KETTELER AND BISMARCK: CHURCH AND STATE IN CONFLICT

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AN ABSTRACT OF

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Church and state are entities whose spheres of responsibility frequently overlap. They are both "independent political bodies," as Bismarck has pointed out. At the same time the Church is more than a political body; it teaches its members to obey the laws of God rather than those of men. In short, church and state are in some ways incommensurate entities. Clearly, these factors tend to complicate their relationship, and hence church and state have often found themselves in open conflict.

This thesis examines such a conflict, that between the Prussian state and the Catholic Church, and centers on two key figures in this confrontation: Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler and Count Otto von Bismarck.

In the period that is under review--the thirty-year interval from 1848 to 1878--German Catholics became a confessional minority and had to fit themselves into the Protestant-oriented state system of Prussia. The Catholic Church's insistence on its previously held guarantees of administering its own affairs and controlling its own school system met with determined opposition from secular and political authorities and resulted in the epochal struggle generally known as the Kulturkampf.

In Germany one of the most articulate exponents of the Catholic point of view was Bishop von Ketteler. Though best known for his work in the social field, his concern with the position of the Church within the state encouraged him to write on this subject throughout his ecclesiastical career.

In this study Ketteler's ideas have been contrasted with those of Bismarck. A comparison of their views in the field of social and political theories reveals that the two men, coming from similar backgrounds and exposed to similar influences, in many instances shared ideological concepts. They both adhered to conservative political theories and distrusted liberal influences that threatened the social order. However, as soon as they entered public life, these common sympathies were nullified because of their conflicting views on the role of church and state. Ketteler's consistent aim was to spread the religious ideals of the Church, Bismarck's to increase the prestige of Prussia. Hence, there was a clear clash between Ketteler's religious outlook and Bismarck's secular, state-oriented philosophy. Their conflicting ideologies are exposed by an examination of their personal reactions to the major conflicts of the period: the Austro-Prussian War, the Franco-Prussian War, and the Kulturkampf.

Though both, through the expression of strongly partisan views and by insistence on safeguarding for themselves a position of strength, contributed to the outbreak of open conflict, their mutual respect for the conservative-monarchic

state structure and the Christian society, as well as their willingness to achieve limited objectives, kept the conflict within bounds and, eventually, helped to bring it to an end.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1864 Pius IX published his famous Encyclical Quanta Cura and attached to it a Syllabus listing the eighty major errors of the times. One of its articles stated that: "[It is an error to hold that] the Church ought to be separated from the State, and the State from the Church."[1] Liberal secular opinion condemned this pronouncement as well as most other articles of the Syllabus. Yet with this particular statement Pius had merely reiterated a principle that historians have long recognized as a statement of fact. Church and state, two organizations to which man has given his highest allegiance, have been in positive contact since the time of Christ, and so far no attempt has succeeded to isolate one from the other completely.

The relationship has not been a static one. From the belief generally held in the Middle Ages that the state served primarily to further the aims of the Church, to the assertion of the French Revolution that the prosperity of society did not depend on any formal link with religion,[2] church-state relations have passed through many stages.

It is not strange that attempts have been made so frequently

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[1]"The Syllabus of Errors", Article 55 quoted in A Free Church in a Free State?, Ed. by Ernst Helmreich, (Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1964), p. 4.

[2]W. O. Shanahan, German Protestants Face the Social Question, (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1954), p. 34. (Hereafter referred to as Shanahan, Protestants)

to ensure the separation of church and state, for each major shift in power has been accompanied by conflict. One of the basic problems involved in the harmonious relationship of church and state arises from the difficulty of legislating separate spheres of activity to each. For those matters which are known in ecclesiastical law as 'res mixtae', and which concern both church and state, no clear line of demarcation can be found. Citizens of a state are often at the same time adherents of a confession which considers itself responsible for the education and training of its believers, and for the care of its poor. But in these matters the state has an interest and an obligation as well. As the modern state has extended its jurisdiction over ever-widening spheres of man's activity, its tensions with the church have been intensified.[3]

The nineteenth century has generally been recognized as a water-shed in church-state relations, for the secularization of society and the triumph of nationalist ideals which followed in the wake of the French Revolution placed church and state on an entirely new footing. The effect of this upheaval was felt by both the Protestant and the Catholic Church, but much more profoundly by the latter.

Generally the Protestant Church tried to adjust to the changes by becoming more and more closely linked to state governments. Catholics, on the other hand, came to look to the Papacy not merely for spiritual guidance but also for direction in their political conduct. State governments have often been antagonized by this 'ultramontane' tendency of Catholicism, but the Church itself has been strengthened by it. From a position of extreme weakness in which it found itself during the

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[3]Theodor Steinbuechel, Sozialismus, (Tuebingen: J. B. Mohr, 1950), p. 257.

Revolutionary era, the Church embarked on a program of restoration, and during the nineteenth century succeeded in re-defining its relationship with individual states. Yet, though in this century more agreements and 'concordats' were effected between the Papacy and state governments than in the entire previous history of the church, this realignment was not accomplished without much complexity and strife.

From the conflicts that arose out of nineteenth-century church-state relations this thesis attempts to isolate one encounter: that between the Catholic Church and the Prussian state in the decades immediately preceding and following German unification.

In nineteenth-century Germany, church-state relations desperately needed definition. In 1803, by the 'Act of Mediatization', the German Diet had dissolved all ecclesiastical states, and each of the remaining secular state entities subsequently worked out its own 'modus vivendi' with the Churches as they existed within its boundaries. Secularization of states, at the time considered tragic to the prosperity of the Church, has since been regarded by most historians as a blessing in disguise, for it forced German Catholicism to re-establish itself in society.

This task was made more difficult for the Church by the constant state of flux in which Germany found itself politically until 1871. For obvious reasons Catholicism fared differently in each of the major states. The Church's position in Prussia, however, was the crucial test of its strength since essentially Prussian policy became German policy after unification.

One way of examining this church-state relationship is to study the views and policies of two men who embodied the interests of church and state respectively: Count Otto von Bismarck, the zealous defender

of state pre-eminence, and Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler, champion of church rights.

Initially Bismarck and Ketteler shared ideological concepts, for they were both adherents of a conservative political philosophy and suspicious of liberal influences that seemed to threaten the social order. Yet they became bitter antagonists because of their conflicting interpretation on the role of church and state, an issue of such overriding importance that it nullified their common sympathies.

Much study has already centered on these two men. Bismarck's thought and his approach to politics has been a subject of endless fascination to historians, and is still under constant revision. Ketteler's writings, and his role in German Catholicism, have also been studied at length. There is little doubt, however, that his work needs re-examining, for too much of what has been done is of a general and polemic nature.

More than a dozen biographies have been written of the Bishop's life. Most of these, treatises done in German in the early years of the twentieth century, are the work of Catholic admirers, and give a rather sentimental and biased view of Ketteler's achievements. Only two of the biographies are of major proportion. Father Otto Pfuelf's three-volume work, published in 1899, is valuable for its detailed examination of otherwise unpublished material. The other major study--Ketteler, Ein deutsches Bischofsleben des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts--is the work of Fritz Vigener, Professor of History at the University of Giessen in 1924. Highly critical of Ketteler's intellectual and philosophic reasoning, it is the most scholarly of the biographies.

The great majority of these studies, as well as the two pub-

lished in English--George Metlake's Christian Social Reform[4] and W. E. Hogan's The Development of Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler's Interpretation of the Social Problem--emphasize the Bishop's contribution in the field of social reform. There is ample justification for this emphasis. One need only recall Pope Leo XIII's reference to Ketteler as his "great predecessor",[5] and study Leo's famous encyclical, De Rerum Novarum, to realize how greatly the Pope was indebted to Ketteler for his vision of the structure of society.

Ketteler's political ideas[6] present an equally interesting though less well-known field of study. Throughout his ecclesiastical career Ketteler occupied himself with political affairs. He devoted three complete works--Freiheit, Autoritaet, und Kirche (1864), Deutschland nach dem Kriege von 1866 (1867), and Die Katholiken im deutschen Reiche (1873)--and countless articles and letters to this subject.

It was not that Ketteler was so much interested in politics per se. Rather, as the introduction to Freiheit, Autoritaet, und Kirche, the earliest of his political treatises, makes clear, he spoke as a son of the Catholic Church to clarify the Catholic position for himself and for others. He sought

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[4]Metlake was the pen-name for Father John Joseph Laux.

[5]Leo XIII is said to have made this statement in an audience granted Gaspard Descurtins, the Swiss layman who had done so much for social reform in his own country.

[6]To our knowledge the exclusive subject of only one unpublished dissertation: Bischof von Ketteler als Politiker, by Peter Rausch.

> clarity as to the dangers that threaten us; clarity as to the demands with which we must confront the spirit of the times; ... clarity as to the main views which at present should make their influence felt with force and persistence by the Catholic Press, as well as by all those who are called to public service.[7]

Basically Ketteler's objectives never changed; his endeavours were always directed towards gaining practical advantages for his Church. "... we must know what we want," he said, "so that we can be of one mind as we enter public life, to gather around us the entire spiritual might which undoubtedly exists in Catholic Germany today."[8]

In view of these aims, and of the amazing success Ketteler achieved in recruiting Catholic Germany, his thought cannot be regarded as that of a private individual. Because he was at all times conscious of his official position, his work gains in significance.

Since this study emphasizes Bismarck's and Ketteler's personal reactions to the problem of finding the Church's proper place in a secular society, the first chapter studies the development of their thought, and compares their views of political and social theories. The comparison is based largely on their private letters, Bismarck's memoirs, and Ketteler's sermons and pamphlets.

The subsequent chapters examine the position of the Catholic Church in Prussia at three distinct stages: at the time of the Austro-Prussian War, the Franco-Prussian War, and the Kulturkampf. Though only the last of these struggles was a direct confrontation between church and state, the two political conflicts also affected

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[7]W. E. von Ketteler, W. E. von Ketteler's Schriften, Ed. by Johannes Mumbauer, 2nd edition, (Munich, 1924), Vol. I, p. 19. (Hereafter referred to as Ketteler, Schriften)

[8]Ketteler, Schriften, Vol. I, p. 19.

the church significantly. Each chapter gives a brief review of the political situation, the extent of political activity among German Catholics, and the degree to which they were affected by developments in Rome. In assessing the position of German Catholicism, Ketteler's political treatises have been considered. His writings have been discussed at some length because they are little known in Germany, and even less in English-speaking countries. They deserve greater publicity, however, because they contain unusually perceptive comments on the Prussian political scene. In contrast to Bismarck's secular outlook, they represent an essentially religious approach to "the conflict that has been waged from time immemorial between priests and kings..."[9]

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[9]Otto von Bismarck, Bismarck, The Man and the Statesman, being the Reflections and Reminiscences of Otto Prince von Bismarck, (2 vols., New York and London: Harper and Brothers, 1899), Vol. II, p. 148. (Hereafter referred to as Bismarck, Reflections)

CHAPTER I

The conservative class-conscious philosophy that Bismarck and Ketteler held in common arose naturally from the similarity of their background. Though Bismarck, born in 1815 into the Junker class, never quite reconciled within himself the conflict between his paternal ancestors' reactionary views, and those of his mother's liberal, bourgeois forefathers, he consciously opted for the perpetuation of the Junker tradition. "I am a Junker and want to profit from it," he told a Liberal member of Parliament in 1848.[1] Nor did Ketteler, born less than four years before Bismarck, ever forget that he was of the nobility. His family, distinguished in Westphalia since the thirteenth century, was no less conservative, though undoubtedly more exposed to liberal influences than the Prussian Junkers. What his family saw of the French occupation instilled within them a lasting hatred of French revolutionary ideas. Speaking of the period of the Rhine Confederation in Deutschland nach dem Kriege von 1866, Ketteler referred to it as "that time of Germany's deepest disgrace and humiliation."[2] Both his conservative tendencies and his antipathies to French liberal ideas are revealed in this passage from the same work. "We demand a complete and thorough break

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[1]Erich Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire, (London: George Allan & Unwin Ltd., 1950), p. 13.

[2]Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler, Deutschland nach dem Kriege von 1866, (Mainz: Verlag F. Kirchheim, 1867), p. 55. (Hereafter referred to as Ketteler, Deutschland)

with the senseless imitation of French state forms," wrote Ketteler, "for only in this way will we achieve a healthy, political life." Monarchical absolutism, he claimed, had given way to a new absolutism in the name of liberalism, and "for this mentality France has become the model, and at the same time the source of political education."[3]

Tied in with Bismarck's and Ketteler's conservative leanings was their almost passionate attachment to their native environment. Though both of them spent much of their youth away from home, this feeling stayed with them through life. Bismarck, at his mother's insistence sent to schools in Berlin, never forgave her. "In early childhood I was sent away from home, and never again did it seem like home to me," he wrote, speaking of his family.[4] Though Ketteler's relationship with his parents was a close one, his unruly nature forced them to enrol him in a Jesuit institution at Brig, in Switzerland. There, his mother felt, might lie his last hope for receiving a proper education.[5]

During adolescence Ketteler's nature does not seem to have undergone a fundamental change. His year at the law faculty of the University of Goettingen (1829-1830) was distinguished more for the duel in which he lost the tip of his nose than for his academic achievements. His record, there, however, looks pale in comparison to that of Bismarck who fought no less than twenty-five duels in his

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[3]Ibid., p. 104.

[4]Otto von Bismarck, Bismarck-Briefe, Ed. by Hans Rothfels, (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955), p. 60. Letter written December, 1846.

[5]William Edward Hogan, The Development of Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler's Interpretation of the Social Problem, (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1946), p. 21. (Hereafter referred to as Hogan, Ketteler's Interpretation)

first three terms at the same University, which he entered two years after Ketteler. Bismarck's thoroughly dissolute life, his arrogance and obtrusiveness were intentional. He admitted to a friend:

> By this sort of behavior, by offering insults, and so on, I wish to force my way into the best corps. But this is child's play. I have plenty of time before me. I want to lead my comrades here, just as I shall lead other folk in later life.[6]

Both men continued their law training at Berlin and, upon passing their examinations for the bar, entered the Prussian civil service. Neither seems to have brought much enthusiasm or dedication to his work.

Bismarck's first appointment at Aix-la-Chappelle came to a premature end because of his flagrant neglect of duties. As his chief pointed out in a letter to Bismarck's mother, the young baron had "vainly endeavoured to work hard, but the attractions of Aix society proved too much for him."[7] A second post in Potsdam proved no more lasting. After this experience he settled down at home to escape his depression and regain a measure of equilibrium. A letter written to his father during this period presents us with a self-analysis which even the advantage of hindsight could not have improved upon. "Affairs and official service are utterly uncongenial to me," he wrote:

> I should not think myself fortunate to become an official or even a minister of state; I deem it quite as respectable to grow corn as to write despatches, and in certain circumstances more useful. I have more inclination to command than to obey. . . . A Prussian official is like a player in an orchestra. No matter whether he be the first violin

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[6]Emil Ludwig, Bismarck, (Cornwall, N.Y.: Little & Brown, 1927), p. 15.

[7]Ibid., p. 26.

> or the triangle, . . . he has to play his instrument as the needs of the concerted piece dictate. . . . But for my part I want to play music such as I regard as good - or else not play at all.[8]

He settled down, therefore, to 'grow corn', and for nine years lived the life of the country gentleman, even here exceeding his peers in hunting and revelling and thereby gaining for himself the title of the "Mad Junker".

Ketteler had been given a position in his home town of Muenster. Though more moderate in his pursuits, he also lived the life of the aristocrat. Hunting became his passion and, as Vigener records, in 1836 the later cleric "came close to being tied irrevocably to the world."[9]

What became the turning point of Ketteler's life was an instance of state intervention into a matter Catholics considered a Church issue. The affair in question was the imprisonment of the Archbishop of Cologne who, in 1837, refused to follow the dictation of the Prussian state demanding that children of mixed marriages accept the faith of their father.[10]

This issue caused Ketteler, together with countless other Catholics, to turn against the Prussian state. At the same time it revitalized his own faith which till then had remained largely dormant in spite of the fact that it had played such a large part in his home and education.

As a personal act of protest Ketteler requested a six-month

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[8]Bismarck, Briefe, p. 36. Letter written September 29, 1838.

[9]Fritz Vigener, Ketteler, Ein deutsches Bischofsleben des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, (Muenchen und Berlin, 1924), p. 12. (Hereafter referred to as Vigener, Ketteler)

[10]Hogan, Ketteler's Interpretation, pp. 24-25.

leave from the Prussian service, "for further scientific studies in administration."[11] Though this was only an initial, cautious step, he was already contemplating a more thorough break with the government. "I do not wish to serve a state which demands the sacrifice of my conscience," he wrote his brother soon after his leave had gone into effect, adding that circumstances generally seemed to be directing him to the priesthood. "Yet," he confessed, "for me to become transformed sufficiently to be worthy of this high calling, greater miracles than the resurrection of the dead will be required."[12]

Ketteler wrote his letter in July of 1838, while he was in Munich. He had decided to become acquainted with the 'Goerres group', and with this decision set in motion a series of events which led him irrevocably to the priesthood.

This development was in reality an astounding one for Ketteler, who had never occupied himself seriously with intellectual and theological problems. As a result of his association with the Catholic intellectuals of Munich, most of them his superiors in theological knowledge and discipline, his behavior became characterized by self-doubts and humility, oddly in contrast to the self-assurance of his earlier days and the sense of purpose which he displayed throughout his ministry.

Ketteler tried to make up for his deficiencies and engaged in serious study, but it took another three years before he resolved to cut his ties with the world, "an operation not entirely unaccompanied

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[11] W. E. von Ketteler, Briefe von und an Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler, Ed. by J. M. Raich, (Mainz: Verlag F. Kirchheim, 1879), p. 5. Letter written December 1, 1837. (Hereafter referred to as Ketteler, Briefe)

[12] Ibid., p. 8.

by pain."[13]

Throughout his subsequent stay at the University of Munich Ketteler was a diligent student, though without intellectual ambitions. Just as an overt act of the Prussian state had led him to the priesthood, so his ambition now was to take an active part in the life of the Church primarily to strengthen her position in the world.

Ketteler's approach to theological studies is exemplified by his reaction to individual authors and lines of thought; it was always an emotional and personal response. After studying the French writers he was much impressed by Fénelon--a man of action--and by Joseph de Maistre's Soirées de St. Petersburg--"truly a gold mine of the most penetrating thought which could only have originated in an essentially Catholic nature"--but, characteristically, remained cool to Maistre's Du Pape.[14] What has been said of Ketteler's approach to social issues--that he did not really study a problem and its theoretical foundation, but merely selected from every available source what was useful to him[15]--characterized his approach to any issue. Certainly many insights remained closed to him as a result of his tendency to weigh all theoretical knowledge in terms of its practical usefulness.

This same tendency is clearly shown, for instance, in Ketteler's reaction to a pamphlet of the Archbishop Droste Vischering, the principal of the 1837 'mixed marriage' dispute. In a letter to his sister, in March 1843, he commented at length on the publication:

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[13]Ketteler, Schriften, Vol. III, p. 285.

[14]Ketteler, Briefe, p. 71.

[15]Steinbuechel, Sozialismus, pp. 255-6.

> It appears to me that the book is of the highest significance, worth a thousand scholarly works. . . . Not that the Archbishop has said anything new; rather, it is his everlasting merit that he has not concealed the old truths any longer. Only as the Church again reveals to the world clearly and openly her principles with all their consequences can she become what she should be, even at the cost of a lethal struggle.[16]

Ketteler's letter reveals the rather un-scholarly attitude which he retained throughout life. Significantly enough, fifty years later his own biographers felt compelled to give an almost identical estimate of his own writings.

Bismarck's final decision to embrace state service was not the result of a single experience. He spent many years in an uncomfortable state of indecision regarding his permanent occupation. This interval, almost ten years in duration, did, however, give him a clearer understanding of the basic contradictions of his nature, and his eternal longing for the unattainable. When at thirty he was tempted to try state service once again, it was "in order to free myself from a sense of weariness with all my surroundings",[17] the same surroundings which he had earlier been so anxious to return to. Yet in reality he knew that it was not state service which would cure his malady. He confessed to his brother that " . . . it is my misfortune that every post I might obtain seems desirable to me until I occupy it, and that then I find it burdensome and a bore."[18] When Bismarck finally entered politics in 1847 it was because he saw his opportunity to "play music such as I regard as good."[19]

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[16]Ketteler, Briefe, p. 131. Letter written March, 1843.

[17]Ludwig, Bismarck, p. 41.

[18]Ibid., p. 49.

[19]See above, page 11, footnote 8.

During this formative period also occurred the decisive religious experiences of Bismarck's life. He had earlier described himself as a 'Pantheist', but through the influence of Pietist friends and the death of a member of this circle, he was in fact moved to a 'conversion' which caused him to say, "Now I believe in eternal life--or, if there is no such thing, the world was not made by God."[20]

This wholehearted acceptance of the Christian faith, however, soon gave way to a more cautious endorsement. Not long after his 'conversion' he wrote his brother regarding his engagement and his fiancée's religious beliefs:

> In matters of faith, we differ somewhat, more to her distress than to mine. Still, the difference is not so great as you might imagine, for many external and internal happenings have wrought changes in me of late, so that now . . . I feel justified in numbering myself among those who believe in the Christian religion.[21]

More important, as soon as he began to relate his faith to life's practical experiences, his scepticism won the upper hand:

> How far am I justified in devoting to my own pleasure what God has entrusted to my administration, while there are still, in my immediate neighborhood, persons who are ailing from cold and hunger, persons who have pawned their bedding and their clothing, so that they cannot go out to work? 'Sell that Thou hast, and give to the poor, and follow me!' But how far may not that lead us?[22]

Although Bismarck's conversion was no doubt a profound experience, it seems apparent that it, unlike Ketteler's religious awakening, did not make him a radically different man. His religious feelings played a strong part in his personal and family affairs; they did not

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[20]Ludwig, Bismarck, p. 54.

[21]Bismarck, Briefe, p. 62. Letter written January 31, 1847.

[22]Ibid., p. 71. Letter written February 17, 1847.

basically alter his public relations with his fellow men.

To what extent religious considerations entered Bismarck's decisions as a statesman has been the subject of considerable controversy. Certainly, his view of the state as instituted by God did not lead him to the Gladstonian concept of a Christian program in politics.[23] Rather, once the welfare of the state was entrusted to his care, he saw as his first duty the conscientious stewardship of that trust; in practical terms this meant the jealous guarding of state power.

The events of 1848, meanwhile, brought both Bismarck and Ketteler into the public eye, and directed their attention to political events.

Prior to the 1848 upheaval both Bismarck's and Ketteler's political philosophy had lacked consistency and profoundness. Except for isolated instances such as the 'mixed marriage dispute' the latter had evinced little interest in political affairs. In his home province of Westphalia, Prussian rule was viewed without enthusiasm, though it did not arouse the intense hatred of the native population, as had the earlier French occupation. Bismarck's approach to politics had been noteworthy primarily for its contradictory tendencies. Essentially an arch-conservative, he had at one point expressed his admiration for the British parliamentary system and

> a state with a free constitution in which anyone who occupies himself with affairs of the state can direct his concerted efforts to the defence and enforcement of those measures which to him seem just and profitable.[24]

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[23]Hajo Holborn, "Champion of Monarchy and Aristocracy", in The Unification of Germany, 1848-1871, Ed. by Otto Pflanze, European Problem Studies, p. 60.

[24]Bismarck, Briefe, p. 36. Letter written in 1838.

In 1848 Ketteler, then serving as pastor in the Westphalian town of Hopsten, was chosen a delegate to the Frankfurt Parliament; Bismarck, a fledgling parliamentarian, did his best to stage a counter-revolution in Berlin. While the latter spoke of the Frankfurt Assembly as 'organized anarchy', Ketteler expressed his approval of its desire to destroy "the deplorable police states".[25] The events of that year, however, forced both men to crystallize their political views, and to adjust to a new era in German politics.

The Revolution of 1848 had two aspects: the desire of the German people to put an end to absolutism, and the desire for national unity. With these two general aims Ketteler could at least sympathize. Yet, since it is basically also true, as Shanahan claims, that in 1848 "there were only two parties - one for the revolution and the other for throne and altar,"[26] Ketteler, with most of his Catholic compatriots, found himself on the horns of a dilemma, for into neither of these camps could German Catholics fit comfortably. Most of them shared with the representatives at the Paulskirche the desire for a united Germany; as Catholics, however, they also wished for the perpetuation of the old, historic rights of the Church within a new Reich, should such come into existence. Out of this dilemma German Catholicism created for itself a clerical interpretation of the Revolution. "A higher power has shattered the rotten police-state, which had lost all moral and material power," claimed one Catholic ecclesiastic,[27] and thus made possible Catholic support for a united

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[25]Vigener, Ketteler, p. 78.

[26]Shanahan, Protestants, p. 192.

[27]Vigener, Ketteler, p. 67.

Germany together with active agitation--in the face of liberal opposition--for Church-controlled education and administrative autonomy of all Churches. Out of these rather conflicting aims German political Catholicism was born in 1848, and thereafter never lacked "tangible objectives bearing a popular endorsement."[28]

Though already a political force in 1848, German Catholics were still tentative in their first political manoeuvres. Ketteler's actions at the Frankfurt Assembly exemplified this political naivete. He first placed himself on the extreme left of the Assembly--as an expression of his desire to see "the deplorable police states" supplanted by a state "with the most extensive self-government"--only to move far to the right when he recognized the political radicalism of the left.[29] His participation in debate was limited to a major speech on the schools question, an address which antagonized the majority of the members by making Catholic support of German unity dependent on continuing Church control of education.[30] Though Ketteler had claimed disinterest in politics since his initiation into the priesthood, his address, though unpopular, was proof of an essentially political nature.[31] This impression is reinforced by the sermon he delivered at the much publicized funeral of two Conservative deputies, murdered after they had aroused the Socialists' wrath, as well as by his famous sermons "On the Great Social Questions of Our Time", held in December

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[28]Shanahan, Protestants, pp. 192-3.

[29]Vigener, Ketteler, p. 78.

[30]Ibid.

[31]His appeal to let each community decide on secular versus confessional schools appeared democratic; it was obvious, however, that confessional minorities would inevitably have their wishes disregarded.

of 1848 at the Cathedral of Mainz. Ketteler's next two appointments--as Provost of Berlin's St. Hedwig's Church in April 1849, and as Bishop of the Diocese of Mainz less than a year later--were the direct result of his politically astute Frankfurt activities.

In view of the events of March 1848, Bismarck, as a Protestant and Prussian Junker, found no difficulty in identifying himself with 'throne and altar'. His opposition to the revolution and to the activities of the Frankfurt Assembly had a threefold cause: his devotion to the Prussian monarchy, his insistence on Junker privileges, and his antagonism to the liberal character of the Assembly.

Bismarck had much earlier committed himself to support of the Hohenzollern dynasty, the only force on which he bestowed a lifetime of devotion and obedience. It was one of the contradictions of his nature that he, the man more inclined "to command than to obey" should show the humble sentiments of a vassal in his relationship with the monarchy. In a letter to his wife he admonished her:

> Do not speak lightly of the king. We are both inclined to err in this respect. We should not talk of him irreverently any more than we should talk irreverently of our parents. Even when he makes mistakes, we must remember that we have sworn to show fealty and to pay homage to his flesh and blood.[32]

When soon after the March events the new speech from the throne was handed down, Bismarck rose in the Prussian Second Chamber to oppose it because it contained

> expressions of joy and thankfulness for what has happened during the last few days. The past is buried, and it is a matter of more poignant grief to me than to many of you that no human power can raise it up again, since the Crown itself has thrown the earth upon its coffin . . .[33]

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[32]Ludwig, Bismarck, p. 76. Cited without date.

[33]Bismarck, Reflections, Vol. I, p. 35.

In 1848 Bismarck opposed, in fact, every liberal impulse. In a private letter to the King he complained of attempts to tax the landed gentry's estates as " . . . an illegal act of force . . . directed against a defenceless class of subjects who have been loyal to the throne for centuries";[34] on other occasions he railed against attempts to abolish the nobility, even against freedom of occupation and encouragement of urban communities, "the hotbeds of democracy".[35] No doubt his stand was inspired partly by fear at the loss of Junker privileges. At the same time these sentiments reflected his basic convictions.

Bismarck proved consistent in his anti-liberal stand. His statement in the Prussian Chamber of 1849--"Everyone wants German unity. . . . But I do not want German unity at the cost of such a constitution"[36]--found an echo in his memoirs written over forty years later, in which he still defended German unity as it had come about under his direction in 1870. Unity in 1848, " . . . won on the pavement, would have been of a different sort and of less range than that afterwards won on the battlefield."[37] In his Reflections and Reminiscences Bismarck was not merely defending his own creation, as might appear. Though his memoirs are notorious for the favourable light they cast on his personal decisions, this same sentiment is voiced too frequently to be considered anything but authentic. Of Prussian policy in the years after 1848 he wrote in this vein:

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[34]Ludwig, Bismarck, p. 89.

[35]Ibid., p. 95.

[36]Ibid., p. 94.

[37]Bismarck, Reflections, Vol. I, p. 47.

> The fundamental error of the Prussian policy of these days was that people fancied they could attain through publicist, parliamentary, or diplomatic hypocrisies results which could only be had by war or readiness for it.[38]

In 1862, when he was finally called by the King to become Minister President, he considered his severest test that of convincing William that,

> so far as he was concerned, it was not a question of Liberal or Conservative, of this or that shade, but rather of monarchical rule or parliamentary government, and that the latter must be avoided at all costs, if even by a period of dictatorship.[39]

In view of these statements later overtures toward the Liberal Party on Bismarck's part can only be regarded as a change of tactics, not a change of heart. As early as 1858 he had confessed to a Liberal member of the Prussian Chamber that, in his opinion, Prussia's only reliable ally was the German people, and added, "I am the same Junker that I was ten years ago when we became acquainted in the Chamber. But I would have to be without eyes and brains not to see how things really are."[40] Similarly, in 1866 when he endorsed the idea of a German parliament elected by universal suffrage, and in 1872 when his much publicized alliance with the National Liberal Party came about, he was merely playing power politics. As a philosophy German liberalism remained repugnant to him; as a political force it had to be wooed.

As these comments reveal, Bismarck's hostility to liberalism had its roots in his view of the state. Liberal ideas, whether they

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[38] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 84.

[39] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 296.

[40] Eyck, Bismarck, pp. 41-2.

were those of the American or French Revolution, or those of the Frankfurt delegates, constituted a threat to the normal progress of political life. Bismarck, having dedicated himself to the task of the aggrandizement of Prussia, could not be expected to welcome disruptive influences.

Ketteler's antagonism to liberal ideas was no less bitter, though not so overwhelmingly determined by political considerations. Liberal philosophy of the nineteenth century was a phenomenon with which he was preoccupied--one might say obsessed--through most of his life. Much of his work, though ostensibly concerned with social or theological problems, was in reality an attack on liberal doctrine.

Ketteler's hostility was directed at liberalism primarily because he considered it a philosophy dangerous to the Catholic Church. That his antagonism was an ever increasing one was due to the fact that he saw liberalism becoming more dogmatic and more powerful. In a speech of 1871, entitled Liberalismus, Sozialismus, und Christentum, he discussed the doctrinaire development of liberal philosophy. "In order to identify liberalism correctly," he said,

> we must distinguish between the various phases through which it has passed in the last fifty years: liberalism as it was in its infancy; liberalism in its maturity; and liberalism as it shows itself in its unruly son which causes it much grief, and which it would like to deny and attach to us Catholics, but which stubbornly clings to its coattails, namely, socialism.[41]

The liberalism of 1848, Ketteler, maintained, "was not so much a self-contained, complete system as a struggle against the absolutism which had become more and more common as a political system."[42]

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[41]Ketteler, Schriften, Vol. III, p. 244.

[42]Ibid.

Liberalism in its full-grown state, however, was a finished system, "which claims to possess all certainty and truth and therein substantiates its claim for universal realization."[43] A second difference between the earlier liberalism and the system which had developed by 1871, according to Ketteler, lay in the fact that the former, in its struggle against the police state, had fought for the freedom of all. "The liberalism of today, however, fights against freedom itself whenever it finds Christians who do not wish to submit to the infallible liberal system."[44]

There was yet another reason why Ketteler's antagonism grew with the passage of time. His feelings toward liberalism could never be dissociated from the fortunes of the Catholic Church and the Papacy. In this respect Ketteler was very much an 'ultramontane'. As long as Pius IX's liberal impulses lasted, Ketteler too could allow himself a half-hearted defense of the principles of 1848. Once misfortune befell the Chair of St. Peter, and was attributed to nineteenth-century liberalism, Ketteler, who always regarded liberalism as a philosophy, held all liberals responsible.

Also, in 1848 Ketteler could perhaps still afford to be magnanimous. German liberalism, as he had pointed out, was still in its infancy; German socialism had not yet come into existence. Only after the middle of the century did German Catholicism feel so completely on the defensive, confronted not only by these secular philosophies but also by the Prussian power state.

It is true that as early as 1837 Ketteler had realized the danger of a state which demanded 'the sacrifice of his conscience'.

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[43] Ibid., Vol. III, p. 245.

[44] Ibid., Vol. III, p. 246.

Yet he had become distracted from this threat by the spread of liberal, rational philosophy and the social problems of the time. The latter issue, especially, occupied his thinking throughout his ministry, and at times to the exclusion of other problems.

Ketteler's views on the social problem passed through several distinct stages, each one related to his concept of the state.

In 1848 his thinking was dominated by the social evils that he encountered in his pastoral work, and in spite of his political activities as a Paulskirche delegate this problem took precedence over all political considerations. In the second of his sermons "On the Great Social Questions of Our Time", held on December 3, 1848, he declared:

> One may give as much weight as one wishes to the political questions, to the shaping of state and governments - and yet, the real difficulties do not lie there. Even under the best possible constitution we would lack work, clothing, bread, and shelter for our poor. Paradoxically, the closer we carry our political problems towards bearable solutions, the clearer it becomes, though many will not admit it even now, that this was only the lesser part of the task before us and that now the social question looms larger than ever, demanding solutions more desperately than before.[45]

Though Ketteler was very much aware of the dislocation of society, and the tremendous disparity in material possessions, he saw the entire social problem as a moral-religious one; a problem that would not be solved by more equal distribution of wealth but by the spread of true Christian principles. "To heal the social evils it is not sufficient to feed and clothe a few more of the poor," he said in the same sermon,

> This is only the smallest part of our task: rather, we need to bridge the immense gulf in society, the deeply-

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[45]Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler, Predigten, Ed. by J. M. Raich, (Mainz: Verlag F. Kirchheim, 1878), Vol. II, pp. 132-3.

> rooted hatred between rich and poor; we must put an end to the deep moral degradation found among a great number of our poor brethren who have lost all faith, all hope, all love for God and their fellowmen; we must halt the spiritual poverty of the physically poor.[46]

Ketteler looked therefore to the church for the solution to the social problems. His ideas during this early stage would have been endorsed by the Prussian conservatives who agreed that charity rather than legislation was the answer to economic need; Ketteler differed from other conservative aristocrats primarily in his degree of involvement and though he did not share their belief in private property as "a physical extension of individual personalities",[47] he repeatedly made it clear that he regarded the sanctity of private property as "a basic law of nature, as elemental as breathing."[48]

Ketteler's approach to the social problem underwent a profound change in the early 1860's, brought about by several factors. No longer a priest in a rural community, Ketteler had come into contact with the industrial proletariat and had realized that the social problem was primarily caused by industrialization and the labourer's plight, a revelation which at this point even prompted him to say that "the so-called working class question is in essence one of subsistence."[49]

As well, the spectacular success of the socialist labour movement under Ferdinand Lassalle's leadership led Ketteler to seek personal contact with the socialist leader, and to endorse some of his principles in an attempt to combine forces against their mutual, liberal foe.

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[46] Ibid., Vol. II, p. 149.

[47] Shanahan, Protestants, p. 112.

[48] Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler, Die Arbeiterfrage und das Christentum, (Mainz: Verlag F. Kirchheim, 1864), p. 71.

[49] Ibid., p. 7.

The Bishop soon came to realize that Lassalle, with his insistence on political power, and his reliance on state aid, could not be his ally. Yet he adopted much of Lassalle's economic creed--Die Arbeiterfrage und Das Christentum gives a lengthy explanation for the author's acceptance of the iron law of wages--and, in essence, his platform of universal suffrage. Approval of this latter article of faith was a rather surprising move in view of Ketteler's authoritarian and conservative tendencies.

Even more surprising, however, was Bismarck's endorsement of universal suffrage, a move made by the Chancellor at much the same time and for much the same reason: his contact with Lassalle. These two men, who spent many hours in conversation, were in most ways direct opposites with incompatible goals. Yet they were united by a common enemy: the liberal bourgeoisie, and by a common belief: the need for greater state power. Both could profit by the extension of large-scale state aid to workingmen's associations, a scheme which would increase the prestige of the state while prejudicing liberal endeavours in that field.

Ketteler never adopted Bismarck's and Lassalle's strong political orientation to the social problem; however, in 1869 even he, inspired by his hatred of liberal ideas and discouraged by the results of his exclusive reliance on charity, came to look to the state for legislation to solve social inequalities. "People say the Church can help," he wrote:

> That is true in so far as it is true that without the Church no one can help, but the statement is one-sided. Many must help. Among the many, the state takes second place.[50]

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[50]Hogan, Ketteler's Interpretation, p. 149.

It is no accident that in the late 1860's Ketteler should look to the state for help with the social problem; by then the Prussian state had become more and more of a consideration in his thought on all spheres of life. Ketteler's earlier antagonism to Prussia had not been forgotten. But the Prussian state, experiencing a period of relative weakness after 1848, seemed not as formidable a foe. In addition, through his appointment as Bishop of Mainz in the spring of 1850, Ketteler's activities were placed into the Grand-Duchy of Hesse where he worked in harmony with the conservative Prime Minister, Dalwigk. His frequent statements on church-state relations in that period are of a general nature and do not constitute an independently developed and complete philosophy of the role of the state.

Nevertheless, Ketteler's views on the concept of the state in this earlier period are noteworthy as critiques of certain forms of government. He condemned, above all, absolutism in whatever form it was found. The form of absolutism that had been practised in many German principalities since the Reformation he chided for misuse of authority. Government 'by the Grace of God', he maintained, did not mean that the power of the state had been transmitted from God to one particular person. Neither did it imply that all government action under such a regime should be honoured, and regarded as coming from God. Rather, "the term 'by the Grace of God' should indicate a government with the severest limitation of power, for he who claims his power from God acknowledges thereby that he may only exercise it in a spirit of obedience to God."[51]

The modern liberal state Ketteler characterized as a new form

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[51]Ketteler, Schriften, Vol. II, pp. 8-9.

of absolutism under the guise of freedom, bound by a new dogma which claimed that "there is no power derived from God; all existing power has its roots in the people."[52]

Ketteler's attacks on absolutism can be seen as the result of his fear of increased state power and its accompanying feature, increased centralization, to which the Bishop was consistently opposed. A ringing defense of decentralized government was given by him as early as 1848:

> I cannot think of the state as a machine, but I consider it as a living organism with living members in which each member has his own rights and functions and his own free life. Such members I consider the individual, the family, the community. Each lower member is free in his own sphere and enjoys the most complete . . . self-government. Only when a lower member is unable of his own strength to obtain his goal . . . may a higher member come to his aid . . .[53]

In his defense of decentralization Ketteler was, of course, fighting for the rights of the Church, not praising a particular form of government.

Bismarck's views on the role of the state, unlike Ketteler's, were not substantially affected by social or philosophical considerations; they were always determined by the needs of Prussia, more specifically, of Prussia at the particular moment in history at which he was called upon to serve the state. While this limited concept kept him from adhering to an abstract philosophy on the function of the state, historians like Erich Eyck are mistaken when they assume that Bismarck, at an early point in his career, freed himself from political doctrines and committed himself to power politics as his

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[52] Ibid., Vol. II, p. 12.

[53] Hogan, Ketteler's Interpretation, pp. 37-8.

personal substitute for political doctrine.[54]

Bismarck was consistent in his concept of the role of the state. He saw in it a divine institution, a force that God had created in the world, and which He meant to prosper. The state, to Bismarck, had a 'raison d'étre' of its own; it did not need to be supported by the 'sanctifying principles' of the Church, as Gladstone thought.[55] What made political action meaningful was the permanence with which God had endowed the state. "The passing of individuals is irrelevant," he wrote in 1882. "The state and its institutions are only possible if they are thought of as personalities with permanent identities."[56]

Perhaps it was because Bismarck considered the permanence of the state so important that he felt justified in granting it exemption from moral restrictions applicable to individuals. Such a concept inspired the doctrine of 'Staats-Raison', exemplified in Bismarck's statement to Thun, the Austrian Ambassador to Russia: "Austria and Prussia are states which are too great to be bound by the test of a treaty. They can be guided only by their interests and their convenience."[57]

Since permanence was the key to a state's 'personality', it followed that Bismarck, in his role as guardian of the Prussian state, would oppose every disruptive influence that might threaten its continued existence. Among these influences he ranked liberal ideas

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[54]Eyck, Bismarck, pp. 65-66.

[55]Holborn, "Champion of Monarchy and Aristocracy", pp. 60-61.

[56]Hans Rothfels, "Responsible Statesman", in The Unification of Germany, 1848-1871, p. 52.

[57]Eyck, Bismarck, p. 66.

as well as certain claims of organized religion.

As will be seen, Ketteler and Bismarck, though at one in their belief that the state was a living organism instituted by God, arrived at almost diametrically opposed conclusions regarding the role of that organism. "The concept of the sovereign state has its justification," Ketteler admitted in a pamphlet entitled Ist das Gesetz das Oeffentliche Gewissen?,

> but the concept of the sovereignty of the human soul stands higher; for the state will pass while the human soul lives in eternity. Both have their basis in God, and thereby are able to maintain their mutual, legal relationship, their harmony and order. . . . But if they should become irreconcilable, we would forego the offices of the state rather than the dignity of the individual; we would rather see conscientious men without allegiance to a state than a state composed of unscrupulous men.[58]

It must be emphasized once more that Ketteler, in the final analysis, measured the worth of any form of government by its attitude towards organized religion. Applying this yardstick, he was bound to regard the Prussian state with mixed feelings. In theory the Prussian state offered complete freedom of religion. By the Act of 1803, Prussia, as all of the other German states, had granted freedom of conscience to each individual, and equality to the two great confessions, the Evangelical and the Catholic Church. This guarantee seemed fully confirmed by the Prussian government in its constitution of 1849. Article 12 of this document, which Ketteler repeatedly referred to as the 'Magna Carta' of religious freedom, specified:

> The Protestant and the Roman Catholic Church as well as any other religious body shall govern itself independently and remain in possession of whatever institutions they

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[58]Ketteler, Schriften, Vol. II, p. 31.

> possess for the purpose of instruction or charitable work, be these foundations or benefices.[59]

Yet in practice the Catholic Church in Prussia did not enjoy the same privileges as its Protestant counterpart. One may note, for instance, a Prussian decree of February 2, 1810, ordering Catholic soldiers to participate twice monthly in Protestant services "in order that they accustom themselves to giving the chief confession of the land its due respect."[60] An echo to this pronouncement is found in an address of Bismarck's, given in the Prussian Diet on April 21, 1887:

> By their whole character the equality of both Churches in the Prussian State is impossible. They are totally incommensurate entities. Should one wish complete equality, one would have to accord to the head of the Catholic Church the identical rights given to the supreme head of the Evangelical Church . . . or explicitly, as long as the king of Prussia is the Head of the Evangelical Church, it is impossible to speak of formal equality between the two Churches.[61]

Ketteler was well aware of these sentiments. Yet he felt that perhaps 'formal equality' could be foregone as long as the Church's freedom was not endangered at the same time. He was never more emphatic than when he refuted the liberals' claim that equality was synonymous with freedom. "There is an essential difference between freedom and equality," he wrote. "There is an equality among slaves, an equality of prisoners, and the equality of illegality."[62] Freedom for the

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[59]Hogan, Ketteler's Interpretation, p. 43.

[60]Albert Franz, Der Soziale Katholizismus in Deutschland bis zum Tode Kettelers, (Muenchen-Gladbach, 1914), p. 25.

[61]Edgar Alexander, "Church and Society in Germany", in Catholic Social and Political Movements, Ed. by Joseph Moody, (New York: Arts Incorporated, 1953), pp. 456-7.

[62]Ketteler, Schriften, Vol. II, p. 19.

Church, the essential prerequisite, he defined as "the Church's right to administer its own affairs according to its own principles, with the understanding that the Church subject itself to the state when general state laws are involved."[63]

When Ketteler's view of Church 'freedom' is contrasted with Bismarck's evaluation, the gulf that separated their thinking becomes apparent. The latter wrote in his Reflections:

> In religious matters, my toleration has at all times been restricted only by the boundaries which the necessity of various denominations co-existing in the same body politic imposes upon the claims of each particular creed. The therapeutic treatment of the Catholic Church in a temporal state is, however, rendered difficult by the fact that the Catholic clergy, if they desire properly to discharge their duty, must claim a share in the secular government extending beyond the ecclesiastical domain; they constitute a political institution under clerical forms, and transmit to their collaborators their own conviction that for them 'freedom' lies in 'dominion', and that the Church, wherever she does not rule, is justified in complaining of Diocletian-like persecution.[64]

What Bismarck termed the Church's attempt to 'rule', Ketteler would call adherence to the 'old, Christian teachings' which specified

> that God has founded on earth two powers, each independent within the sphere allocated to it by God; that secular laws must not be in conflict with the Ten Commandments and the eternal laws; finally, that one must obey God rather than men.[65]

Sensing these differences of interpretation, Ketteler realized that official Prussian declarations about church equality and freedom might mean little in practice. Yet he also realized that political developments after 1848 led inevitably to a Kleindeutschland under Prussian leadership, and that German Catholicism would have to come

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[63] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 309.

[64] Bismarck, Reflections, Vol. II, p. 137.

[65] Ketteler, Schriften, Vol. I, p. 253.

to terms with the Prussian state. Before and especially during the Austro-Prussian War he therefore directed much of his energy to finding for himself and his fellow-believers a place in a Protestant-ruled and -oriented nation.

CHAPTER II

The political orientation of German Catholicism became increasingly evident after 1848. This emphasis has been condemned by some historians for its divisive effect on the German nation, "splitting it once again into two opposing confessional camps, to the lasting detriment of national education and civilization,"[1] while it has been defended by others as a 'historic necessity' since in the decades following 1848 the Catholic Church was fighting for its preservation as an independent institution.[2]

Those who are critical of Catholic action have generally censured not only its political complexion but also its ultramontane character. Certainly Pius IX, by circumstances forced to defend his temporal possessions, and by temperament favoring close interdependence between church and state, consciously made himself the champion of all Catholic aspirations.

The ultramontane character of Catholicism, however, was caused as much by the political situation which had developed in western European states as by Pius' inclinations. Nineteenth century political leaders, be they Cavour, or Bismarck, or Napoleon III, talked frequently of proper church and state relations, and in reality

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[1]Kurt Gebauer, Deutsche Kulturgeschichte, (Berlin: Axia Verlag, 1932), p. 340.

[2]Steinbuechel, Sozialismus, pp. 236-7. See also Buchheim, Ultramontanismus und Demokratie, p. 11.

meant subordination of church to state.[3] Much as they might wish to keep these institutions separate, they knew that in practice complete separation was impossible, for the Church existed within the secular state, and had to come to terms with it.

A further reason for Catholic action extending beyond national boundaries can be found in the specific political events of these decades. In Italy and Germany, at any rate, the national movements that took place were inevitably detrimental to the position of the Catholic Church. As the forces of nationalism emerged victorious in both the Italian War of 1859 and the Austro-Prussian contest of 1866, the real losers were the Church and the particularist interests.

In German affairs the consequences of 1866 can hardly be exaggerated. For Protestants as well as for Catholics the war was decisive since it brought a resolution to the 'kleindeutsch-grossdeutsch' conflict which had long bedeviled all attempts at national unification. In this respect, the Franco-Prussian War, extending the boundaries of the new Germany beyond the Main, was of less significance.

For Catholics the war with Austria had an added dimension. While the idea of national unification held a strong emotional appeal to them, no less than to their Protestant compatriots, in 1848 Catholics had voted almost unanimously in favour of a 'grossdeutsch' solution. The reasons lay at hand. Of the 43,000,000 souls included in the German Confederation in 1855, 23,000,000 were Catholics. Twelve million of these lived in Austria; their exclusion would leave German Catholics a confessional minority.

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[3]E. E. Y. Hales, Pio Nono, (Garden City, New York: Image Books, 1962), p. 13.

Not only numerically was the inclusion of Austria vital. As Catholics felt more and more threatened by the proliferation of secular doctrines, they began to look consciously for a state in which their interests would be safeguarded. That Habsburg Austria, the traditional champion of the Catholic faith, rather than Prussia under its Protestant Hohenzollerns would fulfil those hopes seemed obvious.

Linked to this anxiety over their own national future was German Catholics' increasing concern over the fortunes of the Papal states. As long as Austria's position in Italy was predominant, the political independence of the Pope seemed assured; once the Papal states had become surrounded by Victor Emmanuel's forces, and Austrian control had been relegated to the north of Italy, the Pope's temporal possessions could no longer be guaranteed.[4]

Though Austria's defeat in 1859 exposed her weakness, German Catholics tried more and more determinedly to preserve her position of pre-eminence in German affairs. What else, indeed, could have been expected of them once Prussia, by her recognition of the Italian state in 1862, had made it painfully evident that she would not forego political advantage to preserve Catholic sympathy.

Prussia's recognition of the new Italian state coincided with Bismarck's accession to the office of Minister-President. It marked the advent of an era in which Bismarck's overpowering influence helped the Prussian state to claim for itself a position of supremacy in its relations with the Church.

Yet if Bismarck, primarily by sheer force of character, could assert his will in his dealings with ecclesiastical authorities,

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[4]Vigener, Ketteler, p. 472.

Ketteler proved that he could achieve as much in his relations with the state.

As Bishop of Mainz after 1850 his political dealings were primarily with the authorities of the Grand-Duchy of Hesse. Only months after his installation he re-opened on his own authority the Catholic seminary of Mainz, by government edict closed twenty years before. The Hessian Prime Minister, Dalwigk, raised no objections, for his Conservative government depended on the support of the Catholic element in its fight against the steadily growing national-liberal front. For the next sixteen years Dalwigk and Ketteler worked in close co-operation and the Bishop was able to achieve what he always considered the Church's right: administering her own affairs according to her own principles.[5]

Ketteler's phenomenal success in his personal relations with the state did not blind him to the dangers the Church faced generally at this time. Convinced of the aggressive tactics of the opponents of organized religion--and of Catholicism in particular--he resolved to bring the Catholic viewpoint into the limelight. In 1862 appeared his first full-length work, Freiheit, Autoritaet, und Kirche, of which eleven editions were printed within the first year.[6]

Like all Ketteler's works, it was written primarily to counter a specific threat, in this instance that of the National Liberal Party which had become of political importance in Hesse and which, in Ketteler's eyes, threatened religion. His treatise, as well as the "Great-German

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[5]Karl Buchheim, Ultramontanismus und Demokratie, der Weg der Deutschen Katholiken im 19. Jahrhundert, (Munich: Koesel Verlag, 1963), p. 72.

[6]Hogan, Ketteler's Interpretation, p. 72.

Conservative Party" that the clerics in Mainz had brought together, was intended to secure this party's defeat in the elections of September, 1862.[7]

Though much of the book was a somewhat unbalanced attack against a rather undefined 'liberalism', it presented Ketteler's first detailed analysis of the problems involved in church-state relations, an issue, Ketteler maintained, which now demanded a solution more drastically than any other. It was his interpretation of this issue which much of Catholic Germany in turn came to adopt.

Ketteler's thesis rested on the assumption that church-state relations had entered a new phase because the church was no longer dealing with dynasties which, though often mistaken in their application of power, at least acknowledged God as the source of this power. At present the church was confronted by secular authorities which "recognized no God and no conscience."[8]

In view of its secular philosophy, the new state absolutism--under the disguise of liberalism--wished to bring about the complete separation between church and state, a theory Ketteler categorically rejected. The church, for one thing, he argued,

> may not and can not dissociate itself from the state, as indeed it may not dissociate itself from anything that originates in God. On the contrary, it owes the state respect since the latter is an institution created by God for the benefit of man.[9]

Similarly, the state, whose primary task was the administration of justice, had the duty to safeguard the rights of the church, as of

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[7] Ibid., p. 73.

[8] Ketteler, Schriften, Vol. I, p. 308.

[9] Ibid., p. 321.

all its subjects, and to protect it from unwarranted attacks.[10]

Among the most powerful weapons employed by modern secular authority Ketteler counted the hostile press. It was a force he never underestimated; to a great extent it was the justification for his work as a publicist. In a personal letter written shortly after the appearance of Freiheit, Autoritaet, und Kirche, he admitted:

> I have dealt with some difficult issues on which one can easily go wrong; it seems to me, however, that they must be dealt with. The greatest power in Germany at the moment is the press which is overwhelmingly in the service of Satan. May God help us to set against it a press of equal dimension serving the cause of truth.[11]

Through the Mainzer Journal, the most powerful newspaper in Hesse, Ketteler and his close clerical associates consistently spoke out to advance 'the cause of truth.' Political and theological considerations could profitably be combined, for their views were in singular agreement with those of the Hessian government as to what constituted a desirable political climate. The realization of a Grossdeutschland under Habsburg rule was for them a logical wish in view of Francis Joseph's conservative and pro-Catholic sympathies. With this end in mind, clerical utterances were consistently anti-Prussian as well as anti-liberal. Though the Danish War of 1864 caused a temporary abstention in anti-Prussian utterances, these were intensified as the Austro-Prussian confrontation drew nearer.

The six-weeks war itself was a critical experience to Catholics whose pro-Austrian sentiments took the form of active involvement. The day before the decisive battle of Koeniggraetz

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 19.

Ketteler had issued a statement to the clergy of Rheinhessen condemning Prussia for its "reckless envy which had caused this war between brothers."[12] Only days earlier the Emperor had written to 'Baron von Ketteler'--not the Bishop of Mainz--thanking him for "the numerous expressions of warmest sympathy."[13] Ketteler's answer, written immediately after the Peace of Prague, went much beyond a personal acknowledgment; it was his political testament, the full text of which was not made public until thirty years later.[14] "A Germany without Austria and without the imperial family is no longer Germany," Ketteler wrote. "Our only hope now is that present conditions cannot possibly be of lasting duration." Though this letter also contained 'expressions of warmest sympathy,' it left no doubt that Ketteler considered Austria's internal weakness responsible for her defeat. "Our prayers," he suggested, "will accompany your Majesty as you undertake the great work of domestic reform and strengthening of the Austrian nation." As well, the Bishop's letter was a subtle reminder that only a strongly religious Austria could hope for future Catholic support from Germany. Commenting on the lack of religion evident within the Austrian army, Ketteler pointed out that "the Catholic soldiers of the Prussian army were treated with infinitely greater respect regarding their religious convictions and needs," a factor which he considered the main cause of the self-sacrificing valour dis-

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[12]Vigener, Ketteler, p. 492.

[13]Ibid., pp. 492-3.

[14]Raich, in the Collection of Ketteler's Letters, published in 1879, includes only a drastically cut version. The full text may be found in Pfuelf, in his three-volume biography of Ketteler.

played among Prussian Catholic soldiers.[15]

The events immediately following the Peace of Prague intensified the depression felt among Catholics across Germany. Of the South-German states that had fought against Prussia, three[16] accepted offensive-defensive alliances which placed them at Prussia's mercy in time of war.[17] The Grand-Duchy of Hesse, consisting of two physically separated areas, was left in an ambiguous position. Upper Hesse came under Prussian control as part of the North-German Bund, while the more important southern section south of the Main maintained its precarious independence until the following year.

These post-war events demanded a drastic reorientation of policy among South-German Catholics, including a reappraisal of the 'new' Prussia that confronted them under the leadership of Bismarck, whose hand had played a part in all these developments.

Ketteler's reappraisal found expression in his book Deutschland nach dem Kriege von 1866, written during the last weeks of 1866 and published early in 1867. Its effect on friends and enemies alike was profound, for its Preface bluntly stated that annexation of the South-German states to the North-German confederation was the only possible solution if another fraternal war and the destruction of the southern states were to be avoided.

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[15]Vigener, Ketteler, p. 493.

[16]The three states were Baden, Wuerttemberg, and Bavaria.

[17]Windell, Catholics and German Unity, p. 57.

The text of the book itself, revealing how difficult it had been for Ketteler to come to this conclusion--and his detailed analysis and dismissal of other possible solutions--did little to soften the harshness of this initial statement.

The Bishop's abrupt reversal of political allegiance has been taken as a lack of consistency, but in reality it can be more satisfactorily explained as consistent adherence to Ketteler's overriding concern: the worldly position of the Catholic Church.

As one of the most pragmatic but also most ardently patriotic among Catholic Church leaders, the Bishop could not fail to be distressed by the lack of direction that marked Catholic action. Had Austria been victorious in 1866 the same need for vigorous, concerted action would not have existed, for the Church would have been assured of a privileged position. Since Prussia had won, a common viewpoint within Catholic ranks was essential; Ketteler's leit-motiv was that, "the closer the Church is united in spirit, the more triumphantly can she confront the world . . ."[18] Thus Deutschland nach dem Kriege was Ketteler's attempt to show his fellow-believers a way in which they could accept Prussia politically and fit themselves into the new situation. At the same time he intended to show Prussia how Catholic sympathy and co-operation could be won at this crucial point in German history at which, "we see before us a course full of inner conflicts, full of humiliation and ruin; but we also see ways which can save us."[19]

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[18]Ketteler, Deutschland, p. 178.

[19]Ibid., p. iv.

Ketteler had set himself a difficult task. As a champion of 'throne and altar' the Bishop could find no moral justification for Prussian action. His condemnation of Prussian politics was in fact all the more wholehearted because they had offended both his religious and his conservative sympathies. Prussia had taken advantage of a fellow monarch's weakness "to enter into an alliance with Victor Emmanuel, Garibaldi, and Klapka, with Napoleon as chief overseer in the war against Austria."[20]

With great insight Ketteler dismissed the succession question in the Schleswig-Holstein Duchies as merely the immediate occasion of the war, hiding Prussia's attempt to exclude Austria from German affairs, an attempt Austria was obligated to oppose with all its military might.[21]

As the second and main reason for the war Ketteler named Prussia's constitutional conflict, pointing out that victory at Koeniggraetz and possession of the duchies had been the only way the Indemnization demands could have been secured.[22]

In this specific instance of Prussia's attempt to solve its domestic problems through foreign successes Ketteler saw the predicament of modern states in general since their constitutional form of government by its very nature contained contradictions that could not be resolved.

Almost every aspect of Prussia's political life Ketteler regarded with pessimism. Its reliance on dramatic foreign suc-

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[20] Ibid., p. 44.

[21] Ibid., p. 18.

[22] Ibid., p. 20.

cesses to avert internal crises was only one outstanding example of its weakness. Bismarck, commented Ketteler, had spoken of Prussia acting in 'self-defense' in 1866, an unfounded statement if one thought in terms of another German state threatening Prussia's position. Yet in view of its recent domestic difficulties there was indeed reason for his statement. If the constitutional conflict had not been resolved, the King would have been faced with the choice of ruling without a constitution, or submitting to "the terrorism of majority rule and the ruin of monarchic principles."[23]

Ketteler's conservative inclinations came to the fore in his defense of Bismarck whose action in the constitutional question he considered justified since the Chancellor had represented authority, and "acting with incomparable courage and skill, had managed to avert, at least for the time being, the curse of majority rule."[24]

Another aspect of Prussia's political life that Ketteler deplored was the 'idée fixe' that Prussia had a 'mission', that it was a 'historic necessity'--as one adherent claimed--for her to gain greatness within the community of nations. This greatness, though it meant different things to different people, would be based on various aspects basic to Prussian dynastic vitality.

The dangers involved in adhering to such a philosophy, Ketteler argued, were incalculable. If carried to its logical

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[23] Ibid., pp. 24-25.

[24] Ibid., p. 27.

conclusion, it would threaten the entire peace of Europe, for it was a declaration of war against everything that stood in the way of Prussia as she pursued her way to greatness.[25] Most lamentably, this philosophy of egotism and simple expediency in politics had become widespread, and drastic consequences must follow "as soon as one applies exceptional rules for the relations between nations and states, as though in this instance different laws exist than those of common morality and justice . . ."[26] How closely Prussia would follow just such a policy probably not even Ketteler himself foresaw, for he could not know of the statement Bismarck had made to the Austrian ambassador Thun ten years earlier: "Austria and Prussia are too great to be bound by the test of a treaty. They are to be guided only by their own interests and their convenience."[27]

Ketteler's alarm would have increased had he known of Bismarck's motives for the generous peace terms granted Austria. In the Bishop's opinion Prussia, since she had been largely responsible for initiating the war, was morally obligated to treat Austria with consideration, and to preserve the closest ties with her. Bismarck, though he had pressed for a settlement without annexations, had acted purely from motives of expediency. "Since Austria has left us elbow room in Germany," he wrote his son in August of 1866, "we have let her down lightly. In politics, if one has many enemies, one must simply put out of the game the

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[25] Ibid., p. 37.

[26] Ibid., p. 45.

[27] See above, Chapter I, Footnote 10.

strongest opponent and fleece the weaker ones; in private life such behavior would of course be most unchivalrous, and a mean trick."[28] In all events Bismarck did not share Ketteler's feeling that Prussia was morally indebted to Austria. As a Prussian delegate to Frankfurt he had long resented his country's submissiveness to Habsburg policy.

> I could not, as the spokesman of Prussian policy, avoid a feeling of shame . . . when I saw how, in face of the demands of Austria . . . we sacrificed all our own policy and every independent view . . .,

he noted many years later in his Reflections.[29]

Deutschland nach dem Kriege revealed that its author realized how greatly the future of Germany would depend on the image of statehood held by the Prussian Minister-President; indeed, Ketteler was preoccupied with the enigma of Bismarck. "Count Bismarck has achieved incredible results," he acknowledged:

> Against all expectations he has conquered . . . a majority in the House; he has achieved similar startling victories in foreign politics; yet, we do not wish to judge the effect of his activity for the Prussian state until we come to know his domestic policies. At present we do not know whether he is merely a lucky gambler who can lose in one night what he has won in another, or whether he is a statesman who builds for the future.[30]

Seeing domestic policies as the most important as well as the most difficult task of modern states, Ketteler warned specifically against various pitfalls for Prussian domestic policy, envisioning in the process with accuracy some of the

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[28]Bismarck, Briefe, p. 330.

[29]Bismarck, Reflections, Vol. I, p. 105.

[30]Ketteler, Deutschland, p. 90.

characteristics of the future Bismarckian Reich.

Neither government by military might nor a return to monarchic absolutism were desirable forms of Government, the Bishop argued. The former might be the easiest way to maintain order, but certainly not worthy of the high calling God had intended for the German people. The latter was especially dangerous since it tended to lead to a pseudo-religious cult of the Prussian dynasty among those who favoured it.[31]

Two other forms of government prevalent among modern nation states Ketteler condemned as well. The rule of elected majorities, first of all, would be objectionable in the case of Prussia, since "the right to vote is merely determined by possession of property; . . . this type of constitutionalism could at the same time lead to a state ruled by wealth, and, in the effort to make the will of elected majorities all-powerful, one would merely achieve the absolutism of capital . . ."[32]

Finally, state-supported social democracy, though it might help the growing misery of the working class, would again merely promote the idea of an absolute state, which in this instance would serve the interests of labour instead of the interests of the capitalist class: "it would be the same engine, but with a different driver."[33]

Disparate as these forms of government might seem, to Ketteler they all represented one and the same evil since they

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[31] Ibid., p. 91.

[32] Ibid., p. 94.

[33] Ibid., p. 95.

had a common foundation in their 'doctrinaire absolutism' and in their belief that a self-made political system could be the cure-all for every political situation.[34]

Ketteler did not merely warn against pitfalls in policy, however; he also suggested "ways which can save us."[35] For the political organization of the new German nation he advocated a return to old Germanic state forms. The medieval corporate state (Staendestaat) adapted to nineteenth century conditions seemed to him the ideal system of social and political life,[36] for the organization of the people according to their function in society, according to 'natural' unions, such as family, community and church "would allow true self-government, genuine representation of the people, the ideal and at the same time most practical participation of all classes in public life."[37]

Essential to any satisfactory domestic policy Ketteler saw, of course, the recognition of religion and education "which alone could guarantee peace between church and state." While the Bishop acknowledged that this peace had often been difficult to achieve, he foresaw no problems in the case of a German nation under Prussian leadership. "As difficult as this issue of an ideal relationship between church and state may be when it is viewed 'in abstracto', from a theoretical point of view," Ketteler

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[34] Ibid., p. 96.

[35] See above, Chapter II, footnote 21.

[36] Bismarck had also begun his career as the advocate of the "Staendestaat", though with the intention that landowners would have the dominant voice in any representative body arranged according to interest and occupational groups.

[37] Ketteler, Deutschland, p. 110.

assured his readers, " . . . as favourable it seems to us in the particular situation of the North German Bund and the states which might join the confederation."[38] The solution to the thorny problem, in this particular instance, lay simply in adherence to the Prussian constitution, which offered all the advantages by allowing the church the "inner freedom" which was necessary for the realization of its mission; by keeping away from the states all complications that could arise from interference with internal church affairs, and by promoting peace among the adherents of the various confessions.

The schools question, similarly, could be satisfactorily resolved merely be adherence to Article 15 of the Prussian Constitution, which guaranteed confessional educational institutions. By making the church and school question their battleground, the liberal and progressive parties, according to the Bishop, had done their fatherland the greatest disservice; they were "the enemies within,"[39] for, "since religion is at the very core of a man's thought and has the deepest roots in his soul, nothing will have as calming an influence on the domestic life of a nation as peace between church and state."[40]

As will be noted, Bismarck, to whom Ketteler was primarily addressing himself, also wished to avoid religious animosity at this time. Unfortunately events between 1866 and 1871 were not conducive to the establishment of peace between church and state.

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[38] Ibid., pp. 117-8.

[39] Ibid., p. 131.

[40] Ibid., p. 115.

CHAPTER III

Events in the years after 1866 tended to confirm the Bishop of Mainz in the stand he had taken in Deutschland nach dem Kriege. His position was severely censured, however, by both religious and political leaders. August Reichensperger, one of the founders of the Center Party, wrote a close political friend shortly after the book's appearance that "Ketteler should at least have waited for the year of mourning to come to an end before taking this 'accomplished fact' as the foundation of his new, hoped-for structure."[1] Abroad, too, the Bishop's views received widespread attention. The Westminster Gazette, though agreeing with some of the author's political views, condemned its most important suggestion: the annexation of the South German states to the North German Confederation.[2] Grossdeutsch adherents felt Ketteler's position a betrayal, while supporters of Prussia, on the other hand, took exception to the Bishop's moral condemnation of Prussian action. For most of the liberal and Protestant press Ketteler became the focus of attack.

In spite of its largely unfavourable reception, the political importance of Ketteler's work could not be denied. In these years between 1866 and 1870, though there was widespread

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[1]Vigener, Ketteler, p. 515.

[2]Ibid., p. 517.

political activity among Catholics, the Center Party had not yet come into existence, and hence Ketteler's influence was at its height. Karl Bachem, the historian of the Center Party, claims that to a large extent the Party came to adopt Ketteler's ideas as its official program.[3]

Personally the Bishop found himself isolated as a result of his political views. Though in April 1867 the Grand-Duchy of Hesse entered into an alliance with Prussia, Dalwigk was supported in his opposition to the treaty by members of the Upper House, among them Canon Moufang and others of Ketteler's closest clerical associates. When the Hessian Prime Minister subsequently still enlisted French aid against Prussia, the Bishop dissociated himself completely from his former ally. Ketteler's isolation became virtually complete when Joseph Edmund Joerg, the editor of the most significant Catholic organ--the Historisch-politische Blaetter--turned into a bitter enemy of Prussia as a consequence of Prussian annexation of lands north of the Main.

Ketteler himself became more and more convinced that German unification should come about under Prussian leadership. His position has been regarded as a counsel of expediency. Perhaps it was, but his stand was taken for many other reasons besides convenience. His stand reveals, first of all, his political realism and his acute awareness of the changing political conditions which church and state leaders could only ignore at their own peril. The political circumstances determined his endorsement of Prussia.

First of all, Ketteler realized that Austria was no longer

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[3]Windell, Catholics and German Unity, p. 103.

in a position to take over the reins in Germany. In view of her preoccupation with her 'unbalanced minorities' he even suggested to Dalwigk that such a development was no longer desirable,[4] for Austria's history was conclusive proof of the difficulties involved in governing a racially diversified population. Furthermore, the selection of the Protestant F. F. von Beust as Foreign Minister in 1867 indicated a deliberate slackening in Austria of former close ties between throne and altar. Finally, when in November 1867 the intervention of French rather than Austrian troops determined the victory of the Papal forces over Garibaldi's troops, Austria had also lost her position as the traditional defender of the Papacy.

This last development, however, did not tempt Ketteler, like many German Catholics, to turn to France for aid in settling German affairs. In fact, one of the factors which contributed to Ketteler's pro-Prussian stand was his perpetual and intense dislike of French political ideas. "To achieve a healthy, political life we need a complete and thorough abandonment of the cheap imitation of French forms of government," he observed in Deutschland nach dem Kriege. "Our political sentiments, our political concepts and views must once again become German."[5] The possibility that France might control South Germany if Prussia failed in her bid for power also influenced Ketteler's views. Nothing short of one united state would meet the expectations of German patriots, among whom Ketteler numbered himself. "Though we must

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[4]Vigener, Ketteler, pp. 536-7.

[5]Ketteler, Deutschland, p. 104.

forego the privilege of assuming first place among the states of Europe," he argued, "we nevertheless merit a position that corresponds to the might of the combined German peoples."[6] In 1868, in conversation with Karl Ludwig Bruck, the Austrian delegate to Darmstadt, the Bishop made clear that he was irrevocably committed to German unification under Prussian direction. "I must honestly admit," he said,

> that at one time, in view of my sympathy for Austria and her dynasty, I had hoped that Austria would advance to the Main . . . Since this, however, did not come to pass, the small glimmer of patriotism that is left in me after my main allegiance to the Church has been fulfilled, makes me hope for the realization of a strong national state, which will put an end to this provisional arrangement. Prussia really cannot claim any legal justification for her attempts, but since she once surpassed her legal limits, she should at least remain consistent and not leave the work half-finished.[7]

A final consideration that undoubtedly prompted Ketteler to recruit for endorsement of Prussia among his Catholic compatriots was Catholic Church policy itself. Anxious to minimize conflicts between church and state, Ketteler had given the Syllabus of 1864 the mildest possible interpretation.[8] Now the proposed Vatican

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[6] Ibid., p. 78.

[7] Vigener, Ketteler, p. 536.

[8] Ketteler had devoted an entire chapter to its interpretation in Deutschland nach dem Kriege von 1866. He was especially concerned with the Pope's articles on confessional freedom. Since publication of the Syllabus, his earlier statement made in Freiheit, Autoritaet, und Kirche, that, "No church ruling exists which would hinder a Catholic from believing that state authorities do well . . . in granting full religious freedom," had been repeatedly under attack. Ketteler maintained that Article 77 of the Syllabus--[It is an error to hold that] in the present day, it is no longer expedient that the Catholic religion be held as the only religion of the State, to the exclusion of all other modes of worship--applied only to Spain.

Council and its agenda, including the definition of Papal Infallibility, aroused his concern. Long before the opening of the Council he made clear that he would oppose such a proclamation as 'inopportune'.

The basic reason for Ketteler's position in both religious and political questions is easily discernible. "Our fatherland needs nothing more than it needs religious peace," he had written in the Mainzer Journal in 1867,[9] a thought he also expressed on various other occasions. It was a sentiment that Bismarck himself voiced repeatedly in the inter-war years. Yet, ironically, in spite of both men's desire to avoid animosity, the interval from 1866 to 1871 was marked by a steadily deteriorating relationship between the Catholic Church and the Prussian state. Obviously the two great events of this period, the Vatican Council and the Franco-Prussian War which brought about German unification, affected church-state relations. However, ironically again, the proclamation of Papal Infallibility, which both Ketteler and Bismarck had opposed, caused less tension than German unification to which both men had aspired.

Had Bismarck and Ketteler, usually so accurate in their appraisal of political developments, failed to gauge correctly the consequences of these issues? Or were they less than sincere in their professed desire for co-operation? Rather than through deliberate ill-will, the conflict between the Prussian state and the Catholic Church seems to have developed because spokesmen for each side failed to realize how divergent secular aims had become

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[9]Windell, Catholics and German Unity, p. 163.

from religious goals.

Certainly in large part the tensions that ensued were the result of Bismarck's attitude toward Catholicism. The ultramontane element in the Church had always been the object of his anger. From Frankfurt he had written to Leopold Gerlach in 1854:

> It is not a Christian creed, but a hypocritical, idolatrous papism full of hate and cunning, which conducts an unrelenting struggle with the most infamous weapons against the Protestant governments, and especially against Prussia, the worldly bulwark of the evangelical faith.[10]

Though violent in tone, this expression of antagonism was an isolated one, and prior to 1866 Bismarck had shown little prejudice to Catholics generally. The Chancellor seems to have been favourably inclined to Ketteler personally, even though the Bishop himself was considered an Ultramontane. On January 10, 1866 August Reichensperger noted in his diary: "Bismarck was in favour of Ketteler as Archbishop of Cologne, but from all sides the opposition against him was so great that confessional peace was at stake."[11]

Bismarck's growing hostility to German Catholics can be attributed to his tendency to view all issues in terms of their political significance. His animosity did not become pronounced until he realized the strength of Catholic opposition to Prussia during and after the War of 1866. On December 8, 1866 he wrote Count Harry Arnim, his ambassador in Rome, that the 'Catholic faction' was the most antagonistic group among the Prussian

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[10]Otto Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany: 1815-1871, (Princeton, New Jersey, 1963), p. 368.

[11]Hogan, Ketteler's Interpretation, p. 146.

delegates, "surpassing in hostility the 'red democracy'."[12] Bismarck failed to realize that he, himself, had placed Prussian Catholics in a very awkward position as a consequence of his foreign policy; that by 1866 he had, in fact, virtually destroyed the Center Party. Bismarck's tendency to view all organized religions as potential political blocs led him to the conclusion that the opposition to Prussia must have been instigated by the Pope, who, as the leader of a kind of political party, should be held responsible for the conduct of its members. "If Rome either has not the will or the power to exercise a calming and moderating influence upon its adherents, and to make the cause of governments its own, what interests can governments have in making the cause of the Pope their own?" he demanded of his ambassador in the same letter.[13]

Pius IX could well have addressed the same rhetorical question to the Prussian Prime Minister, for Bismarck was certainly not willing to come to the aid of the Pope. Both before and after the 1867 French intervention in behalf of the Papacy, he observed strict neutrality, for he did not wish to offend either Italy or France. The desire for religious peace and a united German citizenry governed his actions. On October 21, 1867 he made clear to Usedom, his ambassador in Florence, that he would rather lose Italy as an ally than offend German Catholics and thereby lessen the chances for German unification. "The situation would alter to our disadvantage," he wrote, "as soon as the mass of devout Catholics should become convinced, rightly or wrongly, that Prussia was in

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[12] Windell, Catholics and German Unity, p. 194.

[13] Ibid.

open conflict with the supreme head of the Church . . ."[14] How clearly Bismarck envisaged the probability of war with France becomes clear from the text of the same letter. Though it would be disastrous, he asserted, to enter a war in which France was cast into the role of the defender of the Pope, an attack by France over a non-religious issue would greatly strengthen German national feeling.

During the course of the following year Bismarck's hostility to German Catholics increased because his efforts to overcome their anti-Prussian attitude proved to be of no avail. To Bismarck the most significant event of 1868 was the 'Zollparlament' election, which marked a decisive victory for the particularist interests. The Prussian Chancellor held the political action of Catholics directly responsible for his defeat, claiming that they had been willing to engage in "unnatural alliances" with democrats or worse, their only aim being the election of candidates unfriendly to Prussia. He vented his anger in a dispatch to Arnim, urging his ambassador to use it "to enlighten the Roman Curia on the state of things."[15] Once again his belief in a Catholic conspiracy aimed at humiliating Prussia was strengthened because the attacks made against Prussia in German Catholic newspapers had found an echo in Catholic news-organs in Belgium and France. Bismarck's letter to Count Arnim expressed hope for a "moderating influence" which he thought possible only through "a serious intervention of the Pope."

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[14] Ibid., p. 195.

[15] Ibid., p. 197.

He threatened that if

> the Church itself on its highest level has either not the will or the power to impress another character upon the attitude of the German clergy, we would be forced thereby to a position toward the Catholic Church which I, in the interest of both the state and the Church, and in the interest of the civil order as a whole, would most deeply regret.[16]

This approach of Bismarck's was in fact an appeal for Papal intervention in German affairs. However, his request was not heeded. As Arnim explained to his chief, the Pope was not a free agent but a prisoner of the ultramontane bishops who were opposed to Hohenzollern policy. Though in view of the preponderance of the Pope's ultramontane advisers, Arnim considered German unification without a break with the Papacy only a 'faint' possibility, he nevertheless recommended ignoring the Vatican in all political considerations.[17]

The 'Zollparlament' election has been called a milestone along the road to the Kulturkampf. Certainly Bismarck's reaction to it proved how violently he resented any force that stood in the way of his plans for German unification, and how carefully he weighed every issue in terms of its effect on unification. The success of the particularists in the 1868 election he regarded as a major set-back; it led him to the conclusion that "to attain with one blow a homogeneous structure for Germany is only possible in the event of war. Aside from this eventuality, which we shall neither predict nor precipitate, the development will have to run

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[16] Ibid., p. 199.

[17] Ibid., pp. 200-201.

through one or more transitional stages."[18]

Whether this assessment made Bismarck look more favourably to war as a means of achieving unification is difficult to assess. The events of the next years do, however, offer further evidence that the Chancellor was obsessed with the realization of his plan and impatient at outside disturbances. Of these the preparations for the Vatican Council must be numbered in first place.

The proposed agenda of the Council caused agitation in political as well as religious circles because, as Acton wrote, "the purpose of the Council being so largely political, the governments could not remain indifferent to its actions."[19]

Bismarck's reaction to it, however, was one of almost total indifference, based on his belief that the theological doctrines under dispute did not interfere with his immediate plans. He had been made aware of the proposed developments early through Prince Hohenlohe, the Bavarian Prime Minister. The latter, who was kept informed by his brother, an influential Cardinal, was alarmed at the Council's agenda and determined to persuade secular authorities to protest. Prince Hohenlohe's first official move was a circular despatched on April 9, 1869 to Bavarian representatives in European capitals. He wished governments to inform "the Council itself of the perilous consequences to which such a deliberate and fundamental disturbance of the relations of Church and State must inevitably lead."[20] Bismarck remained unmoved by

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[18]Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, p. 399.

[19]J. Acton, Essays on Freedom and Power, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1948), p. 310.

[20]Windell, Catholics and German Unity, p. 208.

the request, and ignored equally Usedom's requests for direction and Arnim's insistence on Prussian action. To the latter he replied that "to make protests is always a thankless task, and can have meaning only when it lies within the power of the one protesting to prevent what he is protesting against."[21]

Bismarck was in all probability correct in his estimate that protests would be to no avail, for the political conditions of Europe generally tended to favour the Papal cause. Though the ultramontanes had regarded Hohenlohe as a strong opponent, his proposal for a Conference of the European nations and possible civil intervention met with no success. For various reasons none of the major powers wished to become involved. The Austrian Foreign Minister Beust, knowing of Hohenlohe's sympathy for a Bavarian alliance with Prussia, suspected him of acting under Bismarck's influence.[22] Gladstone, though he was known to be opposed to promulgation of the dogma, did not give in to Acton's urgent demands for civil intervention.[23] Similarly, Napoleon was in sympathy with the French bishops who opposed Infallibility, but knew that Pius IX enjoyed great popularity among the French.[24] Bismarck, though he did not turn down Hohenlohe's request for a joint warning, insisted that such action be initiated by predominantly Catholic countries. After Hohenlohe himself lost all support in the Bavarian Upper House and was forced

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[21] Ibid., p. 211.

[22] Acton, Essays on Freedom and Power, p. 310.

[23] Hugh A. McDougall, The Acton-Newman Relations, (New York: Fordham University Press, 1962), p. 116.

[24] Hales, Pio Nono, p. 253.

to resign early in 1870, all possibility of concerted action from secular authorities came to an end.

Though not faced with official opposition, the Council was nevertheless aware that its aims met with the disapproval of political leaders. In an atmosphere characterized by mutual distrust, the Council's relations with the Prussian government were more fortunate than with those of any other power. The personality of Count Arnim, a Protestant conservative known to be sincerely interested in the welfare of religion, did much to increase Prussia's prestige.[25] Bismarck, too, made his attitude as conciliatory as possible. Though on April 7, 1870 he finally joined the other nations in protest of the Council's proposals, his note represented a warning, not a condemnation. "We have no interest in weakening the authority of the Sovereign Pontiff," he assured the Council. "But

> to attempt to proclaim these principles today from the height of the pontifical throne . . . would be, we fear, to cause disturbance to the entire range of relations of the Church with the State. . .[26]

The Prussian Chancellor never denied that the proposed dogma was of far-reaching political implications. Yet his thoroughly political orientation always suggested to him secular means of confronting possible dangers coming from the Church. "We have the wisdom to overcome any crisis resulting from the Council's action in the field of legislation, supported by the power of public opinion and by enlightened political consciousness," he

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[25]Acton, Essays on Freedom and Power, p. 313.

[26]Windell, Catholics and German Unity, p. 224.

wrote Arnim.[27] The Chancellor's last communication to his minister at Rome, the day after the outbreak of war, was one more curt reminder to "keep away from any . . . demonstration. Infallibility is at the moment without interest for us."[28]

In contrast to Bismarck's nonchalant attitude was Ketteler's deep involvement with the issues of the Council. In 1868 the Bishop had written a brochure entitled The True Bases of Religious Freedom. In it he had expressed his belief in the infallibility of the Church, but also his conviction that every individual Christian was prone to error.[29] Though this pamphlet seemed to indicate that Ketteler was opposed to the dogma in principle, he stressed only the inadvisability of the doctrine's pronouncement. At his direction the Fulda Conference of German Bishops, held September 1-6 1869, drafted a resolution which condemned the definition of the dogma as 'unpropitious.' Thereafter the Bishop of Mainz became recognized as one of the leaders of the 'inopportunists,' and remained in close touch with Darboy, the Archbishop of Paris, Dupanloup, and other of the 'Minority' bishops.

Ketteler's entire approach to the Council's proposals was complicated by two conflicting strains in his personality: his great desire for church unity, and his strongly-developed sense of the authority and responsibility that accompanied the Bishop's office. Ketteler's biographer claims that one cannot understand the Bishop without realizing how seriously he took

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[27] Ibid., p. 221.

[28] Ibid., p. 229.

[29] Ibid., p. 207.

the responsibilities of his office.[30] As Ketteler frequently pointed out, the Bishops had received from Christ the "mission to govern the Church."[31] Thus he believed that the opinion of the bishops should be respected in matters of church policy. At the same time the thought of disunity within the Church was abhorrent to him. In theological matters he had always condemned unorthodox stirrings; for that reason he had insisted on seminary rather than university training for the clergy of his diocese.

As soon as Ketteler arrived in Rome he was placed under great mental stress. On the one hand he resented the high-handed methods of the Ultramontane 'Majority' bishops who forced a change in the agenda in order that the dogma of infallibility could be placed ahead of other matters. Significantly, Ketteler's most important speech, on May 23rd, was given in protest against this move which he considered the assertion of absolutism over the constitutional powers of the Council.[32] He resented no less, however, the highly biased accounts that Ignaz von Doellinger, the arch-opponent of Infallibility, was giving of his activities. Doellinger's articles gained wide publicity through their publication in the Allgemeine Zeitung. On several occasions the Bishop protested in the Mainzer Journal against the misrepresentation of facts. His article of February 19, 1870 calling Doellinger's series "a system of errors" earned him a

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[30] Vigener, Ketteler, p. 566.

[31] Ibid., (Letter written December 4, 1865.)

[32] Ibid., p. 587.

special commendation from the Pope.[33] Further incidents, such as the Pope's query to Ketteler, "Amas me?"[34] and Ketteler's final meeting with Pius in which he prostrated himself before the Pope attest to the severity of Ketteler's inner struggle. He could well have asked, as Newman did in his letter to Bishop Ullathorne, "What have we done to be treated as the faithful were never treated before? . . . Why should an aggressive, insolent faction be allowed to 'make the heart of the just to mourn, whom the Lord hath not made sorrowful'?"[35] To escape the final dilemma, Ketteler, like many of the 'inopportunists', left Rome the day before the final vote on Infallibility was taken. As he wrote Pius IX, he did not wish to be placed in a position "abhorrent to my soul" of publicly going against the wishes of the Pope.[36]

Once the doctrine of Infallibility had been proclaimed, Ketteler worked diligently for its acceptance and for restoration of Church unity. Yet he always gave the dogma the mildest interpretation and complained of "unjustified, extreme factions" which pushed themselves into the limelight. "If this were called 'ultramontane', and if everyone could agree to such an interpretation of the term, I would not condemn attacks against such manifestations of ultramontanism," he wrote in December of 1870.[37] In his desire to play down the political as well as the theological implications of the doctrine, Ketteler published a pamphlet on "The Infallibility

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[33]Windell, Catholics and German Unity, p. 220.

[34]Ibid., p. 219.

[35]McDougall, Acton-Newman Relations, p. 118.

[36]Ketteler, Briefe, p. 421. Letter written July 17, 1870.

[37]Vigener, Ketteler, p. 608. Letter written December 2, 1870.

of the Pope after the Decision of the Vatican Council", and maintained that "the present world situation and the sentiments of all Catholic nations provide a complete guarantee against all religious encroachments into the field of politics."[38] It is doubtful that the Bishop himself seriously believed this assertion in view of the Pope's emphatic support of Catholic France during the Franco-Prussian War.

If Ketteler had hoped that Bismarck's conduct before and during the Vatican Council augured well for future church-state relations, he was soon disappointed. When the Bishop returned to Germany, war had already broken out and the events in Rome were overshadowed by the overwhelming patriotic response that followed the French declaration of war.

As Pflanze has pointed out, this war was in the real sense one of peoples rather than of governments, and Gramont, the French ambassador, was soon to learn how mistaken he had been in his estimate that the Hohenzollern candidature was a fortunate issue for the outbreak of war since it did not involve German national sentiment.[39] Bismarck, as was to be expected, capitalized on the upsurge of nationalism, and in his diplomatic circulars of July 18-19 he spoke in emotional tones of French action forcing "us to take up the struggle for the sake of the national honor and freedom of Germany."[40]

There existed in South Germany, of course, particularist

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[38] Ibid., p. 688.

[39] Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany, pp. 468-9.

[40] Ibid., p. 470.

elements who opposed the war and who, like Dalwigk, tried to evade the responsibilities of their military alliance with Prussia. "We are completely in the talons of the eagle," Dalwigk wrote when his efforts failed.[41] His sentiments were not those of the majority, however. Even among South-German Catholics there were many who like Ketteler welcomed the opportunity of putting down the French political and social system.

The issues of the war soon took second place, though, to considerations of German unification. Once the Prussian military successes had assured victory, the proposed structure of the new Reich became of paramount importance, especially to minority groups which were fearful of a new constitution that might endanger their privileges.

Ketteler was quick to realize the issues at stake, and on October 1, 1870 addressed a long, carefully-worded letter to Bismarck at the Chancellor's headquarters in Versailles. Ketteler's main request was for a definition of Church privileges in the new constitution, as it was contained in that of Prussia. Religious freedom, he asserted, was a means of ensuring German unity for the future, and peaceful relations between church and state. Repeatedly, he pointed out

> the events of the present have been pictured as a victory of Protestantism over Catholicism. Though this is a misrepresentation . . . we Catholics, in spite of all our joy at the military victories of Germany, cannot escape the fear that perhaps at some future date . . . this entire upheaval will have been to the disadvantage of Catholics.[42]

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[41] Ibid., p. 471.

[42] Ketteler, Schriften, Vol. I, p. 409.

A guarantee of religious freedom, Ketteler reasoned, would achieve several objectives.

First of all, the acquisition of new territories, especially Alsace and Lorraine, demanded peace on the domestic scene. Admittedly considerable time would elapse until these provinces became 'entirely German', and undoubtedly France would do everything in her power to prevent their complete integration with Germany. But France's efforts would prove fruitless if "the population is given complete assurance that union with Germany will not mark the beginning of an epoch of religious prejudice, of attempts at gradual protestantizing."[43]

Secondly, the Bishop emphasized the promises made by the King and his advisers: that the new German nation, under Prussia's direction, would be a state based on the principles of religion, morality, and devotion of duty. A German citizenry that was still largely God-fearing had the right to insist that these promises be honoured.[44]

Finally, as in Deutschland nach dem Kriege, Ketteler warned Bismarck of the domestic quarrels which would no doubt arise once the issues of war had been resolved. "No one knows better than Your Excellency how dangerous these can be to the monarchic principles. Though this overwhelming success may postpone them for a few years, they will erupt again," the Bishop prophesied.[45]

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[43] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 410.

[44] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 411.

[45] Ibid.

Ketteler's points were well taken, for the Chancellor was aware of the dangers mentioned in the letter. Bismarck had had fears himself about the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine. " . . . we have achieved more than my personal political calculations consider necessary," he wrote his wife regarding the signing of the Peace Treaty.[46] The Chancellor was equally aware of the dangers of religious discord. Between 1868 and 1870 the tension between Liberal and Catholic elements in the Prussian House had steadily increased. The Liberals, long opposed to confessional elementary schools, had pressed for the secularization of all education. Bismarck had postponed decision on this matter--just as he had ignored specific Catholic requests--because he could not afford to offend either faction. The realization that these delaying tactics could not be continued indefinitely had no doubt contributed to his desire for the speedy realization of unification.

Ketteler's request, coming at a time when the negotiations between Prussia and the South German governments had reached the final and most critical stage, irritated Bismarck. His irritation soon increased with the visit of Count Ledochowski, the Archbishop of Posen, who came as emissary from the Vatican. Ledochowski's requests--for a formal Prussian protest against the Italian take-over of Rome, and for possible asylum for Pius IX in Germany--as well as Ketteler's letter seemed to the Chancellor strong examples of clerical interference in the field of politics. Ketteler received no answer to his letter, and Ledochowski only a

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[46]Bismarck, Briefe, p. 371.

noncommittal one to his requests. Once unification had been achieved, Bismarck became progressively less careful in his treatment of Catholics, and all the animosity that had smoldered under the surface soon broke into open conflict.

CHAPTER IV

Though between 1866 and 1870 Bismarck's relationship with political Catholicism had been marked by a number of unhappy incidents, these alone do not explain the bitter attacks and repressive legislation which the Chancellor employed against the Church during the 1870's. In the light of later developments Bismarck's Kulturkampf policy can be seen as both mistaken and ineffective. However, the political climate of that time furnishes an explanation for its implementation.

In 1871 a critical point in German history had been reached. The Empire had become a reality, but it still had a very precarious structure. One of the main factors threatening national unity in these early stages was the strength of particularist sentiment, the existence of which was by no means confined to South Germany. Partly to allay particularist fears--and partly to avoid any threat to Prussian pre-eminence--Bismarck therefore pursued a policy of decentralization.

In this respect Catholic wishes should have coincided with Bismarckian policy, for decentralization was one of the fundamental and constant demands of political Catholicism throughout the nineteenth century. In this instance, however, Catholic desires were in conflict, for their aims included constitutional guarantees of church rights as well as decentralization in government. Bismarck, by his decision to leave each state in

control of Church policy, had frustrated one of their basic demands. Since this issue of church autonomy, as gauranteed in the Prussian Constitution, was so vital to Catholic interests, it became a central point in the platform of the Center party after its official inception in December of 1870. It was debated with great passion in the first national Parliament and aroused much ill-feeling.

Bismarck resented the opposition of the Center Party keenly. Concerted political action for Church reasons always suggested to him the dangers of "a state within a state." Moreover, nothing in his experience as Prussian Minister-President had prepared him for the force of the attack, for the Center's behavior stood in sharp contrast to the Protestant concept of church-state relations to which he had until now been primarily exposed. Johann Wichern, who because of his great social contributions has often been called Ketteler's Protestant counterpart, expressed clearly the Protestant ethic when he wrote: "In relation to the state the Inner Mission knows how to differentiate its task from that of politics . . . and participates in politics only in so far as it relates to the word of God: 'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for there is no power but of God'."[1]

There is little doubt, then, that the Center's spirited opposition in Parliament aroused Bismarck's genuine annoyance. Other factors, quite independent of Center activity, however, persuaded him to launch the Kulturkampf.

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[1]Johann Wichern, Die Innere Mission, (Hamburg: Agentur des Rauhen Hauses, 1889), p. 9.

Since Pius IX's publication of his 1864 Encyclical, and especially since the definition of Papal Infallibility, secular and liberal opinion had come out strongly against the Catholic Church. These issues aroused intense excitement at the time, and Bismarck knew that in taking a strong stand against Rome he could count on the support of secular governments, especially those of Protestant countries. Though Gladstone's official attack on Infallibility--in his pamphlet "The Vatican Decrees in their Bearing on Civil Allegiance"--did not appear until 1874, it had been known since 1870 that he considered adherence to this doctrine incompatible with the civic duties of Catholics.[2] Especially during the first stages of the Kulturkampf, British public and official sympathy rested with the Prussian state. In an article of May 18, 1872 the Saturday Review referred to the policy of the Prussian Chancellor as one "of perfect fairness towards Catholicism while retaining . . . mastery over the dangerous elements that it contains."[3] Bismarck delighted in this evidence of support, as his letter to Lord Odo Russell, then British Ambassador to Berlin, reveals. In 1875 the Chancellor wrote:

> I am gratified by the active interest the Nestor of European statesmen is taking in our defensive warfare against the priesthood of Rome. I quite agree

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[2]McDougall, Acton-Newman Relations, p. 116.

[3]Kurt Meine, England und Deutschland in der Zeit des Ueber-Ganges vom Manchestertums zum Imperialismus, 1871-1876, (Berlin: 1937), p. 119.

> with the idea which seems to underlie his [Earl John Russell's, previously Secretary of Foreign Affairs] letter: that in clerical government there is always a need of international conflicts, and that a great deal less of that seed will be thrown out, if England and Germany are agreed to stand up for religious liberty.[4]

Within Germany the decisions of the Vatican Council had handed Bismarck an additional weapon which he used in his 'defensive warfare against the priesthood of Rome'. The declaration of Infallibility had split German Catholicism. While the great majority of Catholics supported the Papal doctrine, a section, under the influential leadership of Doellinger, refused to accept the dogma. Though these irreconcilables, which were known as the 'Old Catholics', never became a significant church body, Bismarck was anxious to grant them official status since they displayed 'national' characteristics and had resisted ultramontane domination. The Chancellor soon came to realize that the practical problems of dealing with two irreconcilable factions of Catholics provided him with a convenient excuse for cancelling some of their previously held privileges as, for instance, the maintenance of a separate Catholic section in the Ministry of Public Worship.

Finally, Bismarck's conviction that he needed a cause to which the great mass of German citizens could rally and which would strengthen national feeling contributed to his decision to launch his attack on the Center Party. Many historians have felt that this was indeed the Chancellor's prime

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[4]Bismarck, Briefe, p. 385.

motive, for ever since he had become Prussian Prime Minister in 1862 he had tried to find scapegoats on whom to blame external and internal difficulties. Since by 1871 foreign enemies had been eliminated and some of the domestic problems, of which Ketteler had warned the previous year, had materialized, Bismarck proceeded to label the members of the Center 'Reichsfeinde', the enemies of the Reich. Though Bismarck's motives are still the subject of much controversy, all these factors lead to one inescapable conclusion: to Bismarck the Kulturkampf was a political struggle, waged against the Center Party, not against the Catholic religion. He never intended to destroy the Catholic Church in Germany, but he did intend to force the Center Party into submission and, if that proved impossible, to destroy it.

As with all his political struggles, Bismarck waged this one to enhance the power of the state. As soon as the conflict no longer furthered this objective, he was anxious to terminate it. As in the eighteen fifties and early sixties he had viewed with favour the clergy of the Rhineland simply because they had provided one of the main bulwarks against bourgeois liberalism,[5] so now he threw his support to the National Liberal Party because its principles coincided with his interests. This shifting of alliances could not embarrass Bismarck seriously in the political framework of the German Reich for the state and its ministers stood above parliamentary parties.[6]

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[5]Windell, Catholics and German Unity, p. 193.

[6]Georg Franz, "Defensive Victory for the Church", in A Free Church in a Free State?, p. 79.

One other related factor is of great significance in an examination of the tactics employed by church and state in the Kulturkampf. Neither Bismarck nor the majority of the Catholic leaders had wished or anticipated that the conflict would assume major proportions. Bismarck did not favour the secularization of society and did not fight for the sake of principle, as the Liberals did. Neither did the Catholic Church wish liberalism to triumph over the conservative monarchic state-structure of Bismarck. Both opponents recognized the necessity of co-existence, and hence the compromise peace that was eventually effected was the only suitable conclusion to the long struggle. It is in the light of these circumstances that the developments of the Kulturkampf have to be studied.

Even before the first Reichstag assembled, the elements of discord were present. The Liberals expected the Center candidates to fight for the inclusion of Church guarantees into the Imperial Constitution, and planned their election strategy accordingly. In the face of Liberal attacks, many clericals entered the political arena.

Ketteler was one of these. In fact, throughout 1871 he devoted his energies almost exclusively to politics. Convinced that not only Catholicism but all religions were threatened by secular dominance, he issued an appeal before the general election to all men of religious beliefs, urging that " . . . the difference which separates us Catholics from you Protestants must be forgotten. We must all stand together against the unbelief which

threatens all justice and morality . . ."[7] Convinced also that a guarantee of church rights could only be gained in the political arena, he accepted a mandate to the Reichstag. Of the five constituencies in which he was offered a seat, he chose to run and was elected in the one of Tauberbishofsheim, for Catholics the most doubtful one.[8]

In spite of Ketteler's prestige among the leaders of the Center, his parliamentary experience proved most unhappy. Though the Bishop had felt that only through participation in the Reichstag could Catholics obtain satisfaction, he soon became thoroughly disillusioned with the tactics of politicians. As in 1848 he limited his participation in debate to a major address on the basic issue of church guarantees. His approach was that of the theologian; he refused to debate its political implications. To Heinrich von Treitschke's scathing argument that his demand was an attempt to make the Church independent of state laws--since imperial laws superseded state laws--the Bishop replied:

> Deputy von Treitschke has asked you not to vote for laws which could turn bishops into rebels against state laws. I will tell you how to avoid that danger; never vote for laws which are rebels against God's laws, and we shall never rebel against state laws.[9]

Ketteler's greatest disappointment, however, was his realization that even to members of the Center this fundamental issue was

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[7]Hogan, Ketteler's Interpretation, p. 188.

[8]Ketteler, Schriften, Vol. I, p. 32.

[9]Andreas Dorpalen, Heinrich von Treitschke, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), p. 188.

determined by political rather than moral considerations; Windthorst, the Center's leader, voted against the Center's motion for particularist reasons.

Before the end of the session the Bishop departed from Berlin, the nation's capital "where children vilify the Catholic priest on the street when he shows himself in clerical garb."[10] As Count Chlodwig Hohenlohe reported in a letter to a friend: "In the Center Party Ketteler and Windthorst have fallen out. The former has departed. It is said that Ketteler has accused Windthorst of misusing the Church issue for political purposes."[11]

Ketteler's conclusion, that political rather than religious considerations would decide the position of the church, was reinforced by his interviews with Bismarck. This series of meetings left a lasting impression with both participants; Bismarck referred to them at length in his memoirs, Ketteler in his unpublished notes and letters. The Chancellor's reaction to the Bishop's "representation . . . amounting to a demand" was one of annoyance; the reason for his refusal of Ketteler's request that: "So far as I was concerned, the course of our policy was not determined by religious considerations, but purely by the desire to establish as firmly as possible the unity won on the battlefield."[12] Not until their final meeting of November 16, 1871 did Ketteler realize the extent to which Bismarck felt insecure

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[10]Ketteler, Briefe, p. 448.

[11]Vigener, Ketteler, p. 641.

[12]Bismarck, Reflections, Vol. II, p. 137.

politically. In his unpublished notes the Bishop wrote in regard to this last interview:

> I found the Reichschancellor thoroughly convinced that his work was threatened by Rome and that from Rome an organized plan was being made against the German Reich, and that the first point of attack in this struggle would be the Prussian Polish lands. I was astounded then to discover this obsession in the head of such an influential and energetic man. Every attempt to dissuade him from this error was fruitless. He explained that it was his chief goal to overcome the dangers which threatened his creature and that he would use every means at his disposal to this end.[13]

Thus, though it seemed incomprehensible to Ketteler, by Bismarck's own admission anti-church legislation was initiated entirely for political purposes. "The beginning of the Kulturkampf was decided for me preponderantly by its Polish side," the Chancellor noted in his Reflections.[14] The "Polish side" of the Kulturkampf Bismarck considered Catholic attempts at Polonising Upper Silesia. And since "such things could only happen in Silesia by reason of the official authority of the Catholic Section [of the Ministry of Public Worship],"[15] primarily through clerical control of schools, Bismarck removed that danger by abolishing the Section on July 8, 1871, and thereby formally initiated the Kulturkampf.

With this move the Chancellor was acting once more in accordance with his theory that political inconvenience caused by religious groups could best be overcome "in the field of

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[13]Hogan, Ketteler's Interpretation, p. 180.

[14]Bismarck, Reflections, Vol. II, p. 139.

[15]Bismarck, Reflections, Vol. II, p. 140.

legislation, supported by the power of public opinion and by enlightened political consciousness."[16] The previous month he had appealed to the Papal advisers in Rome to curb the Center's opposition; since his request had not been heeded, he had concluded that "in our country the Jesuit 'Centrum' was at the moment stronger than the Pope, or, at least, independent of him,"[17] and had turned to 'the field of legislation.'

This initial piece of legislation was followed by a host of other repressive measures. Though these were officially the responsibility of the new Minister of Religious Affairs, Adalbert Falk, and though Bismarck in his memoirs disclaimed all responsibility for their implementation, they clearly met with his approval.

'The power of public opinion and enlightened political consciousness' was also mobilized in Bismarck's warfare against the Church. Increasingly violent anti-Catholic newspaper articles, many of them inspired by the Chancellor, appeared in the Liberal and Protestant Press. In Parliament, as well, Bismarck's attacks on the Center became progressively sharper. In a speech given in the House of Lords on March 10, 1873 he accused Ketteler of aiming for

> the establishment of two confessional states, which would confront each other in a dualistic struggle, since one has as its highest authority a foreign church prince who, through the latest changes in the constitution of the Catholic Church, has become more powerful than ever before.[18]

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[16]See Above, Chapter III, Footnote 25.

[17]Bismarck, Reflections, Vol. II, p. 136.

[18]Ketteler, Briefe, p. 470.

Bismarck's conviction that Catholics also regarded the Kulturkampf as a political power struggle was enhanced by several factors: the equally fanatical and unanimous opposition to Prussia by the international Catholic Press, and the Pope's encyclical of 1875, which declared null and void all Prussian laws that 'contradict the divine institution of the church', and seemed to exempt Catholics from obedience to the state.[19]

When in 1878 Bismarck made the first moves to rescind the more controversial of the anti-church laws, it was precisely because he had seen that they had failed both as pieces of legislation and in their effect on public opinion. By 1878, as Bismarck noted, the "parliamentary policy of the government had been crippled by the defection of the Progressive party[20] and its transition to the Centrum."[21] In its appeal to public opinion official legislation had also failed, for "it was only by seeing them [the Laws] in practice that I became convinced that the legal details had not been properly conceived for the effect they were wanted to produce."[22]

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[19]Pinson, Modern Germany, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1966), p. 188.

[20]The Progressives had for a time been the strongest advocates of the Kulturkampf. One of their members, the physician Virchow, had coined the term 'Kulturkampf' in a speech given in the Prussian Diet on January 17, 1873. It was meant to indicate the struggle of modern liberal and scientific culture against the ignorance of medieval darkness to which Catholic doctrine still adhered.

[21]Bismarck, Reflections, Vol. II, p. 145.

[22]Ibid., p. 142.

For these reasons, Bismarck maintained, it became "more politic to pave the way for peace provided the schools remained protected, the Constitution freed from the abolished articles, and the State rid of the Catholic Section."[23]

Increasingly, Ketteler also came to realize that the Kulturkampf was a political, not a moral struggle. His gradual withdrawal from active participation in Center affairs was primarily due to personal factors; it did not indicate his loss of faith in the Center's role. On the contrary, his parliamentary experience had convinced him of the need for a thoroughly political program, the main points of which he indicated in his pamphlet Die Centrumsfraktion auf dem ersten deutschen Reichstag, written in 1871. In advocating a broad political party based on mass support, Ketteler was motivated by his desire to see religious interests defended, and social needs met. To these ends he sought co-operation between the major confessions, maintaining that

> the Center Party could be of great importance for Germany's future if on matters of principle these men, Catholic as well as Protestant, unite who recognize in the separation of the German Reich from the foundation of Christianity the germ of decay . . .[24]

In his proposals Ketteler was ahead of his time; only gradually did the Center come to incorporate many of his suggestions.

A more comprehensive statement of his hope for the new German Reich was contained in Ketteler's Die Katholiken im Deutschen Reiche, written in 1871 but not published until 1873

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[23] Ibid., p. 148.

[24] Hogan, Ketteler's Interpretation, p. 189.

since only then did the Bishop consider the time opportune. With this predominantly political treatise Ketteler hoped to convince his opponents of his absolute sincerity and vital interest in national issues. Why else, he reasoned, "would a Bishop, in this time of Church oppression, publish a treatise dealing with political issues and not exclusively with the rights of the Church."[25]

Ketteler's work, which has been called a supplement to Deutschland nach dem Kriege von 1866, pointed out weaknesses within the new Reich and suggested ways of improving the new structure so that practicing Christians would feel at home within its boundaries. In spite of Center opposition to any further centralization now that church guarantees had been excluded from the Constitution, Ketteler's work was noteworthy for its strong national stand. Though he regarded "nothing more German than the consciously or subconsciously expressed particularist feelings," he made clear that "unjustified particularism is everything which opposes a vital and energetic existence of the Reich."[26]

Ketteler's enthusiasm for the German Reich had lessened, however, because of its apparent inability to correct the dislocation of society, and its tendency to destroy jealously all organizations that might compete with the state for the affection of its citizens. "If we compare the many corporate organs in

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[25]Ketteler, Schriften, Vol. I, p. 42.

[26]Ketteler, Schriften, Vol. II, p. 149.

which the community life of a people in earlier days was ordered," Ketteler observed,

> with a great building of many sections and rooms in which everything had its appointed place, then one could say that . . . we have, in a certain sense, become homeless in our social life. . . . Now the state covers the people as a roof; under its protection all are to be brought within a single room. In a word, though the destruction of the old social order which everywhere was tied in with the political order, the people have been disorganized and today a political union alone confronts this disorganized mass.[27]

More strongly than ever before the Bishop advocated the return to a corporate society and the careful nurturing of earlier social organisms, the "precious building stones for the future structure of society."[28] Since the church, at present, was the only one of the 'earlier social organisms' still flourishing, it especially deserved the protection of the state.

Like Deutschland nach dem Kriege, Ketteler's latest treatise aroused much opposition. Because of his desire to see the working class organize itself into independent corporations, the Nationalzeitung labelled the Bishop "a more evil and dangerous demagogue than Lassalle."[29] Bismarck's open attack on Ketteler--in his speech of May 10, 1873 previously referred to--also centered largely on this work, whose goal, Bismarck asserted, was to create:

> instead of the previously existing unitarian Prussian state, instead of the realization of a German Reich, two parallel state organisms: one seeking its leadership in the Center Party, the other willing to adhere

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[27]Hogan, Ketteler's Interpretation, p. 202.

[28]Ketteler, Schriften, Vol. II, p. 175.

[29]Hogan, Ketteler's Interpretation, p. 199.

to current secular principles and the sovereignty of His Majesty, the Emperor.[30]

Bismarck's attacks on Ketteler met with spirited opposition from the Bishop. He answered the Chancellor's accusations in a letter to the editor of the Germania--a paper which to Bismarck represented "Democratic Jesuitism."[31] In his letter Ketteler brusquely described as "untrue and arbitrary" Bismarck's assessment of his plans for the church since he "had never asked for greater church rights than those specified by the 1848 Frankfurt Assembly and the Prussian Constitution."[32] Similarly, the Chancellor's charges that he was working exclusively "in the interests of Vatican politics" Ketteler rejected categorically. The Chancellor's comment merely revealed "how completely ignorant he is of the true situation within the Catholic Church. All my activities have nothing to do with 'Vatican politics', and never has a similar suggestion [to work in the interests of the Vatican] come to me from Rome."[33]

Though at this stage of the Kulturkampf Bismarck and Ketteler were bitter enemies, in both of them the diplomatic instinct was too strong to sustain an irreconcilable attitude. Ketteler personally became progressively less interested in the purely political and parliamentary aspects of the conflict.

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[30]Ketteler, Briefe, p. 470.

[31]Bismarck, Reflections, Vol. II, p. 154.

[32]Ketteler, Briefe, p. 471.

[33]Ketteler, Briefe, p. 473.

Though in 1874 he wrote two pamphlets[34] in which he attacked Bismarck directly, he never allowed these to be published. In one of them the Bishop accused Bismarck of trying "to restore in its full integrity the old monarchical, absolutist, and militaristic Prussianism," at the point of sacrificing all freedom, and especially the rights of the Catholic Church.[35] Tempering this sharp attack, however, was Ketteler's overall review of Bismarckian politics which revealed his insight into the complexities of the political situation, and his awareness that it was this complexity, in part, which had forced the Chancellor to embark on his aggressive anti-church program.

Throughout the duration of the Kulturkampf Ketteler continued to publish; he dealt with the anti-church legislation in ten major pamphlets. Though all of these reflect his tendency to exaggerate and generalize, they also show his innate respect for state laws, and his desire to solve the church-state impasse by legal means.[36]

Generally Ketteler's sharpest rebukes were directed against those laws which seemed to attack fundamental principles of the Church, not those that deprived her of administrative rights. Among the former Ketteler regarded the expulsion of the Jesuit order--an issue of personal interest to him since he had been in-

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[34]These were: Die wahre Bedeutung des Kulturkampfes, and Wie ist Bismarck ein Feind der Kirche Geworden?

[35]Vigener, Ketteler, p. 708.

[36]Most of the anti-church legislation consisted of Prussian state laws, not national laws. Ketteler felt justified in objecting publicly to these also since three villages in his diocese had become Prussian in 1866.

strumental in bringing the Jesuits to Mainz--and the requirement for state-controlled education of theological candidates. To the Hessian government he complained of the latter edict, claiming that it deprived him of "the most sacred of his official duties." He argued that he could never entrust his theologians to University faculties since they were now frequently run by Old Catholics and men of unchristian sentiments.[37]

Even though Ketteler gradually loosened his ties with the Center and avoided the political limelight, he remained one of the leading figures in the Kulturkampf until his death in 1877. During the last years of his life his work became more exclusively that of a church leader, working primarily for church unity in the face of political discrimination. In general Ketteler's position can be characterized as unyielding in matters of basic Church principles, but most anxious for compromise with the state in all other areas of the Kulturkampf. He strongly opposed, for instance, the unduly aggressive clerical press, and chided the founders of the Genfer Correspondenz, one of the more militant Catholic organs, for "a certain boasting with the power of the Pope, as if he were in a position to destroy all his enemies at a blow . . ."[38] He also accused the same paper of "having contributed substantially to the prevalent and damaging notion within Germany that there exists a Catholic coalition, directed by Rome, and motivated by the most hostile views and intentions

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[37]Vigener, Ketteler, p. 697.

[38]Vigener, Ketteler, p. 662.

towards the German Reich . . ."[39]

Ketteler rejected as well Pius IX's undiplomatic approach to the Kulturkampf, evidenced by the Pope's encyclical of 1875. The Bishop's earlier ultramontane tendencies had in fact become less pronounced from the time of the Vatican Council. In a personal letter of 1871 he allowed himself the observation that he was still hoping "for a time in which God will send the world a Pope who knows how to unfold all the divine strength now latent within the Church."[40]

Ketteler did not live to see the reconciliation between church and state. Yet in 1875, upon request, he had outlined a program which could, without formally revoking the existing anti-church laws, make possible the re-establishment of peace. In his program he indicated his willingness to grant the state the right to participate in the appointments of clerics; not so much because the state innately held this right, but because the Church might transfer such administrative functions. Similarly, in the recognition of religious orders he felt that church and state could arrive at a compromise arrangement. Only in the fundamental issue of religious education of children, and the training of theologians Ketteler would not relinquish Church control. Significantly enough, and consistent with his patriotic emphasis, one of his demands was that the state "never again doubt our proven and untarnished loyalty and patriotism by accusations of subversive

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[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid., p. 666.

behavior."[41]

Only a year after Ketteler's death Bismarck made his first overtures to the church, and the eventual settlement between church and state coincided closely with the compromises that Ketteler had suggested. The comparative ease with which peace was re-established in the 1880's indicated to what extent the issues of the Kulturkampf had been artificially manufactured.

In 1878, when Bismarck had become convinced that it was 'more politic to pave the way for peace', the political situation, both within Germany and abroad, was substantially different than it had been in 1871. By 1878 the Chancellor could feel justifiably sure that no threat of an international Catholic coalition, such as he had feared in 1871, remained. During the decade of the seventies France had become an anti-clerical republic and Austria had become tied to Germany by a firm alliance.[42] On the domestic scene the Reich had weathered the threats of particularism. Yet the Chancellor's problems had not disappeared or diminished; they had merely changed with the times. Though in terms of legislative enactments Bismarck could still regard himself as "having gained considerably by the Kulturkampf, considering the state in which things were before the outbreak of the conflict,"[43] this cautious comment on his struggle with the Church reveals that he recognized the

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[41]Ketteler, Briefe, p. 513. Letter to Baron von L. September 23, 1875.

[42]Golo Mann, The History of Germany Since 1789, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1968), p. 224.

[43]Bismarck, Reflections, Vol. II, p. 145.

misguidedness of his venture. Perhaps he was justified in claiming a political success in the legislative field, but he had not been able to force the Center Party into submission. On the contrary, the Party had steadily grown until during the 1880's it became the second largest in the Reichstag, able to cast the decisive votes on all major legislation. Even more important, political Catholicism had been immeasurably strengthened by the struggle it had undergone. It now confronted the state with a new confidence and demanded from it legislative enactments of far greater impact than those Bismarck had earlier wrested from the Church.

CONCLUSION

In its examination of the events leading up to the Kulturkampf and the Kulturkampf itself, this study has emphasized the role of Bismarck and Ketteler. There is no doubt that the philosophy of these two men influenced the course of the church-state confrontation. Bismarck waged his campaign in accordance with his theory that "the national idea is stronger than the Christian idea . . ."[1] He sincerely believed that the only way to win mass support was by appeals to nationalism. Yet the reason why the Kulturkampf was one of the few conflicts in which the Chancellor failed to win a clear-cut victory was that he was opposed by men who were able politicians, and who were at the same time defending the supranational ideals of the Catholic Church, to which they successfully rallied the Catholic masses.

Ketteler's contribution in marshalling the religious and political force of German Catholicism was considerable. Edgar Alexander, one of the leading authorities on German Catholic history, has called him "one of the soundest and most perfect types of Catholic personality," and has considered it "only natural

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[1]Hajo Holborn, "Champion of Monarchy and Aristocracy," in The Unification of Germany, 1848-1871, p. 67. (Bismarck's statement was contained in a letter written to Prince William shortly before the latter's accession to the imperial throne.)

that he emerged as the most outstanding social, political, and spiritual leader in nineteenth-century Germany."[2]

What made Ketteler eminently suited for political leadership was his all-encompassing view of religion--Catholic in the truest sense--and his desire to have the Church share in all facets of human experience. While he wished to uphold the spiritual unity of the Church, he was willing to experiment in the social and political field.

Ketteler's political activities were brought about by his fear of the increased power of the Prussian state. His motives were always church-directed, but he knew that only a manifestation of political strength would enhance the position of the Church. Like Bismarck, he also understood the need for gaining mass support and the importance of the press. His effort at publication to rally Catholic citizens must be regarded as one of his greatest achievements. "You have a good pen, my son. I believe your pen writes better than mine," Pius acknowledged at their last meeting.[3]

Ketteler's political philosophy was not entirely determined by practical considerations. Bismarck's contention that "sovereignty can only be unitary and it must remain so,"[4] the Bishop emphatically denied. In one of his last public statements

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[2]Edgar Alexander, "Church and Society in Germany," in Catholic Social and Political Movements, 1789-1950, p. 412.

[3]Hogan, Ketteler's Interpretation, p. 52.

[4]Excerpt from Bismarck's speech in the Reichstag, May 14, 1872. Quoted in A Free Church in a Free State?, p. 66.

he asserted:

> We do not deny the sovereignty of the state, we have always submitted to it. What we do deny, what we do oppose, is state sovereignty that exceeds its sphere. We maintain that a belief in divine revelation excludes the recognition of an absolute state sovereignty, and that divine revelation in combination with unconditional sovereignty of the state is impossible without subjecting revelation itself to the whims of changing governments.[5]

In these conflicting interpretations on the sovereignty of church and state can be seen the crux of the entire conflict, for the issue of sovereignty was a manifestation of two contrasting concepts of life: Bismarck's secular state-oriented ideology and Ketteler's religious outlook.

It must not be forgotten, however, that in spite of their differing philosophies Bismarck and Ketteler had much in common and that in many ways they reacted similarly. Though both "the fighting Bishop of Mainz" and the German Chancellor vehemently defended their interests during the course of the Kulturkampf, neither of them was intransigent, neither was interested in the fight for its own sake. In short, both men were realists and were willing to accept what could not be changed: as Ketteler had accepted a Kleindeutschland under Prussian leadership in 1866, so Bismarck hastened to end the Kulturkampf once it proved 'more politic to pave the way for peace'.

Though waged with a great deal of bitterness for a time, the Kulturkampf was marked by a willingness to compromise,

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[5]Ketteler, Briefe, p. 535.

evident in the leadership on both sides. What has been said of Bismarck's foreign policy, that it was "limited, circumscribed, . . . and therefore essentially peaceful in character,"[6] applies equally to his actions in this conflict. The German nation was fortunate that the desire for peaceful co-existence prevailed on both sides.

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[6]Pinson, Modern Germany, p. 295.

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