

**8. MAI 1985:**  
**TAG DER ERINNERUNG - TAG DER ZUKUNFT**  
**and**  
**VIENNESE MILITARY SOCIETY:**  
**AN EXPLORATION INTO A FANTASY WORLD**

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**by**

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**REPORTS**

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**8. Mai. 1985:**

**Tag der Erinnerung - Tag der Zukunft**

Der 8. Mai 1985 war in beiden Teilen Deutschlands ein grosser Tag -- vierzig Jahre zuvor war der Zweite Weltkrieg zu Ende gegangen. Vierzig Jahre. Biblisch sind 40 Jahre ein Symbol für eine sehr lange Zeit oder das Ende eines Zeitalters. Die ehemaligen Alliierten feierten. Staatschefs reisten und lobten die Rollen ihrer eigenen und die anderer Länder. Militärparaden fanden statt, und es gab kirchliche Tagungen, Reden, Versammlungen, und Kundgebungen. In manchen Städten waren öffentliche Feiertage proklamiert. Aber was bedeutet dieser Tag in Deutschland wirklich? Wie wurde er in der Bundesrepublik gefeiert? In der DDR? Wie wurden die Feierlichkeiten in dem jeweils anderen Teil Deutschlands gesehen? Und wie kamen die Unterschiede zustande? Ein Vergleich der Feiern auf beiden Seiten der Mauer zeigt, wie weit die beiden Staaten in 40 Jahren auseinandergewachsen sind.

**1.1. HINTERGRUND**

Nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg war ein breiter Wiederaufbau in beiden Teilen Deutschlands nötig. Viele Fabriken waren zerstört; viele

Gebäude waren durch Raketenabwürfe, Artilleriebeschuß oder Bombardierungen in Trümmer gelegt worden, in vielen Städten war das Leben fast erstarrt. Im Gegensatz zum Ersten Weltkrieg hat Deutschland diesmal materiell viel mehr gelitten.

Beim Wiederaufbau wurden zwei grundverschiedene Wege eingeschlagen. Im Westen ermöglichten Marshall Plan und Währungsreform das Wirtschaftswunder. Verwaltungspersonal und Verwaltungsmassnahmen aus der Zeit vor und während des Weltkrieges wurden wieder benutzt, die ökonomische Hilfe der westlichen Nationen anzuwenden. Im Osten dagegen war die UdSSR mit ideologischer Hilfe, statt wirtschaftlicher Unterstützung bereit, einen neuen Staat aufzubauen. Von den (vorwiegend kommunistischen) Deutschen, die nach Moskau geflohen waren, um Hitler, seinem Krieg und seinen Konzentrationslagern zu entkommen, war eine neue Regierung gebildet worden, die Besatzungstruppen zu ersetzen. Ohne besondere Erfahrungen ausgestattet, machte die neue Regierung Fehler, blieb aber ideologisch treu.

Angesichts dieser programmatischen Unterschiede während der Nachkriegsjahre 1945-1950 ist es kein Wunder, daß der 40. Jahrestag ein besonderer Ausgangspunkt für Bestandsaufnahme ist; und es ist ebenfalls kein Wunder, daß dieser gemeinsame Jahrestag den Unterschied zwischen den beiden Staaten verdeutlicht.

Der erste Unterschied ist die Divergenz der Selbstbilder beider Staaten. Ein Vergleich zeigt, wie die BRD sich gegen Freund und Feind

von innen und aussen verteidigen muß, um ihren 40. Jahrestag begehen zu können. Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland (BRD) verteidigt Deutschland nicht auf die Art, wie es vor 40 Jahren (und nach 12 Jahren der Naziherrschaft) der Fall war, sondern alle Leute, die damals wie heute auf ihrem Gebiet wohnen. Im Vergleich hierzu gibt das Selbstbewußtsein der DDR dem Arbeiter-und-Bauern-Staat Tapferkeit, die UdSSR weiterhin zu unterstützen: mit dieser Feier versucht die DDR, ihrer Existenz als autonomer deutscher Staat Gültigkeit zu verleihen, ein positives Bild abzugeben. In der DDR feierte die Bevölkerung auf vielen Veranstaltungen mit, die nur der Verehrung der UdSSR galten.

Wie die Feierlichkeiten auf beiden Seiten betrachtet wurden, weist auf einen zweiten Gesichtspunkt in der unterschiedlichen Entwicklung beider Teile Deutschlands hin. Die DDR betrachtet ihren Schwesterstaat noch immer als Heimat der Nazis (auf Grund der BRD-Veranstaltungen) und verurteilt die BRD offen. Dagegen nimmt die Bundesrepublik offiziell zu den DDR-Feiern wenig Stellung. Lediglich die Presse bringt Berichte, meistens mit negativem Kommentar.

## **1.2. DIE FEIERN IN DER BRD**

Negativ wurden auch die meisten Erinnerungen an den 8. Mai in der BRD gesehen. Die BRD-Regierung ist gegen die Teilung Deutschlands, wie von den Alliierten vor 40 Jahren vereinbart. Die Regierung verurteilt die Vertreibung von Deutschen aus ihren

Heimatdörfern und ist gegen die bestehende Tatsache, daß die Vertriebenen heute in einem nur halb so grossen Gebiet leben müssen. Ob die Bürger der BRD diese Verurteilung voll unterstützen, ist dagegen eine andere Frage. Sicher hat der "Bund der Vertriebenen" in der BRD nicht nur im Bundestag eine starke Stimme. Die Meinung der Bevölkerung jedoch ist nicht einhellig, und bei vielen Veranstaltungen in der BRD gab es Proteste und Demonstrationen gegen die Entwicklung der eigenen Regierung in den letzten 40 Jahren.

### **1.2.1. Offizielle Stimmen**

Was bedeuten die letzten 40 Jahre für diese Regierung?  
Richard von Weizsäcker, Präsident der Bundesrepublik, kommentiert:  
"40 Jahre spielen in der Zeitspanne von Menschenleben und Völkerschicksalen eine grosse Rolle." Im Alten Testament:<sup>1</sup>

... spielen 40 Jahre eine häufig wiederkehrende wesentliche Rolle. 40 Jahre sollte Israel in der Wüste bleiben. ... 40 Jahre waren notwendig für einen vollständigen Wechsel der damals verantwortliche Vätergeneration. ...die Erinnerung an erfahrene Hilfe und Rettung nur 40 Jahre dauerte. So bedeuten 40 Jahre stets einen großen Einschnitt.

Bundeskanzler Helmut Kohl wollte, als Zeichen der Verantwortung für die Nazizeit und als Beweis daß die Kriegsgeneration keinen Einfluß mehr auf die Bundesregierung und die Bevölkerung der



BRD hat, eine Aussöhnung mit den ehemaligen Feinden erreichen, um diesem grossen Einschnitt in der deutschen Entwicklung eine gegenwärtige Bedeutung zu geben. Der Bundeskanzler lud den amerikanischen Präsidenten Ronald Reagan nach seiner Teilnahme an der Wirtschaftsgipfelkonferenz in Bonn zum Staatsbesuch in die BRD ein. Kohl hatte schon mit dem französischen Staatschef Mitterand den Soldatenfriedhof in Verdun besucht, wo er sagte, Grabstätten seien vielleicht der richtige Ort, einen Krieg zu vergessen. Umstritten war die Kranzniederlegung auf dem deutschen Soldatenfriedhof in Bitburg durch Präsident Reagan. Dort liegen 49 gefallene Angehörige der Waffen-SS. Die Welt war offensichtlich nicht derselben Meinung wie der deutsche Regierungschef: er empfand einen solchen Besuch als keineswegs harmlos. Der amerikanische Präsident verließ jedoch Deutschland schon zwei Tage vor dem 40. Jahrestag des Kriegsendes. Aber der Fehler war begangen, und die Welt sah einen US-Präsidenten an, der über Aussöhnung sprach, wo Waffen-SS-Soldaten begraben liegen. Und das vor dem 40. Jahrestag! Die Bundesrepublik überschätzte wahrscheinlich die Bereitschaft und Fähigkeit der Betroffenen zu vergessen.

In der Bundesrepublik war der Höhepunkt der offiziellen Feier eine "Stunde des Gedenkens" im Deutschen Bundestag. Bundespräsident von Weizsäcker und der Präsident des Deutschen Bundestags, Dr. Philipp Jenninger, hielten Reden. Der letztere verglich den 8. Mai 1945 mit dem 8. Mai 1985:<sup>2</sup>

[Es] erschien der 8. Mai 1945 wirklich als das Ende Deutschlands: Verzweifelte, hungernde, ihres Lebenssinns beraubte Menschen: die Abwesenheit jeder staatlichen und gesellschaftlichen Ordnung und - nach der bedingungslosen Kapitulation - das Abwarten, was die Sieger über die Deutschen beschließen würden. Heute, 40 Jahre danach, können wir Gott danken, daß unser Volk in Schuld und Elend nicht zugrunde ging, sondern sich - wenn auch unter schweren Einbußen - erheben konnte, und daß sich eine demokratische Ordnung entwickelte mit der besten Verfassung, die wir je hatten. ....Auch das deutsche Volk hat nach dem Zusammenbruch der nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft aufgetatmet. ... erinnern wir uns an Krieg, Leid und Tod, an das unter der nationalsozialistischen Herrschaft und der Besatzung erlittene Unrecht, an Unterdrückung und Verfolgung unschuldiger, wehrloser Menschen...

Jenninger will den Alliierten mehr Schuld geben, als die Deutschen selbst tragen wollen!

Danach erwähnte Richard von Weizsäcker den 8. Mai 1945 als Schicksalstag für fast alle Europäer: einen Tag von entscheidender historischer Bedeutung. Er hält es für richtig, daß die Deutschen den Tag unter sich feiern. Der 8. Mai 1945 ist heute vor allem ein Tag der Erinnerung an die Kapitulation; und zugleich ein Tag des Nachdenkens, aber kein Tag zum Feiern. Am Tag der Kapitulation waren die Ungewißheit, Erschöpfung, Ratlosigkeit und Sorgen der Bevölkerung groß. "Die militärische Kapitulation war bedingungslos" [und auch bedeutungslos!]. Auch war der 8. Mai 1945 ein Tag der Befreiung von dem "menschenverachtenden System der nationalsozialistischen

Gewaltherrschaft." Ein Tag der Erinnerung ist der 8. Mai auch, um des Geschehens so "ehrlich und rein zu gedenken, daß es zu einem Teil des eigenen Innern wird." Der Bundespräsident sagt, daß die Deutschen "wahrlich keinen Grund haben, uns an Siegesfesten zu beteiligen." Dann setzt von Weizsäcker fort:<sup>3</sup>

40 Jahre nach dem Ende des Krieges ist das deutsche Volk nach wie vor geteilt... Wir Deutschen sind ein Volk und eine Nation. Wir fühlen uns zusammengehörig, weil wir dieselbe Geschichte durchlebt haben. Auch den 8. Mai 1985 haben wir als gemeinsames Schicksal unseres Volkes erlebt, das uns einigt. Wir fühlen uns zusammengehörig in unserem Willen zum Frieden. Von deutschem Boden in beiden Staaten sollen Frieden und gute Nachbarschaft mit allen Ländern ausgehen. ... Die Menschen in Deutschland wollen gemeinsam einen Frieden, der Gerechtigkeit und Menschenrecht für alle Völker einschließt, auch für das unsrige. ... Wir haben die Zuversicht, daß der 8. Mai nicht das letzte Datum unserer Geschichte bleibt, das für alle Deutschen verbindlich ist.

Die Bevölkerung, obwohl schon lange von der Schreckensregierung befreit, wird immer noch als Opfer der Nazis gesehen, diesmal aber von der heutigen Regierung.

### 1.2.2. Gegenstimmen

Der Spiegel kritisiert nicht von Weizsäcker, sondern die Anwesenheit eines Gastes: protokollgemäß war der ehemalige

Ministerpräsident von Baden-Württemberg, Hans Karl Filbinger, der auch als Marinerichter während der Nazizeit tätig war, eingeladen. Reporter Jürgen Leinemann schreibt: "Noch kurz vor dem 8. Mai 1945 hatte er [Filbinger] seine verdammte Pflicht und Schuldigkeit gegenüber dem verbrecherischen Hitler-Regime so tödlich genau genommen, daß er einen jungen Soldat hinrichten ließ."<sup>4</sup> Leinemann stellte Filbinger Willy Brandt gegenüber, der während des Kriegs im Exil war und gegen Hitler-Deutschland gesprochen hatte, jedoch nicht nach Bonn eingeladen wurde. Die Filbinger-Einladung, zusammen mit dem Reagan-Besuch auf dem (teilweise SS) Soldatenfriedhof, war keineswegs gute Propaganda für die BRD. Der Reporter, wie viele Deutsche heute, steht der Regierung hinsichtlich der Nazi-Vergangenheit skeptisch gegenüber. Die Regierung scheint jedoch zu glauben, die Vergangenheit sei vergessen.

Die Gegenveranstaltung der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands (SPD), als Alternative zur Bundestagsfeier gedacht, fand in der ehemaligen NS-Reichsstadt Nürnberg statt. Es sollte nicht nur eine Erinnerung an den Zweiten Weltkrieg sein, sondern auch ein Plädoyer für die Abrüstung und den Weltfrieden. Anwesend waren acht Bürgermeister aus Städten, die vom Krieg zerstört worden waren -- Wolwograd [Stalingrad], Coventry, Lidice, Oradour, Köln, Warschau, Dresden und Rotterdam. Auch der ehemalige Bundeskanzler Brandt war in Nürnberg und bezeichnete seine Rede als "Friedensgespräch."

### 1.2.3. Bilanz

Die offiziellen und Oppositionsveranstaltungen unterstrichen, daß man in der Bundesrepublik die Möglichkeiten hat, abweichende Meinungen zu äussern und zu hören und in der Öffentlichkeit nicht immer nur aus dem Propaganda-Vokabular zu reden. Das Volk nutzte diese Freiheit zum Großteil nicht. Aber in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik bemerkte man, daß die westdeutschen Feiern die Befreiung voll ignoriert hatten. Folgendes wurde von einem ostdeutschen Journalisten über die Veranstaltung in der Hauptstadt der BRD geschrieben:<sup>5</sup>

Zur historischen Wahrheit bekannte sich zur 40. Wiederkehr dieses Tages auch eine Mehrheit der Bürger der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Die Weltöffentlichkeit registrierte aber auch, daß in der BRD Politiker und Zeitungen im Zusammenhang mit dem 8. Mai von Niederlage, Katastrophe und Trauer sprechen. ... uns Mahnung und Verpflichtung zur historischen Wahrheit der Befreiung *auch des deutschen Volkes* [vom Verfasser hervorgehoben] von der Nazibarbarei am 8. Mai 1945. Wer im Zusammenhang mit diesem Tag von Katastrophe und Niederlage spricht, verhüllt -- bewußt oder unbewußt -- diese Wahrheit.

Auch Otto Funke, Vorsitzender der Zentralleitung, Komitee [sic] der Antifaschistischen Widerstandskämpfer der DDR, sprach gegen "die Verfälschung . . . als Tag der Kapitulation und der Niederlage."<sup>6</sup> Hiermit versucht die DDR, an die Gegenstimmung des bundesdeutschen Volks anzuknüpfen, um die Nazi-Vergangenheit der BRD-Regierung in Verruf zu bringen.

### 1.3. DIE FEIERN IN DER DDR

In der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik war die Lage ganz anders. Dieses Land sieht diesen Tag nur positiv: Befreiung, Rettung. Die Sowjetunion wird auch in ihrer Rolle in der Kapitulation nur positiv bewertet und nicht wie in der BRD, wo die NATO-Alliierten oft in der Öffentlichkeit von Regierungsgegnern als Besatzungstruppen bezeichnet wurden. Um diesen Tag richtig als Feiertag zu würdigen, ist er in der DDR zum offiziellen und öffentlichen Feiertag proklamiert worden. Dazu schreibt die Neue Heimat: "Unser ehrendes Gedenken gilt am 8. Mai 1985 den Helden des Sowjetvolkes und seiner ruhmreichen [sic] Armee...."<sup>7</sup> Der 8. Mai ist also Triumph, nicht Kapitulation, und Neubeginn, nicht "unbewältigte Vergangenheit" wie er in der BRD bezeichnet wird.

#### 1.3.1. Offizielle Veranstaltungen

Die Bevölkerung wird aufgerufen mitzufeiern, wenn die DDR diesen Tag überall feiert. Am 7. Mai 1985 gab es um das sowjetische Ehrenmal in (Ost-) Berlin-Treptow eine Grossveranstaltung mit mehr als 50,000 Mitgliedern der DDR-Jugendorganisationen. Auch am 8. Mai 85 fand eine Kranzniederlegung an diesem Ehrenmal statt. Vor 40 Jahren

war es anders in Berlin, wie Dr. Andreas Schönherr in der DDR Revue schildert:<sup>8</sup>

**8. Mai 1945.** Der erste Tag des Friedens in Europa. Salutschüsse auf dem Roten Platz in Moskau ... Glocken läuten von jenen Türmen Deutschlands, die das Inferno überstanden. Der Krieg ist gebannt, die faschistische Pest bezwungen, Europa von der Nazi-Tyrannie befreit.... Die Sowjetunion und ihre Alliierten, Partisanen und Widerstandskämpfer triumphieren gemeinsam.... Das Sowjetvolk mußte die Hauptlast tragen. 20 Millionen Tote - gefallen, ermordet, verhungert, erfroren.

Dann vergleicht Dr. Schönherr die heutige Lage am 40. Jahrestag damit:

**8. Mai 1985.** Wie vor 40 Jahren herrscht Freude darüber, daß Frieden ist, heute der längste, den Europa erlebte. Millionen hoffen und kämpfen dafür, daß es für immer bleiben möge. Die Kraft unserer Freundschaft will Hoffen in Gewißheit verwandeln. Gewißheit nicht nur für Moskau und Berlin.

Die heutige Gesellschaft und die Regierung stehen zusammen, um die Vergangenheit anzuerkennen; das Volk braucht nicht getrennt zu stehen.

Die DDR sieht sich auf der Seite der Siegermächte im Zweiten Weltkrieg. Nicht nur, daß die DDR die sämtliche internationale Äußerungen der Union der Sowjetischen Sozialistischen Republiken (UdSSR) seit dem 8. Mai 1945 mitgeäußert hat; sondern auch, daß kein

Wort davon gesagt wurde, daß Väter oder Brüder von den Russen im Krieg getötet wurden: "Wir stehen mit in der Front der Sieger," sagt Junge Welt, Organ der Freien Deutschen Jugend (FDJ).<sup>9</sup> Das heißt, man braucht im Osten nicht mit Rachgelüsten an die politische Vergangenheit zu denken, sondern ihre eigene Entwicklung muß positiv bewertet werden.

Die Führer der DDR betonten ihre Feierlichkeiten gegen die BRD und für ihren eigenen Sozialismus. Erich Honecker, Generalsekretär des Zentralkomitees [sic] der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands und Vorsitzender des Staatrats der DDR, hielt mehrere Reden bei den Veranstaltungen und Kundgebungen. Auf der Grosskundgebung des 40. Jahrestags der Befreiung des Zuchthauses Brandenburg-Görden wurde nicht nur die Erinnerung an Soldaten in der BRD verurteilt, sondern es wurde auch versucht, zwischen die Betroffenen, die BRD und Amerika einen Keil zu treiben:<sup>10</sup>

Wir wissen, daß die Stunde der Befreiung, die Stunde der Zerschlagung des Hitlerfaschismus nicht für alle willkommen war. Das ist, wie die Diskussion um den 8. Mai und die SS-Treffen (in der BRD) unterstreichen, auch heute noch nicht überall der Fall....der Sieg der Roten Armee und der mit ihr verbündeten Armeen in der Antihitlerkoalition die Menschheit vor der Barbarei gerettet hat. Wenn Herr Dregger [Chef der CSU/CDU Bundestagsfraktion] glaubt, den 53 USA Senatoren Vorwürfe machen zu müssen, weil sie nach wie vor die SS...als eine verbrecherliche Organisation ansehe, dann zeigt er damit nur, in welche Richtung er die BRD drängen möchte.



Welche Lehre aus der Vergangenheit versucht die DDR aufrecht zu erhalten?

Horst Sindermann, Präsident der Volkskammer der DDR und Mitglied des Politbüros des ZK der SED, sprach in seiner Rede auf einer Festveranstaltung in Berlin am Abend des 40. Jahrestags sehr deutlich über die russischen Anteile am Sieg, und diese politische Position wird allgemein in den DDR Feierlichkeiten eingenommen:<sup>11</sup>

Das Sowjetvolk und seine ruhmreiche Armee trugen die Hauptlast des Kampfes.... So wurde der Sieg des Sowjetvolkes im Großen Vaterländischen Krieg unter der Führung der Kommunistischen Partei der Sowjetunion zum Triumph der Freiheit und der Menschenwürde.... Wie bekannt, wurde die sowjetisch-deutsche Front zur Hauptfront im zweiten Weltkrieg. . .

Sindermann und Honecker haben daher eine andere These über die Entwicklung ihres Landes als die BRD: die DDR hat ihre "Chance" genutzt, um ihren Staat in eine antifaschistische, demokratische Umgestaltung der Gesellschaft zu verwandeln. Es ist, als ob die DDR als Mitsieger der Alliierten diesen Jahrestag zu feiern hätte.

### **1.3.2. Gegenstimmen von Aussen**

In der Bundesrepublik wurde nichts Offizielles über die Großfeier in der DDR geschrieben. Der Spiegel verwirft die "Manifestation der Jugend" im Treptower Park am 7. Mai 1985 als

pompös. Es sollte keineswegs gesagt werden, daß die DDR mitgesiegt hätte.<sup>12</sup>

Die DDR feierte den 40. Jahrestag "des Sieges der Sowjet Union über den Hitler-Faschismus und der Befreiung des deutschen Volkes von der Naziherrschaft". . . so als seien die Nazis über die Deutschen gekommen wie Pest und Cholera, als bestände die ganze DDR aus Widerstandskämpfern.

Die Zeitschrift verurteilt die DDR, sie habe angeblich die historische Wahrheit vergessen, und kein Wort darüber sage,<sup>13</sup>

daß dies nur ein Gesichtsbild der regierenden Minderheit, der Kommunisten, ist.... können die machtbewußten Einheitssozialisten nicht auf die Illusion verzichten, das ostdeutsche Volk stehe geschlossen hinter ihnen.

Auch als für den nächsten Tag eine Art "Volksfest" am Alexanderplatz in Berlin geplant war, sah Der Spiegel schwarz: "eine ganz andere deutsche Jugend in der Öffentlichkeit: Punks, Rocker und schrill gekleidete junge Leute, die selbstvergessen westlicher Popmusik aus Lautsprechern lauschten." Dann erinnert sich diese Zeitschrift daran, daß am 7. Oktober 1977, auch ein Nationalfeiertag, zwei DDR- Polizisten von "randalierenden Jugendlichen" getötet worden waren

Der Versuch aus dem Westen, ehemalige Mißerfolge der DDR in den Vordergrund zu rücken, gelingt sowieso nicht; genau wie am 8.

Mai fand kein Krach auf dem "Alex" statt. Der Spiegel verschweigt jedoch, ob irgendwelche Krawalle in der BRD stattfanden.

#### 1.4. MATERIALIEN ZU DEN FEIERN: "Image Building"

Beide Regierungen haben offizielle Zeitschriften, bzw. Illustrierten herausgegeben. Aus der DDR kam Den Frieden Bewahren, mit dem Untertitel: "Der 8. Mai 1985 in der DDR - 40. Jahrestag des Sieges über den Hitlerfaschismus und der Befreiung des deutschen Volkes." Mit Bildern und Reden aus den verschiedenen Feierlichkeiten propagandizierte die Panorama DDR-Auslandspresseagentur GmbH nicht nur die Massenveranstaltungen, sondern auch die Sowjetunion und ihre jetzigen politischen Äußerungen zu Abrüstung und Weltfrieden. Alle verschiedenen Kundgebungen sind darin beschrieben und eine Grußansprache des Botschafters der UdSSR in Ost-Berlin ist darin abgedruckt. Wie tief die Beziehungen und Verbindungen zu der UdSSR sind, kann man aus einer Festansprache des Vizepräsidenten des Deutschen Turn- und Sportbundes Günther Heinze hören:<sup>14</sup>

Als am 8. Mai 1945 die Waffen schwiegen, war auch der Weg frei für den Aufbau einer neuen demokratischen Sportbewegung in der DDR. Vom ersten Tag an standen uns unsere sowjetischen Freunde, vor allem die Offiziere der damaligen sowjetischen Militäradministration, mit Rat und Hilfe zur Seite, halfen uns, den faschistischen Ungeist aus dem Sport zu verbannen, gaben diesem eine neue Perspektive und organisierten die ersten Sportwettkämpfe.

In diesem Büchlein wird das Thema betont, wie die DDR und die UdSSR in diesem Jahre zueinander stehen, und das beschrieben, was die UdSSR zu der im November 1985 beendeten Gipfelkonferenz Gorbachev-Reagan mitgebracht hat: "Nie wieder Faschismus, nie wieder Krieg. Alles für den Frieden."<sup>15</sup> Hier wird daher widergespiegelt, wie die DDR die Vergangenheit wirklich zu feiern versucht, und sich nicht mit dieser Vergangenheit auseinandersetzt, sondern sich an die Vergangenheit als Vorspiel für heute erinnert.

Im Vergleich hierzu hat die BRD 148 Seiten gedruckt oder drucken lassen -- es kam in der Burda GmbH (eine Firma, die sonst Mode- und andere Zeitschriften herausgibt) heraus: 40 Jahre in Bildern 1945-1985. Diese zweisprachige Illustrierte (auf deutsch und englisch) ist mit einem Vorwort von Bundeskanzler Helmut Kohl erschienen, in dem er sagt: "Wir haben Grund zur Selbstbesinnung und zur Erinnerung. Wir haben Grund zur Trauer wie zur Dankbarkeit und zur Hoffnung." Dann zitiert der Bundeskanzler die Worte des ersten Bundespräsidenten, Theodor Heuss, über den 8. Mai, einen paradoxen Tag: "weil wir erlöst und vernichtet in einem gewesen sind."<sup>16</sup>

In diesem Heft, das offensichtlich nicht als offizielles Dokument der Feier vom Staat im Westen herausgegeben worden war, werden keine Truppenaufmärsche und keine Feierlichkeiten eines einzigen Tages gezeigt. Hier wird eher ein Rückblick in die Vergangenheit geboten: Höhepunkte, Aufstieg und Wirtschaftswunder der Nachkriegsjahre, die BRD heute, ihre Aussöhnung mit ehemaligen

Gegnern und Erzfeinden. Es ist auch eine Chronik der Stichwörter, Geschichte aus westdeutscher Sicht, aus der Sicht der bundesdeutschen Bevölkerung, und nicht als Meldungen vom Bundespresseamt, die die Regierung zitiert. Was man nicht in der Illustrierten sieht, ist ein Bild von Militarismus oder von der heutigen Regierung, wie es die Regierungsgegner und Demonstranten innerhalb und ausserhalb Deutschlands entworfen haben. Sicher sieht man den ehemaligen Bundeskanzler Konrad Adenauer im Bild auf dem Appellplatz, deutsche Kampfflugzeuge in England und Kanzler Kohl mitten im Gespräch mit Bundeswehrsoldaten; aber keinen Militarismus, keine Hetze, keinen Druck auf irgendeine Minderheit. Als ob die Deutschen etwas gelernt hätten.

### **1.5. SCHLUßFOLGERUNG**

Die beiden deutschen Staaten feierten. Der eine im Westen sucht eine Versöhnung mit dem ehemaligen Feind. Der Verlust der heutigen BRD wird als Verlust an Menschenleben dargestellt, an der Bevölkerung die damals nicht überlebte. Der andere Staat im Osten denkt nicht an irgendeinen Verlust, sondern an einen Sieg: Sieg der UdSSR, Sieg über Hitlerfaschismus, Sieg eines neuen Systems, und warnt vor einem neuen Krieg, der nie von deutschem Boden ausgehen dürfe. Deswegen werden die Veranstaltungen der BRD in der DDR nicht nur als gefährlich betrachtet, sondern auch als Gelegenheit für neue Rufe

gegen einen möglichen Atomkrieg genommen. In der BRD hört man immer von den Gefahren eines totalitären politischen Systems, sei es Faschismus oder Kommunismus; aber in der Gegenveranstaltung in Nürnberg ist auch viel von Frieden zu hören. In der DDR sind die Zwillings Themen der Dankbarkeit an die Sowjetunion und der Atomkriegsgefahr aus dem Westen immer zu hören und zu sehen, alles politisch bearbeitet im Sinne der arbeiter-politischen Republik.

Die jeweilige Propaganda aus Osten und Westen bestätigt die unterschiedlichen Entwicklungen der beiden Staaten. In der BRD hört man von dem immer noch unvollendeten Wiederaufbau; in der DDR, von einer Zukunftsprognose. Eigentlich sieht man nur einen Unterschied: in die DDR kann man fast keinen Schritt ohne Erlaubnis der UdSSR machen. Die Bundesrepublik ist aber Partner der USA und daher nominal unabhängig, mindestens aber in einem Sinn ebensogut wie die DDR besetzt, genau wie auf der anderen Seite des eisernen Vorhangs. Auf beiden Seiten sind ausländische Soldaten nur zu einem Zweck stationiert: damit kein Krieg mehr vom deutschen Boden ausgehen kann. Die DDR nimmt (wenigstens öffentlich) dieses Schicksal an und kalkuliert es in der Staatsplanung ein; in der BRD protestiert man in Reden dagegen, während die Regierung die Stationierung amerikanischer Waffen akzeptiert.

In beiden Teilen Deutschlands waren diese Feiern daher eine reine Familiensache. Sie müssen ihre eigenen Positionen unter ihren Verbündeten einschätzen. Die Deutschen feiern den 40. Jahrestag: als

Deutsche, deutschgemäß, ohne irgendeinen Einfluß aus anderen Ländern (mindestens öffentlichen). Beide Republiken haben gefeiert: die eine als Nationalfeiertag mit viel Prunk und Festveranstaltungen; die andere als Tag des Gedenkens mit Erinnerungen an verlorene Brüder, Väter, Ehemänner, Söhne, gefallen im Gefecht. Und getrauert wurde auch über verlorene Mütter und Schwestern, Ehefrauen und Töchter, die ihren Tod auch fanden -- in den KZ-Lagern Buchenwald, Auschwitz, Dachau und vielen anderen Stellen. Oder in den Städten, wo der Schreck von Bombenregen oder Panzerketten, Geschossen und Granaten noch in Erinnerung war. Getötet, ermordet, gestorben. Zu viele Menschen gingen verloren. Trümmer von Gebäuden, von Leben, und von Deutschland lassen sich nicht einfach beiseite räumen.

Es ist gleich wie die zwei Staaten genannt werden: DDR und BRD; Ostdeutschland und Westdeutschland; oder Deutschland und "drüben". Letzten Endes scheint Ideologie oder wirtschaftliche Sachen keinen Unterschied zu machen. Beide Bevölkerungen wollen nur eines: keinen Krieg mehr, nur Frieden. Der Stil der Feierlichkeiten auf beiden Seiten der Mauer zeigten, wie weit von einander sich die beiden politischen Systeme entwickelt haben und wie weit entfernt ihre jeweiligen Stellungen in der heutigen Weltlage sind.

## 1.6. Notes

<sup>1</sup>Richard von Weizsäcker, aus seiner Rede während der "Stunde des Gedenkens im Deutschen Bundestag, 8.5.85," zitiert in deutschland-berichte, Herausgeber: Rolf Vogel, 21:6 (1985), 32.

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Philipp Jenninger, ebend; S. 25f.

<sup>3</sup>Ebend, S. 31.

<sup>4</sup>Jürgen Leinemann, "Möglichkeiten, das Gewissen ablenken," Der Spiegel, 39:20 (1985), 24.

<sup>5</sup>Erich Wischnewski. "Die historische Wahrheit," Neue Heimat, 3/85, S. 3.

<sup>6</sup>"Geleitet von den Idealen des antifaschistischen Widerstandskampfes," Neue Heimat, 2/85, S. 18.

<sup>7</sup>"Der 8. Mai 1985 wird in der DDR als Feiertag würdig begangen," Neue Heimat, S. 2. Ein Vergleich der beiden deutschen Staaten, besonders in Hinsicht auf die beiden Gesellschaften, ist in Society and Democracy in Germany von Ralf Dahrendorf (New York-London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1967) zu finden.

<sup>8</sup>Dr. Andreas Schönherr, "Befreier - Freunde - Weggefährten," DDR Revue 4/85, S. 1-5

<sup>9</sup>"Tausend Fäden," Der Spiegel 39/15 (1985), S. 22.

<sup>10</sup>Den Frieden Bewahren, (Berlin: Panorama - DDR Agentur, 1985), S. 5-7.

<sup>11</sup>Ebend, S. 17-26.



<sup>12</sup>"Treu und Fest," Der Spiegel 39/20 (1985): 28

<sup>13</sup>Ebend.

<sup>14</sup>Den Frieden Bewahren, Ebend, S. 53.

<sup>15</sup>Ebend, S. 3, 43.

<sup>16</sup>Helmut Kohl. "Vorwort," Vierzig Jahre in Bildern, 1945-1985, (Offenburg: Burda GmbH, 1985), S. 5. David Conradt schrieb in seinem Buch The German Polity, daß Deutschland, ganz allein und ohne "Dolchstoßlegende" ihren *Point Zero* -- d. h. Nullpunkt -- am 8. Mai 1945 erreicht habe. Für manchen Bundesbürger sei dieser Zeitpunkt ein Anfang. Das 3. Reich und der 2. Weltkrieg seien nur dunkle Epochen ohne besondere Wirkung auf den heutigen Staat, schrieb Conradt weiter auf Seite 51.

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## **Viennese Military Society: An Exploration into a Fantasy World**

Colonel Alfred Redl did not present a very threatening physical appearance. Less than five and a half feet tall, he did not stand out among his fellow officers of the Austro-Hungarian Royal and Imperial General Staff. His advancement in rank was not unusual, neither too fast or too slow, considering the lack of open warfare on the European continent during his service. He could ride a horse; he could speak French, as well as several other languages more relevant to his work; and he was very much at home in the vainglorious city of Vienna during the decade before the outbreak of the Great War. Like many of his fellow officers, he was unmarried. Alfred Redl was in many ways typical of the military society in which he had lived for more than 30 years. Yet he was neither typical nor representative. For he had one great distinction: he was a spy, a "mole", in the employ of the greatest enemy of the Empire. He was a military officer who sold his country's secrets to the Russian Army for as long as 15 years.

A recent movie, "Oberst Redl", loosely based on his life, makes

Redl appear the scapegoat, taking the blame for the intelligence failures of the Austro-Hungarian Empire prior to World War I, which were, according to the movie (which was nominated for an Oscar as Best Foreign Picture in 1985), the responsibility of the monarchy, specifically the doomed Archduke Franz-Ferdinand. Redl was guilty of espionage, but the most damaging crime was the failure on the part of the military hierarchy to recognize the financial and personal difficulties in which Redl had become enmeshed, failure to take the appropriate actions to prevent or detect the betrayal, and the attempt by the Austro-Hungarian General Staff to cover up Redl's misdeeds after his suicide. As one of the first "moles" in the history of espionage, Redl caused irreparable damage to the Austrian Empire, hastening its demise. To look at Alfred Redl is to examine Viennese military society and assess its impact on pre-World War I society in Austro-Hungary.

## **2.1. A Military Career**

Service as an officer in the Royal and Imperial Army of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was a prime goal for most young male citizens. There were a number of military schools throughout the Empire to train the various nationalities who made up the Empire for a military life. Alfred Redl prepared for his entry into that life in a typical manner. His father had

been an army officer until the inability to combine love and a military career forced him out of the Army<sup>1</sup> and into a life as a lower grade civil service employee for the railroad in the Galician city of Lemberg. The siblings of Alfred Redl were all educated professionals; one brother also became an officer, while another was a jurist and public servant, and at least two of his sisters were teachers. As a young boy in a family of either 7 or 14 children,<sup>2</sup> Redl was used to getting a lesser part, hand-me down clothes and standing near the end of the line to be served at meal time. But he was clever and able to use his intellect to attain good grades in school. By learning Polish and German in school, and speaking Ruthenian (a Russian dialect) at home, he gained a good background for dealing with the many nationalities with whom he lived and worked while in the military.

Redl entered the Karthaus Cadet School in his home town of Lemberg at the age of 14, having passed the mandatory entrance examination. His tuition was free, thanks to his father's service. This school only gave Redl and the other students a basic training in military life, preparing them for duties with the troops. Upon completion in 1882 or 1883, Redl enlisted in the military with a five year commitment.<sup>3</sup> He finally received his commission at the age of 23, having risen through the ranks and shown through his diligence and application -- something not always the easiest to accomplish in either garrison or field duty -- that he was worthy of joining the officers corps of the Royal and Imperial Army.<sup>4</sup>

It should be noted that there was more than one army within the Empire. In 1867 as part of the Great Compromise, Hungary had established the *Honvéd*, a national army under a Hungarian Ministry of Defense and responsible to the Hungarian Parliament, although controlled for operational purposes by the Emperor. Austria, too, was allowed to have its own Army, the *Landwehr*, which was controlled by that part of the Empire. The Royal and Imperial Army remained in addition to these two, and the officer corps provided the only cohesion among the three. Redl's knowledge of the different languages spoken within the Empire aided him greatly, since each regiment had to instruct its soldiers in their own language. As few as 20% could receive training in their own language, although German remained the official language for the Royal and Imperial forces. All officers swore a personal loyalty to the Emperor, not to the state, regardless of the army in which they served, and regardless of the nationality to which they belonged.<sup>5</sup> The purpose of this personal fealty was to insure the officer corps would not be factionalized, divided by place of birth or language spoken.

Remaining on garrison duty in Lemberg with the 9th Galician Infantry Regiment, a normal non-progression for an ordinary commission, Redl managed to impress his superiors with his aptitude for military organization and administration, and was appointed as Battalion Adjutant in 1889. This office of trust and responsibility fitted Redl well, and he was able not only to learn details about the personal and professional lives of

his fellow officers, but also to suitably impress his commanders at each successive level, so that his superiors began to give consideration to sending this unusual and talented young man to the War College. This in itself was unusual, for only a very few were selected from the non-aristocratic castes without a long military pedigree to attend the highest military school of the Empire. The traditional way was to attend a military preparatory school, followed by cadet school, and then attendance at one of the official academies, leading to graduation and commissioning at the age of 18. The sons of the lesser aristocracy, career military officers, and the nouveaux riches would enter their military profession in this manner, eliminating the need to be "soiled" by contact with the common soldier.<sup>6</sup> Thus to be considered for the War College, to join with the sons of the aristocracy, and the chance to become part of the military establishment was indeed an honor for Alfred Redl.

## **2.2. An Officer's Problems**

However, it also meant entry into the time-honored tradition of long-term debt, for if one were to be an officer, one must live like an officer, with all the accoutrements of the appropriate rank. Uniforms, mess bills, the horse fund, transportation, medical bills, servants, all took money; yet one could not live the life of an officer in the Royal and

Imperial Army without incurring such debts. Military pay was quite low, in comparison with the social stature and the duties and responsibilities of an officer. Moneylenders were only too happy to serve the needs of young officers, knowing that continued military life would bring additional debt. The opportunity to diminish some of that debt by repaying personal debts with appropriate favors rather than hard cash was taken by many officers, and led to practical advantages for these otherwise marginal civilians. After all, to be included in "society" was worth some reduction in debt, and to be introduced to power-brokers for the Empire was worth more. Moreover, should the indebted officer be in a position where procurement of military supplies and equipment was part of his responsibilities, then who better to help obtain the requisite materials than the person who provided that officer with the seed money needed to start or advance his career.

Another typical monetary dilemma which Alfred Redl knew only too well as an officer was the *Heiratskaution* or marriage bond. Not that Redl himself ever required it, but his father was forced to leave the military at the age of 31 because he could not raise the money required to post the bond in order to marry and start a family. The marriage bond was used by government officers to purchase blue chip securities that would provide the young married couple with enough funds to live in an appropriate style, as well as a widow's pension in case of the untimely death of an officer-husband. Once purchased, the bond could not be



touched by the officer until he retired. Were the officer of modest means, and the bride-to-be's family also unable to post the required amount, then love meant resignation from the military, as Redl's father had done. Additionally, married officers were not allowed to attend the War College, and upon graduation and appointment to the General Staff, the officer could not marry until attaining his captaincy.<sup>7</sup> All these traditional requirements favored the military careers of young aristocrats, or those who had independent wealth, rather than those of Redl's meager background and means. The 1848 upheaval in Austrian politics had brought some measure of reform to the military, and by 1913, more than 85% of all officers had commoner backgrounds, rather than aristocratic, but the marriage bond provision was still extant.

The marriage problem did not mean enforced abstinence, naturally, for there were other means of relieving sexual pressures. Most garrisons had their share of camp followers, as well as brothels in the larger towns. Common whores were left to the enlisted men or conscripts, but the bordellos were fair game for officers who might make up "hunting parties" for a night's fun and games to relieve the stress of military life. Were the indignity of sex for pay too demeaning for a particular officer, there were other possibilities, including the daughters of older officers and other "nice" girls who may have chanced a casual flirtation.<sup>8</sup> There was yet another way to take care of one's sexual drive. Though condemned and punishable by immediate relief from duty, homosexuality was a reality

in the Emperor's armies. Homosexual liaisons were furtive, often accompanied by demands for payment for services rendered, to be followed by pure extortion, a price for silence. Despite whatever precautions taken, the partner of the homosexual officer often made financial demands which only added to the mounting debts. Alfred Redl succumbed to temptation and took under his wing a young man, Stefan Horinka,<sup>9</sup> arranged for him to become an officer and, while passing himself off as Horinka's uncle, managed to continue their homosexual affair until his death in 1913. The all-male environment of the garrison, the even more exclusivity of the soldier on military bivouac, certainly seemed to provide ample opportunity to fulfill whatever homosexual needs that any officer, including Alfred Redl, may have had.

### **2.3. Upward Mobility: To the General Staff**

These problems associated with a military career were exacerbated as one ascended in the hierarchy. Most officers had some measure of ambition, and Alfred Redl was no exception. Steeped in the male military mythos, the War College was the crown of the Austrian institutionalized military. For two years officers concentrated on a martial curriculum (military geography, weapons, war history and strategy, administration and operations of the General Staff, tactics, army

organization, terrain appreciation, natural science, fortresses and fortress warfare, cultural history, state and international law, French and riding) to provide the Emperor with graduates of impeccable bearing and ability. The best graduates were destined for service with the General Staff. Redl finished 28th in his class, and was assigned to the Railroad Bureau of the General Staff; but, according to Georg Markus, only the top 25 were chosen for such duty. Because such duty was the most prestigious and rewarding, selection among War College graduates was hotly contested. Failure meant consignment to troop duty, with limited promotion, reduced social and financial potential, and being stationed in less desirable locations. In 1909, for example, one of the lower-ranking graduates poisoned a higher-ranked officer in order to take his place on the General Staff list.<sup>10</sup>

Redl left the Railroad Bureau after a few months for duty as a General Staff officer with the 61st Brigade in Budapest. Two years in the Hungarian capital added to his administrative experience and efficiency, and he was transferred back to Lemberg for duty with an Infantry Regiment, before getting the opportunity which may have changed his life. Since 1890, the Empire had been sending two officers each year to study Russian in Kazan, in central Russia. In 1899, Redl and another officer were selected, returning in 1900. Whether this was the beginning of Redl's work for the Russians is unknown, but it was certainly made to order for the Czar's secret services, which enjoyed a reputation as one of

the finest in Europe, to recruit a deeply indebted homosexual who soon would be detailed to the headquarters of the Imperial General Staff.<sup>11</sup> It has been shown that public exposure of homosexual conduct or excessive indebtedness were grounds for instant dismissal from the officer corps. The espionage bureaus of Imperial Russia were sure to spot Redl's character weaknesses. In a foreshadowing of a psychoanalytical theory of treason as developed around 1940 by Ernest Jones, the Russian recruitment of Redl may have been Redl's own homosexual answer to dealing with a potential enemy on the enemy's own turf. Jones states that where homosexual trends are more active, there is a more complete identification with the enemy, a positive admiration of the enemy and a search for a type of "protective security."<sup>12</sup> Redl must have known prior to departure that he could not keep his homosexuality a secret, that and Russian with whom he had contact could report on his activities, regardless of whether they were sexual or not, to the counterintelligence service. Therefore Redl may have been engaging in self-deception to both identify with and accept alliance with Russian intelligence, and to have started his betrayal of the Empire while in physical custody of the Russians. It is unknown by what means Redl achieved sexual gratification while in Russia, but it is known that he requested and received additional funds from the General Staff to cover the "increased demands and social obligations" that presented themselves. True, Redl and his compatriot did have certain entertainment and social functions and which were mandatory for a visiting foreign

officer, but an extended tour of duty in a strange land is no place to keep one's true sexual orientation a secret.

When he did return to Vienna in October, 1900, Redl was assigned to the Intelligence Office of the General Staff. As opposed to contemporary intelligence operations, Redl had dual responsibilities: as the chief of the Russian desk, he was in charge of collecting, analyzing and storing information on Russia, based on data gathered from foreign newspapers and military writings, as well as reports from military attachés assigned to the Embassy in St. Petersburg. This information was used by the General Staff to determine war contingency plans directed against Russia, maneuver requirements, troop dispositions, and the overall budget for the military. Redl's second job was perhaps more important. As chief of the Operations Section, he controlled the day-to-day administration of the Bureau: not only positive intelligence operations -- utilization of agents targeted against various installations or formations -- but also control of all counterintelligence investigations and operations directed against the espionage efforts of other nations. His predecessors in counterespionage efforts had been relatively haphazard, and Redl introduced to the counterintelligence agency of the Austrian Army modern methods of investigation, counterespionage operations, as well as storage and analysis of data. This led to greater achievements, more spies caught, and resulted in Redl's gaining a reputation as a workaholic who never left his desk, except to catch a spy in person or testify against

an agent in court. Markus maintains that Redl's reports were read by the Emperor himself, while Asprey suggests that Redl himself briefed Franz-Joseph on at least one occasion, although not concerning intelligence matters.<sup>13</sup>

Redl used what were then considered brilliant techniques to obtain information. In one instance, the small daughter of a suspected agent was maneuvered by Redl into revealing where her father hid things he did not want her to find, in a secret compartment of his desk, which led to her father's arrest and prosecution on an espionage charge.<sup>14</sup> Obtaining information from a child may not be the same as compelling children to denounce or inform on their parents, but it does illustrate the means Redl would use to achieve his goals. Redl also was called upon to present evidence before the courts which were trying the accused agents. He did so with a relish and enthusiasm, not to mention a diligence, which soon enhanced his reputation among the General Staff and the civilians with whom he dealt. Redl's work in the Intelligence Office earned him promotions to Major and Lieutenant Colonel, as paved the way for his promotion to Colonel soon after his departure.

These successes brought Redl acceptance, and he moved on the highest levels of Viennese society, although his origins were decidedly more modest than most of his colleagues and contemporaries. Most of his colleagues in the office had primarily made their way to the General Staff in a more traditional manner. Almost all of them were

deemed *satisfaktionsfähig* or able to demand or receive satisfaction from their peers in affairs of honor through means of a duel. There is no indication that Redl ever was involved in a duel, either as a principal or second, but he was most certainly aware of the ritual, and would have been more than willing to engage in the practice had he deemed it necessary for career enhancement. There is nothing to indicate that he was not eligible for satisfaction; he was a man of honor, considered by the General Staff as one of their own. In contrast, certain of his colleagues were deemed incapable of either receiving or giving satisfaction. These included Jews as a category, as well as certain other individuals, but generally an officer was required to give or demand satisfaction or be deemed unworthy to be an officer.<sup>15</sup> Redl's background and credentials were therefore judged by his contemporaries to be sufficient for the career which he had undertaken.

Alfred Redl ended his dozen years in Vienna when he was assigned as Chief of the General Staff of the Eighth Corps in Prague in October 1912. He left the capital with the rank of Colonel, a high honor indeed, since there were only 54 colonels in the entire General Staff. He had also been personally decorated by the Emperor. He retained his friendships and associates in Vienna, and often returned to the capital to visit with both his open and secret friends. The 48-year-old Redl was still masquerading as the ideal officer, but his treachery was about to be made public.

## 2.4. The Case

Most espionage cases come to light because of some failure in communications between the agent and his masters, and Redl was no exception. An envelope, postmarked from Berlin and addressed to a Herr Nikon Nizetas in care of the general delivery window of the Vienna main Post Office, aroused the suspicion of German counterespionage personnel when it was returned to Berlin after lying dormant for several weeks. The Germans opened the envelope and found a large sum of money and two addresses which were known to be espionage centers. The Germans alerted Redl's successor in the Intelligence Bureau, Major Maximilian Ronge, who set up a surveillance of the post office. Two additional letters arrived for Nizetas (the first one showed signs of tampering and, was withdrawn) and were kept under observation. Finally on the afternoon of May 24, 1913, these envelopes were picked up by a gentleman who exited the area in a taxicab. The police followed, but lost their quarry in the evening. The only clue was a gray suede sheath for a pocket knife left in the cab by the suspect and discovered when the police searched the seats. It was traced to the owner, Alfred Redl, who claimed it at the desk of his hotel, under the impression that it had been returned by the taxi driver. The knife and sheath had been given to Redl by his long-



time lover, Stefan Horinka. Redl, who dined that very evening with Viktor Pollak, the chief prosecutor for Vienna, was aware that something was amiss, and pleaded with Pollack to intercede. The attorney was confused, unaware of Redl's crime, and could not help. Redl returned to his hotel, still under surveillance. After midnight, several officers, all of whom had dealt with Redl as a colleague in espionage cases during the preceding years, knocked at Redl's door. They interrogated him for a few hours, determined to discover the depth of the betrayal. Redl admitted his treason, and gave an account of the information he had given to the Russians. In a final military tradition, a revolver was placed at Redl's disposal. The damage was done, and as far as the General Staff was concerned, it was up to Redl to do the proper thing. Redl followed military tradition, and after writing out a suicide note, he pulled the trigger and the life of Alfred Redl came to an end.<sup>16</sup>

In order to determine what physical evidence might be available, and to keep the matter as quiet as possible, two of the officers who had talked to Redl the previous night were dispatched to Prague, where a civilian locksmith was called upon to break into Redl's apartment. Many details concerning Redl's espionage activities and his homosexuality, hitherto unknown, were revealed. The coverup, which had been started, continued. First press reports attributed Redl's death to suicide because of nervous tension, mental overexertion, or severe neurasthenia. But rumors began to fly. Redl had been in good spirits the

previous days and weeks, the gun did not belong to him, and there were strange comings and goings at Redl's Vienna hotel. The coverup was doomed to fail, not because of a break in military discipline, but because a football team lost a game.

### **2.5. The Coverup**

The locksmith who had broken into the Prague apartment was a star player of a soccer team that lost a match because he was absent. When asked for a reason by the team captain, he explained the circumstances, including what was found in Redl's apartment. Normally it would have ended there, except that the captain was also a reporter for a Prague newspaper and correspondent for a periodical in Berlin. The story was broken in the form of a denial in the Prague press (for fear of censorship or retribution), while in Berlin the reporting was more straightforward.<sup>17</sup> Regardless of how the story was broken, Redl's transgressions were revealed to the public, and calls for a complete inquiry were heard from the press, the legislature, and the monarchy itself. In an attempt to keep the General Staff's reputation clean, rumors were circulated that Redl was born a Jew, who converted to Catholicism, as if that were the real reason behind his treason. After all, no true defender of the Emperor, that is, no true Christian, would betray a sacred trust. But

there could be no further coverup. Redl's homosexuality became known, and his sale of military secrets was a topic in every household and coffee shop. Redl's own records, and those of his father, proved the falsity of the claim that he was Jewish. There were still attempts to minimize damage to the military. Claims were made that Redl had only spied for a few years, rather than for more than a decade, and the extent of his knowledge was downplayed, but without much success. The true test would start in August, 1914, as the Great War began and quickly Central Europe became mired in mud and the blood of its soldiers.

How much extra blood the Austro-Hungarian Empire shed because of Redl can never be fully appreciated. At the very least, he sold the Austro-Hungarian war plans, including mobilization details, as well as strategy and tactics to be used against the Russian Army, to Russian Army Intelligence. Also documented as stolen were plans for the defense of various fortresses in Galicia. Because of his earlier service within the Railroad Bureau, and his general knowledge of details within the Intelligence Bureau, Redl's knowledge concerning the Italian and Serbian fronts must have been of interest to his spymasters, and it is inconceivable that he did not provide additional information, given the pressure placed upon him. The Austrian state Defense Minister, Friedrich Freiherr von Georgi, admitted to the parliament that Redl had disclosed the following state secrets:

1. The Handbook for the Reserve -- All of the operations of Austrian weapons systems, as well as the prescribed tactical maneuvers for military formations.
2. Order of Battle -- The strength and formations of each garrison and battle formations in time of war.
3. Communications procedures -- Rear area communications and transportation networks.
4. Mines and minefields -- Requirements for the detection and disarming of explosive devices, to enable the taking of bridges, tunnels and other important areas, without making them impassable.
5. Fortress defense plans -- Not only plans for static defenses, but ammunition, supplies and equipment storage areas.
6. Observations concerning the Great Maneuver of 1909 -- The General Staff's own remarks concerning strengths and weaknesses of the Austro-Hungarian Army and specific battle formations.

Von Georgi denied that actual War Plans had been transmitted by Redl, stating that he did not have access to current plans while on station in Prague. However, an inventory conducted by the VIII Corps in Prague does state that Redl's own office safe contained previous and

current mobilization plans, as well as other documents which would have been of great importance to a potential enemy of Austria.<sup>18</sup>

## **2.6. Conclusion: The Military and Society**

Military society was tightly interconnected with the imperial society of Vienna prior to the Great War. To be a part of the military was a sought-after goal. Though without a history of invincibility on the battlefield, the military arm of the monarchy was never vanquished in the drawing rooms of Vienna. The sight of a dashing military uniform sent the hearts of women, young and old, aflutter. Men were also taken with the flash and dash of the uniformed officer -- or at least with the connections to the highest levels those uniforms represented. The private soldiers and their non-commissioned officers were seen by the general public only in parades or other festive occasions. Conscripts had no multiplicity of uniforms, and only those other ranks in ceremonial units were given finery which would be suitable for a true gentleman. The Ulans, such as Stefan Horinka, wore uniforms designed to capture the fancy of the ladies, as much as strike fear into the hearts of an opponent. Elaborate shakos, capes, and other appurtenances added to the uniforms, as each regiment vied to outdo the others. Just as the private soldier's daily uniforms were unfamiliar behind their parade facade, so, too, was the reality of the

Austro-Hungarian military as a fighting force. For years, the Austrians had been only mediocre on the battlefield, combining with Wellington to subdue Napoleon at Waterloo, and Radetzky's defeat of the Italians in 1857 being the high points. Later losses at Solferino, as well as defeats at the hands of Prussia, relegated the Austrian Army to a second class status on the battlefield. In the ballrooms, however, her officers remained first class.

The groundwork for defeat of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was laid in a preference for drawing room façade over battlefield reality prior to World War I. For example, the Empire neglected modern advances in warfare. Although Redl was able to modernize his Intelligence Bureau, Austrian methods of waging warfare remained in the 19th Century, clinging to obsolete tactics and using obsolete materiel. An Austrian officer designed and constructed an armed automobile, but was unable to win approval for further development and production from the General Staff. However, it was adopted by the English, and during the last year of the War, the "Tank" became a powerful weapon against the Central Powers. There was no use of the airplane, unlike in Germany and among the Allies, and other innovative weaponry and support systems were lacking. A major reason given by the General Staff was the capital necessary to fund such systems, which would drain assets from the civilian economy. The civilian sector, as well as the government and

monarchy, was content to view the military as a social institution, rather than as a political one, in pre-war Europe.

In 1917, an anonymous book, Seven Years in Vienna, August 1907 - August 1914 was published in Boston and New York by Houghton, Mifflin Co. Subtitled A Record of Intrigue, it is little more than a propaganda diatribe against the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It does, however, illustrate a number of deficiencies in the imperial military, and its conflict with the civilian populace, supporting the idea that the military had become primarily a force for the retention of an outmoded social order within the Empire. The most striking phenomena cited include emigration of military-age men in order to avoid service, as well as the giving of "feminine" names to boys to prevent their conscription; the almost exclusive use of minorities and lower classes in the lower ranks of the armies (the so-called cannon fodder), and the lack of sufficient supplies and equipment, as well as the overall poor quality of military materiel, for the armed services. The book also claims that because they were on a limited income, most officers desired open warfare as a way to get out of debt and remain on active service, rather than be forced into the civilian sector with poor job prospects and retained debts.

The veneer of military culture was guarded by the military itself. Access to the General Staff was limited to those who had either the proper background (family ties, member of or related to the aristocracy), sufficient wealth to suborn regulations and retain one's status regardless of

challenge, or those who displayed the qualities deemed appropriate for a member of the General Staff. Those on duty with outlying troop concentrations might come into the capital for a few days each year for a taste of the gaiety and festivities associated with military life in Vienna, but they were not allowed access throughout the year. No one could be a permanent part of the scene unless they were accepted, and being accepted usually meant wearing the General Staff uniform. That is not to condemn the military per se, for the General Staff officers did, for the most part, have to prove themselves in order to achieve their lofty status. Yet the military were regarded as having a direct pipeline to the monarchy, and with the number of Archdukes running around in the uniform of their favorite regiment or branch of service (Archduke Franz Ferdinand favored an Admiral's uniform), the obvious access to royalty was the key advantage to being on the General Staff.

As in any center of power, the ability to rub shoulders with those who can and do move mountains is a powerful narcotic. Like any narcotic, it leads to further addiction, a compulsion to use and abuse the stimulant. Once more Lord Acton has been proven correct: the scent of power, the fragrance of authority, came to be regarded by the military leadership as their birthright. In some cases it was earned; in others, merely assumed. As we have seen, Redl's commoner background was in itself not a hindrance to achieving high status in the military. It could be suspected that his initial rise was due to homosexual liaison(s) with



superior officers, but there is no evidence of this. Redl worked hard, and excelled at the tasks given him. He exercised initiative, within reasonable limits, and was willing to shoulder a greater share of the load than required. He impressed his superiors with his loyalty to the emperor, to his unit, and to his fellow officers. Yet his most outstanding quality, according to Theodor Körner (who later became President of the Republic of Austria), was "his knowledge of human behavior."<sup>19</sup> This intuitive knowledge of his fellow officers, and his ability to incriminate a father by gathering evidence from a small child, was that singular characteristic which made Redl different from his fellows. It was manifested in his ability always to give the answer that people could not refute, and the one they themselves wished they had made; the answer that the questioner wanted, but did not usually get.<sup>20</sup>

Redl was never satisfied with his current career status. He was aware of the optimal methods to ensure his promotion to higher rank and authority, to raise his level of responsibility in a highly class and status conscious society. Despite, or better, because he was in a competitive world, his personal ambition could be masked by surface loyalties to the military and to the monarchy. He found surface loyalty and personal ambition compatible, and was able to foster one while serving the other, achieving social position through his status on the General Staff. While ostensibly working solely for the betterment of his organization, it was very easy to hide his personal aspirations within that dedication to work, and

thus gain promotion in recognition of seemingly altruistic devotion. Since ambition was rampant in Redl's Vienna, the veneer he created as a team player was accepted, and his position strengthened. By becoming an expert, by promoting creative innovations and state-of-the-art modernization in an area where he was the authority, Redl was able to make his office a model of counterespionage efficiency while hiding his own infidelity. Using his talents and experience, he became a Jekyll-and-Hyde monster, confident of his ability to control his fate, yet unable to stop his destruction once he left the General Staff power structure. His position within the military hierarchy almost enabled his superiors to conceal his infidelity. An outsider was only able to reveal the treason by chance, and his crime against the military was made even greater by the scandal which ensued.

Relatively few scholars know of Alfred Redl. How many of today's masters of espionage have studied his treachery? Redl was one of the world's first "moles." Enconced inside the military's Intelligence Bureau, Redl was able to control both the espionage and counter-espionage efforts against Russia, and to provide invaluable information concerning his own country. If the then unsophisticated Russian intelligence services were able to accomplish this feat 80 years ago, what are they capable of doing today?

An attempt to implicate the military, the government establishment, and society itself as a contributors to their own downfall

are seen in the German-language film "Oberst Redl," which portrays the Austro-Hungarian military and monarchical systems as the real criminals, intimating that Crown Prince Franz Ferdinand was himself guilty of passing information to the Russians, and that Redl was only a scapegoat because he was too good at his work. The movie is loosely based on Markus's book, disregarding facts to present a dramatic (and political) statement, very powerful in its presentation and enhanced by the excellent interpretation by Klaus Maria Brandauer in the title role. The trappings of imperial Vienna and its military society are vividly portrayed; the deference to the monarchy, the greedy capitalists seeking profits at the expense of the military, and the inherent advantages held by the aristocracy in military careers all come alive. Redl is treated with sympathy and respect, a product of his time, and a victim of circumstances not of his own making. Redl's homosexuality is briefly expressed, then covered up by means of a heterosexual affair and later a show marriage, never consummated, but entered into by Redl to advance his career. The viewer is never allowed to forget that Redl came from humble beginnings and that, despite the inherent barriers to a military career, he managed more than mere success, as he challenged the leadership and sought a standard of professionalization which was nowhere else in evidence. According to the movie, Redl just did too good a job, and because he was about to discover betrayal at the highest level, he was entrapped by his peers and superiors; he was forced to kill himself in a show of loyalty to flag and monarch, an ironic dénouement given the lack of such loyalties

on the part of the empire or the imperial family. As an epilogue, the heir to the throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, is assassinated by the Serbs, and one is left with a feeling that he has received his just reward for his chicanery and the undoing of Redl, the only man capable of preventing the outbreak of World War I.

The Alfred Redls of contemporary society do not commit espionage for ideological reasons. Like Austria's "mole", they are entrapped by personal weaknesses, and kept on the hook with money. The recent past is filled with parallels to Colonel Redl's betrayal from inside the intelligence community: the Russian Penkovskiy; the British team of Philby, Burgess, Maclean, and Blunt; US Army Colonel William Whelan, military couriers Minktenbaugh and Johnson, the Walker family spy ring, even a low-level employee like Christopher Boyce. The solution to internal betrayal by the keepers of a nation's secrets is to separate the professional mission and the purely social qualifications; there must be a capability of recognizing weaknesses within the system itself, and in the personnel who operate the system. The security of the nation must be placed before personal camaraderie, and the measures needed to protect the system from real threats must be installed and used.

Substantial numbers of lives were lost in the early days of the Great War. Still, had the leadership of the Royal and Imperial Army been able to see through its own façade of fancy dress balls and its emphasis on appearances, Alfred Redl might have never been able to betray his

country. Lack of introspection, the inability to recognize character weaknesses such as homosexuality, excessive drinking, drug abuse, and indebtedness as true danger signals and not just as minor faults that can be overlooked, the unwillingness to suspect one's peers, and the immediate attempt to cover up any hint of scandal were all symptomatic of that declining society. In a military society this is as suicidal as the gun Alfred Redl placed next to his head.

## 2.7. Notes

<sup>1</sup>Robert B. Asprey, A Panther's Feast (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1959) 22; Georg Markus, Der Fall Redl. mit unveroeffentlichen Geheimdokumenten zur folgenschwersten Spionage Affaere des Jahrhunderts (Wien-Muenchen: Amalthea, 1984) 27. Since these two references disagree in certain details, both are cited. Asprey used fictitious names and disguised other data for the protection of persons and families involved in the Redl affair who were still alive at the time of publication. Both authors constructed scenes and dialogue to add dramatic presence to their works. Writing his book some 25 years after Asprey, Markus had access not only to previously undisclosed Austrian War Archives, but also two books published in the Soviet Union concerning the Redl affair.

<sup>2</sup>Asprey 25; Markus 23. The sources disagree on the number of siblings.

<sup>3</sup>Asprey 29-33; Markus 29.

<sup>4</sup>Asprey 17ff.

<sup>5</sup>Asprey 33f.

<sup>6</sup>Asprey 34; Markus 28f.

<sup>7</sup>Asprey 48ff.; Markus 27.

<sup>8</sup>Asprey 49f.

<sup>9</sup>Markus 90ff. et seq.; Asprey 13 et seq. Asprey used an alias to protect the name of the individual and the family.

<sup>10</sup>Asprey 72-74; Markus 36f.

<sup>11</sup>Markus 49ff.

<sup>12</sup>Jones, Ernest, "The Psychology of Quislingism." The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis, XXII:1, January 1941, Reprinted London: Wm. Dawson & Sons, Ltd., 1953. 2ff. In Redl we can see a possible confirmation of Jones's hypothesis, which provides us with a plausible explanation for Redl's betrayal. Jones states that the dissatisfied and the insecure are the most fertile breeding grounds for betrayal, and when combined with ambition and homosexuality, the distinctions between friend and enemy are blurred, to say the least.

<sup>13</sup>Asprey 102ff.; Markus 55ff.

<sup>14</sup>Markus 119.

<sup>15</sup>Markus 48.

<sup>16</sup>Asprey 243ff.; Markus 200ff.

<sup>17</sup>Asprey 265f.; Markus 237ff. The reporter, Egon Erwin Kisch, later gained fame as an anti-establishment, populist writer and critic.

<sup>18</sup>Markus 13ff.

<sup>19</sup>Asprey 179.

<sup>20</sup>Asprey 47.

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