it is necessary for me further to apprize Your Lordship that at this moment there are subjects of contestation between the Grand Ducal Government and the Catholic Hierarchy, and that a conference of the commissaries of the Five States forming the Ecclesiastical Province of the Upper Rhine, is about to be held at Carlsruhe to take into consideration certain demands made by the Arch Bishop of Freyburg and the Four Catholic Bishops, who claim for the Catholic Church a greater extension of temporal and spiritual power in their respective Dioceses.[13]

In these demands the Catholic Hierarchy expressly call for more independent communication with the Holy See: a greater controul in the appointment and superintendence of the Catholic Priesthood: entire authority over the Catholic Seminaries, and a sphere of action, undivided and free from the state. These demands are not couched in the temperate tone becoming members of a Religious Body: they are not made in the form of a special favor: They are conveyed in naughty and exacting terms: they are loudly claimed as their due prerogative: their indisputable Right.

The Grand Duchy of Baden, ruled by a Protestant House yet containing a Population two thirds of which are Catholic would appear to be selected by the Catholic Hierarchy of the Upper Rhenish Province as the theatre of their ambitious projects and is perhaps viewed by them with more jealousy and umbrage than the other states of the Province, where the great majority of the Population is Protestant. During the contention on the subject of mixed marriages which at one time menaced the Religious Peace of Northern Germany,[14] the Catholic Church in this Ecclesiastical Province rested on so legal and harmonious a footing with their

[12]Enclosures: proclamation of Grand Ducal Minster of Interior, Adolf Freiherr Marschall von Bieberstein, regarding the celebration of Funeral Service in the Catholic Church, 6 May 1852 (original and translation).

[13]The ecclesiastical province consisted of the Archbishopric of Freiburg (Baden) and the Bishoprics of Mainz (Hesse-Darmstadt; Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler), Fulda (Electoral Hesse; Bishop Christoph Florentius Kött), Rottenburg (Württemberg; Bishop Josef von Lipp), and Limburg (Nassau; Bishop Peter Josef Blum).

[14]Loftus refers to the Prussian church conflict over mixed marriages (1837–1841).

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respective Governments, that happily no cause of dissension arose, or any rupture of their amicable relations. But the time has arrived when the Catholic Church both here and elsewhere (even in Bavaria) is struggling to obtain a temporal as well as a spiritual ascendancy, and when no longer content to obey, she seeks to command. The instance which I have now reported to Your Lordship, though in itself of a trifling character, is of a nature to shew the pretensions to which the Catholic Hierarchy lay claim and offers a distinct proof that their object is to exercise a power independent of the state.

I am reduced to think from a resolution taken at a meeting of the Catholic Hierarchy under the Presidency of the Arch Bishop of Freyburg in March last,[15] that this act of the Arch Bishop is designedly intended to throw down the gauntlet of open hostility to the Grand Ducal Government with the intention of seeing how far they dare advance, and in the hope perhaps of intimidating the Grand Ducal Government into yielding concessions to their demands. It may and probably will have a contrary effect, and it is not improbable that a very large portion of the Catholic subjects of the Grand Duchy will out of respect to the late Grand Duke, obey the command of the Regent rather than that of the Archbishop. There is already a division in the Catholic Body, and unless the Arch Bishop of Freyburg may think fit to withdraw his ill judged opposition, this occurrence may tend to widen it.

I shall have the Honor of informing Your Lordship more fully upon this subject when the result of the Conference at Carlsruhe is made known. Not wishing to take up Your Lordship [*sic*] time with long details, I have confined my remarks to a general outline of the causes which have given rise to the incident I have thought it my Duty to report.

## FO 82/74: Arthur Charles Magenis to Earl of Clarendon, No 8, Stuttgart, 28 February 1853

*Prosecution of Professor Gervinus for high treason; observations on Gervinus' work, opinions, and reputation*

A prosecution which was commenced by the Grand Ducal Government of Baden at Manheim [*sic*] on the 24th instant against

[15]In their memorandum of March 1851, the bishops addressed their sovereigns and demanded the abolition of state supremacy and superintendence over the Catholic Church, which had been instituted in the joint *landesherrliche Verordnungen* of 1830. Their specific demands included: the privilege of training and appointment of priests; the maintenance of Catholic schools; the establishment of religious societies and associations; and the power of disposal of Church property.

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Professor Gervinus of the University of Heidelberg, has created considerable sensation not only in the Grand Duchy of Baden, but generally in Germany. The case for the prosecution as well as for the defence was closed on the same day, but the judgement of the Court will not be delivered till the 2nd of March, and I will lose no time in transmitting it to Your Lordship as soon as it shall have been made publick.

In elucidation of this Affair I enclose herewith copy of a Report which Lord Augustus Loftus addressed to me previously to his leaving Baden, and containing in original and translation the act of accusation brought by the Baden Attorney General[16] against Professor Gervinus for the tendency of his Work "Introduction to the History of the 19th Century",[17] and the reply of the latter to this accusation.[18]

The Government prosecutor calls on the Court to declare the defendant guilty of incitement to High Treason by the Press, and of instigation against Constitutional Monarchy, and to condemn him to four months imprisonment, with costs, a lenient sentence if guilty of what he is taxed with.

I am informed by I believe competent Authority, that this persecution of Professor Gervinus who bears a high reputation at Heidelberg both for his learning and personal character, has been chiefly instigated by Baron d'Uria chief of the Police there, and leader of the political Party professing absolutist opinions opposed to the Professor, and it is said that the prosecution has rather displeased the Prince Regent of Baden.[19] Professor Gervinus is supposed by his opponents to belong to the so called Gagern or Gotha Party,[20] though I am told he does not, but he certainly professes very liberal political views, and the present prosecution is perhaps more against the opinions of his supposed Party than against himself.

The "Introduction to the history of the 19th Century" is of a highly German philosophical character, and intended merely for very cultivated and scientific minds, and it would not have probably had many readers among the masses. It appears to me very probable that this very prosecution and the prohibition of the Work may procure for it a general notoriety which it would not otherwise have obtained.

[16] Eugen von Seyfried.

[17] *Einleitung in die Geschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1853).

[18] Enclosures: copy of report from Loftus to Magenis, dated 12 February 1853; accusation laid by the Attorney General at Mannheim against the writing of Professor Gervinus, dated 12 January 1853 (original and translation); reply of Professor Gervinus delivered to the Bailiwick of Heidelberg, dated 28 January 1853 (original and translation).

[19] Friedrich.

[20] For the Gotha Party see n. 7 in Frankfurt section.

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It states, that in modern as well as in ancient history a regular transition from a monarchical to aristocratical, and from aristocratical to monarchical forms of Government may be traced, and that from the observation of this fact, combined with the present state of Europe, and the existing state of America, it was not improbable that towards the end of this Century (he fixes the fulfilment of his prophecy about 1890) the monarchical form of Government in Europe would be pretty generally replaced by the democratic, to prepare the way for Constitutional and democratic Monarchy.

Professor Gervinus in his reply complains of being judged by isolated passages of his work, and not by the whole, and in reply to the accusation of "heaping all praise on democracy" says there is nothing so condemnatory of even absolute monarchy in his whole work, as what he applies to French democracy, and that no form of Government is so much praised "indeed every praise that is conceivable" [than] of constitutional monarchy as it exists in England.

It certainly is a remarkable fact that while this work is prohibited as dangerous in Baden, Saxony, and Bavaria, its sale is permitted in Austria.

## FO 82/77: Frederic Hamilton to Earl of Clarendon, No 7, Stuttgart, 16 July 1854

*Neurath's resignation over Eastern Question; pro-Russian sympathies of the king*

With reference to my despatch No. 6 of yesterday's date announcing to Your Lordship the recent change of Ministry here, I have the honor to state as follows.

On the 5th Instant an article appeared in the "Staat's Anzeiger", the official "paper of the Government, stating, that at the conference of Bamberg[21] the Government of Wurtemberg had wished (eut désiré) that the Germanic Confederation should remain entirely neuter in the Oriental Question, according to the sense and spirit of the Federal Constitution[22] which stipulates that war ought only to be declared in the event of the frontiers of Germany being attacked or menaced, and that as these frontiers are neither attacked or menaced, Wurtemberg could only adhere to the declaration of Bamberg in the sense of an Union with the other states of the Germanic Confederation."

[21] For the Bamberg Conference of 25–30 May 1854 see n. 9 in Bavaria section.

[22] Act of the Confederation of 1815 (Articles 2 and 11) and the Vienna Final Act of 1820 (Articles 36–49).

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The publication in the political organ of the Government, though not exactly under the head of official intelligence, of an article of this nature at variance with the truth, and in opposition to the policy advocated by Baron de Neurath and many of his colleagues, was exceedingly distasteful to them, and after conferring together, they decided that it could not be passed over in silence, Baron de Neurath therefore addressed a communication to the King, then at Baden Baden,[23] requesting permission to contradict the article in question. His Majesty refused to accede to the request of his Minister, and Baron de Neurath, on the return of His Majesty to his capital tendered his resignation which was accepted and Baron de Linden the Home Minister is charged ad interim with the seals also of the Foreign Department and it is supposed will hold the two Portfolios until the solution of the Eastern Question, at least as far as regards the attitude which Germany will assume in it.

This change of Ministry will probably be one of the last public acts of His Majesty with regard to the Political Drama which the Minor German states are playing, and as such requires a few words of comment.

Ostensibly the dismissal of a Minister for refusing to be a Party to a measure indicative of a Policy favorable to Russia would lead one to suppose that His Majesty espouses her cause, but such I am informed is not the case, and that the King does not entertain very friendly sympathies for the Czar and that his present line of conduct is rather the result of an innate spirit of intrigue which generally guides His Majesty in all his actions: If the latter hypothesis be taken for granted His Majesty probably rejoices at the resignation of his Minister as giving him the means of professing to Russia, by this public Act, his sympathies for Her:

Be this as it may in Baron de Neurath His Majesty loses a Minister generally considered able, of independent character, well versed in foreign Politics and esteemed by his countrymen.

Baron de Linden, the Successor of Baron de Neurath is of a more pliable disposition than his predecessor and therefore less likely to offer much opposition to the intrigues of His Royal Master.

His Excellency Baron de Neurath still retains his Post as Minister of State without Portfolio, and President of the Privy Council, but in fact he will soon cease to take any participation in the Acts of the Government, as he purposes immediately to leave the Capital and retire for some time to his Country Residence.

[23]Constantin Freiherr von Neurath to Wilhelm, 5 and 6 July 1854. Neurath resigned from his post as foreign minister on 10 July 1854; Wilhelm accepted this resignation on 14 July.

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Conjointly with Baron de Neurath several of his Colleagues wished to tender their resignations, but it is said were deterred from doing so at his earnest request.

## FO 82/80: George Sulyarde Stafford Jerningham to Earl of Clarendon, No 57, Stuttgart, 1 May 1855

*Discussion with Linden on Württemberg's involvement in Crimean War; diplomats invited to dinner with the king*

I asked Baron de Linden yesterday if this Government would oppose the mobilization of the Federal Contingent, were war between Austria and Russia to cause the former to repeat her demand for that measure.[24]

His Excellency replied that it would depend entirely on the explanations furnished by Austria at the time, but he appeared desirous of conveying that Wurtemberg's consent was at least as likely as her refusal, although, as he said, the former would be given unwillingly.

It has been observed to me that, in the case supposed, the three German States lying between France and Austria, namely, Baden, Wurtemberg, and Bavaria, would hardly venture, or be able, to withhold their cooperation against Russia.

This Government perhaps feels that it is high time to make arrangements for not being ultimately on the losing side, as well as that the present aspect of affairs may possibly indicate the beginning of the end.

The financial part of the question is also looked upon here with no little alarm, in the present penurious state of the Country and consequently, were a German war to break out, the leading idea might be to favour its early termination by throwing all the strength on one side.

Some weeks ago Baron de Linden made a speech in the Chamber of Peers to the effect that there could be no question about the anti-Russian object of the preparations for war, thereby contrasting himself with the Prussian Minister at Frankfort on a late occasion.[25]

[24]The Austrian request on 14 January 1855 for mobilization was rejected by the majority of the Federal Diet on 8 February. Instead, the federal army was merely placed on a general war footing.

[25]Speech of Linden on 6 March 1855. On 22 February 1855, Otto von Bismarck explained to the Federal Diet that the federal resolution of 8 February only pertained to Article 2 of the Federal Act of 1815, which declared the general duty to maintain the internal and external security of Germany.

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As the Diplomatic Body are rarely invited here to the Royal table, it may possibly be worth mentioning, considering the present state of diplomatic affairs, that I had the Honor this evening of dining at the Palace in company with my French, Austrian, Prussian, and Bavarian colleagues.[26] In conversing with me, the King alluded to what He termed the splendid occurrences in England,[27] but His Majesty did not touch upon Politics, beyond asking if Lord John Russell had arrived in London.[28] The King appeared in the highest spirits, and He conversed much and cheerfully with the Austrian Minister, a circumstance perhaps worth remarking, as His Majesty is considered a great actor.

The Prince and Princess Royal[29] are not expected to return from St. Petersburgh before next month.

[. . .]

P.S. Another observation I made yesterday to Baron de Linden was, that we considered Russia's refusal of our terms regarding the third point as a proof that she wished to continue making an aggressive use of the Black Sea.

## FO 82/81a: Frederic Hamilton to Earl of Clarendon, No 15, Stuttgart, 29 September 1855

*Disputes between the government and chamber of deputies; Linden's support for indemnification of nobles; struggle with liberals in lower house*

From information which I have obtained from reliable sources it is to be presumed that the component parts of the next Wurtemberg Chamber of Deputies will contain elements of as much if not of greater hostility to the Government than the one lately dissolved.[30]

In a conversation which I had this day with Baron Linden, I pointedly put the question to him whether he thought the new Chamber would be less hostile to the Executive than the last; His Excellency hesitated somewhat in his answer, but eventually said that in his belief it would certainly not be less hostile.

[26]These were, respectively, Ferrière le Vayer, Maximilian Joseph Freiherr von Handel, Theodor Franz Christian Graf zu Seckendorff-Gutend, and Max von Neumayr.

[27]King Wilhelm alluded to Napoleon III's visit to England from 16 to 21 April 1855.

[28]Lord John Russell was British plenipotentiary to the Vienna conference on the Eastern Question from 4 March to 23 April 1855.

[29]Crown Prince Karl and Olga Nikolaevna.

[30]The chambers were dissolved on 20 August 1855 and new elections for the second chamber were held in December 1855.

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His Excellency then narrated at some length the principal points of dispute between the Chamber and the Government, of which I shall endeavour to give Your Lordship an epitome.

In the first place the Government was defeated in its endeavour to obtain for the Peers a privileged Forum[31] and,

Secondly, suffered a similar defeat in proposing an indemnity to the Nobility generally for losses sustained by them in 1848–49.[32]

In making these proposals to the Chambers His Excellency said that though he was guided principally from a spirit of conciliation to act as Mediator between the Nobility and the People, yet with regard to the first point he was of opinion that the Nobility were in strict justice entitled to that Privilege – a Privilege granted to them by the Congress of Vienna;[33] and that they had equal justice on their side with regard to the second Point – Indemnification; and he had hoped,– as the Six Millions of Dollars, the Indemnity proposed by him, was so trifling compared to the loss sustained amounting to Forty Millions of Dollars,– that the Chamber of Deputies would have granted it;–

That he the more regretted this opposition as the Government had submitted this latter question to the Lower and not to the Upper House, and without any previous understanding with the Nobility, under the hope that, if it had been, accepted and had been sent to the Upper Chamber, though considerable discussion might have ensued, it would probably have been accepted with perhaps some trifling amendments, and thus this vexata questio[34] would have been finally settled.

Having been informed that Baron Linden had hinted at the possibility of a second dissolution of the Chamber in the event of it still persevering in its hostility to the Government, I sounded him on the subject, His Excellency replied in the negative, but added that he had changed his plans (thereby admitting by inference the truth of the report made to me) and he now intended first to come to some understanding with the Nobility on those Points more directly concerning their interests, then to submit such arrangement to the Chamber and if rejected, to carry the whole affair before the Diet at Frankfort, which latter event he considered almost inevitable, as,

[31] Hamilton refers to the government's attempts to alter the municipal electoral law. The bill, which was rejected by the second chamber on 21 February 1855, proposed a three-class suffrage that favoured the large aristocratic landowners.

[32] On 14 July 1855, the government of Württemberg had retracted a bill that would have compensated the nobility for the losses incurred as the result of the laws enacted in April 1848 and June 1849, which had included the abolition of tithes.

[33] Article 14 of the Act of the German Confederation of 1815.

[34] 'A vexed or disputed question'.

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looking to the almost entire refusal of the Chamber to entertain any of those claims, it was hardly to be expected that the Nobility would consent to any arrangement of such a nature as to meet the views of the Lower House, but on the contrary that they would rather submit their claims for the decision of the Diet.

To resume in a few words the present state of Political Parties in Wurtemberg, the Government, having been defeated by the Liberal Section of the Chamber on different proposals of Administrative Reform[35] presented by it to the consideration of the House, dissolved the House, and purposes if still unsuccessful to submit the whole affair to the Diet trusting with the assistance of that Body to overcome the opposition of the Lower House.

Serious results may be apprehended from this struggle as a large and influential Portion of the Lower Chamber have openly declared that they do not consider the Diet has any right to interfere in these questions, and some of the members even called upon the House to take advantage of the present moment to assert its rights now that Russian influence could not be brought to bear in the scale against it, and one Member, Mr Pfeiffer,[36] went so far even as to call the attention of the House, with a view to the future, to the fact of the Crown Prince having married a Daughter of the late Zar [*sic*] Nicolas.[37]

To a reflecting mind, My Lord, the facts narrated above afford ample food for consideration. The truth is beginning to make itself evident in many parts of Germany – general dissatisfaction of the Masses against their rulers, & an apparent intention to bring this discontent to the issue of a trial, with a perfect knowledge of having one powerful Antagonist the less, Russia, to deal with.

## FO 82/82: Frederic Hamilton to Earl of Clarendon, No 1, Stuttgart, 1 January 1856

*Conversation between king, Hügel, and French envoy; Württemberg's reluctance to support Austrian position in Crimean War; general observations of apparent pro-Russian feelings of middle states*

I have the honour to report to Your Lordship a résumé of a conversation between the King, le Marquis de Ferrière French Minister, and Baron Hügel Minister for Foreign Affairs, which took

[35]In addition to proposals to compensate the nobility, the second chamber rejected the proposal for the reorganization of local administrations, the ban on the municipal corporations' right to petition the government, and the increase of salaries for ministers of state.

[36]Carl Pfeifer.

[37]Crown Prince Karl had married Olga Nikolaevna on 13 July 1846.

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place three days ago at Court after a dinner given by His Majesty to Baron Wächter His Representative at Paris now here on leave of absence.

The King after some introductory compliments said to M. de Ferriere, Baron Wächter has brought me a charming and amiable letter from Prince Napoleon, and I am glad to see by it "qu'on travaille à la Paix".[38]

M. de Ferrière replied that it was the anxious desire of every one to see established an honourable and durable Peace.

But Austria, rejoined The King, wants to bring us into a War on account of the Danube which is not a German but a Hungarian River. We wish to continue our neutrality.

M. de Ferrière was sorry to observe the misconstruction which was put generally upon the acts of the Allies. That the present course adopted by Austria in conjunction with her Allies was calculated to bring about the establishment of Peace on terms honourable to the Belligerent Powers, and advantageous to the general interests of Europe, and that Germany by frankly assisting the Allies at the present juncture would insure its success; but that, unfortunately, there was always an "arrière pensée"[39] which seemed to guide the Statesmen of Germany in discussing the Propositions for Peace which had been advanced, instead of considering them on their own bare merits; that if more "bonne foi" and less "malveillance"[40] had prevailed, an earlier and more satisfactory state of things might have ensued than at present existed; that with regard to the question of neutrality he begged respectfully to doubt its existence as far as all Germany was concerned, quoting in support of his idea the official language employed in the Chamber by Baron Linden the late Minister for Foreign Affairs who declared that Wurtemberg in accepting the "Kriegsbereitshaft" had departed from her neutrality and had virtually sided with the Allies in hostility to Russia.[41]

The King then proceeded to show at some length that as Wurtemberg was concerned the Danube was of no advantage to it, that all the Trade of the Country with the East was carried on by the lake of Constance through Trieste, and ended by saying that the Danube was an insignificant stream, not of the slightest commercial value to Germany.

[38] 'That peace is being worked towards'; for the peace negotiations with Russia see n. 27 in Frankfurt section.

[39] 'Ulterior motive'.

[40] 'More good faith and less ill will'.

[41] Ferrière le Vayer referred to Linden's speech in the first chamber on 6 March 1856. For the disputed interpretation of the federal resolution of 8 February 1855 on the mobilization of the federal army, see n. 25 in this section.

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Mr. de Ferrière replied that, to a Suabian who had never quitted Suabia, it was possible the Danube might so appear, though he could hardly credit it, but that Bavaria and Austria would not be of that opinion.

Baron Hügel here remarked that whatever commercial importance for Germany the Danube might once have had, was now nearly nullified by Rail Roads, and when the projected line between Roustehouk and Varna was executed, the Danube would cease to be of any commercial advantage to Germany.

M. de Ferriere contested the validity of His Excellency's argument adding that it could only be admitted were the Danube and all the Rivers which fed it dried up; and in order to show that Railroads did not annul the many commercial advantages which a large River afforded to the Countries through which it passed, he cited the Rhine.

His Majesty here took up the conversation and said, well whatever you may think or do "tout ce que je désire c'est qu'on nous laisse tranquille"[.][42]

The Conversation ended here. I have thought it my duty to bring it to Your Lordship's knowledge, because carried on in the presence of ten or twelve Persons probably designedly, and as showing the Political tendencies and views of the Sovereign and His Court at the present moment, and because I conceive the language employed by the King may almost be considered as tantamount to a declaration of a determination under all circumstances of maintaining a neutral attitude.

In my humble opinion this neutrality amounts to hostility towards the Allies, for as long as Russia can count upon the non interference of Germany apart from Austria, she knows that the Action of that Power is neutralized if not completely nullified.

It is to be hoped in the present crisis that Russia will be mistaken, and that Austria will actively cooperate in the Spring with the Allies. The rest of Germany has evidently taken the Alarm, and will certainly leave no stone unturned in heaping up obstacles to impede a joint active operation of the Allies in the field this year.

There are sins of Omission as well as of Commission and when too late – when Europe is convulsed, then the secondary States of Germany will see their error and pay dearly for it, if not peril their very existence. The sin of omitting at the right moment to make their voices heard will have been committed, and they will have to suffer a retributive punishment. I hold this language constantly in different quarters, but one might as well speak to the Winds,– the Germans

[42] 'All that I desire is that we are left in peace.'

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affect not to believe in it. They are at least one year behind-hand and forget the present in thinking of the future.

In a year hence they will admit that the terms now offered to Russia are acceptable without taking into account the sacrifices made during the twelvemonth by the Allies.

The language I have made use of in the above Paragraph relative to Germany refers to its Rulers and their advisers, not to the Bulk of the People who think, and do not hesitate to say, that Russia is the principal Bar to all improvement in Germany, particularly in a liberal and constitutional sense.

## FO 82/83: George Sulyarde Stafford Jerningham to Earl of Clarendon, Confidential, No 24, Stuttgart, 25 October 1856

*Strained relations and quarrels between king and crown prince; anti-Russian feeling in Württemberg; royal family strongly pro-Russian*

The want of cordiality which has long subsisted between the King of Wurtemberg and the Prince Royal[43] was lately further developed in a way which has given rise to much regret and observation in this Capital, and which has not tended to diminish His Royal Highness's want of popularity.

The circumstance which I allude to was the refusal of the Prince to pay His respects to the King on the occasion of His Majesty's Birthday in the last week of September, although His Royal Highness's Sister, the Queen of the Netherlands[44] had gone to Zurich, where He was then staying, to implore Him to act differently.

The excuse made by the Prince was indisposition, but this was disproved by His appearance at Stuttgart in perfect health almost immediately after the occasion in question, and when, as if to aggravate the case, His Royal Highness paid His first visit, not to the King, but to His Cousin, Princess Mathilde, then about returning to Paris, and to see whom only it seemed sufficiently clear that he had come.

I have not heard, although I have inquired, that this conduct was caused by any recent or particular circumstance.

The general coldness between the King and the Prince would seem naturally accounted for by the difference of their tastes and characters, the former being a superior man with serious predilections, and the latter an inferior person with frivolous propensities.

[43]Karl.
[44]Sophie.

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The King's disposition, moreover, is highly national and independent, while that of the Prince would appear chiefly remarkable for subservience to Russia.

As the most recent proof of the latter tendency, I may mention that His Royal Highness has been seen wearing the Russian Crimean medal.

It might perhaps be urged in His defence, that in the Crimean war He had not been defeated.

The Princess Royal[45] is said fully to vindicate Her Russian origin by keeping Her Husband (if I may so express myself) well up to the muscovite mark, which added to Her haughtiness and reserve, perhaps inclined the balance of popularity in favour of The Prince, who, in spite of His short-comings and self-sufficiency, appears to be considered good-natured.

It must be borne in mind, as I had long since, and on more than one occasion, the honour to observe to Your Lordship, that the national feeling in this Country is strongly anti-Russian, a circumstance hardly calculated to brighten the prospect of the next reign, when there is little or no reason for hoping that want of sympathy between the Nation and the Throne will be compensated by any abundance of good-sense either in The King or The Queen.

The protracted Mission at this Court of Prince Gortchakoff would seem to be considered as having done much harm to The Prince Royal, since that Diplomatist is said to have strived at little else than Russianizing His Royal Highness, and with a deplorable degree of success.

As the coming Russian Minister, General Benkendorff, is said to be a Person of another stamp, and more in the style of M. de Titoff than of Prince Gortchakoff, perhaps his presence here will be marked by a more beneficial influence.

It may not be new to Your Lordship, though it is to me, that The King originally wished The Prince Royal to marry a Daughter of Prince Charles of Prussia.[46]

I have heard, moreover, that people observed at the time, that the expression of such a wish by His Majesty was sufficient to defeat His object.

That The King's life may be prolonged (He is now seventy-five) appears a general and ardent wish, and there are those who seem to go the length of thinking that His demise, or rather His succession, may serve to fix in this part of Germany the outburst of that smouldering

[45]Olga Nikolaevna.
[46]Luise Marie.

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Teutonic flame which shewed itself so fiercely in 1848, and which was perhaps but ill got under.

I am certainly inclined to believe that any tampering with the Constitutional liberties of the Country would excite to the utmost the well-known dogged Suabian resistance, and which would scarcely be softened by the Russian character of the provocation.

It may here be called to mind that the Chamber of Deputies not long ago elected is supposed to contain as strong an opposition as that of its predecessor, on account of which the latter was dissolved.[47]

It is supposed that the Chamber will meet in January or February.

I ought perhaps to mention another circumstance which, in the course of the last two months, has caused The Prince Royal to be unfavourably talked about, namely, His quarrel with, and separation from, Baron de Berlichingen, His Marshal of the Court.

It appears that, in consequence of something which went wrong,[48] His Royal Highness treated the Baron with such intemperate harshness that he resigned his place, but not without telling the Prince some disagreeable truths, one of which is said to have been, that the Berlichingens were German Noblemen and not Russian Moujiks.[49]

## FO 82/88: George Sulyarde Stafford Jerningham to Earl of Malmesbury, No 24, Stuttgart, 28 July 1858

*Heated debate in the chamber of deputies over official salaries; king's ambivalent feelings towards constitution*

The stormy Debate in the chamber of Deputies on the 10th instant, which I had the honour to report in my Despatch of the 25th, may perhaps be described as the tail of the gale of 1848, since it is said to have resembled the Parliamentary scenes which occurred in that year, and as the subject of it was the restoration of the official Salaries to what they were up to that period.

Whatever may have been the partial mixture of good in the effects of that Outbreak, the reduction of Salaries would hardly seem to have formed part of it, since the maximum on the restored scale is only about £800 a year for a Cabinet Minister, & £1100 for an Envoy,– the former having been reduced one half, & the latter more than a third,– so that the King was obliged, for several years, to furnish a supply from His own resources.

[47] See n. 30 in this section.

[48] Karl had reproached Berlichingen for neglecting his official duties, as he had not ordered a royal carriage for the crown prince's guest, Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich of Russia, in good time.

[49] *Muzhik*: Russian peasant.

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When talking on this subject with Baron de Hügel, I have observed, while carefully avoiding any opinion on the constitutional part of the Question, that the recommendation of such reductions appeared to me abound in all those Persons who wished for a continuance of the Monarchy.

In the present Chamber of Deputies there may be 10 or 12 Republicans, but in that of 1848 the great majority were probably in favour, partly of a Republic, & partly, though more numerously, of the phantasmagoric impossibility called German Unity.

The number of violent Radicals now in the Chamber, whether Republican or Unitarian, is perhaps about 20, or nearly, a fourth of the whole, which is aggravated by the fact that one of the Suabian characteristics is dogged theoretical obstinacy, for probably no part of Germany contains more enthusiastic votaries of what has been called the Empire of the Air.

With regard to the Point which has been under discussion, the 110th article of the Constitution[50] provides that no Tax can be levied without the consent of both Chambers, & also that they must be convinced both of the utility & the necessity of every expense proposed.– But the Government would seem to contend, in a certain degree, that, when there is a conflict of opinion, between them & the Chambers, the decision rests with the crown, a principle nowise sustained by any part of the Constitution.

Another argument on the part of the Ministry is, that the Public Salaries were fixed by Law in 1817,[51] that is, two years before the establishment of the Constitution, & that the latter did not repeal it, nor cause any change in its application.– But there was a constitutional alteration of it in 1848, which the Government tried to annul constitutionally in 1856, and, failing therein, annulled it of their own accord,– against which the Chamber protested, & still protests.[52]

It is to be observed that the Chamber of Peers has always been in favour of the restoration of these Salaries.

The objectionable language employed by the Minister of Public worship & Instruction,[53] adverted to my last Despatch, appears to have been nearly as follows; that the Government were firmly resolved to defend their Prerogative to the utmost; that they would no longer put up with the state of dependence on the Chamber of Deputies in

[50] Constitution of 25 September 1819.

[51] *Edikt über die Besoldungen der Staats-Diener*, 18 November 1817.

[52] The March Ministry of 1848–1849 had reduced ministerial salaries with the agreement of the *Landtag*. In 1855, the Württemberg government attempted to raise these back to their pre-1848 levels, but was opposed in the chamber of deputies. As a result, the government raised the salaries without the agreement of the chambers in October 1855 and June 1856.

[53] Gustav von Rümelin (speech in the chamber of deputies, 10 July 1858).

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which they had been since 1848; that the King had both the right & the power to choose whatever Ministers, & to give them whatever Salaries, He liked; that the constitutional System in Wurtemberg was nowise based upon popular sovereignty; that Wurtemberg had not the misfortune to possess only the phantom of a Monarchy; and that, if the chamber were to complain of the Ministry to The King, the answer would probably be that the complaint ought to be directed against The King Himself.

It is only fair to add, that, on the previous day, a Member of the opposition, M. Schläyer,[54] had branded the arbitrary augmentation of Salaries as Robbery of the Public money.

Baron de Linden, the Minister of the Interior, who may be considered the Parliamentary champion of the Cabinet, succeeded, as I have already had the honour to state, by adopting a more conciliatory & constitutional tone, in calming the commotion, an effect which the recollection of Hanover, & the consciousness of Frankfort, are perhaps calculated to enhance.[55]

It seems probable that The King regards what has happened with considerable regret, both an [*sic*] account of the repose desirable at His time of life, & because His Majesty is said to be much attached to the Constitution, as being His spontaneous gift to the Nation.

On the other hand, it may possibly be that The King is actuated, to a certain degree, by the feeling, that, to use a familiar expression, He may do what He likes with His own.

At all events, the Wurtemberg Constitution would seem at present under strong bureaucratic tutelage, and it may be destined in the next Reign, when no longer guarded by the sentiment of Paternity, which will have been substituted by that of Russian Sympathy, to find itself still more helpless than at present, if not altogether effete.

## FO 82/88: George Sulyarde Stafford Jerningham to Earl of Malmesbury, No 38, Stuttgart, 23 September 1858

*Disputes over Austria's admission to* Zollverein*; annoyance of minor German states at Austro-Prussian rivalry*

The last time but one I was at Carlsruhe Baron de Meysenbug conversed with me upon what he termed the most important Question in Germany, namely, the admission of Austria into the Zollverein, & His Excellency expressed himself as if he thought it not impossible

[54]Johannes Schlayer.

[55]Jerningham refers to the intervention of the Federal Diet in the Hanoverian constitutional struggle in 1855. See nn. 75 and 126 in Hanover section.

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that Prussia's opposition to that measure might eventually lead to a disruption of the Zollverein, to Prussia's abandonment by the other German States, & to the formation of a new German Commercial League under the Headship of Austria.

Your Lordship is aware that the discussion of the said Question at Frankfort is to be opened in 1860, & that it may last till 1866.

It is perhaps not too much to say that the Lot of Germany, as regards her internal & most vital relations, will be fixed in those five years.

As far as I have had opportunities of judging, the smaller countries of Germany are becoming much annoyed by the frequent differences of the Two Great Powers, which seem to be ascribed, in great part, to Prussia's unwillingness to regard Austria as having a right to the first place in Germany.

It is argued that, from the moment Prussia failed to take the lead of Germany in 1848, it became absurd in her to dispute the supremacy of Austria.

The discontent to which I have alluded has evidently been much aggravated by the anomalous condition of Prussia arising from the illness of The King, & it may perhaps be presumed that proportional hope is centred in the permanent Regency, or Succession, of the Prince of Prussia.[56]

"It is to be desired that The King of Prussia should either recover, abdicate, or die," – is an observation I have heard made by a German Statesman,– though in no unfeeling tone,– but with an earnestness which seemed to show that he considered the matter of the utmost importance.

## FO 82/95: George John Robert Gordon to Lord John Russell, Confidential, No 127, Stuttgart, 30 August 1860

*Police Conference at Stuttgart;* Nationalverein *to meet at Coburg; Hügel's wariness at meeting, particularly owing to Queen Victoria's impending visit*

The Conference of the Chief Police Authorities of the different German States which assembles every year met this year at Stuttgart at the beginning of the current month.[57]

The only point of what may be considered general interest to which I have heard that their deliberations were directed, was the course which it would be right to recommend the several Governments to follow

[56]For Wilhelm's regency in Prussia see n. 45 in Frankfurt section.

[57]15th *Polizeikonferenz*, 6–8 August 1860. The police conferences were held from 1851, for the purposes of exchanging information regarding police procedures and activities.

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with regard to the "National Verein" – The Republican Unitarian association for Germany as it may be termed.[58]

The result of the deliberations of the Police Conference on this point was, that it would be inexpedient to recommend any restrictive measures to be taken against the proceedings of the Association, for so long as they should not transgress public Law and order.

I believe, that this prudent decision was owing, in a great measure, to the representations of the Police of Bavaria; Wurtemberg and Baden, in which States, it is however right to observe, there are fewer members of the National Verein than in the Northern German States.

But, apart from this and the manifest policy of the course, which has been recommended, it was borne in mind at the Conference, that the Diet[59] is not now sitting and that, even if it were, it would take time in order to give to any repressive steps against the National Verein which might seem expedient, the Sanction of a Federal determination, without which any petty State of the Confederation might set such decision at defiance and the Association might then have free action within the limits of that State.

Notwithstanding these considerations however, I believe, that certain members of the Wurtemberg Government are of opinion, that it would be better to restrain the Proceedings of the "National Verein" now, before it shall have attained greater influence and become more widely extended.

These discussions and the views last mentioned have had reference more especially to a General assembly of the National Verein which has been convoked to meet at Coburg on the 3rd of next month and at which, it is expected, that very revolutionary and republican proposals will be made. Amongst them it is said, that a Herr Kinckel,[60] (who generally resides in England and is, I have heard, at the head of the Association,) is to propose the establishment of a German republic, with the Duke of Saxe Coburg[61] at the head of the army and the title of "Oberwehrmeister"; and I know that men of influence here do not hesitate to believe, that such a position might possibly, as they express it, tempt the vanity and gratify the Vindictiveness of His Highness.

Baron Hügel is evidently not without anxiety as to the approaching meeting of the National Verein at Coburg and has manifested some apprehension, as to the effect that might possibly be produced, if the visit of the Queen which, it is reported to be Her Majesty's intention

[58]The first general assembly of the *Nationalverein* (see n. 71 in Frankfurt section) took place in Coburg on 3–5 September 1860.

[59]Diet of the German Confederation.

[60]Gottfried Kinkel.

[61]Ernst II.

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to pay to the Duke of Saxe Coburg, should take place, whilst the association is assembled there.[62]

I have taken occasion therefore, in conversing with Baron Hügel, to use the language contained in Your Lordship's dispatch No 38 of the 13th instant to Sir John Milbanke, as expressing the opinions of Her Majesty's Government, with regard to any projects which might be put forward for altering, in a revolutionary manner, the present relations of the different German States to each other, and in proof of the impossibility, therefore of the Queen allowing Her Majesty's presence to sanction, in any way, a Republican demonstration of the nature anticipated as likely to take place at Saxe Coburg.

## FO 82/98: George John Robert Gordon to Lord John Russell, No 22, Stuttgart, 25 February 1861

*Restrictions on the press; meeting at Esslingen*

The Resolutions of the Diet of Frankfort of 6th of July 1854 with regard to the public Press and restrictions upon it in Germany have never been carried out either in Prussia or Bavaria, as they were opposed in certain respects to the Legislation of these States.

In Wurtemberg and other smaller German States, however these resolutions have been strictly enforced, notwithstanding much opposition from the liberal party.[63] In consequence of this opposition promises have been made by this Government of modifying the Regulations in question and a Royal decree was signed on the 22nd instant to fulfil them.

It is only necessary for me to report as to the details of this decree, that by one of its articles, printed publications are to be no longer subjected, as has hitherto been the case, to arbitrary administrative suppression, but must be regularly proceeded against before the legal tribunals, previous to being visited with this punishment; and by another article, the sums required to be deposited by the publishers of periodical papers are much reduced.

The publication of this decree so short a time before the meeting of the Chambers is thought in some quarters to bear the appearance of weakness on the part of the Government as being a concession to the views of the liberal party and of having been occasioned by

[62]Queen Victoria visited Coburg from 25 September to 10 October 1860.

[63]The federal resolution on the press of 1854 (see n. 29 in Hanover section) was published as a royal decree in the *Staatsanzeiger für Württemberg* on 11 January 1856.

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the charges brought against them at the late meeting at Esslingen.[64] Baron Linden, the Minister of the Interior, in repeating to me these ideas as likely to be adopted, took pains to assure me that they had no foundation in fact, for that he had proposed the measure to the King eight months back, although it was only now it had received the Royal signature. There can be little doubt however, that the Esslingen meeting and the meeting of the Legislature have contributed to hasten the completion of this measure which so far as it goes is well calculated to disarm opposition in the matter to which it refers.

## FO 82/99: George John Robert Gordon to Lord John Russell, Confidential, No 65, Stuttgart, 28 May 1861

*Reports on the formation of a new pro-French Confederation of the Rhine; royal conferral of honours on Dalwigk*

In Your Lordship's despatch, No 20 of the 22nd inst. marked "confidential", Your Lordship communicated to me for my information copy of Mr Consul General Crowe's Despatch No 13 general, of May 7th, relative to the military affairs of the German Confederation, and I am instructed to give my opinion "as to the truth of the Reports contained in this Despatch, respecting a confederation of the Rhine States."

I have no hesitation in saying that the plan for forming a confederation of the Rhine States, presented crudely, as it is, by Mr Crowe, has no foundation in fact and is a positive calumny against the honorable Men and really patriotic and German feeling Ministers (however much mistaken we may believe them to be with regard to the system of Government which they support) who are represented by Her Majesty's Consul General at Leipzig to have conceived it and to be plotting actively and to have so nearly succeeded in carrying it into effect.

That the Statesmen referred to, as well as others in Germany, contemplated the possibility, under certain adverse eventualities, of their several countries and Governments being forced, as a measure of self-preservation, to submit for a time to French domination is, I believe, quite true, as well as quite excusable. When at Hanover, during the French advance on Lombardy,[65] I had the honor, if I mistake not more than once, to report, in my official correspondence,

[64]Meeting of the Württemberg *Fortschrittspartei* (Progressive Party) in Esslingen on 3 February 1861, with 700 participants.

[65]Gordon was British envoy to Hanover at the time of the Second War of Italian Independence in May and June 1859.

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that Count Platen had stated to me that such might become the deplorable necessity of the Southern German States, in case France should depress Austria too low and Prussia should continue to refuse to lead the rest of Germany to her assistance. Happily, this very serious calamity was at that time averted.

Since my Residence here, I think I can recollect that Baron Hügel has taken occasion, from the symptoms which have more than once arisen, of possible French aggression on Germany and the disunion which unhappily still exists between Austria and Prussia, as to the Military organization of the Confederation, to hint at the disastrous policy which might be forced upon such states as Baden, Wurtemberg and the Hesses, as first exposed to and possibly inadequately supported, against the first French attack – to accept French protection and form a species of confederation of the Rhine.

But I think I can assure Your Lordship positively, that it is an unpardonable calumny to represent Baron Hügel, Herr von Dalwigk, Herr von Beust, or other German Statesmen, directing the Policy of the middle States – and I will assuredly not except from this exculpation Count Borries himself[66] – as conspiring together coolly and systematically to offer up their Fatherland to French rapacity, in order to maintain the system of Government which they have unfortunately adopted, and to save their own positions, at the expense of the independence of their country.

But I will go further and submit to Your Lordship that in no case could Prince Talleyrand's apophthegm be more strictly applicable than with regard to such a charge against these statesmen, as the one in question: it would be worse than a crime – it would be a folly.[67] For, most assuredly, the first step which should be made towards an understanding with France, such as that which is attributed to them, and which should become known, would be the signal for the loss, by the Politicians who might be its authors, not of their places only, but of their lives. They would infallibly be sacrificed at once to the popular fury which such treason would excite.

I must, however, repeat my conviction on the other hand, that should the period of French Imperial aggression on the Rhine arrive – as arrive it assuredly will – if the French Empire should continue – before Germany shall have come to some positive agreement on the

[66]See n. 58 in Hanover section.

[67]The saying 'It is worse than a crime, it is a blunder' (*C'est pire qu'une crime, c'est une faute*) – which originally referred to the murder of the duc d'Enghien by Napoleon I in 1804 – was ascribed to Talleyrand.

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subject of the Federal Military Organization,[68] wherever the fault of such disunion may be, the great proportion of the middle States and especially the openly exposed Southern States will be forced, as a measure of self-preservation, to submit, at first, as a confederation of the Rhine, or in some other form, to the French armies, so constantly and completely in readiness, and which could at any moment, therefore, be poured over the Rhine and these comparatively defenceless States. But I believe also, and as firmly, that such submission would not last long, that the hour of danger would unite German patriots, would strike the death-knell of division and separation, and would hurl back French invasion by the advancing tide of a patriotic popular movement which, at its subsidence, would leave behind it the unassailable position of a strong, because united Germany.

Such is the reply, My Lord, which I ventured to give, on full conviction of its being well founded, to the Report made to Your Lordship by Mr. Crowe, of what he does not hesitate to denominate already a coalition of the Southern German Statesmen, to offer their submission to France as the basis of the formation of a confederation of the Rhine.

But before I conclude, I must beg leave to notice two facts, brought forward by Mr. Crowe, as part of the flimsy structure upon which the momentous charge which he reports has, according to the information received by him, been reared.

The first of these is the speech made by Herr von Dalwigk, at the Baden Banquet, in giving the health of the Emperor of the French.

I had the honor, in my despatch No 39 of April 9th to report to Your Lordship the incident at this Banquet, but I omitted to state that Herr von Dalwigk had given the Toast in question.[69] I have no doubt that Her Majesty's Minister, accredited to the Hesse Darmstadt Government,[70] will have reported on the occurrence after the speech had been animadverted upon severely by the liberal German Press. I beg leave now to state that, whilst the sentiments expressed by Herr von Dalwigk were ill-chosen under the circumstances, the Toast and

[68]The question of the revision of the federal military law (*Bundeskriegsverfassung*) of 1821 remained unresolved after Austria's rejection of Prussia's proposal for a defensive alliance, as put forward at the Berlin military conferences (January–April 1861). While Prussia proposed to divide the federal army into Prussian and Austrian parts, the Würzburg Coalition, which reassembled for its third conference from 21 to 23 May 1861, advocated the creation of an independent military contingent of the German middle states. See pp. 426–428.

[69]At the banquet, which was held at Baden-Baden on 7 April 1861 on the occasion of the opening of the railway bridge between Strasburg and Kehl, Reinhard von Dalwigk toasted Napoleon III.

[70]Sir Alexander Malet, envoy to the German Confederation at Frankfurt, was also accredited to Hesse-Darmstadt.

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speech were quite unpremeditated; the occasion was not a political one, and that they took place towards the end of what had been a very copious and well served Banquet.

The other fact, on which I wish to offer some explanation, is the King of Wurtemberg's visit to the Biberich [*sic*] Flower-Show.[71] The King is very fond of flowers, this show is an annual Fête, much resorted to every spring, and which His Majesty never missed attending; so that The King's going to Biberich in itself could have no political importance. I am not certainly positive, but I believe that the King did not meet Herr von Dalwigk at Biberich at all, for the very simple reason that His Majesty paid a short visit to the Grand Duke of Hesse, on his return, at Darmstadt, where he could more conveniently see the Minister, if he wished, and where His Majesty did confer on him the Grand Cross of His Order. The King's visit to Darmstadt[72] was one of merely friendly feeling and of quite natural occurrence. The Grand Duke is a great admirer of The King of Wurtemberg, who had for several years passed Darmstadt, on his way to Biberich, without visiting His Royal Highness.

The conferring of the Order on Herr von Dalwigk, just at this moment was, as I have had occasion to observe in another despatch, a political mistake, and was strongly commented on by the liberal journals, in consequence of the repressive measures which that Minister thought it right to adopt against the National Verein.[73] But to attach to such a common mark of mere Royal favour so important an intention, as appears to have been done by Mr. Crowe's informant, is simply ridiculous. Had The King paid the visit he owed before, the order would have then been given.

As regards Herr von Dalwigk's Journey to Paris,[74] to which so much importance is attached by Mr. Crowe, and the objects which that Minister had in making it, I am naturally unable to offer to Your Lordship any positive information except to repeat my disbelief, that those, attributed to it by Mr. Crowe's informant, are the correct ones. Perhaps Sir Alexander Malet may have it in his power to clear up this point.

[71]The flower show was held from 31 March to 18 April 1861 in the conservatories of Biebrich castle, the summer residence of the Duke of Nassau.

[72]Wilhelm visited Darmstadt on 3 April 1861.

[73]The Hessian authorities, in the decree of 21 September 1859, were advised to take legal action against all members of the *Nationalverein* (for whom, see n. 71 in Frankfurt section). The Hessian government based this procedure on the decree of 2 October 1850, which expressly forbade participation in foreign and domestic political organizations.

[74]Dalwigk stayed in Paris in April 1861 for personal reasons, and not (as Crowe suspected) on the orders of the south German states to inform Napoleon III of their willingness to accept French protection.

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With regard to the other meetings between the South German Ministers of State, reported by Mr. Crowe to have lately taken place, I consider that they may be all fully accounted for by the necessity of their coming to an understanding preliminary to the Military conference, now again assembled at Würzburg, and other internal affairs such as the course to be adopted, with regard to the National Verein.

FO 82/103: George John Robert Gordon to Earl Russell, No 17, Stuttgart, 11 February 1862

*Opposition to Bernstorff's proposal for reforms of Confederation; general pro-Austrian policy of middle states*

Baron Hügel pointed out to me yesterday a notice in the Allgemeine Zeitung[75] of the 10th Inst. of the presentation to Count Bernstorff of the identic note of Austria, Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Saxony and Hanover, Hesse Darmstadt and Nassau, contesting the principles advanced in Count Bernstorff's proposal of December 20th last, for a modification of the German federal relations, by the adoption of the so called Klein, Deutsch [*sic*] arrangement, or the unification, under Prussian Hegemony, of the middle and smaller German States, to the exclusion of Austria, within and subordinate to the great Federation of Germany, represented by the Diet at Frankfort.[76]

It is not difficult to perceive, that such a measure, if ever carried out, would only be a very short and easy step towards a Borussification of Germany and it is most natural therefore, that it should be looked upon with great apprehension by Austria, but more especially by the Sovereigns, Governments, and even by a considerable part, perhaps the majority of the populations of the numerous petty German States, whose independence, nay whose very existence, (I speak of the Dynasties) is thus directly menaced. The determined opposition, then, of Princes and Governments to an arrangement of the sort in question was of course to be expected and, when the local prejudices and the positive and numerous material advantages, – particularly as regards art, Science, and social pleasure, – are considered which the residence of a Court, however small, must carry with it and when the

[75] *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung.*

[76] On 2 February 1862, the envoys to Berlin of the signatory states of the Austro-Bavarian protocol of 22 January (with the exception of Saxony) presented identical notes to Bernstorff, the Prussian minister for foreign affairs, rejecting the plan for a smaller union put forward in his dispatch of 20 December to the Prussian envoy to Dresden, Carl Friedrich von Savigny. Saxony addressed a separate note to the Prussian government on the same day.

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Conservative, not to say reactionary opinions, of such populations are recollected, it will not appear extraordinary, that the higher and more remote dignity and benefits, belonging to the position of subjects of a great and powerful centralized Government, should be forgotten by them and that the claims and interests of the great Fatherland should yield to the petty but more intimate relations and local affections of the more homely system of native Sovereigns and Governments, to which centuries have attached them.

Accordingly, ever since the issue of Count Bernstorff's proposal for Federal Reform, the Southern German States, with the exception always of Baden, but in combination with the two other Kingdoms,[77] have been occupied with negotiations under the leadership or with the support of Austria, to organize a determined opposition to the system of Prussian Hegemony, brought forward by Count Bernstorff on December 20th last; and the result of this concert has now made its first move in the identic note, which has been presented at Berlin by the Powers referred to above. It appears more than possible, that this, then, is the ultimate result of the frequent journeys and meetings of Barons Beust and Hügel, during last autumn which I had the honour to report at the time and may perhaps afford some ex-post-facto explanation of the apparent Enigma, involved in the proposal made by the former,[78] for a Reform of the Germanic Confederation, not having been after all supported by Wurtemburg.

The negotiations preliminary to this step have evidently been long in progress and have been conducted, so far as this Government is concerned, with very great secrecy, and I know that even my Prussian colleague[79] was not aware of them, until within a very short time back, and even then had no knowledge of their precise import. And this is strongly corroborated by the Article in the Allgemeine Zeitung, which states, that the presentation of the identic note was a most unlooked for occurrence by Count Bernstorff. Baron Hügel called my attention to this and added, that it was so of course, and must have been unpleasant also, inasmuch as the Prussian Government must be aware, that, as the Governments concerned had come to such an understanding as this note indicates, they must, at the same time, likewise, have concerted the measures necessary, in case of need, to defend and complete it.

[77] Hanover and Saxony.

[78] *Denkschrift der königlichen Regierung zu dem Projekt einer Reform des deutschen Bundes*, 15 October 1861.

[79] Gustav von der Schulenburg-Priemern.

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Baron Hügel is very bitterly opposed to Herr von Roggenbach and his Policy[80] and attributes to him the Revolutionary principle of recommending a resort to force, if argument should not succeed in bringing about the victory of his opinions as regards German unity.

I said in answer to this, that I never had perceived the existence of such an opinion in Herr von Roggenbach's conversation with me: and on the contrary although evidently convinced of the Correctness of his views, and of their ultimate success, he always appeared to me to be content to wait, until conviction should cause their realization.

## FO 82/103: George John Robert Gordon to Earl Russell, No 21, Carlsruhe, 16 February 1862

*Analysis of Würzburg Coalition; Baden's neutrality in conflicts over federal reform; observations on public opinion and particularist sentiment*

I desire to furnish Your Lordship with some information as to the spirit which I have found to prevail here, on the part of the Grand Duke and his Minister for Foreign Affairs, with regard to the position, in which the late coalition of the Würzburg Governments with Austria has placed the German Question.[81]

Baron Roggenbach and the Grand Duke have both talked freely on the subject with me, and, whilst the former has stated his opinions more at length, I found them to agree essentially with those which his Sovereign also expressed to me on the subject.

The presentation of the identic note of February 2,[82] is considered at Carlsruhe to be a very important and momentous event, not for Germany only, but in all probability for Europe in general which may very possibly be involved in difficulties in consequence. The Würzburg states and Austria, it is considered here, have acted in a somewhat unworthy manner in combining so secretly against Prussia, who only did as She was called upon to do by Baron Beust's note of the 11th January, and emitted her opinion openly and frankly on the question of a Reform of the federal relations, put forward by

[80]The Baden minister of foreign affairs, Franz Freiherr Roggenbach, advocated a '*Doppelbund*', made up of a smaller union under Prussian leadership, and a wider union including Austria.

[81]The Würzburg Coalition was named after the conferences on federal reforms that were held in Würzburg from 1859 to 1861. See n. 55 in Hanover section and nn. 57 and 58 in Bavaria section.

[82]For the identical notes of 2 February 1862 see n. 76 in this section.

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that statesman.[83] But the coalescing Governments are looked upon as having made a grave mistake, in the important and unexpected move, executed by them so secretly as to have taken all not concerned in it by surprise. For they have now stepped themselves into the position in advance, hitherto assigned to, if not very effectively occupied by Prussia on the German question. They first extracted from Prussia her opinion respecting it, and then gave her, in return, a slap in the face, by the mere fact of their coalition, in opposition to her opinion so expressed and by their allusion to Olmütz,[84] although the form in which they clothed their attack was moderate and civil. Prussia, will therefore, it is supposed, refuse to put herself forward again; the coalition have declared for federal Reform, but in a different sense from that believed to be the most effective by Prussia and the party of Progress throughout Germany; let them therefore act on the principles they have thus enounced; they will in fact, be forced to do so by the pressure of public opinion and in order to defend their position. The people and their wish for Reform have been appealed to, possibly without the parties taking this step having any desire or intention to act on their declarations; but the people will not forget them and will demand the fulfilment of the pledge. But how are they to satisfy these expectations? In the first place, they assume themselves, by the fact of their coalition, the very position proposed by Prussia of a Federal State ("Bundes Staat") instead of or within the existing Confederation of States, ("Staaten Bund"), and which, in the identic note, is declared to be illegal; only they do so secretly and without the public authority, which the Prussian proposal would have given to the act. How then will they proceed to carry their views into effect? By Federal resolution at Frankfort? But there, Prussia will assuredly oppose them and no federal measure can pass in the Diet in opposition to the determination of one of the Great Powers. Will they then resort to force? They may threaten it; but it is unlikely they will really employ it. The consequence then must be, that the present state of affairs will continue and that nothing will be done to set at rest the German question. But should such a state of inaction recur, that question will by no means be set at rest by such a result, it will still be agitated by the party of progress; the idea will continue to advance under the stationary crust thrown over it, by the intrusion into the place of action of the Governments

[83]Ferdinand Freiherr von Beust had already officially presented his reform proposal (see n. 78 in this section) to Prussia on 11 November 1861. In his note to Karl Adolf Graf von Hohental-Knauthain of 11 January 1862, Beust answered Bernstorff's plan for German unity of 20 December 1861 (see n. 76 in this section).

[84]The Olmütz Punctation, signed by Austria and Prussia on 29 November 1850, forced Prussia to abandon its union project, and thereby its claim for supremacy in Germany.

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and the reactionary Dynastic Party, and from this State of things the only issue can be, that the Democratic Party will gain strength: they always have argued, that moderation and forbearance towards the Dynasties and the present Division of Germany was misplaced and useless; that argument and persuasion could never bring about any satisfactory Reform, and that the only practical course would be, the mediatization of the German Sovereigns. This is the apprehension entertained at Carlsruhe of the probable result of the step taken by the coalesced Powers, whose present exultation at its apparent success will thus be but momentary and whose acknowledgement of the mistake made by them is here looked forward to as certain.

I do not think, that the Prussian answer to the identic note[85] has given complete satisfaction at Carlsruhe. It appears to be considered, that it only defers the decision of the question; that its purport is merely contradictory and that each party thus maintains its opinion; and Baron Roggenbach at all events would have desired more energetic action and that Prussia should, at once, have declined all further communication with the Würzburg Governments, have recalled all her Representatives at those Courts, and have determined to treat only at Vienna. He is also not without fears, lest the inherent pusillanimity of the Prussian Government and the absence of any first rate Statesman at Berlin may cause them at any moment, to act, as the timid and vacillating often do, when urged by their fears, and adopt some desperate and deplorable course which may endanger the peace of Europe.

The position taken by Baden, for the present, in regard to this momentous crisis, is, or is attempted to be one of strict neutrality. They do not interfere, and they disagree in their view of the question with both parties. They by no means join with the anti-Prussian party, but neither do they completely accept the programme of Count Bernstorff's note of December 20, as they have proved by Baron Roggenbach's note to Baron Marschall of February 11, and of which I do not forward a copy because it is now published in all the newspapers.[86] In case of any conflict, whether material or only moral, Baden hopes to maintain, strengthen and develop her neutrality and will be eager to seize any opening, by which an European sanction may be obtained for it; and, in making this avowal, Baron Roggenbach emitted some rather obscure hints, which he would not further elucidate, of the advantage which Europe might derive from the interposition of a Barrier, such as a neutral Baden, (possibly

[85]Prussian answer of 14 February 1862.
[86]For Roggenbach's position see n. 80 in this section.

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of somewhat extended territory) might present between France and Germany.

If this be the object of Baron Roggenbachs Policy, he is indeed playing a high game and, from what I have seen and heard of him, I am inclined to doubt very much, whether he be endowed with the talents necessary to succeed in it. His political opinions have made him enemies both in the narrower circles of his own family and country and throughout Germany, whom the favour he now enjoys with the Grand Duke, alone, enables him to disregard; whilst the support he, without contradictions receives from the National Verein,[87] in its present uninfluential position, would certainly be quite insufficient to maintain him in authority, should any circumstance again bring about a change in his Sovereign's political opinions. It is also I believe, certain that Dr. Stabel, the head of the liberal administration appointed last spring by the Grand Duke, does not approve of the lengths to which Baron Roggenbach is inclined to go.

A circumstance which cannot but strike an Englishman in contemplating the present very serious position of affairs in Germany, is the monopoly, or very nearly so, of action exercised by the various Governments in one sense or the other, and the almost total abstention of the mass of the people from any popular manifestation on the subject whatever. Different classes of people talk and discuss the subject doubtless in their clubs, at their Eating Houses and in their private circles: But it is all talk and nothing else; no action of any sort anywhere follows from it. Even a meeting of the National Verein held here yesterday, just whilst the feeling might be supposed to be most excited on the vital question, now being discussed by the German Governments, and which was brought forward also there, only attracted a few hundred attendants (a large proportion of whom were students, little more than boys) and this in a Capital of 30.000 inhabitants. Whence then can a liberal Government, desirous of progress in such a question, derive its strength? And how difficult must it be to form an opinion of the issue! But after taking all, so far as my opportunities and powers admit, into consideration I cannot but fancy I perceive the hollowness, for the present, of these German aspirations after Reform as regards the mass of the nation (?) [*sic*]. They are without doubt held and urged by many such as Baron Roggenbach and those who agree with him. But what proportion do these bear to the numbers consisting of the Governments and their adherents, on the one hand, who actively oppose them, and, on the other, of the overwhelming mass of the indifferent and of those who, in the enjoyment of high material welfare and apprehensive of

[87]For the *Nationalverein* see n. 71 in Frankfurt section.

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the probable damaging effects on this of any change, deprecate any Reform whatever and would let well alone. Besides this, the promoters of Reform are comparatively few in numbers and possess neither wealth nor worldly position, with perhaps the sole exception of Herr von Roggenbach, unless I may add to them The Grand Duke of Baden and the Duke of Saxe Coburg.

Besides these social influences of actual hostility and vis inertiæ[88] to German Reform, there is the thorough and distinctive German local feeling (Particularismus as they term it) which would lead the large majority of Germans to oppose anything, tending towards the delocalization of their own particular home and country or petty state and which would, therefore, in any question for the Centralization of the Supreme Power, run counter to the best devised plans and most honourable Efforts. An anecdote in illustration of this feeling, was told me at Carlsruhe. Herr von Meysenbug, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, was talking with a Gotha Citizen on the German question and the advantage of establishing a Supreme Authority and, in connection with this, the advisability of promoting the Duke's Efforts to unite the Gotha and Coburg legislatures – the one representing 100.000 the other 50.000 Souls – the man's answer was – "As to German Unity, I may perhaps believe that to be possible – But the Union of Coburg and Gotha – never!"

The appearance of some first rate leading mind and talent in Germany might possibly effect the unity of his country, but such a man is still a Desideratum in the Fatherland.

## FO 82/103: George John Robert Gordon to Earl Russell, No 35, Stuttgart, 17 March 1862

*Rumours that south German states will reject the Franco-Prussian Commercial Treaty; south German manufacturers in favour of protection; existence of* Zollverein *threatened*

With reference to my preceding number, I beg to transmit the following translation of a note which appeared at the head of the unofficial portion of the Staats-Anzeiger of Wurtemburg, of yesterday, denying authoritatively the report, that the Governments of this Country and Bavaria had concerted together to refuse their adhesion to the Commercial Treaty between France & Prussia.[89]

"Stuttgart March 15.

A Report has appeared in several official papers of the last few days, to the effect, that the Governments of Bavaria and Wurtemburg had

[88] 'Inertia'.

[89] For the Franco-Prussian Commercial Treaty of 1862 see n. 88 in Frankfurt section.

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united in withholding their assent to the Prusso-French Commercial Treaty. We are in a position to characterize this report as being at all events premature. The Commercial Treaty in question has not yet been in any way communicated to the King's Government and therefore also, no determination with regard to its acceptance or rejection has taken place, either within the Government itself, or in the way of agreement with Bavaria."

The above declaration is quite explicit as to the fact it refers to; but Your Lordship will remark the qualification attached to the denial of the truth of the report, by which it is clearly intimated, that it is only "premature". This completely coincides with such information as reaches me on the subject – all of which tends to show, that this Government – and I doubt not that of Bavaria also, – has fully determined to refuse its adhesion to the Prusso-French treaty. Its Austrian sympathies would doubtless suggest such a course and in following it, the Government will, I am informed, receive the complete support of the manufacturing interest in this part of Germany. In taking such a step as that evidently contemplated by the note in the Staats Anzeiger translated above, the Wurtemberg Government will certainly not be necessitated to manifest any of the anti-Prussian feeling which it undoubtedly entertains; for the Commercial treaty must be submitted to the Legislature before the Government accedes to it, and the Protectionist opinions of the Chamber of Deputies are of the more decided character and are professed by many of its most radical members. The manufacturing industry of this Country is highly prosperous and has advanced rapidly under the present system of protection to a very considerable pitch of activity; but it is argued, that its rise is as yet too recent and its means too confined, to enable it to maintain its position against open trade with France, whose greatly superior taste and versatility the German manufacturers dread, if French goods were unrestrictedly admitted to this market. In fact all the old arguments for protection, which have now been triumphantly disposed of in England, are here reproduced and I consider therefore, that the rejection of the Prusso-French Commercial Treaty by South Germany, with the exception, in all probability, of the Grand Duchy of Baden is undeniable.

But if this result take place it seems evident, that the question of the prolonged existence of the Zollverein is ipso facto decided in the negative; and that too, even before the expiration of the current period for which that union now subsists.[90] For if Prussia alone or Prussia with Baden and other small states accept the commercial treaty negotiated

[90]The treaty of 8 April 1853 (*Verlängerungs- und Erneuerungsvertrag*) agreed that the *Zollverein* would be extended until 31 December 1865.

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by the former Power with France, by which facilities are stipulated for the importation of French goods and manufactures into their territories, which facilities are refused by the remainder of the states composing the Zollverein, it requires no argument to prove, that the old Custom House lines and regulations existing previously to the establishment of the Zollverein, must be re-enabled between these several classes of States.

It cannot be supposed, that the South German Governments shut their eyes to this eventuality, and I think indications may be perceived, that they are preparing public opinion for the possible change. Certainly short notes and articles make their appearance in the leading journals from time to time, drawing attention to the fact, that, whilst France takes from Germany scarce anything beyond Raw Produce, the Austrian Empire, from its general want of home manufactures is the great customer of South Germany for manufactured goods, and would be still more so if more favourable commercial legislation could be established between them.

The opinion seems to be gaining ground therefore, that the period has arrived when a Commercial Treaty, if not a Commercial Union, with Austria will be a more advantageous Policy for South Germany, than a maintenance of their present Customs-House dependence on Prussia through the Zollverein. How far this change, if effected, will have been due to political feeling, it is now hard to determine, but it is incontrovertible, that this so far as the Governments are concerned, is not without its influence at the present juncture.

## FO 82/108: Evan Montague Baillie to Earl Russell, No 6, Stuttgart, 27 January 1863

*Continuing controversies in Württemberg over Franco-Prussian Commercial Treaty; many now in favour of ratifying treaty to preserve* Zollverein*; strength of protectionist feeling in south German states*

The question of the treaty of Commerce between Prussia and France[91] continues to cause a good deal of excitement and agitation in this country.

The attitude of the Government, guided as they are almost entirely by political motives in dealing with this question, remains the same, but public opinion, especially among the industrial classes, has evidently been undergoing a change. Manufacturers who were at first ardent in supporting the Government in rejecting the Treaty from fear of the consequences to their own private interests, are now beginning to

[91] See n. 88 in Frankfurt section.

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awake to the possibility of a result more serious than that of losing part of their profits viz: the disruption of the Zollverein.

The Prussian note to this Government of last November[92] seems to have given the first signal of alarm, and the conviction that the Zollverein would be imperilled by the course adopted by the Government led to a meeting being held in Stuttgart on the 3rd inst. for discussing the whole question.[93]

This meeting which I had the honor to inform Your Lordship was contemplated in my Despatch No 15 of the 27. Dec was well attended and several persons of influence and consideration took part in it.

Resolutions were passed, with scarcely a dissentient voice, to the effect that the Treaty ought, notwithstanding its defects, to be accepted.

Other demonstrations of a similar character have taken place in different parts of the Country, but of less importance and less marked in their results.

It is not easy, amid the conflicting statements of the two parties to determine with any degree of accuracy what progress is really being affected in people's minds in Wurtemberg in favour of this Treaty and of liberal commercial principles in general.

The friends of the Treaty in Wurtemberg and the Carlsruhe journal[94] profess to attach immense importance to the meeting of the 3rd inst. The protectionists, on the other hand, and the Wurtemberg "Moniteur",[95] state that it by no means represented the general feeling of the country, that it was a mere party affair, emanating from the "National Verein",[96] for the purpose of working upon the minds of the people through fear of a danger which does not really exist.

The truth lies, no doubt, between the two extremes, but, I am inclined to think, nearer to the latter than to the former.

The long prosperity which this country has enjoyed, renders the Wurtemburgers, as a general rule, a contented people, and they look with little interest, rather perhaps with aversion, to the prospect of any changes being introduced calculated to disturb the existing order of

[92]Otto von Bismarck to Gustav von der Schulenburg-Priemern, dated Berlin, 12 November 1862. In this despatch, Bismarck interpreted Württemberg's refusal (of 12 August) to endorse the Franco-Prussian Commercial Treaty of 1862 as an indication of Württemberg's intention not to continue the *Zollverein* beyond the current treaty period.

[93]At the assembly of the Stuttgart *Bürgergesellschaft*, the majority of the 200 participants (primarily *Landtag* delegates and merchants) pronounced in favour of the commercial agreement with France.

[94]The *Karlsruher Zeitung*, the official government gazette of Baden, was founded in 1757 as the *Karlsruher Wochenblatt*.

[95]Probably the *Schwäbischer Merkur*, the main political daily in Württemberg, founded in 1785.

[96]For the *Nationalverein* see n. 71 in Frankfurt section.

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things. The "National Verein" has, therefore, never been popular here, and though that party obtained some success in the Esslingen Radical meeting last November,[97] yet even the "Beobachter"[98] the only Journal which supports the "National Verein" is now compelled to admit that the Esslingen demonstration of which so much was boasted at the time has not had the effect of inducing any of the leaders of the Wurtemberg Democracy to stand up boldly in support of that Verein in either of the questions of the German Constitution or the Franco Prussian Commercial Treaty.

It must also be remembered that the national economy is based upon Protectionist principles, which are deeply rooted in the minds of the Industrial Classes throughout South Germany, and in Wurtemburg are supported with great activity by the leaders of that School, especially by Mr Moritz Mohl, one of the most prominent men in the Democratic party here, and a great authority in Commercial matters. The arguments of this gentleman, which are now constantly filling the columns of the Press, are by no means destitute of ingenuity and plausibility as addressed to persons imperfectly acquainted with the theory of Free Trade, and therefore are no doubt eagerly credited by the majority of his readers, but they would have very little weight indeed with those who are capable of considering with impartiality, the replies made by the best political Economists of the present day to the various points of Protectionist teaching.

It seems to be hopeless to expect that erroneous principles of this kind can be eradicated, except by very slow degrees, and, though the activity of the opponents of Free Trade principles is in itself a proof that they feel the enemy they have to contend against is gaining ground, yet I apprehend that the popular feeling in opposition to the Government, is far from having advanced to such a point as to cause them much anxiety or embarrassment.

## FO 82/109: George John Robert Gordon to Earl Russell, No 31, Stuttgart, 30 November 1863

*Württemberg government compelled by public opinion to repudiate commitments of London Protocol; public agitation on Schleswig-Holstein Question and desire to separate both duchies from Denmark*

I have now the honor to forward to Your Lordship in original and translation the full report of Baron Hügels reply, in the Chamber of

[97] Baillie refers to the Esslingen assembly of the Württemberg *Fortschrittspartei* (Progressive Party) on 14 December 1862, which declared in favour of joining the *Nationalverein*.

[98] *Der Beobachter*, a liberal-democratic newspaper, founded as *Der Hochwächter* in Stuttgart in 1830.

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Deputies, to the Questions which had been addressed to him, as to the adhesion of this Government to the Treaty of London of May 8. 1852. and the subject of the Slesvig Holstein Succession, as reported in my Despatch No. 22 of the 27th instant.[99]

I was told by Baron Hügel whom I saw on the morning of the 28th, that the Report to be published that day in the official paper and enclosed herewith would be a corrected one and Your Lordship will perceive, that it coincides in all essential particulars with the summary which I forwarded to Your Lordship by Telegram on the evening of the 27th instant.

The Wurtemberg Government have thus officially declared their determination to repudiate the engagements they undertook in acceding to the Treaty of London, notwithstanding the remonstrances of Her Majesty's Government[100] which had been conveyed to Baron Hügel, when I acted on Your Lordship's Telegram of the 22nd instant, as reported in my Despatch No 19. of the 23rd instant; Wurtemberg being compelled to take this course by the strong pressure of public opinion here and elsewhere in Germany and the fear of revolutionary outbreaks, should it adhere to the stipulations of the Treaty.

Baron Hügel was evidently embarrassed when I pointed out to him that, by taking this course the Government were acting in direct opposition to their engagements and were in fact conducting themselves as faithlessly as they accuse the Danes of having done. His Excellency appealed to our compassion, when he showed how violent the whole Chamber was on the subject and that, as they had unanimously signed the Petition to the Government forwarded in my Despatch No 20 of the 25th Instant, there was not one Member, however reasonable any arguments might be that were adduced in favor of maintaining the engagements of the Treaty of London, who would not oppose such a course bitterly.[101] During the whole time His Excellency was speaking, he heard on all sides of him suppressed exclamations of disgust at the course which had been pursued by the Government and he appears to have lost his equanimity in a great degree, in presence of the hostility which he was obliged to face alone

[99]Enclosure: Baron Hügel's declaration in the chamber of deputies, 27 November 1863 (original and translation). Württemberg acceded to the London Protocol (see n. 97 in Frankfurt section) on 23 November 1852.

[100]The British government expressed its expectation that Württemberg would remain bound by the London Protocol and support Christian IX's claims over the sovereignty of the duchies in the forthcoming discussions of the matter in the Federal Diet.

[101]On 24 November 1863, an address to the king from the first chamber and a resolution from the chamber of deputies both declared their support for the Augustenburg succession in the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein and demanded the immediate occupation of the duchies in consequence of Christian IX's proclamation as King of Denmark and Duke of Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg on 16 November.

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and whilst compelled to make the unpopular admissions which had been extorted from him.

In the meantime, it is my duty to report to Your Lordship, that the excitement on the question of the Succession in Slesvig-Holstein and the determination to separate both Duchies from Danish rule and maintain their incorporation with Germany are increasing in this country and in the Grand Duchy of Baden in a manner that no apprehension of possible alarming and perilous consequences appears likely to allay; so that, if the Governments do not place themselves at the head of the movement, revolution will be the certain result.

The hesitation which the Cabinets of Austria and Prussia have hitherto manifested, as to the course to be pursued by them on the Slesvig-Holstein question is causing great discontent and, as regards Austria especially, if she should maintain the engagements of the Treaty of London and refuse to support the so called German cause, all Her Influence and popularity in the South of Germany will be annihilated; The opposition in Austria's favor to the Franco-Prussian commercial Treaty[102] will be at an end and no voice will ever again be raised in these states in deference of Austria's position in Venetia[103] – should it ever hereafter come to be imperilled.

The Slesvig-Holstein idea and question is the one subject with regard to which German Unity is a reality. This is the solitary point upon which all the German populations, all German Statesmen agree and, being so exceptionally universal in it's influence and acceptation, it is and will be adhered to and cherished from the hope that it thus affords of Union upon more important matters being attained through it – quite apart from the merits of the case itself. It is a national question in the strictest sense of the term and it is cherished and supported with the unreasoning enthusiasm which such questions always excite and which is common to the Statesman [*sic*] and Politicians as well as to the whole mass of the population.

## FO 82/112: George John Robert Gordon to Earl Russell, No 4, Stuttgart, 6 January 1864

*German dismissal of British warnings over Schleswig-Holstein*

Having received Your Lordship's telegram, dated the 4th instant at 7.20 p.m., late that night, I communicated its substance to Baron Hügel yesterday.

[102]See n. 92 in this section.

[103]Following the conclusion of the Second War of Italian Independence in 1859, Venetia remained under Austrian rule, as the remnant of the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia.

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I cannot say, that Baron Hügel made me any more positive reply as to the serious warning conveyed in this communication, against the occupation of Sleswig by German troops than he did to the proposal made by Your Lordship's Despatch to me No 23 of the 31st ultimo for the Assemblage of a Conference on the German Danish differences. His Excellency repeated the necessity there was for Wurtemburg as a German State, to guide its policy in such a case by the determination of the Diet, and that the subject was now under the consideration of the Committee of the Diet, to which had been referred the proposals of Austria and Prussia to occupy Sleswig as a material guaranty for the abolition by Denmark of the Denmark Slesvig-Constitution[.][104] But that, if the Diet should determine in favour of the pretensions of Prince Frederick of Augustenburg to Holstein, he would be entitled under Art. 47 of the Federal Constitution, to call upon the Diet to aid him in maintaining the rights which he claimed over Slesvig.[105]

I could only press earnestly on Baron Hügel the necessity there was for not shutting his eyes to the very serious responsibility the German Governments, and that of Wurtemburg in particular, would incur who should vote for any act of hostility against Denmark which the occupation of Slesvig would more certainly amount to. But it appeared evident to me, that nothing I could advance would have the smallest effect in preventing this step, because, as I have repeatedly had the honor of stating to Your Lordship, this Government in common with others of the German Middle States consider, that Revolution would be the consequence of their firm opposition to the popular will in this matter, that popular will demands, at this moment, the occupation of Slesvig and the union of at least the German portion of the Duchy with Holstein, under the Sovereignty of Prince Frederick of Augustenburg, with the views of repairing the honour of Germany which is universally considered to have suffered so deeply in the conduct of the Sleswig Holstein Question for the last ten Years. To attain this result and indicate the national honour and credit before the world, the German people, are, I firmly believe, in their present temper, prepared to run any risks, to encounter any opposition whatever, and from whatever

[104]The Austro-Prussian motion of 28 December 1863 was rejected by the Federal Diet on 14 January 1864. The joint constitution for Denmark and Schleswig of 18 November 1863 incorporated Schleswig into the Kingdom of Denmark and stipulated the separation of the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein.

[105]Article 47 of the Vienna Final Act of 1820 regulated the commitment of the Confederation in the event of attacks on the territories of federal states lying outside the Confederation. In this case, Friedrich von Augustenburg, who claimed the right of succession in the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein (see n. 97 in Frankfurt section), argued that Schleswig (as opposed to Holstein) was not a part of the German Confederation.

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quarter it may come; and I am bound to report, that it is my strong opinion, from all the information that has reached me hitherto, that no threat on the part of Great Britain or any other power – no fear of having to meet our or other military or less formidable opposition, will cause the German people, now thoroughly roused, to pause in prosecuting to the utmost extremity the cause they have taken up, as best suited to attain the main object which they have in view; namely the reestablishment of their long lost credit, Power and place amongst the nations of Europe, and, irrespective of the two Great German Powers, as one of the first amongst those nations. From all quarters I hear the Declaration;– "If it must come to war; and were it even with England, which we look upon rather as our most natural and best ally – be it so; in this quarrel, we are ready for it and believe even, that war will be of advantage to us". This Government simply cannot resist this heartfelt national feeling, and if the King's present advisers should be dismissed on this account, none others would be found ready to assume their vacant portfolios.

Further, as regards the course adopted by this Government, it places itself on the platform of strict legal right. It will examine thoroughly the Law and Right of the Question of Succession in Holstein and Sleswig and, having convinced itself of the side on which these lie, it will support that side by its Vote in the Diet, by its military force, and by all its influence advienne que pourra.[106]

There is therefore, I apprehend, not the slightest advantage to be expected from warning this Government or from protesting against the Acts of the Diet. They will pay no attention whatever to the threats or cautions of non-German Governments, at all events, not to those of Great Britain, whose means of enforcing them are not considered to be alarming here.

It is my duty to state clearly and without concealment what I know to be the opinion of all classes, and I trust I shall not need to offer to Your Lordship excuses, even for writing so plainly as above. This Government would deplore such a necessity as that pointed at, were it to occur; but they scarcely believe, that it will or that Great Britain will offer any material aid or armed support to Denmark, and as I have said, if Her Majesty's Government should do so, this Government are prepared to encounter such aid to their enemies;– they had rather encounter war abroad than Revolution at home.

I know that both my Austrian and Prussian colleagues[107] here have repeatedly pressed this Government to moderate the popular excitement and prevent matters coming to the last extremity, throwing

[106] 'Come what may'.
[107] Maximilian Joseph Freiherr von Handel and Gustav von der Schulenburg-Priemern.

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on this Government all the responsibility of a contrary course; but the answers they have received and the results they have attained have been fully as unfavourable as those which I have had the honour to report to Your Lordship have attended my own efforts consequent on Your Lordship's instructions[.]

As to the Representatives of the smaller German states here – the Bavarian, Baden and Hesse Darmstadt Ministers[108] – they all declare to me openly "we must have war in order to retrieve German honour", – and they all express their readiness to accept War even with England if necessary in order to secure German Supremacy over Slesvig as well as Holstein.

I have forwarded to Mr. Baillie the substance of Your Lordship's telegram of the 4th instant with the exception of the last clause, for communication to Baron Roggenbach as the opinions of Her Majesty's Government.

## FO 82/113: George John Robert Gordon to Earl Russell, No 101, Stuttgart, 1 June 1864

*Schleswig-Holstein Question strengthening protectionist feeling in Germany; anti-British sentiments*

As the Slesvig-Holstein Question was adopted in Germany, as the one point on which all parties and all Governments were agreed for the promotion of the cause of German administrative Unity, so now it would appear, that it is proposed by the Protectionist Interest to work the same question for the purpose of reconstituting the kindred unity in Germany on commercial affairs which has been placed in so precarious a position by the Franco-Prussian commercial treaty and by the notice which has been given by Prussia of the termination of the Zollverein at the end of next year, which has been hitherto the most prominent result of that negotiation.[109]

Articles and correspondence have appeared for the last fortnight in the Wurtemberg newspapers urging the unreasonableness of acceding to the French Commercial Treaty at this period, when Great Britain has manifested such pervese [*sic*] hostility to German interests on the Slesvig-Holstein Question,[110] – on the ground that the advantages to

[108] August Lothar Graf von Reigersberg, Ferdinand von Dusch, and Julius von Breidenbach.

[109] Bismarck's circular to the governments of the *Zollverein* states on 15 December 1863 gave notice that Prussia would terminate the *Zollverein* treaty at the end of 1865. For the Franco-Prussian Commercial Treaty see n. 88 in Frankfurt section.

[110] The criticism related to Great Britain's continued adherence to the London Protocol of 1852 (see n. 97 in Frankfurt section).

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Foreign commerce stipulated therein would, in point of fact, benefit British Trade and Manufactures, as much as those of France, in consequence of the corresponding advantages obtained by the former from our late commercial treaty with France.

But beyond this even, the same newspapers recommend strongly that a German internal Blockade should be instituted against the admission into Germany of British manufacturers, – and failing this the German people are urgently recommended to adopt the advice of an address which has, it seems, been lately issued by 50 citizens of Lübeck, and to abstain from the use of British manufactured goods.[111]

Both these proposals are of course accompanied by the now usual abuse of England.

It is not difficult to perceive, that such impracticable propositions proceed from the camp of the South German Manufacturing interest,– the Head Quarters of which are situated in this country, – and which desires equally the continuance of the present prohibitive system of the Zollverein and the opening of the Austrian frontier to their Products and to those alone.

This interest which has gradually attained, under the fostering care of protection, a very high state of prosperity dreads very naturally the opening of the German market to Western and especially to British manufactures, and, at the same time, it as strongly deprecates the rupture of the Zollverein which it justly fears that Prussia will agree to, rather than renounce the commercial treaty which she has signed with France.

In order therefore to avert the latter catastrophe and at the same time to attain a widely extended market for their goods in the Austrian empire, the South German manufacturers and their supporters seek to take advantage of the prevailing Slesvig-Holsteinism and consequent animosity against England throughout the Fatherland.

It may, however, I imagine, be safely predicted, that the device thus adopted by the German manufacturers as forlorn hope to maintain their present monopoly, is of too transparent a nature to blind or attract either Governments or people; and that, notwithstanding Slesvig-Holstein animosity, British Manufactured goods will continue to be imported, and to be used throughout Germany, as well as that the Franco-Prussian Commercial Treaty will be accepted, rather than that a rupture of the Zollverein shall be acquiesced in.

[111]The demand for a boycott was published in the *Lübecker Zeitung* on 22 May 1864.

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## FO 82/118: George John Robert Gordon to Earl Russell, Confidential, No 1, Stuttgart, 3 January 1865

*Federal policy of middle states; attempts to establish the 'Trias' a failure; effectiveness of administration in smaller German states*

My despatch No 207. of the 27th ultimo informed Your Lordship of the visit of Baron v. der Pfordten to Stuttgart, in order to confer with Baron Varnbüler on the relations of the middle States to the two German Great Powers.[112]

I have the honour now to report to Your Lordship, the result of Baron von der Pfordten's conferences with the Wurtemburg Minister for foreign Affairs, so far as I have been able to discover it, and I think I may assure Your Lordship, that the following account contains the substance of the most important part of what took place.

The points upon which Baron Varnbüler and von der Pfordten came to an understanding were,

(1). That a good understanding between Austria and Prussia was to be considered as beneficial and conformable to the true interests of the middle states.

(2). That every effort to promote the industrial intercourse and union between the middle states should be eagerly seized and promoted by each and all of them; such as monetary unity of weights and measures, increased Railway communication &c.

(3). That it is not advisable that the middle states should meet in separate Conference for political objects.

(4). That it is not contrary to the Interests of the middle states of Germany generally, but quite the reverse, that Prussia should obtain maritime advantages in the North of Germany.

(5). That it is advisable, that the settlement of the Sleswig Holstein question especially, as to the Sovereignty of the Duchies be left to Austria and Prussia; but that it is of importance that the settlement be not long delayed, and it is understood that the two Great Powers are expected to decide it according to law and Right, all arbitrary arrangement of it being deprecated. Finally:

(6). Baron v. d Pfordten adverted to the contingency of Austria and Prussia deciding the succession question in Sleswig Holstein arbitrarily and contrary to manifest right, and suggested the propriety of the middle states coming to a resolution as to the course to be pursued by them in such an event. On this point Baron v. d. Pfordten encountered Baron Varnbüler's objection, that it would be advisable for the middle states, which manifestly had not the power of giving effect to any course

[112] Von der Pfordten visited Stuttgart on 29 December 1864.

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of policy they might resolve upon in opposition to the views of the two Great Powers, not to form any fixed plan of proceeding for a contingency which it was hoped might never arise, and the exact notion of which, if it did, could not be foreseen.

Baron v. d. Pfordten, I learn, yielded to this argument, and ceased to urge on Baron Varnbüler his views on this point.

The above probably explains the observation made to me by Baron Varnbüler in reply to a question I put to him as to the result of Baron v. der Pfordten's mission,– that the latter, he found, came here "très calme et il nous a quitté, s'il fut possible plus calme encore."[113]

Baron von der Pfordten was not more successful in gaining over Baron Roggenbach to his supposed views as to the "Trias," as Your Lordship will perceive from the enclosed Despatch which I have received from Mr. Baillie.[114]

The conclusion in fact resulting from what I have learnt with respect to Baron v. der Pfordten's interviews with the middle States' Statesmen, amounts to a total failure of his presumed project for the establishment of the "Trias" and the consequent complete subjection for the present, of the middle smaller states to the supremacy of Austria and Prussia, as was the case before 1848.

This position appears now to be accepted by the former from a prudent consciousness that, under present circumstances, and fearing as the Government do, and possibly with reason, the action of the popular party, if admitted to power,– it is utterly out of their power to contest any point on which Austria and Prussia may be agreed. They determine therefore, most reasonably, "to make the best of it"; they recognize their incapacity and, as Baron Vanbüler recommends, decline to make themselves ridiculous, by fractiously opposing an irresistible Power. They fall back on the true strength of their position; namely that of a number of small but on the whole, exceedingly well administered States, whose populations enjoy all rational freedom, where public Burdens are very moderate, where justice is righteously administered, and where agriculture[,] industry and commerce flourish and increase year by year; all which combine to give them one item of strength and Power which certainly, neither of their two colossal confederates possess – that of freedom from debt and overflowing exchequers. Wurtemburg for instance, during the last financial period of four years exhibits a treasury overplus of 16,000,000 of florins. Besides this the middle states always count

[113]'Very calm, and was possibly even calmer when he left us'.

[114]For the idea of a 'Trias' see n. 18 in Bavaria section. Enclosure: Evan Montague Baillie to George John Robert Gordon, No 19, Carlsruhe, 30 December 1864.

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upon the antagonism of Austria and Prussia preserving the balance in the Confederation and probably rightly considering the realization of the "Trias" plan would be but a renewal of the Confederation of the Rhine,[115] with dependence upon France, to which the greatest imaginable subjection of the middle and smaller States to the two Great Powers would evidently be a preferable alternative.

It is not to be supposed that this moderate line of policy will satisfy the popular party in Germany, who urge the general arming and training of the people and assert that the middle smaller [*sic*] States could under such a system, place on foot an army equal to the disposable force of either Austria or Prussia, and combined with a popular and central Representation of the people, would bid defiance to the encroachments of the Great Powers and any necessity for foreign support. If, however, such aspirations may be supposed ever likely to be realized in Germany, this is manifestly too remote a possibility to make it worth while to do more them thus cursorily [*sic*].

## FO 82/118: George John Robert Gordon to Earl Russell, No 62, Stuttgart, 30 August 1865

*Württemberg liberal party alarmed by Gastein Convention; opinions of the middle states on Schleswig-Holstein Question ignored by Austria and Prussia; public agitation*

The liberal party (by far the majority of the educated classes) of this country look upon the Gastein convention[116] with feelings of great bitterness and alarm, both on the ground of the utter disregard which they consider it manifests on the part of the two Great Powers to German wishes and principles as to the Elbe Duchies, and likewise from the indication which according to them the Convention affords of what it is supposed may hereafter be the course pursued by the two High Contracting Parties in dealing with the middle and smaller German States. As yet the leaders of the Party appear to be taken by surprize and to hesitate what step to take in order to save the Country, if possible, from future annexation or mediatisation which they anticipate. In the meantime, however, "Volks vereine" (popular Unions) are being organized all over this Kingdom to discuss and agitate on the subject and so procure the pressure of the public opinion of the masses to be exercised on the Government. I learn that, as it

[115]The original Confederation of the Rhine was established by Napoleon I in 1806.

[116]In the Gastein Convention of 14 August 1865, Austria and Prussia adhered to the policy of combined supremacy in the duchies, though with Schleswig under Prussian administration and Holstein under Austrian. Additionally, Austria ceded its claims to the Duchy of Lauenburg to Prussia for the payment of two and a half million Danish thalers.

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is, the peasants already talk with indignation of the so called sale of the Lauenberg population to Prussia which they have denominated "Gschlaverei"[117] at so much a head according to a calculation which has appeared in the Newspapers to that effect, and begin even to entertain the idea that, if it be possible thus to turn over a people for a sum of money to a new Sovereign, it might also perhaps be advisable to consider for how much their own Sovereign would agree to commute his monarchical rights over them, in the same way as, since 1848, they have been accustomed to have the Seigneurial rights of the mediatized Princes and proprietary Barons commuted by Legislative enactment.[118]

It is too early as yet to form any reliable opinion as to what such discussions may lead to, and in any case German populations are slow and difficult to move to take any decidedly revolutionary step, especially when they enjoy such large material prosperity as that of Wurtemberg now does; but these views are certainly not without gravity and are at all events very unlike those held hitherto by German peasants.

The Committee of 36 of the Deputies of all the German second Chambers are to meet in a few days at Leipsic to discuss the Gastein Convention and the course which ought to be adopted in consequence.[119] I am told that the Austrian members of the Committee are expected to be present on this occasion, and it is supposed that a further meeting of the whole number of German Deputies will be determined upon.

The conduct of Austria in this affair seems to be considered by the liberal Party as the most inexplicable and surprising; whilst that of Prussia provokes the greatest indignation and bitterness.

## FO 82/122: George John Robert Gordon to Earl of Clarendon, No 21, Stuttgart, 28 March 1866

*Varnbüler's assessment of Bismarck; revulsion at unprincipled expansionist aims of Prussian liberals and Junkers; war between Austria and Prussia postponed for the time being, but inevitable in the future*

I learnt yesterday from Baron Varnbüler that the probability of hostilities between Austria and Prussia is for the present at an end

[117]Swabian dialect for *Sklaverei* ('slavery').

[118]The abolition of tithes and other manorial dues in Württemberg was regulated by the laws of April 1848 and June 1849. Since 1855, all attempts to gain additional compensation for the nobility had been unsuccessful and had been resisted by the second chamber (see n. 32 in this section).

[119]The Committee of 36 (see n. 109 in Frankfurt section) was summoned to meet in Leipzig on 3 September 1865.

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in consequence of the King of Prussia having positively refused to agree to Count Bismark's policy in this respect,[120] but Baron Varnbüler seemed to think that no great reliance could be placed on His Majesty's abiding firmly by this determination.

Baron Varnbüler believes that Count Bismark desires war "tout crûment",[121] as he expressed himself; he says that the Prussian Statesman is shocked at the idea of material prosperity and the interests of Trade, Commerce and Industry being those which should chiefly influence the Policy of States and that he is incapable therefore of feeling for the destruction, loss and misery occasioned by war. Count Bismark is desirous of obtaining the line of the Main as the Prussian Boundary by incorporating all Germany to the North of it and, to gain this end, he would not, according to Baron Varnbüler, hesitate to sacrifice the Prussian Rhenish Provinces.

Baron Varnbüler feels absolutely "revolted" at such unprincipled Policy which, however, he believes is shared to a great extent by the Liberals in Prussia as well as by the Junker party, the whole nation being puffed up by vanity (on account of their prowess in the Danish war?) and "drunk" with the lust of acquisition of increased territory; so that it would be of little service to the interests of peace if Count Bismark's rule should cease. If Wurtemberg (Baron Varnbüler said) were a nation of 30 millions, instead of what it is, he would not hesitate to declare war immediately against so dangerous a Confederate. But, he added, I am perfectly aware of the pressing necessity for great caution and reserve on the part of the Middle States as matters are and at the present juncture in order not to provoke Prussia and only say this as my personal opinion and to show how Count Bismark's proceedings incense me.

Baron Varnbüler, however, believes that the present peaceful aspect of affairs is only temporary and that war must and will eventually break out between Austria and Prussia; the crisis will be constantly recurring after every few months and His Excellency is of opinion that it is a grave question whether it would not be better for Austria at once to meet the danger and so avoid the fruitless charges of constant preparation and as regards the Confederate States also, the embarrassment and loss to Trade of continual uncertainty. His Excellency anticipates no danger to the independence of South Germany from Prussian aggression.

[120] The Austro-Prussian conflict had been further aggravated by Bismarck's circular to the German governments of 24 March 1866, in which he stated the need for federal reform.

[121] 'Very bluntly'.

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FO 82/123: George John Robert Gordon to Lord Stanley, No 8, Stuttgart, 18 July 1866

*Reactions to advance of Prussian army; anti-Prussian feeling*

It is difficult to report shortly and with any certainty as to the state of affairs and public opinion here. All appears to be confusion, depression, disappointment and especially great and doubtless well grounded dissatisfaction with the course of events, the inactivity of the 8th Federal Corps and especially the damaging inefficiency of the 7th, or Bavarian Corps; as regards the former Corps incapacity is loudly attributed to its Commander Prince Alexander of Hesse, as well as to the Chief of the Staff, the Wurtemberg General Bauer [*sic*], besides the treacherous conduct referred to in my No 1 of the 10th instant of which Prince William of Baden was accused and which it appears impossible to disprove.[122] As regards the Bavarian Corps, the age of its Commander Prince Charles of Bavaria, as well as the doubtful Policy of Herr v. d. Pfordten,[123] is generally considered to paralyze it's action.

The inexplicable secrecy with which the movements of the Wurtemberg Division in the field have been hitherto shrouded is another natural cause for discontent and discouragement. Up to yesterday evening neither the King nor the War Department nor Baron Varnbüler had received the slightest information from Head Quarters since their retreat on the Main and two Royal Aides-de-Camp whom the King had dispatched successively to bring him information had not returned to the Capital.

Notwithstanding the above fatal drawbacks, however, on the efficiency of the Federal Troops, it is averred that their first object has been now attained, although by means of a long retreat, and that the junction between the two Corps referred to has been at last effected, although not before the line of the Main had been entirely resigned to the Prussians, who have even occupied Darmstadt and the South of that River.[124]

The question now presents itself whether the Prussians will prosecute their successful advance further South and occupy Baden

[122]On 4 July 1866, Prince Wilhelm, commander of the Baden division in the 8th corps of the federal army, was ordered to unite his troops with the Bavarian contingent. However, he did not carry this out, and instead ordered a retreat to Frankfurt. Wilhelm was accused of treason and pro-Prussian sympathies by many sections of the press, although the Baden government stated that there were military reasons for his actions.

[123]Von der Pfordten was attempting to conclude an armistice with Prussia, in order to prevent the threatened invasion of Bavaria and preserve the independence of the south German states.

[124]Darmstadt was occupied by Prussian troops on 18 July 1866.

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and Wurtemberg or even Bavaria. Opinions here differ much on this point. I will only say that Baron Varnbüler seems to think that the enemy will restrict himself to the line of the Main, for the present at all events.

In the meantime the valuables in the Palace are being packed up in readiness for removal, should it be necessary. As to the course which The King and Queen[125] will adopt it appears only to be decided that Their Majesties will not remain here should the Prussians come to Stuttgart, nor suffer themselves to be made prisoners by them.

Should the Prussians advance into Wurtemberg, I have reason to believe that they will not do so unopposed; much of course will depend upon the fortune of arms on the great Theatre of War before Vienna and on the resistance which Austria may still be enabled to make.[126]

A numerously attended popular meeting held last week at the requisition of supporters of the Prussian party here, in union with religionists of the Pietistic school, was attended by large numbers of the Volks Partei who are opposed to Prussian Supremacy and the Resolution in favour of that solution of present difficulties was rejected, whilst all present united in deprecating the war and in rejecting Foreign intervention.[127]

The opposition to the supposed intention of France,[128] in order to settle the German question, continues to be very great and this is the only point apparently in which all parties agree.

But, although the Anti-Prussian feeling here is very strong, it is difficult to doubt but that, if Prussia should now succeed in the bold enterprize which she has hitherto conducted with such consummate skill and good fortune and should she content herself at present with the line of the Main as her boundary, but a comparatively short time would elapse before the States South of that line, even should they at first preserve their independence would, by the mere force of attraction

[125]Olga.

[126]After the Prussian entry into the Archduchy of Austria on 14 July 1866, the *Landsturm* (militia) were mobilized and a citizen defence formed. The final engagement between Prussia and Austria took place on 22 July at Preßburg (Bratislava) and a preliminary peace was agreed on 26 July at Nikolsburg (see n. 174 in Prussia section).

[127]The meeting, with around 1,500 participants, was held in Stuttgart on 12 July 1866. The supporters of Prussia, who included numerous Pietists (adherents of a Protestant revival movement), merged in August 1866 to form the *Deutsche Partei*. The *Volkspartei* developed in 1864–1865 from a section of the *Fortschrittspartei* (Progressive Party), composed primarily of federally minded democrats.

[128]French mediation in the negotiation of an armistice between Prussia and Austria (including Italy) was opposed because it was feared from the French peace proposal of 14 July 1866 that it would lead to French territorial expansion in south-west Germany (particularly Landau and the Saar valley), as well as the surrender of Venetia.

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and the evidences of strength and energy which would be presented by the Great Northern Monarchy, gravitate towards and finally be absorbed in the same and so satisfy the long nourished aspirations after German Unity.

How the establishment of so immense and influential a Power in the centre of Europe would affect other Continental states and even Great Britain is another and very serious question.

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