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A LEGION OF LEGACY: TYROLEAN MILITARISM, CATHOLICISM, AND THE
HEIMWEHR MOVEMENT

by

Jason Christopher Engle

A Dissertation
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December 2017

A LEGION OF LEGACY: TYROLEAN MILITARISM, CATHOLICISM, AND THE
HEIMWEHR MOVEMENT

by Jason Christopher Engle

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ABSTRACT

A LEGION OF LEGACY: TYROLEAN MILITARISM, CATHOLICISM, AND THE HEIMWEHR MOVEMENT

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This study of the origins of the Heimwehr (Home Guard) movement offers insight into the conditions under which such groups gained their following. As such, its story is a valuable one that shows a society groping with the problem of a complex, multi-faceted identity that was, at the same time, wracked with substantial economic privation and politically polarized. The paramilitary Heimwehr movement that began in 1920 was the creation of Austria's conservative provincial governments. It was intended to preserve the existing social and political order—that of the hegemonic social groups of the Habsburg Monarchy—against the growing threat of Marxist revolution, embodied by the Social Democratic Party. The movement understood itself as the continuity of the centuries-old, volunteer militia tradition and carried on its rituals and adopted many of its values. In post-Habsburg Austria, the Heimwehren sought to defend their homeland not from any army, but from an ideology—Marxism. With numerous sources—foreign and domestic—of financial, material, and military support, the Heimwehr movement was at the epicenter of anti-Marxism in Europe and waged an ideological war against the Austrian Social Democratic Party.

The movement's seemingly negative political agenda that extended beyond its aversion toward Marxism has been depicted by historians as indicative the absence of a

distinct, overarching sociopolitical outlook. The controversial and misunderstood—even by Heimwehr members themselves—Korneuburg Oath its federal leaders published in May 1930 outlined the agenda of the movement and, when carefully read, reveals the guiding hand of Catholic social thought. The fact that far right circles of Austria’s mainstream conservative parties birthed and reared the Heimwehr movement, differentiated it from the Nazis and Italian fascism, who only later gained mainstream support due to the desperation of the latter.

Indeed, with the recent outpouring of populist, xenophobic nationalism in the United States and Europe, the Heimwehr movement in Austria, among other right-wing paramilitary organizations of Europe’s “Fascist Era” serve as useful, cautionary tales for the present political landscape.

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One becomes a historian out of an intrinsic and unending fascination with the past that they want to understand and to help others understand. For me, that fascination was first enlivened by my middle school history teacher, Jim Arter, and was further stoked from from vacations stops at historic battlefields and sites as a youth—both of which clearly had a profound impact on my life.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------------|--|
| <i>ANNO</i> | AustriaN Newspapers Online |
| <i>AOK</i> | Armeeoberkommando |
| <i>CSP</i> | Christian Social Party |
| <i>IMCC</i> | International Military Control Commission |
| <i>KUK</i> | Kaiserlich und Königlich |
| <i>SA</i> | Sturmabteilung |
| <i>SDP</i> | Social Democratic Party |
| <i>SSV</i> | Selbstschutzverband |
| <i>TNA</i> | The National Archives of the UK |
| <i>TLA</i> | The Tiroler Landesarchiv |
| <i>VVVD</i> | Vereinigte Vaterländische Verbände Deutschland |
| <i>VVVB</i> | Vereinigte Vaterländische Verbände Bayerns |

INTRODUCTION

The question of fascism, for better or worse, has framed the study of the Heimwehr (Home Guard) movement.¹ Historians of fascism, the First Republic, and of the movement itself, all grappled with whether or not the Heimwehren were a fascist movement, a “proto-fascist” movement, or merely militant reactionaries. Overall, these efforts have yielded limited fruit. As Robert Paxton has noted, many such examinations have produced little more than fascist “bestiaries,” with each “fascist” organization having its own entry in a “catalog of portraits...one beast after another, each portrayed against a bit of background scenery and identified by its external signs.”² On the whole, such evaluations simply reiterate the fact that the Great War left Central and Eastern Europe in shambles and exposed to revolutionary and counter-revolutionary activity within which these fascist organizations were born. On the individual level, these exercises are ultimately unsatisfying, as they offer only present surface-level observations based on their place in the wider political climate of their respective state, offering little to no insight into the social and cultural influences that shaped the groups.

¹ To establish a base understanding of the Heimwehr movement and terminology surrounding it, some explanation is in order. The Heimwehr movement refers to a confederation of provincial (or state) paramilitary organizations, which were themselves a confederation of local paramilitary groups throughout the province. A standardized naming convention was never established, so local and provincial groups assumed a wide variety of names (e.g. Heimwehr, Heimatwehr, Heimatschutz, Heimatdienst, Selbstschutzverband, etc.). The provincial organizations established several national and regional coalitions throughout the course of the First Republic, all of which had different names. To make matters more confusing, despite whatever specific name they designated for themselves, newspapers frequently referred to them in generic terms, typically “Heimwehr,” “Heimatwehr,” or “Heimatschutz.” Thus, historians came to refer to these local, provincial, and/or national confederations as the Heimwehr (or Heimwehren, the plural of Heimwehr) or Heimwehr movement for the sake of simplicity.

² Robert O. Paxton, “The Five Phases of Fascism,” *The Journal of Modern History* 70 (March 1998): 10.

In the case of the Heimwehr movement, for which no broad consensus has been reached among scholars, it fittingly resides in a state of limbo. Early assessments, on the heels of the Second World War, unsurprisingly identified the Heimwehren as “fascist formations, Austrian counterparts to Hitler's S.A.”³ Francis Ludwig Carsten clearly saw the Heimwehr as a fascist movement when writing, in 1976, that there was “no comprehensive history of Austrian fascist movements and the many links between them,” added that there existed “no history of the whole Heimwehr movement, and none at all of the Austrian National Socialist Party.” More explicitly he later explains that it was Heimwehr leaders in Carinthia and Tyrol, in particular, who “came under the spell of Italian Fascism.”⁴

It is appropriate here to note that Austrian historians writing on the Heimwehr in the decades immediately following the World War II perpetuated the myth that Austria was the “first victim” of Nazi aggression, which originated from the Moscow Declarations and was spread by the Allies. The “coalition historiography,” which remained prevalent until the mid-1970s, used the defunct Heimwehren as scape-goats for the fall of the First Republic.⁵ Depicted as the instruments of the Fascist Italy and authoritarian Hungary, the Heimwehr movement could conveniently be divorced from

³ Charles Gulick, *Austria: From Habsburg to Hitler*, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1948), 7; See also Alfred Diamant, “Austrian Catholics and the First Republic, 1918-1934: A Study in Anti-Democratic Thought,” *The Western Political Quarterly* 10 (September 1957): 609-10.

⁴ Francis Ludwig Carsten, *Fascist Movements in Austria: From Schönerer to Hitler* (London: SAGE, 1977), 7, 167-172.

⁵ Julie Thorpe has pointed out that there were other facets of early Second Republic scholarship that created politically expedient narratives, such as Adam Wandruszka’s three “*Lager*” (camp) model. See Adam Wandruszka, “Österreichs politische Struktur: Die Entwicklung der Parteien und politischen Bewegungen,” in *Geschichte der Republik Österreich*, ed. Heinrich Benedikt (Wien: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1954); Julie Thorpe, *Pan-Germanism and the Austro-Fascist State, 1933-1938* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 8; Tim Kirk, “Dictatorship, Fascism and the Demise of Austrian Democracy,” in *Austrian Studies Today*, Contemporary Austrian Studies Volume 25 (New Orleans, LA: University of New Orleans Press, 2016), 118, 120-1.

Austrian society at large, thereby deflecting blame from the Austrian population and the political figures involved, who then remained active in the government of the Second Republic. Ludwig Jedlicka, for example, would claim that the Heimwehr movement was “the sole repository of authoritarian and fascist thought in recent Austrian history.” Two important points are implied in this statement. First, it implies that none of these tendencies existed within the Christian Social Party, which has been proven time and again, to be patently false. Second, he is implying that National Socialism was an entirely German creation, once more divorcing Austria from Nazism.⁶ This too, is demonstrably untrue. The roots of National Socialism were firmly planted in the political anti-Semitism and pan-German rhetoric of Georg von Schönerer in 1890s Vienna, not to mention the fact that an overwhelming majority of Austrians supported Anschluss (unification) with Hitler’s Germany.⁷ Its own biases (which will be addressed later) notwithstanding, Charles Gulick’s exhaustive, two-volume history of the First Republic was correct in vigorously asserting that numerous segments of Austrian society actively worked to undermine the government and destroy the republic. In doing so, his foundational work was met with “unusually harsh criticism.”⁸

Interpretations of the Heimwehr movement remained largely unchanged until the 1970s when a younger generation of scholars began to re-evaluate the Heimwehr movement.⁹ The emergence of fascist studies, in particular, helped refine interpretations

⁶ Ludwig Jedlicka, “The Austrian Heimwehr,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 1 (1966): 127.

⁷ John T. Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right in Austria, 1918-1934* (Copenhagen: The Royal Library Museum Tusulanum Press, 2007), 27; See also Franziska Schneeberger, “Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr in Österreich. Eine vergleichend-politische sozialgeschichte der Heimwehrbewegung.” (PhD diss., University of Salzburg, 1988), 48-52.

⁸ Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 30.

⁹ See, for example, R. John Rath, “Authoritarian Austria,” in *Native Fascism in the Successor States, 1918-1945*, ed. Peter F. Sugar (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, 1971), 30.

of the Heimwehr movement through comparative study of radical right-wing organizations across Europe. Bruce F. Pauley, in his comparison of the Heimwehr movement with the Austrian Nazi Party, concludes that, though they shared similar aims with the Austrian National Socialists in that they professed to be a non-partisan organization dedicated to the renewal of Austria, the Heimwehren differed in that they were “characteristically ambiguous” in their adherence to the “Führerprinzip” (leader principle). Their program called for obedience to strong central authority, but no single Heimwehr leader, including its federally elected leaders, Dr. Richard Steidle (Tyrol), Dr. Walter Pfrimer (Styria), and, later, Ernst Rüdiger Prince von Starhemberg (Upper Austria), forged the ‘cult of personality’ maintained in other fascist regimes Hitler, Mussolini, or Franco.¹⁰ Thus, as Roger Griffin concludes that the “bulk of the Heimwehr stopped short of full-blown fascism.”¹¹

Indeed, Stanley Payne contends that the Korneuburg Oath—the controversial program published by the Heimwehr movement in May 1930, in which they vowed to establish an authoritarian, corporatist state—failed to articulate “clear-cut fascism,” and prompted division between the moderate Christian Social factions and its radical, “proto-fascist” bloc.¹² The fact that the Oath triggered division within the movement, is less than a ringing endorsement of fascism within a sizeable segment of the movement. Richard Schober has contended that the Korneuburg program Steidle championed, simply

¹⁰ Pauley, “Fascism and the *Führerprinzip*: The Austrian Example,” *Central European History* 12 (Sept. 1979): 280.

¹¹ Roger Griffen, *The Nature of Fascism* (London: Routledge, 1991), 125.

¹² For interpretations of the Korneuburg Oath as an indication of the movement’s definitively fascist nature, see Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 171-2; Tim Kirk, “Fascism and Austrofascism,” in *The Dollfuss/Schuschnigg Era in Austria: A Reassessment*, Contemporary Austrian Studies 11, ed. Günter Bischof, Anton Pelinka, and Alexander Lassner (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Press, 2003), 16.

articulated long-held positions in that it was “an openly anti-parliamentary doctrine, informed by anti-Marxism and an affinity for fascism.”¹³ Harboring an “affinity for fascism” is not the same as being a fascist movement. Payne concludes that even though some local groups defected to the Nazis, “most clung to a steadily amorphous if authoritarian conservatism.”¹⁴ Though the Heimwehren demonstrated general characteristics synonymous with fascism, they lacked key hallmarks of the fascist benchmarks—the National Fascist Party in Italy and the National Socialist German Worker’s Party or “Nazi Party” in Germany. The genre of fascist studies, with its comparative basis, marked the first real substantive efforts to examine the attributes of the Heimwehr movement, bringing into question earlier historiographic interpretations.

This shift is also noticeable in studies focusing on the Heimwehr movement, as suggestions that the Heimwehren exhibited fascist leanings replaced ham-fisted, unsubstantiated assumptions typical of earlier, politically biased scholarship. Reinhart Kondert, for example, defines the Heimwehr movement as “a paramilitary organization strongly imbued with fascist tendencies and supported by Italian money.” Complicating the picture further, he adds:

[T]he rank and file were democratically inclined whereas the leadership tried to set out in a fascist direction. When the Heimwehren leaders publicly announced that they would follow a fascist course (the Korneuburg oath of May 18, 1930), the majority rejected the plan and the organization became split even further. The evidence thus suggests that fascism (especially the Italian brand) was an unwanted import and had little chance of winning the hearts and minds of the Austrian people.¹⁵

¹³ Richard Schober, “Aufstieg und Fall der Tiroler Heimawehr (1928-1936),” *Tiroler Heimat* 61 (Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 1997): 182.

¹⁴ Stanley G. Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914-1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 247.

¹⁵ Reinhart Kondert, “The Rise and Early History of the Austrian Heimwehr” (PhD diss., Rice University, 1972), iv-v.

According to C. Earl Edmondson, “The Heimwehr belongs in both the paramilitary and, with some qualifications, in the fascist categories.”¹⁶ While Edmondson acknowledges that the Heimwehr leaders claimed the movement to be one of nonpartisan renewal, as was “typical for fascist movements throughout Europe during the interwar period,” he stops short of calling the movement fascist.¹⁷ While the Heimwehr movement exhibited general characteristics of contemporary “fascist” organizations in Central and Eastern Europe, its clear connections to historic paramilitary institutions, residual features of Habsburg military culture, and the support and direction of the leading social groups of the Habsburg Monarchy make it difficult to place the movement neatly into the fascist category.

Fascist theoretician, Camillo Pellizzi, was right to be skeptical about the association of similar movements with Italian fascism. As Luca de Caprariis notes:

In his view, however, most movements which called themselves fascist, such as the Austrian Heimwehr movement or the German Stahlhelm, were in reality conservative groupings. By and large, they represented entrenched interests. Fascism, Italian fascism, was radically different, strongly rooted in the popular classes and 'in its essence revolutionary, the impulse of a people struggling for living space and international respect'.¹⁸

While the Heimwehren, the Stahlhelm, and to a lesser extent, even the Nazi Party, actively agitated for radical, revolutionary methods of restoring German pride and

¹⁶ C. Earl Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics 1918-1936* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1977), 8; *Konkurrenz* meaning competition/rivalry between leaders/factions/organizations—a prominent feature that Hitler nurtured within the Nazi Party.

¹⁷ Bruce F. Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hakenkreuz. Steirischer Heimatschutz und österreichischer Nationalsozialismus 1918-1934* (Wien: Europa Verlag, 1972), 29.

¹⁸ Luca de Caprariis, "Fascism for Export? The Rise and Eclipse of the Fasci Italiani all'Estero," *Journal of Contemporary History* 35 (April 2000): 168.

prosperity, they were financially support by traditional, mainstream interests and conformed their aims to maintain that support, even if only temporarily.¹⁹

The ambiguity of the Heimwehr movement's fascist status reflects the more fundamental challenge of simply understanding fascism was or was not. The very term "fascism," as Paxton notes, "has been so loosely used that some have proposed giving it up altogether in scholarly research."²⁰ Payne adds that the definition of fascism "bedeviled" even the original, Italian Fascists, adding that "[t]he term has probably been used more by its opponents than by its proponents, the former having been responsible for the generalization of the adjective on an international level, as early as 1923." As a result, fascism became synonymous with violence, brutality, and repression.²¹ The numerous left-wing newspapers in Austria such as the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, *Der Rote Fahne*, *Arbeiterwille*, the *Vorarlberger Wacht*, and the *Tagblatt*, illustrate this point quite well in their liberal application of the "fascist" moniker to the Heimwehr movement in frequent diatribes over the speeches of its leaders, their rallies, as well as its strike-breaking activities.²² These same newspapers, however, also condemned the Heimwehren as "monarchists" conspiring to overthrow the republic and install a Wittelsbach (the Bavarian royal family) king, before they were "fascists." The ease with which one label was replaced with another indicates that the meaning of the label did not matter so much

¹⁹ Paxton, "The Five Phases of Fascism," 12-16, points out that this willingness to sacrifice ideological integrity for the support of mainstream conservatives to have been a common, if but temporary, phase in the development of fascist organizations.

²⁰ Paxton, "The Five Phases of Fascism," 9.

²¹ Payne, *A History of Fascism*, 3.

²² The earliest case of this can be found in the September 15, 1923 edition of *Arbeiterwille*, the Styrian Social Democratic news organ. "Heimatschutz oder Kapitalistenschutz?" *Arbeiterwille*, September 15, 1923, 9.

as did the intent to isolate.²³ Paxton points out, “It took two generations before the Left understood that fascism is, after all, an authentic mass popular enthusiasm and not merely a clever mass manipulation of populist emotions by the reactionary Right or by capitalism in crisis.”²⁴ It is significant, therefore, that the extensive, negative depictions of the Heimwehren in the contemporary leftist media penetrated the earliest studies of the First Republic.²⁵

Nevertheless, the evolution from blanket assumptions of the movement’s fascist character to more complex and refined interpretations of the Heimwehr movement has been a positive development. Interpretations of the movement have progressed to recognize a more complex set of organizations more firmly planted in historically influential institutions and social circles than other contemporary right-wing paramilitary organizations. The term “paramilitary” here is important to recognize; the Heimwehr movement was a confederation of paramilitary groups, not a political party. Though it ultimately established its own political party in the form of the Heimatblock, this was never its original intent, rather it was the product of political and economic pressures to seek constitutional reform through legal, political channels rather than by force. Put differently, the Heimwehr movement was a paramilitary organization that created its own political party, not a political party that created its own protective paramilitary wing, as in

²³ See, for example, “Ein Monarchistisches Landeschießen in Tirol,” *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, November 18, 1920, 2.

²⁴ Paxton, “The Five Phases of Fascism,” 2-3.

²⁵ Charles Gulick’s two-volume history of the First Republic is among the earliest and is most clearly biased in its depiction of the Heimwehr movement. Paul R. Sweet, “Democracy and Counter-Revolution in Austria,” *The Journal of Modern History* 22 (March, 1950): 53-4, points out the unabashedly adversarial position Gulick takes against the Heimwehren and the conservative establishment in Austria. Sweet also notes the extensive use of Austrian newspapers and periodicals (much of which was Social Democratic in orientation).

the case of the Social Democrats and the Republican Defense League (Republikanischer Schutzbund), the Nazi Party and its “Sturmabteilung,” or SA, or Mussolini’s “Squadrismo,” better known as “Blackshirts.”

More recent scholarship has only reiterated the continued lack of clarity around identifying interwar right-wing governments and organizations. Tim Kirk’s recent survey of new scholarship on the Dollfuss-Schuschnigg governments highlights this problem, pointing to the disagreement between historians as to how best to define their regimes.²⁶ As for the Heimwehr movement itself, whatever refinements that have been made in understanding its relationship to fascism are still, at times, appear lost on studies where it is only tangentially related to the topic of discussion. Janek Wasserman, in his important examination of right-wing intellectuals in Vienna, for example, repeatedly labels the Heimwehren as “fascist groups,” even when referencing events that occurred before the organization had made contact with Mussolini.²⁷ While he rightly points out the influence of Catholic social thought in groups like the Leo Society (Leo-Gesellschaft) and Austrian Action (Österreichische Aktion), he precludes any notion that it might have influenced the Heimwehr movement by identifying it as merely an extension of Italian fascism. Erin Hochman, in her comparative study of German nationalism in the Weimar and First Republics, by contrast, acknowledges the regional and cultural peculiarities—specifically Catholicism—that were formative in shaping the attitudes of the Heimwehren rather than dismissing them as simply being Mussolini’s acolytes.²⁸

²⁶ Tim Kirk, “Dictatorship, Fascism and the Demise of Austrian Democracy,” 114.

²⁷ Janek Wasserman, *Black Vienna: The Radical Right in the Red City, 1918-1938* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 2, 49, 91, 93, 115, 128.

²⁸ Erin R. Hochman, *Imagining a Greater Germany: Republican Nationalism and the Idea of Anschluss* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016), 26.

To be sure, the question of fascism has proven as prohibitive as it has instructive toward understanding the Heimwehren in that its often-narrow focus on how its actions and ideology compared to similar European movements, has neglected to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the Heimwehren in its own native setting and historical context. The majority of scholarly examinations of the Heimwehren make sweeping, surface-level generalizations about the movement's overarching political designs, which do not correlate with its intractable regionalism (that they also acknowledge). To that end, historians have also tended to take the words and actions of the movement's leaders at face value, as a reflection of the outlook of its membership at-large. Those political studies often neglect the potential insights gained by analyzing their lexicon, activities, and espoused values.

Purpose and Approach

As with all research projects, this one materialized out of a desire to answer a question that has not been sufficiently addressed in the historiography—what was the Heimwehr movement? While much of the scholarship written on the Austrian Heimwehren offers surface-level explanations, this has not been a question that historians have sought to answer.²⁹ This study is not an exhaustive examination; such an endeavor would require numerous volumes. Building on existing scholarship that has focused on

²⁹ Franziska Schneeberger's unpublished dissertation, "Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr in Österreich. Eine vergleichend-politische sozialgeschichte der Heimwehrbewegung," is a significant step toward a more extensive understanding of the Heimwehr movement, though her important points get bogged down in sociological theory at times.

the political impact of the movement, this study emphasizes pre-war cultural continuities that helped shape the movement itself.

Contrary to the conventional periodization, the Heimwehr movement cannot be fully understood without understanding the resonance of pre-war customs and attitudes, which did not simply vanish with the conclusion of the Great War. As Jay Winter explains, distinct traditional versus modern boundaries established in the cultural historiography of the Great War invites “distortion by losing a sense of messiness, its non-linearity, its vigorous and stubbornly visible incompatibilities.”³⁰ Winter continues, “The ongoing dialogue and exchange among artists and their public, between those who self-consciously returned to nineteenth-century forms and themes and those who sought to supersede them, makes the history of modernism much more complicated than a simple, linear divide between ‘old’ and ‘new’ might suggest.”³¹ More specific to the Austrian case, John Boyer rightly points out, future scholarship needs to connect “what happened before 1914 and what happened after 1918...in order to understand the broader structures and systems that defined Austrian political culture in the later twentieth century.”³²

Beyond the severe economic constraints of the new Austrian republic, its inability to achieve political stability reflected the fact that “the First Republic was deeply shaped by the memories, traditions, and institutional practices from the Empire, and...was hard

³⁰ Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), loc. 240.

³¹ Winter, *Sites of Memory*, loc. 205.

³² John Boyer, “Boundaries and Transitions in Modern Austrian History,” in *From Empire to Republic: Post-World War I Austria*, eds. Günter Bischof, Fritz Plasser, and Peter Berger (New Orleans: University of New Orleans Press, 2010), 15.

pressed to extricate itself from, much less to overcome, the stunning collapse of the Empire.”³³ The hegemonic social groups of Habsburg Austria, despite suffering their own economic and legal setbacks, remained influential in the new republic and found themselves threatened by the rise of Marxism across Europe.³⁴ The continued prominence of these social groups in the First Republic reiterates Winter’s conclusion that “the rupture of 1914-18 was much less complete” than has often been suggested.³⁵ And when the new system of government proved unwieldy and ineffective in smothering the Social Democratic opposition, these same circles quickly lost their patience parliamentary democracy. Together, Christian Social and pan-Germanist party officials, Catholic clergy, declassed aristocrats, financiers and industrialists, and former k.u.k. officers actively worked to undermine the democratic system, primarily through the creation of, and continuous support for, the Heimwehr movement.³⁶ Indeed, the Great War might have destroyed the monarchy in a physical sense, but it could not erase its impression on Austrian society. To Wolfgang Maderthaner’s point, one might as easily view the process of revolution and the creation of the First Republic as one of “de-feudalization” as much as state building.³⁷ Ultimately, neither process succeeded, as the latter depended on the successful realization of the former.

Indeed, there is a universal and enduring cycle of ‘old’ and ‘new;’ what was once the ‘new’ inevitably becomes the ‘old.’ Those who doggedly clutch traditional values in

³³ Boyer, “Boundaries and Transitions,” 22.

³⁴ Wasserman’s *Black Vienna* admirably demonstrates this in its focus on conservative, backward-thinking academics entrenched in Viennese institutions of higher learning.

³⁵ Winter, *Sites of Memory*, loc. 187.

³⁶ Gulick, *Austria*, 7-8, 129-30.

³⁷ Wolfgang Maderthaner, “Utopian Perspectives and Political Restraint: The Austrian Revolution in the Context of Central European Conflicts,” in *From Empire to Republic: Post-World War I Austria*, eds. Günter Bischof, Fritz Plasser, and Peter Berger (New Orleans: University of New Orleans Press, 2010), 52.

juxtaposition to those that gravitate toward the avant-garde invariably find themselves at opposite ends of a perpetual Kulturkampf, or “culture war.” While the Heimwehr movement indeed “reflected the conditions of central Europe in the interwar period,” as Edmondson contends, it was also a central part of an enduring struggle for political and, thus, cultural hegemony.³⁸ To better understand the Heimwehren, one must understand the mass politics of the First Republic on a cultural level, as a fundamental struggle over the fate of traditional German values, which most Heimwehr leaders viewed as being inherently intertwined with Catholic social teachings and the ancient connection between southern Germans and the Church. As social scientist Edgar Shein explains,

If we understand the dynamics of culture, we will be less likely to be puzzled, irritated, and anxious when we encounter the unfamiliar and seemingly irrational behavior of people in organizations, and we will have a deeper understanding not only of why various groups of people or organizations can be so different, but also why it is so hard to change them. Even more important, if we understand culture better we will better understand ourselves—better understand the forces acting within us that define who we are, that reflect the groups with which we identify and to which we want to belong.³⁹

This study approaches the Heimwehr movement on two levels. On one hand, it places the Heimwehren in the context of the wider phenomenon of counter-revolutionary Paramilitarism in what Robert Gerwarth and John Horne have called “shatter zones” in the footprint of the defeated Central Powers.⁴⁰ In particular, it will focus on the anti-Marxist “Ordnungsblock” forged through the paramilitary Bavarian Citizen’s Guard (Einwohnerwehr) organization and its successor, the League for Bavaria and the Empire

³⁸ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 8.

³⁹ Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, Third Edition (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 10.

⁴⁰ Robert Gerwarth and John Horne, “Vectors of Violence: Paramilitarism in Europe after the Great War, 1917-1923,” *The Journal of Modern History* 83 (September 2011): 493; For a useful discussion of the significance of transnational histories of the interwar period, see John Deak, “Austria in the 1920s,” in *Austrian Studies Today*, Contemporary Austrian Studies 25, ed. Günter Bischof and Ferdinand Karlhofer (New Orleans, LA: University of New Orleans Press, 2016), 205-214.

(Bayern Bund und Reich) the fledgling Austrian Heimwehr movement, and the Horthy government in Hungary between 1920 and 1923. Despite this coalition's collapse in the wake of the Hitler's abortive Beer Hall Putsch, the Heimwehren resurrected their Bavarian connections, establishing a close working relationship with the Bavarian state association of the Steel Helmet, League of Front Soldiers (Landesverband Der Stahlhelm, Bund der Frontsoldaten) in 1927. Utilizing contacts in the Horthy government in Hungary they facilitated a working relationship with Fascist Italy, which would last until 1936. As these sections will demonstrate, the Heimwehr movement actively sought cooperation and support from neighboring governments and paramilitary organizations. In doing so, it functioned as a hub for transnational reactionary collaboration.

On the other, this project analyzes the Heimwehr movement inside Austria. Specifically, it teases out the question of the movement's popularity, looking closely at the support offered by its domestic patrons. It examines the activities of the Heimwehr organizations, such as military actions and training, rallies, religious ceremonies, and war memorial dedications, and what those events reveal about the movement's cultural influences. While the battle with the Social Democrats was a clear cut, mobilizing force, the conflict that emerged with the Nazis in 1931 was much more complicated and would evoke divisions among Christian Social and pan-Germanist factions within the Heimwehren. Particular attention is given to the Tyrolean organization—the *Tiroler Heimatwehr*, also referred to as the *Selbstschutzverband (S.S.V.) Tirol*—whose leadership stood at the forefront of the movement throughout much of its existence. Alongside Dr. Richard Steidle, leader of the Tyrolean Heimwehren and Bundesführer (federal leader) of the national confederation, was his chief of staff, German émigré,

Major Waldemar Pabst. Pabst was the driving force behind the organization of a national Heimwehr front. Thus, the organizational files of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr offer not only a window into the Tyrolean organization but also into the movement itself.



Figure 1. *Dr. Richard Steidle and Major Waldemar Pabst, 1930*
(Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-2005-0413-501 / CC-BY-SA 3.0, CC BY-SA 3.0 de)

What is more, in no other provincial organization were the peculiarities developed over the centuries of Habsburg rule more influential than they were on the Tyrolean Heimatwehr. Austria's Alpine provinces historically relied heavily on the volunteer militia for self-defense and the members of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr understood themselves and their group as building on the province's long legacy of civic militarism. Only in Tyrol and Vorarlberg, however, did they develop an extensive militia system (Landesverteidigung) outside the control of the House of Habsburg. This "privilege"

became part of Tiroler identity, illustrating the contrarian, independent-mindedness of its population.

A Note on Sources

In addition to the body of secondary literature written on the Heimwehr movement, this study draws from a variety of primary source material compiled over the course of months of research conducted at the Tiroler Landesarchiv (TLA) in Innsbruck, Austria and serves as the foundation of this study. Particular attention was given to its organizational files, which offer insight into a wide variety of aspects regarding the day-to-day operation and logistical planning, training, and relationships with other organizations and important actors. Events that Tyrolean leaders were involved with and helped plan, such as the November 1920 shooting festival (Festschießen) at Berg Isel—the first open clash between the Heimwehr movement and the Social Democrats—and the October 1928 rally in the Social Democratic stronghold of Wiener Neustadt, were especially insightful. Though not comprehensive in the fact that they do not span the entirety of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr's existence, its rich contents complicate and dispel older interpretations of the Heimwehr movement.⁴¹ In addition to its primary source material, the manuscript collection at the TLA also has a number of doctoral dissertations focusing on all matters of the Tyrolean history, two of which were consulted in this study.

⁴¹ Unfortunately, this seems to be the case with records for the various Heimwehr organizations. The files for the *Tyrolean Heimatwehr* range from its inception to December 1929. As to what happened to the files after this period, it is unclear. One might reasonably infer, however, that the files from 1930-1938 would have been of interest to the Nazi officials, since by 1938 the *Heimwehren* had opposed *Anschluß* with Germany for quite some time, and either taken by the Nazis or destroyed by the *Heimatwehr*.

The British National Archives houses copies of several German Foreign Office (Auswärtige Amt) files seized at the end of World War II. Document collections focusing on the Anschluss Movement in Tyrol in the years immediately following World War I (1919-1921), as well as “Secret Files” on the Tyrolean Heimatwehr (1927-1933) have also been consulted in this investigation, adding an outside, but knowledgeable perspective on the Heimwehr movement. Moreover, these record groups offer insight into the close cooperation between the Bavarian and Tyrolean governments in establishing defense agreements and contingencies for the dissolution of the Austrian state. An important, and stealthy, avenue of this cooperation was through the alliance between the Bavarian Einwohnerwehr and the Tyrolean Heimatwehr. The ultimate change in direction of the Tyrolean government—to seek unification with Germany as an independent state—reflected the power of regional identity, particularly in the Tyrol.

German Foreign Ministry “secret files” on the Austrian Heimwehr center upon the activities of the Heimwehren between 1927 and 1933, and provides useful insight into its efforts to establish collaborative relationships with Bavarian defense organizations. They present a German Foreign Office whose representatives discouraged Bavarian cooperation with the Heimwehren for fear of prompting international scrutiny that could bring further repercussions on Germany. Moreover, the documents offer valuable perspectives from German officials observing and evaluating the Heimwehren and their leading personalities. This was especially telling is their perceptions of Waldemar Pabst, whose gift for intrigue they were most leery.

This study also draws on Heimwehren newspapers *Die alpenländische Heimatwehr* from 1926 to 1933, as well as the *Tyrolean Heimatwehr Blätter* from 1924

and 1925, housed at the Main Library of the University of Innsbruck. The Austrian National Library (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek) has digitized and made available for the public, an extensive online collection of historical newspapers—AustriaN Newspapers Online (ANNO)—that span, intermittently, from 1568 to 1944. The newspapers referenced in this project are, aside from the various Heimwehr newspapers mentioned above, are almost entirely drawn from the ANNO collection. The Austrian National Library has also digitized, and published online, stenographical reports from the provisional Tyrolean Tyrolean National Council (Nationalrat) from 1918-1919 as well as those of the Tyrolean Diet (Landtag) meetings for 1920-1921, which are also cited in this investigation. Older, relevant historical texts whose copyrights have expired are widely available online, and were utilized, as were published primary source materials available via digital literature collections maintained by the University of Innsbruck, the Hathi Trust Digital Library partnership, and Google Books.

Arguments

The overall structure of this study is topical, to better highlight themes and its principal arguments. However, it follows the general chronology where possible, for the sake of clarity, and to illustrate change over time. Using the Tyrol as its primary window into the Heimwehr movement, chapter one argues that the province's long legacy of civic militarism exercised significant influence on the Heimwehren. Of special significance was the system of shooting ranges (Schützenwesen) that became the basis of its state defense system (Landesverteidigung). Though originally not an official component of Tyrol's military infrastructure, these shooting ranges were constructed by local gentry

and were home to recreational rifle clubs. The democratization of firearms helped make sport-shooting increasingly popular, which led to the construction of more ranges and the formation of more clubs. The gun culture that materialized from this past-time (as well as hunting) became deeply entrenched in the Tyrolean identity.

By the early eighteenth century, some rifle clubs—in times of war—volunteered to serve as light infantry (sharpshooter) companies. Originally, these companies were under no formal obligation to the state, volunteering their skills out of patriotism for “Vaterland Tirol.” Over time, these “hand-shake” agreements evolved into more formalized obligations. These rifle club companies, or *Standeschützen*, as they became known, formed the basis of Tyrol’s militia system (*Schützenwesen*). The *Schützenwesen*, in turn, formed the core of Tyrol’s system of defense. Likewise, the shooting ranges around which the clubs were based, took on an increasingly official, militaristic character until they—like the rifle clubs that used them—were wholly integrated into the Tyrolean defense system by the early twentieth century. Over the course of the nineteenth century, the Tyrolean *Landesverteidigung* had decayed and lost its autonomous character, becoming increasingly reliant upon, and subject to, imperial (Habsburg) funding and oversight.

The codification of militia obligations added an increasingly formalized the militarism of the *Landesverteidigung*. This process was formative in that it helped to transform the vibrant gun culture in Tyrol into a more dynastically-oriented culture of civic militarism. Thus, the essence of Tyrolean civic militarism lay in the intersection of multiple facets of identity. One might argue that regional (Tyrolean) patriotism and loyalty to the Habsburg crown were the pillars, while their religious devotion was the

“glue” that held those pillars firmly in place. Throughout Tyrol’s history, the dominating presence of Catholic clergy proved crucial in motivating and directing—often both spiritually and militarily—the patriotic energies of its people.

The shooting ranges, themselves, were conduits that fostered this civic militarism in that they were spaces where camaraderie and unit pride were forged, military skills were learned and honed, and dynastic and provincial patriotism were cultivated. The shooting ranges served dual purposes as nodes of community and military mobilization, which cultivated the militarization of Tyrolean society by subconsciously connecting military service with fundamental aspects of daily life. Thus, the unit pride of a *Standschützen* company was closely intertwined with its local identity. This connection was articulated by the participation of rifle companies in community, religious ceremonies, shooting competitions, and social events, such as concerts and dances, put on by the companies for their communities. As subsequent chapters will reveal, this process of militarization remained a formative influence on identity of the Tyrolean *Heimatwehr* and, by extension, the movement as a whole. *Heimatwehr* propaganda framed the militarism of the movement in traditional, masculine terms. Military service and war volunteerism in defense of one’s home and hearth was a duty for which he had been trained from his youth through activities like hunting, sport shooting, and rugged, outdoor games boys played. As such, the activities *Heimatwehr* youth groups centered around shooting contests, marches, map reading exercises, and various other outdoor activities. The parallels between *Heimatwehr* and *Schützen* militarism is especially clear.

Chapter two will examine the establishment of the *Heimatwehr* movement within the broader context of reactionary Paramilitarism in the footprint of the former Central

Powers. The political upheaval of Marxist revolution was the catalyst for galvanizing counter-revolutionary defense organizations such as the Freikorps in Germany, the Hungarian National Army, and local Heimwehren in Austria. Their resistance to Marxist revolution in central Europe was heightened by what Wolfgang Schivelbusch has called a “culture of defeat,” which was founded on the myth that the loss of the war was the work of Judeo-Bolshevik revolutionaries scheming behind the backs of the German and Austro-Hungarian armed forces, not military defeat on the field of battle.⁴² As such, the violence unleashed in Germany and Hungary, in particular, was excessively brutal.

The founding of Heimwehr movement in 1920 was achieved through transnational cooperation between reactionary circles that made the Austro-Bavarian border the epicenter of anti-Marxist paramilitary activity in Europe. With the cooperation of the Bavarian government, the paramilitary Einwohnerwehr helped to arm, organize, and train Heimwehr groups. Provincial Austrian officials provided legal protections and resources, while the Hungarian government was the major financier of the Heimwehren. While ultra-nationalism has been the watch-word for the radical right in interwar Central Europe, the transnational collaboration that took place in establishing the Heimwehren illustrates the counter-revolutionary right’s pragmatism, ideological flexibility, and very real fear of communist revolution. Their efforts in Austria would pay dividends, as they laid the foundation for what would be a strong, anti-Marxist bloc in Central Europe.

Their cooperation was short-lived, however. In the face of intense international pressure, the Einwohnerwehr was dissolved in June 1921. Hungarian support also dried

⁴² Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery* (New York: Picador, 2001).

up that winter when it became evident that its aims for funding the Heimwehren—regaining the Burgenland—was not to be. The predecessor of the Einwohnerwehr, Bund Bayern und Reich, proved divisive, prompting the Heimwehren in some provinces to leave its tutelage in favor of that of Erich Ludendorff, rival of Bund Bayern und Reich leader, Dr. Otto Pittinger. Nevertheless, money, arms, and equipment continued to flow from Bavaria. The cooperation between Austrian and Bavarian organizations all but dried up in the wake of Hitler’s failed “Beer Hall Putsch,” and would not be resurrected until the summer of 1926.

Chapter three analyzes the organizational culture of the Heimwehr movement, teasing out its founding charters, organizational hierarchies, mission statements, and membership data. Analysis of state leadership (Landesleitung) documents provide insight as to the identity and interests—and, therefore, the purpose—of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr. Documents detailing the leadership hierarchy of the organization at the district and precinct levels, offering names and professions where the information was known or communicated by the respective leaders, are also revealing. When compiled and broken out, the professions of Heimatwehr leaders indicate the predominance of elected officials in these roles, demonstrating how the organization was intertwined with mainstream conservative circles. Though purposefully vague so as to not outwardly violate the peace treaties ending World War I, it is clear that Heimatwehr was a voluntary, “patriotic,” German nationalist, and anti-Marxist organization.⁴³ The statutes of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr also reveal its basic organizational hierarchy that generally

⁴³ To see that the military-related requirements of the peace treaties of Versailles and St. Germain were carried out, the Allies created a taskforce called the Inter-Allied Military Control Commission (IMCC).

followed existing provincial administrative zones, as well as its limited membership requirements.

Though not addressed in the organization's charter, two seemingly insignificant, but mutually reinforcing, membership policies emerged to drive the actions and decisions of its leadership and had profound impact on the development of the movement. The first was the fact that the Heimwehren did not require their members to pay dues for various reasons. This meant that the organizations did not generate any of their own revenue. Therefore, they were wholly dependent upon the generosity of private donors and the governments of their provinces, many of whom they served as auxiliary police forces. By depending solely on external sources of income, they found themselves beholden to the agendas of their patrons, at first willingly and later begrudgingly. Despite the pleas of the influential German émigré and federal chief of staff, Waldemar Pabst, this policy went unaltered.⁴⁴ Second, the Heimwehren maintained a largely open membership policy: anyone who was not a member of the Social Democratic Party and was of non-Jewish, German descent was eligible to join. Combined with the absence of membership dues, this policy generated a broad support base across all socioeconomic strata and political ideologies. These policies worked well together in establishing the organizations as non-partisan, civil-defense groups, amassing a combined membership of between 300,000 and 400,000 at its peak.

The activities, behaviors, and espoused values of the Heimwehr organizations reflected the fundamental place of Catholic social teachings. Beyond the incorporation of field Mass services in all Heimwehr activities, itself, an indication the primacy of the

⁴⁴ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 180.

Church, Catholic social thought shaped the ideological development of the movement. The rhetoric of Heimwehr leaders, its propaganda, and its political platform—the Korneuburg Oath—clearly reconcile with the work of Catholic social theorists and papal encyclicals. The movement’s aversion to Marxism, Capitalism, liberalism, and Western-style parliamentary democracy reflected the sentiments echoed in the encyclicals and the work of Catholic social thinkers. Likewise, its support for a corporatist alternative to Marxism and capitalism also correlated with the position taken in papal encyclicals and writings of Catholic philosophers. The lineage of these ideals clearly flowed from the writings of Karl von Vogelsang and Adam Müller as well as from the papal encyclicals, *Rerum Novarum* and the *Quadragesimo Anno* to political thinkers like Othmar Spann and his students, Heimwehr ideologues, Hans Riehl, Walter Heinrich, and Odo Neustädter-Stürmer. Having to balance political Catholicism and German nationalism, these overtones had to remain subtle and may have been lost on readers not intimately familiar with the writings of Spann and his predecessors or the papal encyclicals.

The basis of support for the Heimwehr as a mass movement is the subject under scrutiny in chapter four. The prevailing orthodoxy in the literature rejects Seipel’s claim that the Heimwehr was an “irresistible people’s movement,” citing estimations of its membership numbers. As this chapter will demonstrate, this simplistic method of measuring support tells a story that is consistent with efforts of “coalition historiography” to white-wash Austria to better fit the “victim” role prescribed by the Allies and the Soviets following World War II. Beyond the fact that the Heimwehr movement secured a sizable membership base (per capita) at its peak, it secured the support important cross-sections of the Austrian population. That is, it was funded by industrial associations,

financial institutions, nobles, as well as state and federal governments at various times. Furthermore, the provincial governments were key to the movement's success, providing essential legal protections from federal calls for its disarmament and dissolution. It also could count on sustenance from Catholic clergy members throughout Austria who lent the movement respectability. At the same time, the involvement and backing of nobles provided the movement with standing and flair, while the support of former k.u.k. officers gave the Heimwehren credibility as a paramilitary organization. Whatever the Heimwehr movement may have lacked in sheer numbers, it made up for in the fact that its backers were wealthy, politically powerful, and socially influential. In other words, their wealth, power, and influence were force multipliers.

Chapter five picks up with the resumption of contact between the Heimwehren and Bavarian paramilitary organizations in the summer of 1926. Of particular importance was the "Arbeitsgemeinschaft" or "working group" between the Heimwehr and the Stahlhelm in Bavaria, among other defense organizations. Through the Stahlhelm, the Heimwehr secured access to arms, munitions, military equipment and money from Bavarian nobles. Agreements that obliged the Stahlhelm to come to the aid of the Heimwehren in the event of civil war or neighboring conflagrations proved elusive. The German Foreign Office was concerned that the Heimwehren would drag Bavarian paramilitary organizations into a reckless civil war by attempting to march on Vienna. The resistance of its German counterparts to agree to come to its aid did not deter Heimwehr leaders, who were simultaneously exploring similar agreements with Yugoslavian paramilitary organizations, Hungarian contacts in the Horthy government, as well as with Fascist Italy. The relationship forged with the latter would be its most

formative, permanently changing the trajectory of the Heimwehr movement and the Austrian state. Nevertheless, a productive “working group” with the Stahlhelm was achieved. Steidle and Pabst would also connect federal leaders Franz Seldte and Theodor Duesterberg with Mussolini, who aided them with political advice and support as the Stahlhelm entered the realm of politics in the 1930 German federal election.

Shortly after Ernst Rüdiger Prince von Starhemberg toppled Steidle and Pfrimer from federal leadership over the Heimwehr movement, he met with Mussolini who became something of a mentor to the young Bundesführer. In 1932, Starhemberg would in turn connect new Austrian Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss with “Il Duce.” Mussolini’s financial backing of the Heimwehren, economic stimulus to Austria, diplomatic support, and political guidance for the Dollfuss government helped stiffen its resistance to Nazi terrorism after the party’s banishment in 1933. The close support Austria enjoyed from Mussolini, for all intents and purposes, died with Dollfuss in July 1934. Shortly thereafter, Italy became embroiled in the so-called Abyssinia Crisis, the international reaction to which would, over the course of the next year-and-a-half, push Mussolini toward an alliance with Hitler.

Ultimately, this dissertation will demonstrate that the development of the Heimwehr movement in Austria did not occur in a vacuum. Quite the opposite. It was the product of close transnational cooperation among anti-Marxist circles in Germany, Austria, and Hungary. Like its influential Bavarian mentors, the Heimwehr movement understood itself to be heirs to the heritage of Alpine civic militarism, embodied in the deep-rooted history of volunteer Schützen and Standschützen companies. As such, the Heimwehren adopted much of the longstanding rituals and ideals that were underpinned

by conventional Catholic notions of gender that glorified masculine duties of military service and war volunteerism. The voluntary character of the movement would, unintentionally impact the decision-making of its leadership and eventually prove to be its Achilles heel. Catholic social thinking figured centrally in the Heimwehr movement's worldview, mirroring the values and beliefs espoused by Popes and Catholic social theorists. The ubiquitous place of Catholic clergy and ceremony in the events staged by the Heimwehren simply reiterated its firm Catholic underpinnings. The Schützen and the Church were not the only entrenched imperial-era institutions with which the Heimwehr connected. It also enjoyed the patronage and involvement of many members of the leading circles in Habsburg society. It was these continuities that, in part, helped inspire spirit of the Fatherland Front and the identity of the Austria corporatist state. The economic stagnation resulting from the Great Depression was the rock upon which the energetic Nazi Party broke the backward-looking Fatherland Front.

CHAPTER I – AUSTRIA’S LEGACY OF ALPINE CIVIC MILITARISM

Former Austrian Chancellor, Kurt Schuschnigg described the impetus for the Heimwehr movement from a historical perspective, explaining that “[t]he desire for military preparedness, more particularly in the Alpine lands, was deeply rooted in the character of the people.”⁴⁵ Schuschnigg, a Tyrolean himself and founder of the Catholic paramilitary Östmärkische Sturmscharen (Eastmark Stormtroopers), was well acquainted with the militaristic nature of Alpine culture that remained prevalent throughout the interwar period.⁴⁶ The specificity of “the Alpine lands,” implies a distinct group from those dwelling in Austria’s plains. Deep-rooted militarism in the Alpine lands represents what Edgar Shein calls “the critical defining characteristic of a group,” as “its members have a shared history.” He adds, “Any social unit that has some kind of shared history will have evolved a culture, with the strength of that culture dependent on the length of its existence, the stability of the group’s membership, and the emotional intensity of the actual historical experiences they have shared.”⁴⁷ This shared historical experience did not simply vanish with the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy, rather it remained a formative cultural influence in Alpine Austria. The paramilitary Heimwehr movement that emerged in 1920 was an indication of just how deeply-rooted that influence was, most especially in the province of Tyrol.

⁴⁵ Kurt Schuschnigg, *My Austria* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1938), 128.

⁴⁶ “Ostmark” was the medieval name for the hereditary Austrian provinces, Ostmark meaning “East[ern] Mark,” which was made in reference to its geographical location. When annexed into Germany in 1938, Austria once more became known as Ostmark.

⁴⁷ Shein, *Organizational Culture*, 11.

Focusing primarily on the province of Tyrol, this chapter establishes the functional, organizational, and cultural continuities from the imperial-era Tyrolean Standschützen, which fundamentally shaped the character of Tyrolean Heimatwehr and, by extension, the Heimwehr movement. First, the Heimatwehr emulated the Standschützen in its function; both served the purpose of civil defense against all manner of threats—rioting, rebellion, or foreign invasion—to their local communities. Moreover, the Heimwehr, like its Standschützen forerunners, served as an extension of the local and provincial governments. Second, the Heimatwehr emulated the Standschützen in its use of Tyrol’s extensive pre-war network of shooting ranges. Though it followed the general organizational model of the Bavarian Einwohnerwehr, which was structured to correspond to local, regional, and provincial administrative zones, it also utilized the shooting ranges to train and store weapons it smuggled across the border from Bavaria.

Third, the impression of Standschützen culture could be seen in the organizational culture of the Heimatwehr on several levels. The Heimatwehr paralleled the Standschützen in its close relationship with local Catholic clerics; shared rituals and activities such as flag dedication ceremonies, shooting competitions, and parades, almost always included Sunday Mass service. Also like the Standschützen, the Heimatwehr maintained an active youth component that trained young men in marksmanship; in the case of the Heimatwehr, this extended to general military conditioning, drilling, and training. Too, both served as channels for social engagement. The Heimatwehr would also adopt the social conventions of Standschützen: holding concerts, dances, and family events and activities created a sense of community and togetherness among the families of the participants. As such, the Standschützen and the Heimatwehr both reflected

traditional Catholic ideas of masculinity, offered fellowship, and served as mediums of patriotic expression.

Lastly, the connection with the Standschützen was expressed clearly by the Heimatwehr. Before the towering likeness of Andreas Hofer on Berg Isel, the Heimatwehr regularly drew inspiration from the courage and achievements of the Standschützen in 1809. These links were also articulated in Heimatwehr newspapers, propaganda, and speeches. Indeed, the Heimatwehr saw themselves as the heirs to Tyrol's Standschützen tradition. These many shared characteristics took on new meanings in the hyper-politicization of the First Republic. Though the Heimatwehr understood themselves to be protecting the same communities and values as their Standschützen predecessors, they had become political militiamen who expressly combated the existential threat of Marxist internationalism. Andreas Hofer, himself devoutly loyal to the Habsburg dynasty, was portrayed as a symbol of the German nationalism, a defender of German culture against the encroachment foreign Enlightenment ideals. Heimatwehr Masses, flag dedications, and benedictions no longer represented ordinary religious conventions they did for the Standschützen ancestors, but were also protests against the godlessness of Socialism. Not to be dismissed, the fact that both functioned as extensions of their local and provincial governments also had new meaning for the Heimatwehr; their enemy was not from outside Austria, but were the Socialist enemies within that those governments used to intimidate and suppress. The Heimatwehr understood themselves as representing the same virtues as their forerunners, but in the new post-war world, they were combatting a different enemy.

Militarizing Alpine Society—A Medieval Origin Story

In Tyrol, the beginnings of this “shared history of experience” can be traced as far back as the early Middle Ages, when geopolitical norms allowed duchies and counties to function as virtually autonomous realms despite owing allegiance to a king. In this way, nobles were obliged to defend their borders and communities with their own armies. Thus, the militarization of Tyrol during the Habsburg reign manifested out of necessity. This militarism evolved over the centuries, merging war volunteerism, provincial patriotism and imperial loyalty, expressed through the age-old mantra, “*Für Gott, Kaiser, und Vaterland.*” The militarization of Tyrolean society was a formative influence on population’s collective identity.⁴⁸ Over time, even recreational activities such as hunting and sport shooting acquired increasingly formal, militaristic tinges.

Time and again the Habsburg’s imperial army sought to gain control over matters of Tyrolean state defense (Landesverteidigung). Tyrol’s numerous shooting ranges (Schießstände) and clubs served as the infrastructure for the Landesverteidigung. The official integration of Tyrol’s militia system into the imperial military industrial complex reduced its civilian complexion further. By the late-nineteenth century, traditional volunteer militia institutions had almost entirely been integrated into the k.k. Landwehr, Austria’s “National Guard.” As such, Tyrolean shooting ranges now became nodes of military mobilization for reservists and militiamen, beyond their original roles as community spaces for socializing, camaraderie, and target shooting.

⁴⁸ It should be noted that discussions of identity, including, “Tyrolean identity,” should be understood as pertaining to “German” or “German Tyrolean” identity, for which this study is focused.

In 1363 the last of the Meinhardiner line, Margaret, Countess of Tyrol, bequeathed the county to Rudolf IV of Austria. In this way, Tyrol became a possession of the House of Habsburg. Feudal obligations required vassals, peasant farmers, and retainers (knechten) to serve as soldiers in the armies of their respective landlords' private army or in the levies (Aufgebot) of the cities in which they lived. These levies were one of the "pillars" of the "military constitution" of the late medieval and early modern Tyrol. As is evident in the writings of chroniclers of sixteenth century Tyrol, military service was a significant aspect of the lives of the peasantry and townsfolk. Military campaigns, whether they be wars with neighboring duchies or "death feuds" (Totschlagsfehde) between nobles, were unwelcome interruptions in their lives. Not surprisingly, then, the topic of who was obliged to serve and for how long, was an "exceedingly controversial" one between noble and peasant, Bürgermeister and townsfolks, particularly from the fifteenth century onward. Not surprisingly, the "military constitution" framing the parameters of service became increasingly detailed and sophisticated.⁴⁹

For townsfolk, the genesis of codified civilian military obligations appears to have evolved from earlier civil defense duties such as watch duty (Wachtdienst).⁵⁰ The city of Salzburg, for example, obliged citizens to man and defend the towers at Mönchsberg and its gates. In another instance, an executive decree (Ausfergenurkunde) dated 31 January, 1278, required six crossbowman units (Armbrustschützen) to help defend the bridge,

⁴⁹ Martin P. Schennach, *Ritter, Landsknecht, Aufgebot: Quellen zum Tyrolean Kriegswesen 14.-17. Jahrhundert* (Innsbruck: Tiroler Landesarchiv, 2004), 11, 15, 33. The other, Schennach argues, is the Tyrolean Landmiliz, which will be addressed further below.

⁵⁰ Franz Schweyger, *Chronik der Stadt Hall, 1303-1572*, ed. David von Schönherr (Innsbruck: Wagner Universität Buchhandlung, 1867), 32, cited in Franz-Heinz von Hye, *Die Tiroler Schützen und ihre Geschichte* (Bozen, 2001).

ramparts, and walls of the city of Laufen (Salzburg).⁵¹ Nearly a century later, little had changed. Townsfolk remained obliged to perform civil defense duties. The Tyrolean city of Hall, for example, paid two watchmen at a time, stationed in the “Hallerturm” in 1365.⁵²

Civil defense duties expanded to encompass more sophisticated schemes of military preparedness (militärische Bereitschaft). In one detailed example, a city captain (Stadthauptmann), typically a noble, and often the city’s mayor (Bürgermeister), oversaw district captains (Bezirkshauptmann), who commanded militia units from their respective districts of the city. This system of organization, used in the city of Hall, is among the earliest incarnations of civil defense in Tyrol. Further indications of the increasingly sophisticated nature of the Tyrol’s civil defense system can be found in documents such as a muster list (Musterregister) for the city of Lienz (Tyrol) from to 1410, which included not just the personal information of the militiamen but also the weapons that they were trained to use.⁵³ In the late Middle Ages, such measures were local initiatives and, thus, varied greatly from one municipality to the next. Nevertheless, in Tyrol and across Europe, militia systems (Schützenwesen) were refined and standardized over the next five centuries.

The transition from melee to ranged weapons, contributed greatly to the transition from well-trained, expensive, and unwieldy Söldnerheer (mercenary armies) to the formation of standing armies and the recruitment of subjects for militia duty.⁵⁴ Officers

⁵¹ Friederike Zaisberger, Fritz Hörmann, eds. *Salzburgs Schützen und Bürgergarden: Landesverteidigung und Brauchtum* (Salzburg: Landesverband Salzburger Volkskultur, 1996), 21.

⁵² Hye, *Die Tiroler Schützen*, 9.

⁵³ Hye, *Die Tiroler Schützen*, 10.

⁵⁴ Schennach, *Ritter, Landsknecht, Aufgebot*, 16.

could train civilians to use crossbows and muskets in a comparatively short amount of time with a reasonable degree of efficiency, as opposed to mounted knights (Ritter), or mercenary foot soldiers (Fußtruppen) who required much more extensive military training to become proficient with the melee weapons. City governments constructed shooting ranges (Schießstände) outside city walls to provide spaces to drill and practice marksmanship on set days on the calendar.⁵⁵ In 1461 in the city of Hall, a “shooting order” (Schießenordnung) was introduced that required shooting practice every Sunday.⁵⁶ Shooting ranges became crucial components in Tyrol’s system of defense (Landesverteidigung) in numerous facets beyond shooting exercises. They came to function, more importantly, as spaces where war volunteerism and dynastic patriotism converged with pastimes such as shooting competitions and hunting, fashioning a culture of civic militarism that became innately intertwined with the regional identity of Tyroleans.

In 1511, Holy Roman Emperor, Maximilian I, signed the much-venerated Tyrolean “Landlibell,” which obligated the County of Tyrol to provide the emperor with militia forces ranging between 5,000 and 20,000 troops, depending on the severity of the threat. In exchange for this commitment, Tyrolean militiamen would not have to campaign outside of Tyrol.⁵⁷ Despite the reverence attained among Schützenkompanies, the Landlibell codified administrative practices that had already been in place—some

⁵⁵ Schennach, *Ritter, Landsknecht, Aufgebot*, 28; Laurence Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland: Nationale Identität der deutschsprachigen Bevölkerung Tirols 1860-1914* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2000), 415.

⁵⁶ “Notizen über das alte Schützenwesen in Hall,” *Volks- und Schützen-Zeitung*, January 2, 1863, 5.

⁵⁷ F. Gunther Eyck, *Loyal Rebels: Andreas Hofer and the Tyrolean Uprising of 1809* (New York: American University Press, 1986), 9-10.

long before 1511.⁵⁸ For example, in 1497 Tyrol was quartered for the express purpose of military mobilization. Each of the four regions had to provide up to 5,000 men depending on the degree to which the state was threatened.⁵⁹

While Tyroleans long placed much emphasis on the importance of this document as conferring special rights and a greater degree independence, it was not a unique arrangement. The Habsburgs had reached similar agreements with neighboring duchies before the Landlibell von 1511. In Lower Austria, the first set of laws declaring general levies in a state of emergency were written between 1278 and 1281. In Styria, similar defense edicts had been in place since 1443. In same year (1511), the Habsburgs brokered similar covenants in Vorarlberg and Carinthia.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, the Landlibell was critical in that it laid the foundation for the Landesverteidigung (Tyrolean defense system), which, more or less, lasted until the collapse of the Habsburg Empire in 1918. It established recruitment quotas for judicial districts and four-year obligations to the farmers and citizens that filled out its ranks with required weapons exercises in peace time. The right of militiamen to own their own firearms and the increasing availability of firearms helped facilitate the establishment of shooting ranges and the popular pastime of target shooting. What resulted was an increase in the number of shooting ranges being constructed and rifle clubs or guilds being established, most typically in or around more densely populated Tyrolean towns.⁶¹ The Landlibell, established the Landesverteidigung,

⁵⁸ Martin Schennach, „Zum Tiroler Landlibell von 1511“ (Innsbruck: Tiroler Landesarchiv, 2011), 1-2.

⁵⁹ Eyck, *Loyal Rebels*, 9-10.

⁶⁰ Schennach, „Zum Tiroler Landlibell von 1511“, 2.

⁶¹ “Standeschützen,” Tiroler Landesarchiv, Archivglossar – S, accessed April 23, 2015, <https://www.tirol.gv.at/kunst-kultur/landesarchiv/glossar/archivglossar-s/>

which created a framework for the militarization of Tyrolean society not only through militia service, but also by fostering its gun culture.

The growing fear of Ottoman invasion of Habsburg lands offered Maximilian I an opportunity to create a mutual defense policy in the form of the 1518 “Innsbrucker Libell.” Nevertheless, in terms of defense, the policy sought to secure the cooperation of the individual provinces. That is, the fragmented character of the Habsburg lands (Landesfürsten) was not only acknowledged in defense agreements, but those agreements perpetuated their individuality. The geopolitical landscape of medieval and early modern Austria guided imperial defense policy and would have a lasting effect on the identity of the Austrian people.⁶²

By 1633, the Thirty Years War had raged throughout Europe almost continuously for fifteen years, prompting further refinements of the Tyrolean civil defense system. Archduke Maximilian III increased community militia quotas, requiring men between the ages of 24 and 45 to perform militia service. The decree also required regular military exercises (every two weeks on Sundays and public holidays).⁶³ The law divided into military districts, created an “Unteroffizierskorps.” The county appointed uniformed officers who possessed authority to implement martial law in communities directly threatened by war.⁶⁴ The excessive brutality of the Thirty Years War—particularly

⁶² Michaela Fahlenbock, “Das ‘Libell der Rüstung Halben’ Ein Ergebnis des Innsbrucker Ausschusslandtags 1518” (Innsbruck: Tiroler Landesarchiv, 2013); Jakob Andreas von Brandis, *Die Geschichte der Landeshauptleute von Tirol* (Innsbruck: Wagner, 1850), 446-494; Ferdinand Schmid, *Das heeresrecht der Österreichisch-Ungarnischen Monarchie* (Wien: F. Tempsky, 1908), 2.

⁶³ Eyck, *Loyal Rebels*, 11. Eyck compares the Landmiliz units to American minutemen in terms of their “localism, formations, drill, and light armament,” while “Their services were required only sporadically and then for brief periods.”

⁶⁴ Martin P. Schennach, „Das Gutachten Hans Khüenings über die Tiroler Landmiliz vom Juni 1633“ (Innsbruck: Tiroler Landesarchiv), 1-2; Hye, *Die Tyrolean Schützen und ihre Geschichte*, 25-8.

toward civilians—wore on soldiers and populations alike, making it increasingly difficult to get militiamen to fulfill their service requirements. Some refused to from the outset while others marched out, slipping away later at an opportune moment, to return home.⁶⁵

The constant presence of violence and armed combat in the Middle Ages and the early modern era, forged crucial values of military obligation and sacrifice for family and community. This is not to imply that Habsburg subjects accepted military service without question; the examples above indicate quite the opposite. Rather, it was a protracted negotiation of expectations and limits that was an understood facet of ordinary life. Though the Tyrolean Landmiliz reforms reflected the circumstances specific to 1633, it also increased the proximity between civilians and military service in its demands for increased militia quotas. It also marked an increasingly formalized and sophisticated system of training and mobilization.

In the late seventeenth century, private gun clubs began organizing and fielding sharp shooter units in times of conflict. The defense order (*Zuzugsordnung*) of 1704 codified the informal, voluntary actions, obligating sharp shooter companies to mobilize as called upon. Separate from the Landmiliz, they elected their officers, a tradition that remained intact over 200 years later when the *Standeschützen* were mobilized in 1915 to protect Tyrol's Italian border.⁶⁶ This tradition was also a defining feature of the *Heimwehren*, which distinguished it from fascist paramilitary groups that operated under the *Führerprinzip* (leadership principle), which emphasized blind obedience to one's superiors. As it were, it prevented the development of a "cult of leadership" that defined

⁶⁵ Martin P. Schennach, „Das Gutachten Hans Khüenings,“ 3.

⁶⁶ „Standeschützen.“

the National Socialist and Italian fascist movements. Moreover, the continuity of this democratic feature enabled factionalism to develop within the provincial groups and the federal level.⁶⁷

By the mid-eighteenth century, the first levy of Tyrolean militiamen was organized into four regiments, which represented the first line of defense and the provinces' most able-bodied men. These regiments mustered for inspection and drills twice biannually. The units formed from the second and third levies were mobilized "only in case of imminent enemy threat." Virtually any and every able-bodied Tyrolean stood in defense of his community in one of these levies. Lengthy periods of peace and inactivity in the eighteenth century eroded the social and cultural resonance of civic militarism militia in the identity of Tyroleans. The French invasion of Tyrol in 1796 revived these virtues, however temporarily; the role played by Tyrolean sharp shooters remains a source of veneration in the collective memory to this day.⁶⁸ Over time these various levies and the military formations to which they belonged, represented the three "pillars" of the Tyrolean Landesverteidigung: The Landeschützen (a provincial guard), the Standschützen (sharp shooter units), and the Landsturm (militia).⁶⁹

The Tyrolean Landesverteidigung underwent numerous refinements over the centuries, but overall, the system remained largely unaltered over the centuries and continually stood out as the exception to otherwise universal changes instituted in the

⁶⁷ The ousting of Drs. Richard Steidle and Walter Pfrimer from the federal leadership is an excellent example.

⁶⁸ Schmid, *Das Heeresrecht*, 2; There have been countless books written about the exploits of the heroic martyr Andreas Hofer, leader of the Tyrolean rebellion against Bavarian occupation in 1809. Celebration of the mythologized Hofer and other leaders of the uprising have taken on a life of its own in Tyrol.

⁶⁹ "Standschützen."

Habsburg military. The provincial government consistently rebuffed imperial efforts to integrate Tyrol into its general military framework (such as, the imperial army's unsuccessful attempt to introduce conscription in 1785 in Tyrol). Even the dramatic changes the empire's military underwent during the monarchy's transition to the dualist system were not enough to effect change on the Tyrolean system (whereas it had succeeded in other areas such as the old military border region of Croatia and in southern Dalmatia). The relationship between Tyrolean militia formations and the imperial government "remained informal and without legal foundation in the 1868 law."⁷⁰ Only in 1870 did the imperial army finally implement compulsory military service in Tyrol in conjunction with its increasingly codified defense system.⁷¹

Of particular importance to the Landesverteidigung was the Tyrolean Schießstandswesen. As Laurence Cole points out, the shooting guilds who constructed many of these shooting ranges, were not originally a part of the Tyrolean provincial defense system, but were reflections of corporative (noble) privilege. The term "Schützen," then, carried the meaning of "shooter," rather than "protector."⁷² With the democratization of firearms, private and government-funded shooting ranges became an integral part of Tyrolean society, serving a variety of functions. Shooting competitions had been commonplace in Tyrol since the mid-fifteenth century, with imperial, state, or local officials offering prize money for the best shooters in various categories.⁷³ In addition, the Habsburg government supplemented the shooting ranges with annual

⁷⁰ Scott W. Lackey, *The Rebirth of the Habsburg Army: Friedrich Beck and the Rise of the General Staff* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1995), 132.

⁷¹ Schmid, *Das heeresrecht*, 3-7.

⁷² Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland*, 415.

⁷³ Eyck, *Loyal Rebels*, 8.

“gifts,” (Gnadengaben), drawing the ranges and guilds into the imperial military system. By the mid-eighteenth century, the imperial government, in conjunction with the Tyrolean Ministry of Defense, implemented a new Schießstandsordnung (shooting range order), which instituted an increasingly standardized structure and hierarchy, as well as practices and procedures for all imperial shooting ranges in Tyrol and Vorarlberg.⁷⁴

As the 1845 shooting range order (Schießstandsordnung) indicates, the Tyrolean shooting range system mirrored the Austrian government and society in that it was a top down organization, with the Governor standing as its principal overseer. The shooting range system also closely paralleled the government administrative structures. Section one of the 1845 order recognizes the main provincial shooting range to be in Innsbruck, while order named seven counties (which also served as district court ranges) shooting ranges in Bregenz (Vorarlberg), Imst, Schwatz, Bruneck, Bozen, Trient, and Rovereto; the county shooting range in Meran was “entitled to equal respect.”⁷⁵ In order to petition the Governor for a new range to be constructed, communities had to have a least twenty Schützen enrolled shooters. Once approved, the new imperial shooting range was entitled to its own flag with its own name, unique shield, and seal, alongside the Habsburg imperial eagle. In the 1845/6 revision of the Schießstandsordnung, communities constructing imperial shooting ranges would receive an annual contribution of 40,000 florins from the imperial coffers. Additionally, ranges received another 40,000 florins

⁷⁴ On August 3, 1736 Kaiser Ferdinand I decreed the first *Schießstandsordnung*, which remained unaltered until 1845/6. *Schießstand-Ordnung für Tirol und Vorarlberg* (Innsbruck: Wagner, 1846), 1.

⁷⁵ *Schießstand-Ordnung für Tirol und Vorarlberg*, 1. “Schießstands-Ordnung,” *Tiroler Schützen-Zeitung*, July 9, 1946, 9; Vorarlberg’s hierarchy also included the “Präses der Stände” (Church President) as well as “Kreishauptmanne” (district chiefs).

toward the purchase of rifles and ammunition members could use, but remained the state property (Ärar) of the range.⁷⁶

The compact between the imperial government and the Tyrolean shooting range system required that all ranges keep detailed records of its membership in the form of Matrikelbücher (enrollment books). These books contained the rights and duties of members and member information. The ranges kept enrollment books for documentation and collecting shooting fees, but also for the purpose of maintaining muster lists for the Standschützen units, should they be called upon by the Kaiser to protect Tyrol's borders in times of war. Upon reaching eighteen years of age, young men *could* enter into the ranks of a shooting guild.⁷⁷ Reforms to the Landesverteidigung and the Schießstandsordnung in the wake of the Franco-Austrian War in 1859 required men between the ages of 18 to 30 to enroll at their local shooting range.⁷⁸

Oversight of the shooting ranges was the responsibility of the Oberschützenmeister (Shooting Master) along with an Unterschützenmeister (Lieutenant Shooting Master) and a “corresponding number” of Schützenrat (shooting council) members, typically senior members of the guilds.⁷⁹ The “corresponding number” pertained to the status of the shooting range, as previously addressed. Ranges were either the main provincial range, a county range, a court district range, or a municipal range. The main provincial range in Innsbruck retained an eight-man shooter council, while at the county ranges maintained a six-man council. The district court ranges were allowed a

⁷⁶ *Schießstand-Ordnung für Tirol und Vorarlberg*, 6.

⁷⁷ *Schießstand-Ordnung für Tirol und Vorarlberg*, 4-6.

⁷⁸ Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland*, 422.

⁷⁹ Eventually, streamlining reforms to the Landesverteidigung and the Schießstandsordnung merged the Landeshauptmann of Tyrol with the role of provincial Oberschützenmeister.

two to four-man council depending on the size of the range. Range members elected this administrative hierarchy, who served fixed terms of service in their roles; the Oberschützenmeister served for a duration of five years, the Unterschützenmeister for four, and Schützenrat members, for two.⁸⁰ Their duties and responsibilities consisted of all manner of shooting range business, including asset management, handling disciplinary matters, and jurisdiction over shooting matters.⁸¹

The grandest event among the Tyrolean shooting guilds was the imperial open shooting competition (Kaiserlichen Freischießen). The shooting festival cycled through the cities of Innsbruck and Trient, Bregenz and Bozen/Meran (alternatively), Bruneck and Imst, and Rovereto and Schwatz. The Kaiser would supply 200 ducats to assist the city hosting the competition for that year.⁸² The best shooters from their respective ranges were entitled to participate in the imperial shooting competition where they would compete for prizes (Gnadengaben) offered by the emperor. These often included a wreath-shaped target and a financial reward for the best shooter, which varied from one competition to another and from year to year.⁸³

In the comparatively peaceful decades following the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, Kaiser Ferdinand I had encouraged the continued health of the Standschützen and Tyrol's shooting ranges.⁸⁴ By the latter decades of the nineteenth century, the Tyrolean Schützenwesen thrived beyond what would have been his wildest

⁸⁰ The Governor could, at his discretion, remove these elected leaders in critical situations; *Schießstand-Ordnung für Tirol und Vorarlberg*, Section III, 7-9.

⁸¹ "Schießstands-Ordnung," *Tiroler Schützen-Zeitung*, July 9, 1846, 10-11.

⁸² "Schießstands-Ordnung," 12.

⁸³ *Schießstand-Ordnung für Tirol und Vorarlberg*, 6; Special thanks to Laurence Cole for his assistance in helping me make sense of, and contextualize, the terms *Gnadengaben* and *Gnadenschiessen*.

⁸⁴ "Allerhöchste Entschließung," *Tiroler Schützen-Zeitung*, July 2, 1846, 4.

expectations. Despite the military inadequacies of the Schießstandswesen, by 1875 there were 330 registered shooting ranges, 412 in 1895, and 501 by 1913.⁸⁵ In the period between 1880 and 1914 overall shooting range membership doubled and, in nearly a quarter of the ranges, tripled.⁸⁶ In preparation for the Jahrhundertsfeier (centenary celebration) in 1909, the centennial celebration of the 1809 Tyrolean uprising, of the shooting ranges recorded, 359 had a predominantly German speaking membership.⁸⁷ The renovation and expansion of shooting ranges in Tyrol, Cole points out, was a product of genuine patriotism as well as friendly competition between neighboring communities.⁸⁸ At the same time the Tyrolean network of shooting ranges experienced exponential growth, the Landesverteidigungsgesetz (provincial defense law) of 1887 integrated the ranges into the larger imperial military infrastructure to serve as mobilization nodes and the sites where *Landsturm* men would take part in obligatory long distance shooting drills. From an organizational perspective, little changed except for the institution at the levers of power.⁸⁹

The 1913 provincial defense law and shooting range order of 1913 was the final step in the full militarization of the shooting range system, integrating the last levee, the

⁸⁵ “Standsschützen.”

⁸⁶ Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland*, 432.

⁸⁷ Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland*, 434.

⁸⁸ Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland*, 437-442. Cole details the case of the Wängle Schießstand to demonstrate his point.

⁸⁹ Wolfgang Joly, *Standsschützen. Die Tiroler und Vorarlberger k.k. Standsschützen-Formationen im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Innsbruck: Wagner, 1998), 15. For the sake of clarification, the *Landesschützen* was integrated into the *Landwehr* in 1870 and the *Kaiserjäger* was created in 1816 as units of the imperial army. This left the *Landsturm*, which was essentially a reserve militia body to be mobilized to defend the empire's borders should their integrity be threatened.

Standeschützen, into official military hierarchy.⁹⁰ Little had changed in terms of the place of the shooting ranges in Tyrol's overarching system of defense. Despite the order's claim that the shooting range system was "an independent institution without military incorporation," it is clear that the network had been streamlined into the Habsburg military system.⁹¹ Quite explicitly the law states: "The institution of provincial defense is organized through the shooting range system."⁹² Moreover, it adds, Tyrol's militia formations, as well as the *k.k. Schießstände*, were to maintain a "military character."⁹³ In the event of war and general mobilization, veterans' association members—who comprised the bulk of the emergency *Standeschützen* companies—functioned as a "volunteer" (*Freiwillige*) pool of emergency troops.⁹⁴

The 1913 shooting range order also tasked the members of the shooting ranges themselves with the responsibility of the general well-being of the shooting range system as an institution of provincial defense, to arrange formal training for young "Schützen" in the handling of firearms, and "to enliven the public spirit of the Schützen for the defense of the Fatherland and loyalty to the Kaiser." To accomplish the penultimate task, they were to establish "Jungschützenschulen" (young shooter schools) to train youths to handle army rifles and get acquainted with the shooting range system, thereby better

⁹⁰ Christoph von Hartungen, "Die Tiroler und Vorarlberger *Standeschützen*—Mythos und Realität," in *Tirol und der Erste Weltkrieg*, Klaus Eisterer and Rolf Steininger, eds. (Innsbruck: Österreich StudienVerlag, 1995), 63.

⁹¹ "Das neue Landesverteidigungs-Gesetz für Tirol samt der neue Schießstandsordnung und Verordnung über die Begünstigen der *Standeschützen*," p.16, §1, last modified January 1, 2005, <http://www.literature.at/viewer.alo?objid=13834>.

⁹² "Das neue Landesverteidigungs-Gesetz," p.17, Schießstandsordnung, §1; *k.k.* is an abbreviation for *Kaiserlich und Königlich*, or Imperial and Royal.

⁹³ "Das neue Landesverteidigungs-Gesetz," p.10, Landesverteidigung-Gesetz, § 17.

⁹⁴ Joly, *Standeschützen*, 15; Hartungen, "Die Tiroler und Vorarlberger *Standeschützen*," 63.

preparing youths for their compulsory military service and expanding its military potential to include older youths.⁹⁵ The Jungschützenschulen reflected a further formalization of longstanding practices. By 1865, if not earlier, a “Jungschützen” class appeared in Tyrol’s imperial shooting festivals.⁹⁶ By 1868, the involvement of youths in local shooting ranges took another step toward the Jungschützenschulen through the creation of youth shooting groups (Jugendschützengesellschaft) who met regularly and engaged in shooting exercises and competitions.⁹⁷ As will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter as well as in chapter three, the youth organizations established by the Heimwehren carried on this tradition of acclimating Austrian youths to handling rifles and marksmanship. With the prohibition of compulsory military service, it also took on the task of instilling military education and virtues into its young members.

The 1913 defense laws reflected the successful revival of popular interest in Tyrol’s gun culture. The construction of new shooting ranges, the renovation of old ones, and the consolidation of less active ranges created a bustling and ideologically healthy system. On a practical level, consolidation of less active ranges served the purpose of simplifying administrative processes, maintenance, and upkeep.⁹⁸ Broadly speaking, it was the culmination of a slow, methodical process of integrating the principal elements of

⁹⁵ “Das neue Landesverteidigungs-Gesetz,” Schießstandsordnung, §5, 19; After 1859, the use of army rifles in shooting exercises was implemented across the shooting range system; Hartungen, “Die Tiroler und Vorarlberger Standschützen,” 63.

⁹⁶ See for example *Volks- und Schützen-Zeitung*, No.77, June 28, 1865, 404; *Volks- und Schützen-Zeitung*, No.145, December 4, 1865, 757.

⁹⁷ See for example *Volks- und Schützen-Zeitung*, No.71, June 12, 1868, 339; *Volks- und Schützen-Zeitung*, No.75, June 22, 1868, 363; *Volks- und Schützen-Zeitung*, No.78, June 30, 1868, 383; *Volks- und Schützen-Zeitung*, No.122, October 9, 1868, 595; *Volks- und Schützen-Zeitung*, No.136, November 11, 1868, 662.

⁹⁸ “Das neue Landesverteidigungs-Gesetz,” p.20, Schießstandsordnung, §7.

Tyrol's militia defense system—the volunteer Standschützen and the shooting range system around which they were organized—into the Habsburg military hierarchy.

Schützenkompanies in the field

From their earliest incarnations, Tyrol's rifle ranges and war were inextricably intertwined. They were important support centers of the three "pillars" of the *Landesverteidigung*, providing spaces for weapons training, volunteer mobilization, dynastic patriotism, and, in the late imperial era, spaces of imperial mobilization. Throughout the military history of the early modern Habsburg Empire, shooting range members, or *Schützen*, laid down the 'tools of their trades,' retrieved their rifles and powder, and defended *Vaterland Tirol*.⁹⁹ Eyck makes the apt comparison of Tyrolean militiamen to colonial American militiamen "in their localism, formations, drill, and light armament" as well as in fact that they were used only periodically and for a brief time.¹⁰⁰ One might also draw similarities in their democratic nature and the fact that units elected their officers—almost always men who were respected figures in their communities and in some cases wealthy and influential in their respective communities. This unique attribute distinguished the sharpshooter units from those of regular imperial army.

Provincial *Schützen* detachments participated in the military campaigns of the empire's major conflicts of the nineteenth century. Their most celebrated achievement,

⁹⁹ Leighton James, "For the Fatherland? The Motivations of Austrian and Prussian Volunteers during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars," in *War Volunteering in Modern Times: From the French Revolution to the Second World War*, eds. Christine G. Krüger and Sonja Levsen (London: Palgrave, 2010), 40-58.

¹⁰⁰ Eyck, *Loyal Rebels*, 11.

however, was the 1809 Tyrolean uprising. In 1809, Tyrolean militiamen spearheaded military operations against French and Bavarians forces while the regular Austrian army served in an auxiliary capacity.¹⁰¹ The successful ouster of their French and Bavarian occupiers by the Tyrolean Standschützen became the centerpiece of Tyrolean lore. The story of the insurrection and its leading figures became legendary and an inextricably intertwined component of Tyrolean identity. Contemporary chronicler Jakob Bartholdy explained, “The most distinguished heads of civil and military matters in the war of 1809, the most remarkable in the history of the princely county, —were from the peasantry.”¹⁰² In the more rural areas of Tyrol there was little distinction between nobles and wealthier peasantry. It was individuals of this strata led local Tyrolean militia groups. Since the peasantry accounted for approximately 85 percent of the population in Tyrol in 1809, its militia companies had a similarly peasant complexion. The largely peasant-driven insurrection reflected a developing fissure between town and countryside.¹⁰³

Innkeepers, for several reasons, played an especially prominent role in organizing and leading the Tyrolean insurgency. Four reasons, in particular, account for their conspicuous representation in the leading ranks. First, they were among the wealthier strata, owning their properties and businesses, which often made them influential figures in their respective communities. Second, inns often set at strategically important mountain passes where traffic—and information—flowed, making them ideally placed in

¹⁰¹ Eyck, *Loyal Rebels*, 76.

¹⁰² Jakob L.S. Bartholdy, *Der Krieg der Tyrolean Landleute im Jahre 1809* (Berlin: Julius Eduard Hitzig, 1814), 11. It is worth noting that the 1809 uprising was preceded by revolts in 1796-7, and 1805 against French and Bavarian occupation.

¹⁰³ Eyck, *Loyal Rebels*, 12-13.

a position to communicate important information gleaned from guests and outside connections established by the nature of their business. Third, they were usually able to read and write and were shrewd businessmen. Lastly, inns often boasted shooting ranges and offered a convenient space to stow rebel weapons caches.¹⁰⁴

The most revered figure of the rebellion, Andreas Hofer, was a South Tyrolean innkeeper whose inn, the *Sandhof*, lay at the base of the Jaufen Pass that linked North and South Tyrol. Hofer served as the commander of all Tyrolean militia forces and, after the successfully expelling their French and Bavarian occupiers, was recognized by Kaiser Franz I as the Regent of Tyrol. His position, success, and “martyr’s death” elevated Hofer to a mythical status among Tyroleans in the decades and centuries that followed.

According to a Tyrolean noble and contemporary of Hofer, Baron Josef von Hormayr, he was “the representative of the Tyrolean general will in 1809.”¹⁰⁵ It would perhaps be more accurate to say that Hofer's sentiments represented the general will of the countryside, which consistently exhibited devotion to the House of Habsburg and its respect of traditional privileges exercised by Tyroleans. The 1809 insurrection was commemorated throughout nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Hofer and other figures such as Joseph Speckbacher and Joachim Haspinger, the Capuchin monk, insurrection orchestrator, and battlefield commander, became symbols of Tyrolean virtues of patriotism, dynastic loyalty, and civic militarism.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Bartholdy, *Der Krieg der Tyrolean Landleute*, 11; Josef Rapp, *Tirol im Jahre 1809* (Innsbruck: F. Rauch, 1852), 55 cited in Eyck, *Loyal Rebels*, 16.

¹⁰⁵ Josef von Hormayr, *Das Land Tyrol und der Tyrolerkrieg von 1809. Geschichte Andreas Hofer's Sandwirths aus Passyr, Oberführers der Tyroler im Kriege von 1809* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1845), 11 cited in Eyck, *Loyal Rebels*, 16-17.

¹⁰⁶ Laurence Cole, “The Construction of German Identity in Tirol, c. 1848-1945,” in *Regionale Bewegungen und Regionalismen in europäischen Zwischenräumen seit der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, eds. Philipp Ther, Holm Sundhaussen, et al (Marburg: Verlag Herder-Institut, 2003), 30-31.

Much of the success of the 1809 insurrection can be attributed to only lightly-manned Bavarian garrisons, the overwhelming support of peasant militia volunteers, and the adept use of unconventional, guerrilla tactics that utilized their intimate knowledge of the mountain landscape. Moreover, many commanders of the sharpshooter companies in 1809 had also fought against the French in their initial invasion of Tyrol in 1796, so they had combat experience.¹⁰⁷ Combined, these factors enabled the Shützen companies to compensate for whatever they lacked in organization and military discipline. Ultimately, it was military defeat elsewhere and that forced the Austrian Empire—if but temporarily—to end its support of the rebels and its claims to the Tyrol.

Though there were varying degrees of cooperation with the small Austrian Army force aiding the rebellion, the popular revolt was only loosely organized; the recurring pattern of "everybody commanded themselves" is readily apparent in the primary source literature.¹⁰⁸ The voluntary participation of the militiamen and their leaders exemplifies the already strong legacy of civic militarism established by 1809. Moreover, the civilian nature of the Tyrolean insurrection was also demonstrated in Hofer's call for numerous war councils, which included Schützen companies leaders and Landsturm commanders, in order to get their input on the state of the situation and develop strategic and tactical responses.¹⁰⁹ The nature of the insurrection was a seesaw affair in which Tyrolean militia forces would take control over Tyrolean cities only to be forced to abandon them shortly thereafter in the face of a reinforced enemy and, ultimately, Austrian defeat at the Battle

¹⁰⁷ Eyck, *Loyal Rebels*, 49.

¹⁰⁸ Josef Hirn, *Tirols Erhebung im Jahre 1809* (Innsbruck: Heinrich Scwiek, 1909), 593, second footnote, cited in Eyck, *Loyal Rebels*, 118.

¹⁰⁹ Eyck, *Loyal Rebels*, 89.

of Znaim (Moravia). Few Schützen wore uniforms of any sort, rather most were identifiable only by their plumes of feathers, peacock tails, or sprigs of rosemary.¹¹⁰ From concealed positions, Tyrolean sharpshooters harassed French and Bavarian ranks to great effect. They also, at various times, felled trees, and rolled large rocks down from enemy troops.¹¹¹



Figure 2. The tomb of Andreas Hofer in the Hofkirche, Innsbruck, Austria.

(Photo by the Author)

Not typically found in the commemorations of the brave Schützen of 1809 is what took place in the aftermath of the first and second seizures of Innsbruck (April 11-12,

¹¹⁰ Bartholdy, *Der Krieg der Tyrolean Landleute*, 21

¹¹¹ Eyck, *Loyal Rebels*, 66-7, 93, 115, 117.

1809). Numerous Schützen took to looting businesses and residences of purported Bavarian sympathizers, Jews, or homes of wealthy residents that simply looked worth looting. The general mistrust between the peasantry and city residents—a feature that had and would continue to surface—found expression in the pillaging.¹¹² While there were undoubtedly Bavarian sympathizers in Innsbruck and others indifferent to Bavarian rule, much of the plundering underscored the diverging outlooks between city and countryside. This dichotomy remained firmly intact decades later and would be exacerbated by Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, which threatened the rise of the urban, working class in revolution against the bourgeois capitalist system. As his treatise gained adherents among the urban, working class, Austrian cities became symbols of Marxism for its peasant and bourgeois opponents. This was the backdrop for which the Heimwehren and the Marxist Republikanischer Schutzbund (Republican Defense League) would do battle throughout the duration of the First Republic.

In 1816, after the final defeat of Napoleon and Tyrol was restored to the Austrian Empire, it was required to contribute manpower directly to the imperial army in the form of a Kaiserjäger Regiment. Maintenance of a standing regiment garrisoned in Tyrol increased the financial strain for the Tyrolean government (Landesregierung). The weakening of Tyrol's traditional militia defense system was the intended effect of this directive from Vienna, as it hoped to increase its authority in the process.¹¹³ As a result, the Landesverteidigung fell increasingly into financial neglect, which would prove readily apparent in subsequent actions in which Schützenkompanien participated.

¹¹² Eyck, *Loyal Rebels*, 69.

¹¹³ Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland*, 417.

Quite unlike the 1809 rebellion in Tyrol, Schützenkompanies in subsequent conflicts would be the ones playing only minor auxiliary roles. During the revolutions of 1848-49, Italian nationalists seeking to create a unified Italian state challenged Habsburg sovereignty in the crown land of Lombardy-Venetia, and in the largely Italian-speaking region of South Tyrol. While six volunteer Schützen battalions from Styria took part in Field Marshal Josef Radetzky's famous campaign to reassert Habsburg control in Lombardy-Venetia, some 144 German-Tyrolean Schützenkompanies—a total of 16,653 men—engaged Italian revolutionaries on the south Tyrolean border in Judikarien, the Ampezzo, and Stilfser Joch.¹¹⁴ While the spirit of patriotism, dynastic loyalty, and war volunteerism was high in the Schützenkompanies, their performance in the field left much to be desired according to Habsburg officers. The mayor of Bozen, Josef Streiter, complained in 1848 that Schützen troops were unreliable and required close supervision by officers.¹¹⁵ As a whole, the Tyrolean Landesverteidigung was in a state disarray and lacked the organization and arms to field reliable militia units.¹¹⁶

Military opinions of Tyrolean militiamen and their system of mobilization remained low during and after the 1859 war with Piedmont and France. An army report from Rattenberg complained of insufficiency of the Schützenkompanies weapons as well as their training.¹¹⁷ Furthermore, Feldmarschall-Leutnant Maximilian von Baumgarten

¹¹⁴ Dem Ausschusse des historischen Vereines für Styria, *Die Styriaischen Schützen-Freiwillige-Bataillon und ihre Leistungen in den Jahren 1848-1849* (Graz, 1857) for a contemporary account of the battalion's campaign in Lombardy-Venetia. The official history of the campaign is *Der Feldzug der Österreichischen Armee in Italien im Jahre 1848* (Wien: Kaiserlich-Königlich Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1852); Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland*, 419.

¹¹⁵ Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland*, 420.

¹¹⁶ Karl Freiherr von Schoenhals, *Erinnerungen eines oesterreichischen Verteranen aus dem Italienischen Kriege der Jahre 1848 und 1849* (Stuttgart: J.G. Cotta Verlag, 1852), 174.

¹¹⁷ Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland*, 426.

found the process of mobilizing the Schützenkompanies “inadequate and in need of improvement.” The antiquated practice of Schützen using their own personal rifles had also run its course; the army would need to supply the companies with military grade weapons. Furthermore, Baumgarten complained, Schützenkompanies were too large and that elected officers should maintain their positions in peacetime and supervise further training.¹¹⁸ Post-war reforms in late 1859 required Schützen to use military rifles when conducting their obligatory shooting exercises in hopes of acclimating the sharpshooters and militia companies with the rifles.

In 1866, the Austrian Empire faced war on two fronts. In the north, the k.k. Nordarmee, along with its southern German allies, faced a Prussian-led north German coalition. In the south, the empire faced the Kingdom of Italy, which was determined to take the remaining Italian-speaking areas under Austrian control, including South Tyrol. This threat, as had been the case in 1848 and again in 1859, required the mobilization of the Tyrolean militia.¹¹⁹ The Schützen detachments that were deployed to the front lines spent much of their time fighting Garibaldi's invasion of South Tyrol.¹²⁰ In the face of mobilization for war in 1866, members of the Innsbruck-Sonnenburg sharpshooter company were more concerned about their “lack of weapons and money,” had to look to

¹¹⁸ Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland*, 421.

¹¹⁹ Geoffrey Wawro, *The Austro-Prussian War: Austria's War with Prussia and Italy in 1866* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996) provides a high-level military and diplomatic narrative of the events on both fronts.

¹²⁰ K.K. Generalstabs-Bureau für Kriegsgeschichte, *Österreichs Kampf im Jahre 1866, Band V* (Wien, Waldheim, 1869), 23-26. Interestingly, the *Landesschützen*, *Schützen*, and *Landsturm* companies, according to this account, elected their officers, a characteristic that, in World War I, only the *Standeschützen* retained. By the 1880s, *Landesschützen* formations had become the *Landwehr's* active-duty mountain troops.

local aristocracy for both.¹²¹ Post-war evaluations of the Landesverteidigungskommando corroborate concerns the Innsbruck-Sonnenberg unit faced, complaining once more of poorly armed, ill-trained Tyrolean militia volunteers. The fact that only four of the twenty Schützenkompanien mobilized were deployed to the front and no more than six were ever “dressed out” illustrated the lack of organization and exercises in the peacetime prior to outbreak of hostilities.¹²² Be that as it may, the large number of volunteers that turned out in 1866 demonstrated their willingness to defend “Vaterland Tirol” against foreign incursion.¹²³ Throughout the nineteenth century, Schützenkompanien actively participated in the defense of Tyrol's territorial integrity, Habsburg sovereignty, and values they symbolized—conservatism, Catholicism, and militarism. In the process, a rich tradition of civic militarism and war volunteerism was cultivated in the Schießstandswesen and through its sharpshooter companies.

It would not be until the outbreak of the First World War that Tyrolean Landsturm and Standschützen companies were mobilized again for war. In the forty-eight years between the Austro-Prussian War and World War I, the imperial army had fully integrated the Tyrolean Landesverteidigung and all of its institutions into the imperial infrastructure. In the first weeks and months of the war, Tyrol—for the first time—sent some 85,000 men to the fronts in Galicia and Serbia. Though traditionally understood as reserve levees to mobilize in the event that Tyrol's borders were threatened, the k.u.k.

Armeeoberkommando (AOK) mobilized Landsturm formations—across the Austro-

¹²¹ Viktor Laschan, *Erlebnisse der ersten freiwilligen Scharf-Schützen-Kompagnie Innsbruck-Sonnenburg, 1866* (Innsbruck: Vereins-Buckdruckerei, 1867), 3.

¹²² Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland*, 426-7.

¹²³ Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland*, 425-6. See footnote 34.

Hungarian Empire for that matter—almost immediately for front line service.

Subsequently, the AOK activated 25 Standschützen companies for training, watch duty, and to guard prisoners of war.¹²⁴ When Italy declared war on Austria-Hungary in May 1915, only the Standschützen companies and a few Tyrolean replacement battalions (Marschbattallione) remained in Tyrol and could be immediately deployed to defend its southern Alpine passes.

The composition of the Standschützen companies illustrated the totalizing effect of the First World War. With the exorbitant volume of casualties in the opening months of the war, the age limit for service in the *Landsturm* had to be expanded in both directions—from 19 years of age to 18 years of age and from 42 years of age to 50. This meant that the remaining individuals eligible for service in the Standschützen were either too young or too old to be conscripted into the Common Army or the Landwehr.¹²⁵ Thus, it would not have been unheard of for a grandfather serving in the *Standschützen* with his grandson. On July 9, 1915, 14 year old Standschütze, Josef Egger of the Sillian battalion, was killed in front line duty, despite directives that required youths under the age of 17 to remain behind the front lines, in support roles.¹²⁶ To be sure, the all-encompassing nature of the First World War reflected the climax of the militarization of European society that started in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. For Central Europe, the militarization of society did not end with the conclusion of the Great War. Instead, it was amplified in the “culture of defeat” that materialized in its aftermath. Many of the

¹²⁴ Joly, *Standschützen*, 17-18.

¹²⁵ This does not include those who worked in sectors vital to the imperial war effort. Those men were exempted from conscription in order to keep heavy industrial and munitions production going.

¹²⁶ Oswald Überegger, “Kinder im Krieg. Das Schicksal des 14jährige Kartitisher Standschützen Josef Egger” (Innsbruck: Tiroler Landesarchiv, 2004).

institutions that contributed to the militarization of society survived in a very real, physical sense or in the subconscious of those formative years were spent as soldiers and in the war.

The k.k. Schießstände as Cultural Fabric

Tyrolean shooting ranges served in numerous capacities, making them an invaluable lens into the *mentalité* of a significant cross-section of the population. In addition to being spaces where Tyrolean militiamen participated in their required shooting drills, the k.k. Schießstände were essential spaces for inculcating military culture, dynastic loyalty, and provincial patriotism as well as for socializing, camaraderie, and community shooting competitions. Shooting ranges in Tyrol, thus, were dynamic hubs where numerous facets of a Tyrolean's identity converged. As this section will illustrate, the shooting ranges were crucial nodes in the formation of identity and rituals. The interconnectedness of all of these facets of Tyrolean identity are captured nicely in the romanticized poetry of the early and mid-nineteenth century.

Hermann von Gilm's collection of poetry entitled *Tiroler Schützen-Leben* (*The Life of the Tyrolean Shooter*), self-published in honor of Tyrol's 500th anniversary under Habsburg sovereignty, offers a useful case-study.¹²⁷ The poems offer a window into the general outlook of the Tyrolean Standschützen in the mid-nineteenth century, highlighting the prominence of hunting and sport shooting in the communities and social lives of

¹²⁷ Hermann von Gilm, *Tiroler Schützen-Leben. Festgabe zur Feier der fünfhundertjährigen Vereinigung Tirols mit dem österreichischen herrscherhaufe* (Wagner: Innsbruck, 1863). Gilm, born in Innsbruck, was a lawyer, poet, and an enthusiast of Tyrol's Schützen tradition. Upon his passing a collection drive was taken up and a memorial to Gilm was placed in the Tyrolean State Museum in Innsbruck in October 1867. See *Volks- und Schützen-Zeitung*, No.122, October 11, 1867, 587.

Tyrolean. The sonnets also record (and mythologize) events Gilm deemed important in the broader narrative of the Standschützen.

Careful examination of Gilm's work reveals two main ideological threads. The Schützen's idea of freedom appears as a principal force compelling the other recurring themes. In addition to being innately connected to imperial sovereignty, freedom is symbolized through the natural beauty of the Alpine setting, through God's will, and in via Tyrol's hunting and gun culture. War volunteerism in defense of Tyrolean freedom and integrity is the second recurring feature in Gilm's poetry.

The special liberty of owning guns, among other things, that Tyroleans enjoyed required special obligations, namely wartime service to the crown in defend its borders. The hallowed "Landlibell von 1511" established the basis of this arrangement.¹²⁸ Tyrolean men commonly viewed militia service as an obligation, to defend Tyrol's borders, its freedoms, their communities, and their families. The obligation of militia service required the establishment of protocols for mobilizing formations and practices for the military training of volunteers, both of which took place at local shooting ranges. Thus, war volunteerism became an essential motif in Tyrolean society. These requirements went far in militarizing Tyrolean culture. The intersection of these fundamental values, not surprisingly, bolstered traditional social constructs and gender roles, the third major thread. Gilm's verses accentuate the innately conservative and

¹²⁸ Martin P. Schennach, "Zum Tiroler Landlibell von 1511" (Innsbruck: Tiroler Landesarchiv, 2011), p.2 notes that such arrangements between the Habsburg emperor and crown lands was not unique to Tyrol, similar territorial defense agreements had been reached between with the provinces of Lower Austria and Styria. Neighboring states like Bavaria and Salzburg (not yet a Habsburg possession) had brokered similar agreements with their citizenry. For a transcript of the *Landlibell von 1511*, see Martin P. Schennach, *Ritter, Landsknecht, Aufgebot*, 165.

masculine characteristics of Tyrolean identity. The fourth, and last, major thread evident in Hermann von Gilm's volume, is German nationalism. Tyrol's location on the border of Austria's increasingly bitter enemy in the Kingdom of Italy, along with ethnic tensions between German Tyroleans and "walschtiroler"—a pejorative moniker for non-German (and usually Italian) Tyroleans—fortified German national identity.¹²⁹ In turn, German Tyroleans saw themselves as defenders of "Vaterland Tirol," the territorial integrity of the Habsburg Monarchy, as well as a first line of defense for the broader nation of German-speaking kingdoms to the north.

For most Tyroleans the high peaks and valleys of the Alps were symbolic of freedom. The beauty and purity of the mountains provided a landscape in which nature and independence seamlessly meshed. Gilm's opening poem, called "*Unsere Berge*," or Our Mountains, is demonstrative of this symbiosis. The last stanza is especially telling in that it also illustrates the militaristic outlook that often coincided with the freedom of Tyrol:

Let the enemies break into the land,
Let thousands and thousands come;
We have whistling lead on hand
And iron singing and swishing.
Pulling freedom from this world,
We'll build the banished a secure camp
On our mountain.¹³⁰

The Alps were also a defining feature of Tyrolean identity. Joseph Rohrer's early ethnographic study of Tyroleans is an apt example. Throughout, he references Tyroleans

¹²⁹ See Peter Sahllins, *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989) for a detailed study of identity formation in the mountain communities along the French and Spanish border.

¹³⁰ Gilm, *Tyrolean Schützen-Leben*, 4.

as “Bergvolk” (mountain folk) or “Berganwohnern” (mountain residents) interchangeably. He also employs the concept of ‘nation,’ referring to Tyrol as the “tirolische Bergnation.”¹³¹ In basic terms, the use of “mountain nation” uses the mountains as a delineating feature, while “nation” alludes to a group distinguished by one feature or another that separates them from another group. A French general who campaigned in Tyrol shortly after the Rohrer’s study, likened the province to “a natural fortress whose belligerent population constitutes an equally natural garrison.” As F. Gunther Eyck aptly notes, “Tyrol and the bulk of its inhabitants proved no exception...to the corollary that mountain people are generally combative, clannish, traditionalist, self-centered, and self-reliant.”¹³² While early anthropological studies perhaps exaggerated their “backward” world of ancient rituals, traditional dress, and old-fashioned fables, there is plenty of evidence of self-centeredness, self-reliance, conservatism and militarism.¹³³ These attributes underline would underline the reason Heimwehr movement thrived in the Alpine provinces.

While the mountainous landscape played an important role in shaping Tyrolean identity and notions of freedom, so too did the geopolitical location of Tyrol. Located in the southwestern corner of the Habsburg Empire, it constituted a particularly important border region to the Swiss Confederation after 1363 and throughout the early modern era. The Landlibell von 1511 codified the parameters of existing regulations and practices in

¹³¹ Joseph Rohrer, *Uiber die Tiroler. Ein Beytrag zur Oesterreichischen Volkerkunde* (Wien: Dollischen Buchhandlung, 1796). Also cited in Laurence Cole, “Nation, Anti-Enlightenment, and Religious Revival in Austria: Tyrol in the 1790s,” *The Historical Journal* 43 (June, 2000): 477.

¹³² Victor Bernard Derrécagaix, *Nos campagnes ua Tyrol* (Paris, 1910), p.10, cited in Eyck, *Loyal Rebels*, 1.

¹³³ Pier Paolo Viazzo, *Upland Communities: Environment, population, and social structure in the Alps since the sixteenth century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 1,12,49-50.

Tyrol's provincial defense system, which remained—in varying and incrementally lesser degrees—intact until the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy in 1914.¹³⁴ Unlike the other Habsburg crown lands, Tyrol long-remained “something of a self-contained defense unit,” with no professional troops garrisoned in the region.¹³⁵ There were numerous reasons for this arrangement. Mercenary armies were expensive and often maintained counterproductive tendencies like pillaging the countryside of their employers, while exhibiting no higher motivation beyond what was necessary to receive their ransom. With the existing protocols in place, local militia forces, by contrast, could be mustered and deployed to the border quickly and had the added motivation of defending their communities from invasion. Gilm captures the attitude of Tyrolean militiamen (*Schützen*) in his couplet:

*Wir sind Deutschlands Grenzsoldaten,
Seiner Freiheit Gemsenwacht*

We are Germany's border soldiers,
Its freedom watch.¹³⁶

While not as readily apparent in Gilm's liberal, nationalist-oriented poetry, religious freedom was a central aspect of Tyroleans' broader notions of freedom and is particularly evident through the role clergy played in sanctifying war in defense of *Vaterland Tirol*, the Kaiser, and the Roman Catholic Church. Thus, the primacy of tradition in Tyrol lent itself to rigid piety. The reactions of the “overly conservative”

¹³⁴ See Schennach, *Ritter, Landsknecht, Aufgebot*, 43-65 for extensive discussion of the *Landlibell von 1511* and its implications on early modern Tyrol.

¹³⁵ Laurence Cole, “Nation, Anti-Enlightenment, and Religious Revival,” 479.

¹³⁶ Gilm, *Tyrolean Schützen-Leben*, 21-3. Gilm uses the term “*Gemsenwacht*,” which is literally translated “chamois (goat) watch.” While open to interpretation, it would logically seem that Gilm is implying that the *Tyrolean Schützen* will watch the border intently as if they were hunting *Gemse*, a species of mountain goat common to the Austrian Alps.

German Tyrolean clergy and nobility to the enlightened reforms of Joseph II, which sought to reduce the influence of the Catholic Church throughout the empire, was especially truculent. The addition of the archbishoprics of Brixen and Trient to the Tyrol in 1803 further solidified the preeminence of the Catholic Church.¹³⁷ Tyrolean resistance was not limited to the Joseph's reforms, but opposed wider influence of Enlightenment ideals, which they viewed as undermining "the strongest, the primary foundation of the state, that is religion."¹³⁸

The French Revolution further aligned Tyrolean identity and religious beliefs. Refugee priests' stories of the persecution of clergymen and the church by revolutionaries incited increasing fear among Tyrolean clerics who, in turn, unleashed anti-Enlightenment sermons that made obedience to the crown tantamount to obedience to God. Defense of "Vaterland Tirol," the Kaiser, and the church was expressed in militaristic religious terms, as a holy crusade against a godless enemy in the French.¹³⁹ One Tyrolean memoirist wrote, that "the revered priesthood encouraged as much as possible only through prayer and prepared for the coming struggle by granting blessings."¹⁴⁰ Indeed, for most Tyroleans, the French Revolution and the Enlightenment

¹³⁷ Bartholdy, *Der Krieg der Tyrolean Landleute im Jahre 1809*, 3. According to Bartholdy, the addition of the two archbishoprics to Tyrol brought 199 church fathers and 53 monasteries; Cole, "Nation, Anti-Enlightenment," 477-8. Cole also points out these reforms were also unpopular throughout the Austrian population. Tyroleans were not the lone exceptions, but were rather more vociferous in their opposition.

¹³⁸ Cole, "Nation, Anti-Enlightenment," 480.

¹³⁹ Cole, "Nation, Anti-Enlightenment," 482, 487.

¹⁴⁰ Lorenz Rangger, *Kriegserlebnisse des Bauermannes und Patrioten Lorenz Rangger, genannt Stubacher, von Völs bei Innsbruck, in den Jahren 1796 bis 1814*, P. Ferdinand von Scala, ed. (Innsbruck, 1902), 11, cited in Leighton S. James, "For the Fatherland," 43.

ideals propelling it was very much understood as a serious threat to their system of values and very identity.

One observer of the 1809 Tyrolean rebellion noted their obsessive attachment to the Roman Catholic Church.¹⁴¹ The role of the clergy in sanctifying—and in this case, planning, and participating in—war and resistance reiterates the continuity of the mutually reinforcing relationship between religion and militarism. The central role of Capuchin monk, Joachim Haspinger, as an instigator, planner, and commander of the revolt is not a surprise.¹⁴² In April 1848, some 80 Tyrolean-born students at the University of Vienna formed a volunteer company, electing Dr. Adolf Pichler as their captain and, the then 72 year-old, Haspinger as their field chaplain.¹⁴³ Haspinger’s story is not an isolated case, as he was not the only, nor the last, Tyrolean cleric to minister to and lead combat troops. In June 1915, Josef Hosp, chaplain with the 1st *Standeschützen* battalion, Innsbruck, “led patrols, scouted enemy positions, and even served as an artillery spotter.” Hosp was supposed to have shot and killed enemy troops who approached his position while on one such patrol. As with Haspinger, Hosp was celebrated by his men who admired his participation in combat operations and, consequently, understood their own violent actions as having “divine sanction.”¹⁴⁴

Paralleling the Tyrolean devotion to the Catholic Church was their loyalty to the Habsburg dynasty, which had long viewed itself as the defender of the Roman Catholic

¹⁴¹ Bartholdy, *Der Krieg*, 6. Cited in Eyck, *Loyal Rebels*, 4.

¹⁴² See Anton Ritter von Schallhammer, *Biographie des Tyrolean Heldenpriesters Joachim Haspinger* (Salzburg, 1856).

¹⁴³ Schallhammer, *Joachim Haspinger*, 127.

¹⁴⁴ Patrick J. Houlihan, “Clergy in the Trenches: Catholic Military Chaplains of Germany and Austria-Hungary during the First World War,” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2011), 216-7.

faith. This facet of imperial identity became particularly pronounced during the Protestant Reformation, the Counter-Reformation, and the Thirty Years War. The Turkish siege of Vienna in 1683, reinforced the belief, for Austrians, that they were the first line of defense for the Christian faith. Tyroleans remained loyal to the Habsburgs due to their continuous devotion to the church and respect for their special defense privileges granted in the sixteenth century.¹⁴⁵ Gilm's work also illustrates how dynastic loyalty was an important value of the Tyrolean Standschützen. His elegy, *Der Kaiserstutzen*, written from the perspective of a "poor son of the people," whose innate obligations to "the Kaiser and to the land" are accepted without question:

Call me when it's necessary to protect,
I'll follow bold and blind,
And I am not paying with my blood,
So certainly pays my child.¹⁴⁶

Another poem of Gilm's, *Tirols Ehrentag* (or Tyrol's Day of Honor), printed in the *Volks- und Schützenzeitung*, pays homage to Tyrol and the person of the Kaiser, telling the story of how Tyrol became a part of the Habsburg Monarchy. Thus, the 500th Anniversary celebrations reaffirmed the loyalty of Tyrol to the Kaiser, who attended the festivities in Innsbruck as the guest of honor.¹⁴⁷ The anniversary offers an important opportunity to examine how this milestone was celebrated and, consequently, what that reveals about Tyrolean culture and society at that time.

¹⁴⁵ It is worth reiterating the fact that respect for these privileges remained largely intact until the late nineteenth century when Vienna finally—after numerous separate attempts over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—brought Tyrol into the broader imperial military framework.

¹⁴⁶ Gilm, *Tyrolean Schützen-Leben*, 24-5.

¹⁴⁷ Hermann von Gilm, "Tirols Ehrentag," *Volks- und Schützen-Zeitung*, No. 117, September 28, 1863, 711. Laurence Cole, "Province and Patriotism: German National Identity in Tirol, 1850-1914," *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften* 6 (1995): 77 points out that events were staged throughout Tyrol, though that in Innsbruck was the largest and officially recognized by the attendance of the Kaiser.

The celebrations concluded with a two-week shooting festival at the Hauptschießstand in Innsbruck. Indeed, as Laurence Cole explains, since the Middle Ages, nearly all celebrations included shooting matches, which symbolized the special military rights Tyroleans held sacred. At the same time, it represented the centrality of shooting and hunting in the identities of Tyrolean men. As noted in one contemporary source, “there cannot be a genuine Tyrolean celebration without a Schützen procession and a shooting festival.”¹⁴⁸ Even today, Ernst Bruckmüller points out, “Costumes and the shooting clubs prove to be central symbols especially of Tyrolean provincial consciousness...reinforced through the celebration of certain festivals...connected with them.”¹⁴⁹

Some 5,160 Schützen participated in the competition as well as 162 Schützen from Germany (of which 151 came from Bavaria).¹⁵⁰ The events taking place on 28 September 1863 commenced with the ceremonial presentation of the honorary shield of the Habsburg Army in front of the Hauptschießstand with all of the Schützenmeisters gathered at its entrance and their Schützen surrounding. With the business of the day complete, patrons were treated to the festival theater and ended the night taking in fireworks from Castles Ambras, Büchsenhausen, and Weierburg, while enjoying a serenade in front of imperial Palace.

On the morning of 29 September 1863, the festivities were to begin with a cannonade, volleys, and the “jubilant sounds of all of the musical bands.” A field Mass

¹⁴⁸ Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland*, 60.

¹⁴⁹ Ernst Bruckmüller, *The Austrian Nation: Cultural Consciousness and Socio-political Processes*, trans. Lowell A. Bangerter (Riverside, CA: Ariadne Press, 2003), 184-5.

¹⁵⁰ Cole, “Province and Patriotism,” 79.

for the Schützenkompanies was to follow at 10:00am, then came ceremonial processions through various plazas in Innsbruck at 11:00am. Nearly 100 former Standschützen and imperial soldiers who fought in engagements in 1809, 1813, 1848, 1849, and 1859 were to be recognized and expected to join the ceremonial procession of the Hall Standschützen.¹⁵¹ Several volunteer organizations also filled out the schedule of events and participated in festival activities; the Tyrolean Sängerbund (choral association) and the deutscher Turnverein (or German Gymnastic Association), among others, made noteworthy contributions. A ball, to be held on the evening 29 September, rounding out the celebration with the arrival of His Imperial Highness Archduke Carl Ludwig. The unexpected arrival of His Imperial Majesty Kaiser Franz Josef punctuated the anniversary celebrations.¹⁵² Save for the fanfare of the Kaiser and the royal family, if one were to divorce the specifics from the activities—leaving simply a procession, field Mass, shooting competition, honoring veterans, ball—one could seamlessly replace the program of activities for a large, multi-day Heimwehr gathering with this program of events from 1863.

In all, the festivities illustrated the general character of Tyrolean society: militaristic, loyal to the Kaiser, and pride in “Vaterland Tirol” and German cultural heritage, all of which Gilm expresses throughout his commemorative verses.

„Tirol, die schöne Jubelbraut,
Wird neu dem Kaiser angetraut.“
„Fünfhundert Jahre blühet schon
Die Liebe zu dem Kaiserthron.“
„Wie uns're Berge hoch und frei,
So fest besieht Tirolertreu.“¹⁵³

Tyrol, the beautiful cheering bride,
To the new Kaiser wedded.
Five hundred years already blooms
The love for the Imperial Throne.
How our mountains high and free
So firm is Tyrolean loyalty.

¹⁵¹ *Volks- und Schützen-Zeitung*, No. 117, September 28, 1863, 712-13.

¹⁵² Cole, “Province and Patriotism,” 76.

¹⁵³ *Volks- und Schützen-Zeitung*, No. 117, September 28, 1863, 713.

However, there were underlying political and ideological tensions. For (the typically rural) conservatives, the festivities represented merely a “restatement of dynastic loyalty,” whereas, for (urban bourgeois) liberals, it was a broader expression of German nationalism conveyed through regional patriotism “within the framework of loyalty to the Kaiser.”¹⁵⁴ Thus, fealty to the monarchy inhibited the maturation of a wholly German identity. Furthermore, pious obedience to the Catholic Church also trumped German national identity in the hierarchy of self-identification for many conservative Tyroleans.¹⁵⁵ That is to say, in the larger ‘Kulturkampf’ emerging in the mid-nineteenth century between the urban, liberal bourgeoisie—for whom Großdeutsch nationalism had become an increasingly central point of self-identification—and rural conservatives, religion limited the extent to which they sanctioned the notion of a unified German state.¹⁵⁶ Only under Habsburg hegemony would a Großdeutsch nation be acceptable. A Prussian-guided (Protestant-guided) Germany was not an outcome conservative Tyroleans would support.¹⁵⁷ This difference in ideological interpretation illustrated the divisions within the province, the continuity of what had been an already longstanding ‘Kulturkampf’ between urban and rural, liberal and conservative.¹⁵⁸ The fracture amongst the Tyrolean population was symptomatic of a broader socio-political divide throughout German Cisleithania. The absence of consensus would continue to plague the hereditary Habsburg lands of Austria, even after the monarchy’s collapse. It

¹⁵⁴ Cole, “Province and Patriotism,” 76.

¹⁵⁵ Leighton S. James, “For the Fatherland,” 43-4.

¹⁵⁶ Derrick Hastings, *Catholicism and the Roots of Nazism: Religious Identity and National Socialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 17-45 notes similar tensions between adherents of “ultramontanism,” or political Catholicism, and political nationalists, in Munich during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

¹⁵⁷ Laurence Cole, “Province and Patriotism,” 79-80.

¹⁵⁸ Cole, “Province and Patriotism,” 78-9.

would be precisely this internal conflict that would wrack the Heimwehr movement and drive the struggle over Austrian independence.

Militarism and the late Habsburg Monarchy

The military complexion of such public festivals would be reinforced throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire with the implementation of compulsory military service in 1868. “It seems fair to assume that such aspects of military service as being obliged to wear ‘the Emperor’s uniform,’ swearing an oath of loyalty to his person, obeying the commands of his officers, traveling through and/or living in different areas of the monarchy, and being confronted with other ethnic groups (often on a daily basis in barracks, as well as on the outside) would all have raised the individual’s consciousness about the multinational state and its ruler,” Cole contends. His Imperial Majesty Kaiser Franz Josef set the militaristic tone for the Habsburg administrative culture, as was almost always in uniform; it was his long reign that the military assumed center stage in the projection of Habsburg dynasty and its history.¹⁵⁹ The discipline and loyalty to the dynasty exhibited by the supranational imperial army were features the Habsburg government actively sought to inculcate in civil society whenever and wherever possible. The ‘federalization’ of private, voluntary veterans’ associations and rifle clubs are excellent illustrations of how the empire sought to guide their activities in the direction of imperial loyalty and military virtues.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ Laurence Cole, *Military Culture & Popular Patriotism in Late Imperial Austria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 19-62.

¹⁶⁰ Laurence Cole, “Military Veterans and Popular Patriotism in Imperial Austria, 1870-1914,” in *The Limits of Loyalty: Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy*, ed. Laurence Cole and Daniel Unowsky (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 37-39.

Militarism was indoctrinated into the broader civilian population at an early age. Elementary schools taught children not only to read, write, do basic mathematics, but also about the great figures of the monarchy's past—most especially its military past. “The traditions of the Habsburg army [took] center stage. Victorious battles and commanders played an important role alongside prominently emphasized rulers...”¹⁶¹ As Ernst Bruckmüller reveals in his examination of elementary school textbooks, they were introduced to prominent Habsburg figures and important events in the construction of the empire. As students progressed through their schooling, the historical narrative became increasingly complex, particularly as they navigated the often-thorny issue of nationality. Attention to national myths, histories, and figures illustrated the notion that devotion to the Habsburg crown while taking pride in one's nationality were not contradictory ideals according to student textbooks.¹⁶²

Outside of militarism in the Habsburg education system, Tyrolean youths were also indoctrinated with duty, camaraderie, and military service to the Fatherland in the Standschützen community. It was the duty of the older Schützen to impart on the youth the significance of these virtues. “The young shooters, and those who are called in ranks to protect the country, may procure from the course of the festival the conviction that their elder brethren will be united with them in good days and bad,” explained Vorarlberg Governor Sebastian von Froschauer at the Landeschießen in Bregenz, Vorarlberg in June

¹⁶¹ Ernst Bruckmüller, “Patriotic and National Myths: National Consciousness and Elementary School Education in Imperial Austria,” in *The Limits of Loyalty: Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy*, ed. Laurence Cole and Daniel Unowsky (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 13.

¹⁶² Bruckmüller, “Patriotic and National Myths,” 21.

1865. The older Standschützen praised the valuable work of the young riflemen, adding that “they did not allow the love of the fathers' weapons to be broken, and preserved the old, impenetrable bond of brotherhood and loyalty to this day faithfully and unimpeded.”¹⁶³ In Schwaz (Tyrol), the election of Gregory Tafatscher as Oberschützenmeister of its rifle range was, according to one observer, “of the best consequence,” as his vision emphasized young shooters and the Landesschützen.¹⁶⁴

The formation of the Akademischen Schützengilde (Academic Rifle Club) at the University of Innsbruck is an excellent example of the confluence of teaching state and imperial patriotism in school and the education young men received at the rifle ranges. A pamphlet written to document the guild's flag dedication ceremony on 1-2 July 1901 illustrates how some students embraced the traditional “pillars” of Tyrol: Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland.¹⁶⁵ Flag dedication ceremonies like this one typically entailed a Mass service, which included the blessing of the flag by the church father (Pfarrer).¹⁶⁶ As such, the “three pillars”—Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland—was ubiquitous. The identity of the Akademischen Schützengilde was firmly couched in traditional role of Schützenkompanies as the defenders of Tyrol, linking the new guild with the origins of Tyrol's defense system (Landesverteidigung) and, thus, emphasizing its solemn responsibility. The passage below captures how innately militarism, religion, and patriotism were intertwined:

¹⁶³ *Volks- und Schützen-Zeitung*, No. 68, June 7, 1865, 354.

¹⁶⁴ *Volks- und Schützen-Zeitung*, No. 145, December 4, 1865, 757.

¹⁶⁵ *Die Fahnenweihe der Akademischen Schützengilde an der k.k. Universität in Innsbruck am 1. und 2. Juli 1901* (Innsbruck: Verlag der akademischen Schützengilde, 1901), 9.

¹⁶⁶ The actual flag dedication was but one small part of the two-day affair, which included a celebratory shooting competition, and a musical program in the evening. Archduke Eugene of the imperial house was present for the festivities (pictured in the opening pages of the pamphlet).

Undoubtedly Andreas Hofer and his heroes in holy joy look down today at the Berg Isel. For those young men who represent the hope of the future of the country, swear loyalty today for all the world the faith and the church, faithfulness to the holy covenant of our fathers.¹⁶⁷

The Akademischen Schützengilde (Academic Shooting Club) became the youngest association in the Tyrolean militia system and received congratulations for His Imperial Highness Kaiser Franz Josef. In the end, the effectiveness of teaching students state and imperial patriotism as a part of their broader education is difficult to discern, as on one hand, many of the most radical nationalists were educators and students. On the other however, students also demonstrated devotion to the crown, religious piety, and patriotism for their state. For the Tyrolean youth, the role of the Standschützen added another source of indoctrination that imparted the mixed signals of German national pride, patriotism for “Vaterland Tirol,” and loyalty to the dynasty.

The 1909 Jahrhundertfeier (centenary celebration) of the 1809 Tyrolean rebellion against French and Bavaria occupation, was another occasion in which Tyroleans recognized the accomplishments of their brave predecessors, promoted the growing number of shooting associations throughout the province, and reiterated Tyrolean fealty to the Habsburgs. The celebrations of Anno Neun, as it had come to be known, were aimed at idealizing civic militarism in the form of the Tyrolean militiaman. Andreas Hofer, among others, was portrayed as the personification of Tyrolean militiamen’s mantra of “Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland,” which reflected the intersection of religious piety, provincial patriotism, and dynastic loyalty, which had been traditional tenets of

¹⁶⁷ *Die Fahnenweihe der Akademischen Schützengilde*, 11.

Tyrolean society for centuries. Thus, the occasion was utilized to exhibit and cultivate those virtues for the broader imperial population.¹⁶⁸

The two largest ceremonies took place on the “sanctified ground” of Berg Isel (Innsbruck)—the site of three important engagements of the 1809 rebellion—on 29 August 1909 and illustrated the overarching themes of “Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland.” Here, during Mass, Tyrol’s oath of religious obedience was reaffirmed, followed by the recitation of Andreas Hofer’s oath of loyalty. Both of these oaths took place in the presence of clergymen and Kaiser Franz Josef, the benefactor of the celebration, which reflects the union of all three elements that impelled Tyrolean militarism. This ceremony was followed by the Schützenzug (Schützen parade). Indeed, the “whole event had the character of a military operation.” Uniformed members of the imperial family, army, and regimental bands were joined by the shooting guilds, who themselves, wore their own uniquely designed versions of traditional Tyrolean Nationaltracht (national dress).¹⁶⁹

Just as the 1809 Tyrolean Freiheitskrieg was executed largely by peasant militia units, the Jahrhundertfeier was aimed principally at the rural populations “aus allen Tälern” of Tyrol, as these were the Tyrolean elements most loyal to the crown. Local leaders of the rebellion in those valleys were recognized by their respective residents as a part of the commemoration. In doing so, as Laurence Cole points out, provincial and imperial officials attempted to shape the parameters of Tyrolean identity around the ideals and actions of loyal, devout, and patriotic predecessors and the “institution of the Schützen was at the core of the hegemonic version of Tyrolean identity.”¹⁷⁰ The approach

¹⁶⁸ Cole, “Province and Patriotism,” 62.

¹⁶⁹ Cole, “Province and Patriotism,” 66.

¹⁷⁰ Cole, “Province and Patriotism,” 64-6.

of the Jahrhundertfeier was an important event that helped revive interest in the traditions of Tyrolean rifle clubs and their volunteerism in sharpshooter companies during times of war, which had lapsed in the decades that followed the Napoleonic Wars. The re-establishment of expired Schützen groups was bookended by the creation of new groups—some specifically for the celebration of the Jahrhundertfeier—both of which, however, were distinctly German in character.¹⁷¹

Much of the ceremonies and festivities were orchestrated by voluntary associations, particularly shooting guilds (Schützenkompanies), veterans associations, state and local government from parish councils all the way up to the Governor (Landeshauptmann), as well as imperial institutions such as the army and the Militär-Maria-Theresien-Orden (The Military Order of Maria Theresa), which honored the highest virtues of Habsburg militarism. The celebration of the Jahrhundertfeier engaged virtually all levels and institutions of Tyrolean society. The Berg Isel Mass gave the feel of a “ständisch (corporative) medieval society,” with clerics, nobility, peasants, and citizens all in attendance.¹⁷² The seating arrangement further illustrated the primacy of historical tradition with the Kaiser on one side of the pavilion surrounded by high-ranking military officers in attendance one side and clergymen and courtesans on the other. Facing the Kaiser and his entourage were provincial representatives to the federal diet along with the provincial diet as well as the mayor, parish councilmen, local bureaucrats.

¹⁷¹ Cole, “Province and Patriotism,” 66-7.

¹⁷² Cole, “Province and Patriotism,” 65.

The Jahrhundertsfeier celebrated the courageous and efforts of Tyrolean militiamen to restore the province to Habsburg rule. It was also an important event in cementing a Tyrolean identity carefully constructed by Catholic conservatives. The commemoration of Anno Neun did not cease with the collapse of the Monarchy. As the heirs of the Schützen tradition, the Heimwehr movement regularly celebrated the patriotism, piety, and war volunteerism demonstrated by the Tyrolean Standschützen in 1809. Their commander, Andreas Hofer, became a symbol of the legacy that the Heimwehren understood themselves to be upholding.



Figure 3. The Schießstand at Berg Isel today

(Photo by the author)

The cult of Andreas Hofer

No other figure in Tyrolean history—save for perhaps Kaiser Maximilian I—has been mythologized like the Standschützen major and innkeeper of the Sandwirt Gasthof. His ascent to mythical status corresponded closely with the resurgence of

Schützentradition in the popular imagination of Tyroleans in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Poets, writers, and composers attempting to document and pay homage to the life and exploits of Hofer and his role in the Tyrolean rebellion, played a central role in laying the foundation for the hagiographic process. The virtues authors chose to emphasize are instructive as to their political leanings. The cultivation of the Hofer myth, thus, benefitted from the political tensions inside Tyrol. The historical figure of Andreas Hofer was co-opted by competing political ideologies that, in parallel, made Hofer into the archetypal figure of Tyrolean identity.¹⁷³

The Hofer myth did not emerge immediately after his death in 1810, but decades later amid a “*Kulturkampf*” among Tyrolean Catholic conservatives and liberals. While the imperial house often worked closely with Catholic conservatives against liberal nationalism, its alliance sought to foster dynastic loyalty. Contemporary chroniclers conveyed more critical evaluations of Hofer’s deeds. His close cooperation with the Habsburg government during the 1809 rebellion, and subsequent recognition as the Kaiser’s regent of Tyrol, was problematic for some Catholic conservatives, as they saw it as clashing with Tyrol’s traditional opposition to Habsburg efforts to centralize. The early criticisms of Hofer did not stop them from utilizing Hofer as a vehicle for conveying its own *Weltanschauung*. Instead, Catholic conservatives emphasized his virtues that aligned with their own. The construction of the Andreas Hofer Memorial Chapel in Hofer’s birthplace, Sand in Passeier, depicts Hofer as a deeply pious man and a “most ardent

¹⁷³ Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser, und Vaterland*, 225-321; Laurence Cole’s examination of the construction of the Andreas Hofer myth is among the most recent and is the most analytically sophisticated and will serve as the principle basis of this discussion.

admirer of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and a relentless conveyor of this covenant.”¹⁷⁴

Indeed, Hofer was a “Christian hero” that “endured as a fearless martyr.”¹⁷⁵ Given the humanist ideals of the Enlightenment that drove Revolutionary and Napoleonic French armies, Hofer’s religiosity—while not extraordinary for his time—could be readily highlighted.

From a present-day perspective, the divergence of Catholic conservative and liberal interpretations seem barely distinguishable on the surface. The clearest point of divergence, however, was the religious embellishments of the former as opposed to the nationalistic window dressing of the latter. Tyrolean liberals—like their German counterparts—viewed Hofer, and the rebellion he ended up leading, in a broader context, as a German freedom fighter and the “embodiment of a national ideal.”¹⁷⁶ Gilm, like other liberal authors, also understood the term “freedom” in the context of freedom from the “*Zwangmaßnahmen* (coercive measures)” of the Church.¹⁷⁷ The prominent place of the Catholic Church and the fervent anti-nationalist stance of the Habsburg Monarchy, however, prevented liberal constructions of the Hofer myth from gaining imperial recognition; memorial dedications and celebrations such as the *Jahrhundertfeier* accentuated conservative portrayals that stressed his piety and loyalty to the crown.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁴ Tiroler Landesarchiv (TLA), Akten des Landesausschusses (ALA), Landefest in Passeier, Errichtung der Andreas-Hofer-Gedächtnis-Kapelle in Passeier 1899, Z.1 Bericht, 1899, pages 4-7 „Aufruf des Comités der Hoferfeier“ from 10/4/1866, cited in Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser, und Vaterland*, 251. Construction of the chapel began in 1882 and was complete in 1899.

¹⁷⁵ TLA: ALA, Landefest in Passeier, Errichtung der Andreas-Hofer-Gedächtnis-Kapelle in Passeier 1899, Z.1 Bericht, 1899, „Aufruf des Comités der Hoferfeier“ from 10/4/1866, cited in Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser, und Vaterland*, 252.

¹⁷⁶ Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser, und Vaterland*, 238.

¹⁷⁷ Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser, und Vaterland*, 252.

¹⁷⁸ During the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, however, Francis II was not so opposed to seizing upon the gaining popularity of nationalism to mobilize its citizenry against French national armies.

In 1880 the officer corps of the Tiroler Kaiserjäger initiated a project to erect a statue of Hofer (as well as a Tiroler Kaiserjäger museum) on Berg Isel. The aim was to highlight Tyrolean patriotism and loyalty to the Habsburg crown. Hofer's personage and, therefore, his deeds and martyrdom, became a representation of Tyrol. The proclamation of the committee overseeing the statue's construction summarizes the sentiments underlining its intent:

The monument has only the name and features of a man, but honors the country itself, it is embodied in him with all that has met a genuine Tyrolean heart and preserved through centuries. The faith of his fathers, the honesty of his sentiments, the strength and endurance of his heroism. Moreover, because far beyond its original meaning, the simple man is full unselfishness long since become a symbol of popular loyalty, unswerving devotion to his imperial family and faithful holding together with the brothers of the Empire countries.¹⁷⁹

Hofer, as a prominent symbol of Tyrolean identity, survived the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy to which the *Sandwirt* was loyal. The competing interpretations of Hofer, and by extension, central elements of Tyrolean identity, became increasingly indistinguishable during the course of the interwar period as the end of the Habsburg dynasty meant the end of the Catholic conservatives' hegemony over Hofer's legacy. With the pervasiveness of nationalism in post-World War I Europe, the liberal construction of the Hofer myth would gain increasing traction. Indeed, Andreas Hofer in the First Republic exemplified a compliment of both the German nationalism and political Catholicism.

¹⁷⁹ Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum/Landeskundliches Museum Zeughaus, Vereinswesen, Karton B-D, Aufruf des Comités zur Errichtung eines Denkmals für Andreas Hofer, um 1880, cited in Cole, *Für Gott, Kaiser, und Vaterland*, 266.

Heirs to a Legacy

The revival of civic militarism that occurred in Habsburg Tyrol in the late nineteenth century was an orchestration of Franz Joseph I. The Kaiser saw the loyalty and discipline instilled through the army as archetypal virtues that he wanted to inculcate into the general population of the empire. The revival of interest in the ancient Tyrolean militia system, the construction of new shooting ranges throughout the province, and the establishment of new Schützenkompanien indicated the success of his initiative. This was also successful on a deeper level. The central role of the Tyrolean Standschützen in the celebrations of 500 years of Habsburg rule in Tyrol as well as in the centenary of the vaunted 1809 rebellion, demonstrated the central place civic militarism in Tyrolean identity.

The Great War propelled the militarization of Habsburg society to its zenith, but also brought about the Monarchy's collapse. In its downfall, the Monarchy reiterated the continued need for the civic militarism it nurtured for so many centuries. So too did the strict limitations the Allied Powers placed on the size of the new Austrian state's army. Mistrust of the republic's new army, the Volkswehr, also echoed the need for militia. Overseen by the heavily Social Democratic government in Vienna at the time, the Volkswehr was comprised of mainly unemployed industrial laborers sympathetic to the ideals of Marx and Lenin. While the immediate response to civil defense needs materialized at the local level with communities cobbling together their own militias from the remaining able-bodied men, the longer-term vision of Governor Josef Schraffl and his deputy, Dr. Franz Stumpf, was that Tyrol's traditional militia system would continue to

function as the basis for peacekeeping measures.¹⁸⁰ This was not to be, however, at least not officially. Article 128 of the Treaty of Saint Germain prohibited the continuity of this arrangement, stating that “all sporting and other clubs...must not occupy themselves with any military matters.”¹⁸¹ Schraffl and Stumpf would not be deterred, maneuvering easily around the vague language of the article, and in May 1920, the “Selbstschutzverband Tirol” (Self Defense Association of Tyrol)—often referred to as the “Tiroler Heimatwehr”—was born.

Tyrol’s network of shooting ranges through which the Landesverteidigung was organized, served a similar purpose for the Tiroler Heimatwehr. The dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy left the shooting ranges under the stewardship of the cities in which they were constructed; the close cooperation and support of Tyrol’s local and state governments facilitated their use by the Heimatwehr for the purpose of training and stockpiling illicitly attained arms.¹⁸² To that end, Landesführer of the Tiroler Heimatwehr, Dr. Richard Steidle quite successfully recruited many members of newly reconstituted recreational rifle clubs.¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ Günther Messner, “Landeshauptmann Franz Stumpf und seine Sicherheitdoktrin” (PhD diss. University of Innsbruck, 2014), 37-8. The local militias assumed a variety of names—Heimwehr (home guard), Arbeiterwehr (worker’s guard), Sicherheitsgruppen (security groups), Bürgerwehr (citizen guard), and the like.

¹⁸¹ “Treaty of Peace Between the Allied and Associated Powers and Austria, Together with the Protocol and Declarations Annexed Thereto, Signed at Saint Germain-en-Laye, September 10, 1919,” UK Treaties Online, accessed April 2, 2017, <http://treaties.fco.gov.uk/docs/pdf/1919/TS0011.pdf>. See Section I, Chapter IV, Article 128.

¹⁸² Messner, “Landeshauptmann Franz Stumpf,” 53.

¹⁸³ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 22; Kondert, “Rise and Early History,” 12; Christoph von Hartungen, “Die Tiroler und Vorarlberger Standschützen—Mythos und Realität,” in *Tirol und der Erste Weltkrieg*, ed. Klaus Eisterer and Rolf Steininger (Innsbruck: Österreich StudienVerlag, 1995), 90; Schneeberger, “Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr in Österreich,” 79. Unfortunately there are no surviving membership rolls for the *Tyrolean Heimatwehr* that might be used to compare against pre and/or post-war rifle club books. The Vorarlberger *Heimwehr* and its *Schützenbund* would appear to have had many members in common, such as *Landesführer* Stefan Kohler, who also served as *Bundesoberschützenmeister* from 1923-1929.

The connections between the Standschützen and the Heimatwehr extended beyond utilizing the same shooting range system. In one article in the *Tiroler Heimatwehr-Blätter*, the organization's newspaper, drew clear connections between the Tiroler Heimatwehr the province's heritage of civil defense. Throughout the article, it highlighted the parallels between the Heimatwehr and Tyrol's seventeenth century militia. Emphasizing the voluntary, democratic nature of both seventeenth century civil defense formations and the Heimatwehr, as well as the similarities carried forward in their organizational structures, comparing the Viertelgemeinden (quarter groups) of the militia system to the Schutzgemeinschaften (defense groups) of the Heimatwehr. A committee of four to eight mayors and other respected figures in the community would elect a "Quartermaster," who would oversee self-defense measures for the representative communities. The residents of those communities, as it related to self-defense, were commanded by the Quartermaster. Similarly, defense group leaders were elected by local group leaders and would develop and maintain plans for the protection of the communities represented in those groups.¹⁸⁴

To understand the military culture of the Heimwehr movement it is necessary to look to pre-war provincial militarism. That is, the military character of the Heimwehr movement was underpinned by the traditional, patriarchal values of its Alpine provinces. Like Gilm's poems idealized hunting, shooting sports, and the war volunteerism of the Standschützen, the language of Heimwehr propaganda romanticized military service as a

¹⁸⁴ "Eine Tiroler Heimatwehr von 300 Jahren," *Tiroler Heimatwehr-Blätter*, October 7, 1924, 3.

masculine duty, the requisites for which had been cultivated in them from childhood through hunting and sport shooting.¹⁸⁵

In November 1920, the Tiroler Heimatwehr staged a province-wide shooting contest (Landesschießen), which, as demonstrated above, was a centuries-old tradition of the Standschützen and the first to be held since before the First World War. Tyrolean People's Party (Tiroler Volkspartei) representative and leading figure in the Tiroler Heimatwehr, Andreas Thaler, called sport shooting something that was “in our blood.”¹⁸⁶ The surroundings and trappings of the Landesschießen also exhibited the fact that the Tiroler Heimatwehr saw itself as continuing the Tyrolean legacy militia service. The ceremonial aspects of the shooting match took place before the massive statue of Andreas Hofer, at the old Hauptschießstand (main shooting range) atop Berg Isel in Innsbruck. The Heimatwehr men in attendance donned green and white armbands—the traditional colors of the Tyrolean Standschützen.¹⁸⁷ As Steidle explained, the “true meaning” of the Landesschießen lay simply the fact that it represented the continuity of “ancient” Tyrolean Schützenwesen traditions.¹⁸⁸

The prominent role of the Church and clergy in the *Landesschießen* further echoed the traditional features of the festivities. Just as church fathers consecrated the flags of the

¹⁸⁵ Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 188.

¹⁸⁶ Tiroler Landtag, *Stenographische Berichte des verfassunggebenden Tiroler Landtages – 19. November 1920 bis 7. Mai 1921* (1921), 1324. The *Tiroler Heimatwehr* is also referred to as the *Tiroler Selbstschutzverbände* (SSV) interchangeably.

¹⁸⁷ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/6, fol.56, 9. There were 3,000 Heimwehr men expected at the *Landesschießen*: 1200 from Innsbruck, 400 from Schwaz, 780 from Landeck, 400 from Reutte, and 200 from Kufstein as well as 20 members of staff; “Das Tiroler Schützenfest,” *Grazer Tagblatt*, November 22, 1920, 1.

¹⁸⁸ Richard Steidle, “Das Tiroler Landesschießen und seine wahre Bedeutung,” *Deutsches Volksblatt*, December 3, 1920, 3.

local *Standeschützen*, they did the same for the *Tiroler Heimatwehr*. “Here held the forces of Andreas Hofer, Speckbacher, and Haspinger. Here tended their bullet-ridden war flags. Today we dedicate no war flag, but a simple banner for peaceful competition,” Steidle explained.¹⁸⁹ The Landesschießen program fittingly ended with the singing of the *Herz-Jesus-Hymne* (Hymn of the Sacred Heart of Jesus)—the cult for which Hofer had been a most vigorous champion. After the program at Berg Isel concluded, a procession of some 1500 participants marched to the *Tiroler Landeshymne* (Tyrolean national hymn) to Basilika Wilten for Mass and the consecration of the *Heimatwehr* flag, carried out by Abbot Adrian Zacher, who spoke of the banner as a “symbol of peace, quiet and order.”¹⁹⁰

Social Democratic opposition to the *Heimatwehr* confirm the self-identification of the *Heimatwehr* with the province’s legacy of civic militarism:

The Tyrolean *Heimatwehren* draws on the old traditions of the *Standeschützen*. The military special rights of Tyrolean peasants stubbornly insisted on from the Habsburgs, but in the war, was the most fruitful undoing; the liabilities resulting from the rights forced children and old men into the murderous steel hail of the fronts and tore the wounds of the force of the Tyrolean people, which is far from healing. The *Heimatwehren* now in Tirol wreaking havoc, has nothing to do with the past of the *Standeschützen*; they have been by Mr. Steidle an instrument against the working class, against the republic, against the *Großdeutsche* idea...¹⁹¹

In a March 1920 interview published in the *Allgemeiner Tyrolean Anzeiger*, Steidle explained—in true, independent-minded Tyrolean fashion—that the Tyrol did not need the presence of the *Volkwehr* to maintain “peace and order” in the province, it needed

¹⁸⁹ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/6, fol.56, 11a.

¹⁹⁰ “Österreich, Innsbruck 21. November,” *Wiener Zeitung*, November 22, 1920, 1.

¹⁹¹ “Sie wollen Schießen!” 1.

only the police and “our volunteer organization,” meaning the Tiroler Heimatwehr, with the support of “Schießstandorganisationen” (system of rifle ranges).¹⁹²

The Heimatwehr shooting festival was a controversial affair, which will be explained in greater depth in subsequent chapters. Suffice it to say, Social Democrats opposed the event for several reasons. When it became clear that the Heimatwehr was determined to move forward in their decision to hold the event, the Social Democratic Party orchestrated a labor strike in Tyrol. An article in the *Vorarlberger Tagblatt* covering the *Landesschießen* and Social Democrats’ “wanton” response—in the form of a railroad strike—to the fact that “the Tyroleans are resuming their furrowed prewar customs again and that does not suit the leaders of the SDP.”¹⁹³ The conservative *Reichspost* echoed similar sentiments, complaining that the annoyance of Tyrolean Social Democrats had forced “the sons of Andreas Hofer to bury the *Stutzen* of their fathers.”¹⁹⁴ The articles are somewhat disingenuous in their grievances, positioning the shooting match as being staged by the general populous as opposed to one organized by the *Heimatwehr*. While there is little indication of the wider public opinion on the *Landesschießen* they, however, emphasize continuities of the pre-war past and backward gaze of conservative segments of Austrian society. Indeed, the expiration of the monarchy as a sovereign did not mean its cultural resonance ceased to be a formative influence.

¹⁹² *Allgemeiner Tyrolean Anzeiger*, March 20, 1920, p. 3 cited in Lösch, “Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr,” 11.

¹⁹³ “Das Tiroler Landesschießen und der Eisenbahnstreik,” *Vorarlberger Tagblatt*, November 24, 1920, 2. The *Vorarlberger Tagblatt* was clearly sympathetic to the *Heimatwehren*. The important point for the purpose of this study, however, is its acknowledgement of the continuity of prewar cultural expressions within the context of an existing culture war.

¹⁹⁴ “Das Innsbrucker Landesschießen,” *Reichspost*, November 18, 1920, 3.



Figure 4. *Statue of Andreas Hofer at Bergisel, Innsbruck.*
(Photo by the author.)

The desire of the Heimatwehr to maintain and revive disappearing customs was not an anomaly, but part of broader efforts of conservative circles to halt the shifting

sands beneath their feet. For instance, they campaigned for Austria's youth to be taught their "glorious past." As one flyer notes:

The Austrian youth must not be deprived of the history of its people, for when youth knows nothing of the glorious, glorious history of its fatherland, it is only too easily the prey of paid, fatherland-less demagogues. Yes, it lies in the system of today's youth education, only if the history of their fatherland is partially falsified, or withheld, then, can youths become mindless, international socialists.¹⁹⁵

In another instance, an article in the *Tiroler Heimatwehr-Blätter* criticized Social Democratic opposition to religion education in school. "Who gives the Social Democratic leaders the right to strive with all their might to deprive the children of our people of values that they can never later acquire," the article complained.¹⁹⁶

In promoting the Landesschießen, Tyrolean Heimatwehr propaganda praised the "old German passion" for hunting and sport shooting, explaining that the "beautiful, old custom" had been an integral part of their development into men and should remain a "right" of the youth:

When I was a boy, it was our greatest pleasure to shoot a bow and arrow... More and more the old German lust for shooting-sport grew, the arm and eye steeled, the pleasure, quick and sure with a shot to hit a difficult target and to stalk and capture wild game and game birds in flight. The Tesching and lead ball, and soon, the rifle and cartridge became our inseparable companion. It was only when we knew how to handle them with complete certainty that we felt ourselves as men who were aware of their own strength and masters of their bodies, who did not need to crouch and shamefully stand aside when others put the bullet in the black.¹⁹⁷

Not only was mastering the rifle depicted as a rite of passage into manhood, but also that it was an extension of one's body, a part of his being. The continuity of the region's gun

¹⁹⁵ TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV (Österreich), XIII/1, fol.1-1175, 1626.

¹⁹⁶ "Wir brauchen Religion in der Schule!" *Tiroler Heimatwehr-Blätter* 4, November 21, 1924, 3.

¹⁹⁷ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol.410, 100. The Tesching is a small-caliber handgun.

culture was, therefore, a fundamental component of militarizing its young, post-war generation.

The thrust for these efforts gained further impetus through the Treaties of Saint Germain and Versailles, which forbade compulsory military service in Germany and Austria, a requirement of all male citizens 18 years of age in both the Habsburg and Hohenzollern empires before the war. The limitations placed on their militaries reduced its ability to function as a formative institution in shaping the worldview of their youths and many bourgeois families feared that the values that military service instilled would be lost on their sons.¹⁹⁸ As a result, there emerged a broad push to militarize youth scouting and athletic associations throughout Germany and Austria to compensate, in however limited the extent, for this loss.¹⁹⁹ Hallmarks of military training such as physical fitness, discipline, and drills were introduced through these channels now. In Germany, for example, it was estimated that before World War I, 400,000 were enrolled in sports clubs. After the war, that number spiked to 3,500,000. At the same time, boy scout troop leaders were encouraged to conduct military exercises, marching, stage “surprise attacks” and “sham night battles on difficult ground,” among other military-related activities.²⁰⁰

The absence of the formal institutional constraints traditionally exercised by the army allowed the most virulent and radical völkisch ideals to intermingle with the residual elements of imperial military, framed by fantasies of revenge for their humiliated state. The freedom of expression that accompanied the parliamentary democracies in

¹⁹⁸ See chapter one for a detailed discussion of Habsburg efforts to militarize society.

¹⁹⁹ For Germany, see Charles B. Dyar, “The Youth of Germany,” *The North American Review* 215 (June 1922): 739-750.

²⁰⁰ Dyar, “The Youth of Germany,” 742, 748.

Germany and Austria allowed for this amalgam to spread into the political discourse of the interwar period, creating a political climate where the militarization of mass party politics became an accepted and, therefore, legitimate form of expression. Instrumental in this development was the militarization of scouting groups and the formation of uniformed youth combat leagues such as the Wikingbund, Reichsflagge, Werwölfe, Jungstahlhelm, Hitlerjugend, and Bund Oberland. The youths of these organizations provided the thrust (muscle) from below to push these radical reactionary ideals to the forefront of German, Austrian, and, to a lesser extent, Hungarian society.

With that in mind, the fact that the leadership of the Innsbruck chapter of the German Scout Federation (Deutschen Pfadfindersbundes) approached the Tiroler Heimatwehr, in February 1925, to administer military training to its young scouts, requesting that they “agree to the formation of an independent company,” which was to be named the “St. Georg-Zug” (St. George Company) after the federation’s patron saint, St. George. Many of the older scouts—sixteen years of age—of this chapter were already members of the Heimatwehr youth formations, mainly in the telephone company of its Innsbruck machine gun battalion. As a part of their agreement of affiliation, those members would be transferred to the new St. George company. It was the desire of the scout leaders, Kurt Mair and Franz Ferkow, to have the company trained as Jägertruppen (infantry troops) and receive the same training as that of a regular infantry company.²⁰¹

Just as the Standschützen made concerted efforts to orient Tyrolean youth to the virtues of loyalty, militarism, and wartime service in the defense of their communities, so

²⁰¹ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), IV/1, fol.777, 287-92.

too did the Heimatwehr. From the outset of its efforts to establish a youth organization, the Heimatwehr leadership praised Tyrol's centuries-old gun culture, positioning hunting and sport shooting as a natural German pastime. The connection of hunting to masculinity, independence, and confidence was a useful pivot to exalting the virtues of military service that followed. The youth organization of the Tiroler Heimatwehr, established in 1921, outlined a similar mission as that of the German Scout Federation in that it sought the "improvement of our youth morally and physically, so that each of our organization's young members can become leaders...when the Germanic destiny calls, be it in the struggle for the spirit or armed combat." In addition to marksmanship and sport shooting competitions, however, the Heimatwehr implemented a much more extensive military training and physical exercise regimen for its "Heimwehrjugendgruppe" (Heimwehr Youth Group). The more extensive military training program the Heimatwehr established, not only taught youths to shoot military-grade rifles as had long been done in the Jungschützenschule, but also proper technique for throwing hand grenades (using wooden hand grenades), military field exercises, and a physical conditioning regimen.²⁰²

The activities of its youth groups, while paralleling the military training regular Heimatwehr units received, also paralleled the impetus of scouting that it emphasized being outdoors and in nature.²⁰³ In addition to military objectives like map reading, navigation, judging distances, and night hikes, they were to "arouse the body and the mind, stimulate cunning and imagination, strengthen the spirit of adventure and daring." All of this was, "of course...only for boys and youths" and, thus, "not suitable for girls."

²⁰² TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol.410, 93, 282-3.

²⁰³ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol.410, 282-3.

In contrast to the rejuvenating power of hours spent in nature, their time spent in the city was “wasted.”²⁰⁴ Generally negative views of the city and city life emerged right-wing circles in the 1890s, as “[u]rbanization and the growth of the working class, as well as, more nebulously, the spread of values and modernist culture, were leading in this view to the increasing ‘degeneracy’ of the masses.”²⁰⁵ As Large points out, they shared the same views of cities as their Bavarian brethren—a haven for Jews and foreigners. As such, they “were seen as the root of all evil: while their rootless coffee-house intellectuals dispensed moral poison in the form of “asphalt literature” and atheist-socialist philosophy, their parasitic civil servants cooked up schemes to exploit and defraud the honest working men in the provinces.”²⁰⁶ As expressed in the romantic theories of Catholic social thinkers, nature was pure and organic, the work of God, while cities were manmade and became synonymous with the vice and ills of secular modernity that robbed men of their spiritual reason for being.²⁰⁷

The Tiroler Heimatwehr was not the only organization to established a youth group. The Styrian Heimatschutz founded its own youth group on December 1, 1928, but it appears to have been short lived, as according to Pauley, no youth organization was worthy of mention appeared until the White-Green Young People (Weiß-grüne Jungvolk) and the Heimatschutz High School Group (Heimatschutz-Hochschulgruppen), both of

²⁰⁴ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/8, fol.410, 95-6.

²⁰⁵ See, for instance, Richard J. Evans, “The Emergence of Nazi Ideology,” in *The Short Oxford History of Nazi Germany*, Jane Caplan, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 38; Detlev, J.K. Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition, and Racism in Everyday Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 190; John J. Haag, “Othmar Spann and the Politics of Totality: Corporatism in Theory and Practice” (PhD diss., Rice University, 1969), 17, 20-1.

²⁰⁶ Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 54.

²⁰⁷ Haag, “Othmar Spann and the Politics of Totality,” 17.

which were founded in 1932. The establishment of these two youth organizations roughly coincided with the founding of the national youth organization of the Heimwehr movement—Young Fatherland (Jung Vaterland). Nationally, the Heimwehr youth movement grew steadily from 1934, numbering around 15,000 to 103,000 by the end of 1935.²⁰⁸

The role of the war youth generation was clearly articulated in the in the Heimwehr movement's vision for Austria. This is evident, for example, in the Heimwehr propaganda pamphlet, *The Path to Austria's Freedom (Der Weg zu Österreichs Freiheit)*, published in 1929, which makes clear the centrality of patriotic youths in the rise of the Heimwehr movement:

[M]ilitancy is the new style with which the young generation leads the confrontation with Bolshevism and to commemorate the devastated homeland. The red blood of these youths is the liquid, other than the bilious black ink of Marxist scribes, that flows in the veins of Austria. No more cowardly compromise. It is the will of this blooming youth to kick in the barriers to what Austria's people think and feel. Their rallying cry is simply: the Heimatwehr!²⁰⁹

College-aged young men were the building blocks of the movement's military capability, forming the radical basis of its mobile shock units. To reinforce the virtues of military service, war volunteerism, and sacrifice to its youth formations, the *Alpenländische Heimatwehr* regularly printed entries "From the Tyrolean book of Heros," which contained brief biographical portraits of young Tyroleans who died in the Great War.²¹⁰ Simultaneous lamentations of the Heimwehren are indicative, however, that such young men were among the minority of Austria's war youth generation. The "craving of

²⁰⁸ Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 284-5; Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hakenkreuz*, 65.

²⁰⁹ *Der Weg zu Österreichs Freiheit* (Innsbruck: Albert Schober, 1929), 28-9.

²¹⁰ See, for example, "Aus dem Tiroler Heldenbuch," *Alpenländische Heimatwehr*, December 28, 1928, 6.

pleasure,” “worship of foreign customs and dances,” and “dwindling love of the homeland” appears to have been the concerns of most of Austria’s adolescents.²¹¹

Conclusions

Shared historical experiences are, as Shein points out, the “critical defining characteristic” of a social group.²¹² In Tyrol, by the outset of the Great War, there was a longstanding culture of independence, illustrated in its citizens’ deep love of hunting and shooting—privileges not typical of the general population in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Its gun culture was a product of Tyroleans’ obligatory militia service in defense of the county (*Landesverteidigung*). This obligation allowed Tyroleans the freedom to maintain personal firearms during times of peace, as they served a dual purpose as the weapons they would carry into battle.

Over the centuries, the parameters of militia service changed little from their original codification in the *Landlibell von 1511*. Simultaneously, the proliferation of firearms across the Tyrol facilitated the emergence of local rifle clubs who had constructed shooting ranges of varying degrees of sophistication. These clubs began as independent and unrelated entities to the militia levees that were mustered in times of war. By 1703, however, these rifle clubs were obliged to contribute sharpshooter companies to the *Landesverteidigung* in times of war. This marked the beginning of the

²¹¹ “Jugend Tirols!” *Tiroler Heimatwehr-Blätter* 4, November 21, 1924, 4; also cited in Oswald Überegger, *Erinnerungskriege: Der Erste Weltkrieg, Österreich und die Tiroler Kriegserinnerung in der Zwischenkriegszeit* (Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 2011), 219. Similarly, various articles complained about the “Americanization” of European culture and the need for religion in schools. “Der Neue Staat: 21. Die Amerikanisierung der Kunst,” *Alpenländische Heimatwehr*, January 1929, 3;

²¹² Shein, *Organizational Culture*, 11.

integration of rifle clubs into the Tyrolean defense system. The first shooting range order (*Schießstandsordnung*) was decreed in 1736, codifying the role of the shooting ranges and their members in the broader provincial defense system.

The organization of the ranges and their members' obligations remained largely the same until after the Austrian Empire's defeat in the Austro-Prussian war in 1866, which paved the way for the dualist system to emerge in 1867. Among the government reforms of the compromise (*Ausgleich*) of 1867 was compulsory military service. This reform was an important step in the militarization of Habsburg society, as all able-bodied nineteen-year-old men would serve two years of military service and eight years of reserve duty. This exposure to the military culture of the Habsburg army during their active duty, and stints as reservists, were formative experiences that helped ingrain a sense of loyalty and duty to the empire. These residual effects of military service were also observable in the creation of veterans associations, which emerged as voluntary associations to help fellow veterans invalidated or suffering through financial difficulties, as well as assistance for war widows and their children. Indeed, the presence of the military in Habsburg society was, as Mark Twain remarked in 1898, "as pervasive as the atmosphere. It was everywhere."²¹³

With the outset of the Great War, the militarism of conservative Austro-Hungarian society reached its pinnacle. The features of Habsburg and regional militarism remained ubiquitous in the identities of provincial Austrians of all social strata even after the monarchy's collapse. The chapters that follow will illustrate this continuity in greater

²¹³ Mark Twain, "Stirring Times in Austria," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, March 1898, cited in Cole, *Military Culture & Popular Patriotism in Late Imperial Austria*, 3.

depth. The deeply entrenched virtues connected with imperial civic militarism, were formative in shaping the core values, espoused beliefs, behaviors, and activities not just of Tiroler Heimatwehr, but of the movement as a whole. Beyond informing the organizational culture of the movement, they would play an unintended role in effecting the decision making of Heimwehr leadership.

CHAPTER II – THE HEIMWEHR MOVEMENT AS A TRANSNATIONAL PHENOMENON

The vicious feudal dogma of an absolute national sovereignty makes almost impossible all social life...All the states of Central Europe live in a state of clandestine anarchy. Nations have no consideration for each other either in economics or in politics. This system destroys all moral unity in Europe. European distress, misery, anarchy, and civil war are, in their deepest roots, a moral problem. What our most profound and noble thinkers...predicted long ago, has become a reality: Europe is in a state of dissolution, because the spirit of a new Machiavellism destroys private and public moral.

-Oskar Jászi, 1923²¹⁴

The incredible death and destruction wrought by European armies on the battlefields of the First World War was, in large part, a result of the advances in weaponry made possible by the industrialization of European societies over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, penned by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 1848, was also a product of industrialization that reproached capitalism and capitalist governments for the low wages, poor housing, unsafe, and unhealthy conditions in which factory workers languished because of the Industrial Revolution. That the war precipitated socialist-led revolutions, is ironic, but at the same time fitting. That war-weary soldiers and sailors were at the forefront of these revolutions, brought this vicious cycle full-circle.

The theory of “class struggle” laid out in *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* helped drive the Bolshevik revolution in October 1917. Marx and Engels’ treatise detailed

²¹⁴ Oskar Jászi, "Dismembered Hungary and Peace in Central Europe," 280.

how the factory owners (bourgeoisie) emerged, over time, to control modern societies by exploiting the production of wage laborers (proletarians).²¹⁵ Factory owners owned, and thus controlled, the means of production—the tools, machinery, facilities—to manufacture products, which they, in turn, sell at tremendous profit. The workers, whose labor physically produced the products are, on the other hand, paid meager wages on which they and their families could barely survive and were, thus, forced to live in dilapidated tenements. Marx and Engel’s “class struggle” was, thus, an ongoing conflict between the exploiter and the exploited, which the latter—the proletariat—would gradually triumph through its greater strength in numbers and seize control of the means of production in a violent revolution. The proletariat, they predicted, would reconstitute society in the more commensurate system of government in the form of communism. Through the communist system, “The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degree, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the State.” The manifesto goes on to list the measures necessary for “revolutionizing the mode of production,” which entailed the confiscation of all private property (including land), the abolition of inheritance rights, and the consolidation of

²¹⁵ The term “bourgeoisie,” according to Marx and Engels, also included “The lower strata of the middle class — the small tradespeople, shopkeepers, and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants,” who they theorized would “sink gradually into the proletariat, partly because their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which Modern Industry is carried on, and is swamped in the competition with the large capitalists, partly because their specialized skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production. Thus, the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population.” The prediction of the lower middle-class (petit-bourgeoisie) falling into poverty alongside the working-class (proletariat) did not generally evoke solidarity between the two, but instead prompted the petit-bourgeoisie to cling ever more tightly to their middle-class status, perceiving the proletariat as trying to pull them down, rather than bourgeoisie industrialists pushing them down.

means of communication into the hands of the government.²¹⁶ The overarching goal was to “level the playing field,” so to speak, through the destruction of class distinctions.

While the First World War was the catalyst of the revolutions in Central Europe, the Social Democratic parties who guided them were inspired by the Russian Revolutions, which saw the fall of the Romanov dynasty in February 1917, only to be followed by the overthrow of the provisional government in October by a radical faction of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, calling themselves *Bolsheviks*, or “members of the majority”. In the case of the latter, Bolshevik revolutionaries stormed the Winter Palace in Saint Petersburg and arrested present government officials, thereby, seizing control of the primary administrative hub of the federal government. Radical decrees soon followed, placing land, industry, and financial institutions under the control of the Bolshevik government. These measures were part of a larger effort to suppress “class enemies,” which came to be known as the “Red Terror.” The term “class enemy,” while subjective, was generally understood to mean anyone who made money off of the labor of others, such as factory owners, managers, wealthy peasants (pejoratively known as “kulaks”), or army officers. It was also used as a moniker for members of the aristocracy, the bourgeoisie, Tsarist officials, or clergymen, amongst other groupings generally persecuted as the Bolsheviks consolidated power. Those deemed “class enemies” were typically either imprisoned, deported to the developing system of labor camps, or executed by the secret police organization, the Cheka, established by Bolshevik

²¹⁶ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “The Manifesto of the Communist Party,” Marxists Internet Archive, accessed September 29, 2016, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/>.

leader, Vladimir Lenin.²¹⁷ It requires little imagination to see why the ideals of communism, carried out by radical revolutionaries like the Bolsheviks were viewed by bourgeois and wealthy circles in Central Europe with great fright, as something akin to an intellectual contagion, especially given the weak economic and political positions by 1918. The political discourse of conservative political parties and right-wing organizations in Central Europe illustrated as much, frequently calling Marxism a “poisonous bacteria,” a “red plague,” or the “Moscow Scarlet [Fever]” corrupting their society.²¹⁸

According to Robert Gerwarth and John Horne, four “overlapping and mutually reinforcing factors” were the catalysts for paramilitary violence across Europe from the later years of the Great War to the mid-1920s:

the legacy of mass armed combat in the First World War; the Russian Revolution (and subsequent civil war) and the ideological counterrevolution that it generated internationally; the military collapse and dissolution of the multinational dynastic Ottoman, Habsburg, and Romanov empires, along with the often-violent attempts to create ethnically homogenous nation-states under the banner of “self-determination” (including many contested nation-states that obviously contained sizable ethnic minorities); and, finally, the experiences of defeat that accelerated violence in those countries that had been on the losing side in the war.²¹⁹

As this chapter will demonstrate, there was little surprise that the outgrowth of reactionary Paramilitarism was most fervent in the footprint of the former Central Powers, as they were affected by each of these factors simultaneously. Chief among these forces was the fear of communist revolution. As news of the “Red Terror” and brutal civil

²¹⁷ Michael Melancon, “Revolutionary Culture in the Early Soviet Republic: Communist Executive Committees versus the *Cheka*, Fall 1918,” *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 57 (2009): 1-22.

²¹⁸ See, for example, *Der Weg zu Österreichs Freiheit*, 4.

²¹⁹ Robert Gerwarth and John Horne, “Vectors of Violence: Paramilitarism in Europe after the Great War, 1917-1923,” *The Journal of Modern History* 83 (September 2011): 511.

war in Russia spread westward, fears of a similar fate reached a fevered pitch in Austria, Germany, and Hungary. These fears were exacerbated by the political upheaval in Central Europe in 1918. Military defeat was the catalyst for political change in the region, as monarchy gave way to parliamentary democracy. The centuries of rule enjoyed by the Habsburg and Hohenzollern families provided their dynasties legitimacy. The declarations of the fledgling democracies, made at the expense of the abdicating sovereigns, were not universally welcomed or accepted as legitimate.

This was the attitude of many army officers who returned their homeland to find it in the throes of disarray and revolutionary demonstrations in November 1918. These officers, dismayed by the collapse of “peace and order” at home, would become the leading figures of the counter-revolutionary, paramilitary movement in Central Europe.²²⁰ The post-war refrains of military officers touted that the armies of the Central Powers had been “im Feld unbesiegte” (undefeated in the field of battle), only to be “stabbed-in-the-back” (Dolchstoß legende) by “Judeo-Bolshevik” revolutionaries at home. These sentiments illustrated the connection officers made between the revolutions and communism, which reinforced the impetus for the numerous paramilitary organizations that materialized after 1918. As Jászi noted, “According to their (the ruling “oligarchy” in Hungary) ideology Hungary was innocent of complicity in bringing on the World War, which was really caused by German-French capitalistic rivalry. The Hungarian army was actually victorious, and its collapse was brought about by conspiracy.”²²¹

²²⁰ Robert Gerwarth, “The Central European Counter-Revolution: Paramilitary Violence in Germany, Austrian, and Hungary after the Great War,” *Past & Present* 200 (August 2008): 180.

²²¹ Oskar Jászi, “Dismembered Hungary and Peace in Central Europe,” *Foreign Affairs* 2 (Dec. 1923): 279-80.

This myth resonated not only amongst former officers but also gained credence amongst bourgeois and aristocratic circles throughout Central Europe, galvanizing these segments of society against what they perceived to be a common enemy.²²² The outbreak of violence in Central Europe over disputed borders and the protracted process of deciding their fate only contributed to the political instability of the region. To make matters worse, inflation, unemployment, and food and material scarcity—particularly in Austria—only added to the sense of uncertainty. Combined, these conditions created environments in which the process of political demobilization from the war proved impossible.²²³

Another influence that Gerwarth and Horne do not directly address is the hardships and uncertainty exacerbated by the treaties of the Paris Peace Conference. Indeed, the setting in Austria, like that of Germany and Hungary, in the months and years immediately that followed, was a subject of great concern for the international diplomatic community. One observer of the circumstances in Austria wrote, “[t]o Austria the Treaty of Versailles has been more destructive than any war or revolution or scourge or pest or natural calamity, for time can heal such things; but for the consequences of the Treaty of Versailles there is no remedy.”²²⁴ American diplomat, Philip Marshall Brown, declared that Austria was “so reduced in population and economic resources, so hopeless of a national future, that she now remains a proud beggar requiring both food and justice. Her situation is nothing short of tragic.”²²⁵ Sir James Salter, head of the League of Nations’

²²² Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat*, 166-71.

²²³ Gerwarth and Horne, “Vectors of Violence,” 492.

²²⁴ “Notes on the Setting in Austria,” *Advocate of Peace Through Justice* 84 (October 1922): 352.

²²⁵ Philip Marshall Brown, “Self-Determination in Europe,” *The American Journal of International Law* 14 (1920): 238.

economic and financial section, wrote that “Austria lived—but pitifully and precariously. She froze in the winter, and a large part of her population was hungry throughout the year. Her middle class was almost destroyed...Mortality was high and, among children, terrible.”²²⁶ The peace treaties emerging from the Paris Peace Conference were, indeed, the products of adversarial emotion, rather than objective consideration and was generally perceived as “war” carried out “with the weapons of peace.”²²⁷

In the footprint of the Central Powers, the Paris Peace Conference carved out successor states, reducing the territories of Germany, Austria, and Hungary and causing significant national antagonisms. For the anti-Marxist, militant right in Germany, Austria, and Hungary, however, it created opportunities for transnational cooperation. Private organizations, political parties, and government officials worked together in establishing a coalition to defend themselves from communist revolution. The paramilitary Heimwehr movement was at the center of this activity, as the Bavarian and Hungarian governments and paramilitary organizations worked with provincial Austrian officials to fund, organize, arm, and train the Heimwehren. In doing so, they created an anti-Marxist “Ordnungsblock.” Its Bavarian counterpart, the Einwohnerwehr, was dissolved in the summer of 1921 and its successor, Bund Bayern und Reich, enjoyed a brief period of growth that tapered due to its decentralized character, its members defecting to emerging paramilitary organizations such as the Nazi SA. Unlike its Bavarian mentors, the Heimwehr movement remained intact and increased its membership and influence in

²²⁶ John Deak, “Dismantling Empire: Ignaz Seipel and Austria’s Financial Crisis, 1922-1925,” in *From Empire to Republic: Post-World War I Austria*, Contemporary Austrian Studies 19, ed. Günter Bischof, Fritz Plasser and Peter Berger (New Orleans, LA: University of New Orleans, 2010), 132.

²²⁷ Fr. Neuerbourg, “Germany as It Is Today,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 108 (July 1923): 3.

Austrian public life. At its pinnacle in 1929, the Heimwehren confederation was among the largest paramilitary association in Central Europe, exceeded only by the likes of the Stahlhelm and the “Reichsbanner Schwartz-Rot-Gold” (Black, Red, Gold Banner of the Reich), which constituted the largest paramilitary organizations in Germany.²²⁸

Within Central Europe, the Heimwehr movement represented the linchpin of transnational cooperation amongst reactionary right-wing governments and paramilitary organizations working to create a strong, conservative paramilitary front in Austria that would, in turn, solidify an anti-Marxist bulwark in Central Europe. So long as the shadow of the Soviet Union loomed from the East, the threat of communist revolution remained palpable. The ascent of Benito Mussolini and the National Fascist Party (Partito Nazionale Fascista) to power in Italy, however, would inspire these militant right-wing organizations like the Heimwehr movement and the Nazi Party to attempt to implement their own militaristic, authoritarian governments.

As this chapter will illustrate, the menace of communist revolution was the fundamental catalyst for the creation and continuity of right-wing paramilitary organizations and their collaboration in Central Europe. A communist coup attempt in Berlin and the establishment of violent communist regimes in Bavaria and Hungary triggered fierce reprisals from counter-revolutionary paramilitary groups like The National Army in Hungary and the Freikorps (free or volunteer corps) in Germany. The Einwohnerwehr, which emerged after the successful quashing of the communist government in Bavaria, was a byproduct of the wave counter-revolution in Germany and

²²⁸ Eric G. Reiche, *The Development of the SA in Nurnberg, 1922-1934* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 78-9.

was an influential force in the creation of the Heimwehr movement. From financial support flowing from Hungary to its East and the guidance of the Einwohnerwehr in the West, provincial officials were at the center of a transnational collaboration to create an anti-Marxist bulwark in Austria that would connect the states in a Central European “Ordnungsblock.”

Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Central Europe

In the post-war revolutions occurring in Germany, Austria, and Hungary, and even the Russian Revolution of February 1917, moderate social democratic parties were at the forefront. Their platform, while based on Marxist theory, sought a gradual transition to communism rather than violent revolution. Behind these moderates, however, lurked more radical communist elements waiting for the opportune time to orchestrate their own revolution.²²⁹ The nature and extent of the “Red Terror” in Bolshevik Russia sent shockwaves of anxiety among conservative and moderate circles across Europe.²³⁰ “White émigrés” fleeing Bolshevik persecution brought with them first-hand accounts of “Red Terror” and, as Michael Kellogg argues, claims that Jewish capitalists were funding the Bolsheviks.²³¹ These fears were realized in March 1919.

Though paling in comparison to the excesses of the Russian Civil War that followed the October Revolution, the communist revolution in Hungary was, in spite of

²²⁹ The October Revolution (October 1917) in Russia, the Spartacist Uprising in Berlin (January 1919), the formation of the Hungarian Soviet Republic (March 1919), Eugen Leviné’s brief seizure of power in Bavaria (April 1919), and the putsch attempt in Vienna in June 1919 represent specific instances in which communist elements usurped power or attempted to do so from Social Democratic governments.

²³⁰ Gerwarth and Horne, “Vectors of Violence,” 497-8.

²³¹ Michael Kellogg, *The Russian Roots of Nazism: White Émigrés and the Making of National Socialism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

its brevity, brutal. Amidst international controversy surrounding the Hungarian government's resistance against the territorial revisions of the Treaty of Trianon, the ineffective Károlyi government resigned. Hungarian social democratic party leaders bowed to public pressure and agreed to merge the party with the Hungarian communist party, creating the Soviet Republic of Hungary. The confluence of the two parties promised political connections to the West through the Social Democrats and a direct line to the Soviet Red Army through communist party leader, Béla Kun. As the understudy to Lenin, Kun unleashed his own version of the "Red Terror." Playing the role of the *Cheka* was a "terrorist corps" that came to be known as the "Lenin Boys." Their leader, in the words of C.A. MacArtney, was "a particularly revolting and bloodthirsty Jew," named Tibor Szamuely.²³² While clearly written to insight the reactionary right, Ladislaus Bizony's *133 Tage ungarischer Bolshevismus (133 Days of Hungarian Bolshevism)*, offers a contemporary account of Hungary's "Red Terror."²³³ The "Lenin Boys" outfit Szamuely commanded was composed of youths who were "convicted vagabonds and murders," but absolutely loyal to him.²³⁴ Bizony details what became commonplace operations for Szamuely's terrorist unit:

Szamuely received a special train from the (Hungarian) Soviet government so that wherever it showed, counter-revolutionary movements appeared in due time. Szamuely traveled in a parlor car, while the terrorists, armed to the teeth, took other cars... Wherever he stopped, designated a legion of people to be hanged. He ordered the executions to be enforced without trials. Mostly he haphazardly collected together people in the individual villages and hanged them without hearings. He carried with him just a bunch of small perforated forms and a stamp. On the form he wrote the name of the person sentenced to death and stamped it,

²³² C.A. MacArtney, "Hungary since 1918," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 7 (March 1929): 581.

²³³ Ladislaus Bizony, *133 Tage ungarischer Bolshevismus* (Wien: Waldheim-Eberle, 1919), 23-32.

²³⁴ Bizony, *133 Tage*, 26.

having already led to the victim to the gallows. The people in the villages spoke with horror of Szamuely's atrocities. For the scene of executions, he usually chose the main square of the community, the town hall, or the square outside the church. In most cases he ordered the residents of the village, chiefly the family members of the condemned, to the scene of the execution. He brought a chair and gave—with icy calm, smoking his cigarette—the executioners his orders. After the executions he climbed in his car and drove between rows of trees on which the hanged dangled.²³⁵

Bizony even quotes Kun as having said he feared Szamuely would eventually come for him. In total, Gerwarth estimates, between 400 to 500 Hungarians lost their lives in the Red Terror of 1919.²³⁶ This brutalization of perceived enemies of communism would prompt a subsequent, retaliatory “White Terror,” under the Horthy government. Taken together, such political violence contributed to a general state of affairs throughout Central Europe where political and military demobilization became an impossibility. Simply put, neither the left nor the right felt safe enough to “let down their guard.” In this environment of political omnipresence, the radicalization of politics was no longer a matter of “if,” but “when,” and to what extent and for how long.

The outbreak of revolution in Germany and Hungary was met with and followed by strong counter-revolutionary violence. In Budapest, after the disintegration of Béla Kun's communist regime and the brief occupation by Romanian troops, former k.u.k. Admiral, Miklós Horthy and his paramilitary “National Army” opportunistically fell on Budapest, claiming to ‘liberate’ the capital and securing Hungary's national independence. This formation was composed largely of fellow former officers who were “[d]eeply resentful of Hungary's dismemberment at the hands of former national

²³⁵ Bizony, *133 Tage*, 27-8.

²³⁶ Gerwarth, “The Central European Counter-Revolution,” 193.

minorities and unable to cope with the severe economic dislocations of a lost war.”²³⁷ More precisely, 3,800 of the 6,568 volunteers of Horthy’s National Army were former army officers or officers of paramilitary border guard and police formations.²³⁸ In addition to its loftier goals of restoring to Hungary its lost territories and, thus, its national pride, the National Army sought retribution for communist revolutionaries and perpetrators of the Red Terror.

Between 1919 and 1921, reactionary paramilitary formations travelled throughout Hungary arresting, torching, and executing communist supporters of the Kun regime. Just as often, however, Jews and individuals against whom squadron leaders had personal vendettas were the targets of their brutality. Moreover, as Bela Bido explains, in rural Hungary, large land owners invited these paramilitary detachments to their estates to terrorize and intimidate the peasant farmers who worked their land through “a generous amount of lashing.” Estimations regarding the death toll of this “White Terror” vary between 3,000 to 5,000, with approximately 70,000 more individuals imprisoned.²³⁹ In Germany, this took the form of the “Ebert-Groener Pact,” in November 1918. Quartermaster General Wilhelm Groener, fearing Germany would devolve into complete chaos, creating an opportunity for Bolshevik revolution, offered to throw the weight of the army—what remained of it—behind the new government of Social Democratic President Friedrich Ebert. In return, Ebert agreed defend the army and its traditional

²³⁷ Thomas L. Sakmyster, “Army Officers and Foreign Policy in Interwar Hungary, 1918-41,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 10 (January 1975): 20.

²³⁸ Gerwarth, “The Central European Counter-Revolution,” 186.

²³⁹ Bela Bido, “Hungarian Aristocracy and the White Terror,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 45 (October 2010): 703-24.

structure and place in German society against calls for its dissolution in lieu of a “people’s militia.” What was left of the German army was augmented by Freikorps (volunteer corps) formations, which were comprised of demobilized soldiers and officers, frequently of the violent, ultra-nationalist persuasion.²⁴⁰

In January 1919, communist revolutionaries—and disciples of socialist revolutionary Kurt Eisner, President of the “Free State of Bavaria”—and founders of the “Spartacist League,” Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, led the group in a rebellion against the Social Democratic Party over the direction of Germany’s government. At the request of President Friedrich Ebert and Minister of Defense, Gustav Noske, the right-wing, paramilitary Freikorps (volunteer corps) crushed the general strike that came to known as the “Spartacist Uprising” and executed Liebknecht and Luxemburg (allegedly on the orders of Captain Waldemar Pabst, the future Stabsleiter (Chief of Staff) of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr as well as the federal umbrella organization, the Selbstschutzverband Österreich). A month after Luxemburg and Liebknecht’s execution, Eisner was assassinated in Munich by the young, right-wing nationalist Anton Graf von Arco auf Valley.

In a confusing spate of successive and, by April 1919, competing governments in Bamberg and Munich that emerged in the aftermath of Kurt Eisner’s assassination, Russian communist, Eugen Leviné, seized control over what Ernst Toller had only a week earlier proclaimed as the Bavarian Soviet Republic.²⁴¹ Inspired and encouraged by the

²⁴⁰ Frank Tipton, *A History of Modern Germany Since 1815* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 375.

²⁴¹ A cabinet member to Kurt Eisner, Johannes Hoffmann, succeeded Eisner after his assassination. The moderate path Hoffmann hoped to navigate in order to gain the support of the

support he received from both Kun and Lenin, Leviné began arresting bourgeois opponents and executing others he feared to be reactionary spies. Dismayed by these events, German Minister of Defense, Gustav Noske, once more turned to the paramilitary Freikorps to smash the communist government in Bavaria. The Freikorps Württemberg worked with brutal efficiency, capturing Leviné and destroying his “Red Army.”²⁴² Upon entering Munich and re-capturing its public buildings, Freikorps troops discovered those executed, “mutilated to the point of being unrecognizable,” of which three had been beheaded.²⁴³ In total, it is estimated that between 100 to 200 Germans died in various incidents of Red Terrorism in 1918-19.²⁴⁴ The communist revolution in Hungary and the coup attempts in Berlin and Munich created a palpable fear of communism throughout Central Europe that remained a driving motivation for counter-revolutionary Paramilitarism and their cooperation in the Interwar Period.

conservative and leftist factions was met with strong resistance, particularly with regard to the idea of Bavaria remaining within the German state. While meeting with officials in Berlin, his cabinet members, the Central Council, and communist party members met in an effort to work out a solution to their disagreement. In an effort bring unity, the Hoffmann’s representative made the blunder of calling for the creation of a Soviet Republic (*Räterepublik*). Hoffmann was unseated and Ernst Toller was elected in President of the *Räterepublik*. Hoffmann, still recognized in Berlin as the head of the Bavarian government, he and his cabinet reconvened in Bamberg and hoped to solve the issue without having to call on the federal government. The failure of the “people’s militia,” that the Hoffmann government mustered, to retake Munich, forced him to request military support from Berlin. Minister of Defense, Gustav Noske, once more called on the *Freikorps* to retake Munich. See Roy G. Koepf, “Conservative Radicals: The *Einwohnerwehr*, *Bund Bayern und Reich*, and the limits of Paramilitary Politics in Bavaria, 1918-1928,” PhD diss. (University of Nebraska, 2010), 57-61.

²⁴² Friedrich August Winkler, *Germany: The Long Road West, 1789-1933* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 356.

²⁴³ While Eugen Leviné usurped power in Bavaria, known members of the opposition were arrested, along with ten executed—most of which were “mutilated to the point of being unrecognizable,” three of which were beheaded. As brutal as this episode was, it was the extent to which Germany experienced “Red Terror.” See “Ermordung der Geiseln in München,” *Salzburger Volksblatt*, May 3, 1919, 2; Hastings, *Catholicism and the Roots of Nazism*, 47.

²⁴⁴ Gerwarth, “The Central European Counter Revolution,” 193; David Clay Large, *The Politics of Law and Order: A History of the Bavarian *Einwohnerwehr*, 1918-1921* (Philadelphia, PA: The American Philosophical Society, 1980), 12.

The recurring appearance of Jews in leading roles of communist revolutions between 1917 and 1919, helped solidify in the minds of Marxist opponents that there were legitimate connections between Judaism and Bolshevism. Moreover, given the fact that the Jewish population in Europe represented roughly only one quarter of one percent at the time, this would have likely seemed all the more conspicuous.²⁴⁵ This recurrent theme began with the fact that Marx, was a Jewish philosopher. Aside from Vladimir Lenin, the most widely known figure of the Russian Revolution was Leon Trotsky, founder of the Red Army, was the son of a wealthy Ukrainian Jewish farmer. The lead perpetrator of Red Terror in Hungary, Tibor Szamuely, was also a Jew.²⁴⁶ Leviné, Eisner, and Luxemburg were, likewise, Jews. In the case of the Bavarian revolution, it is worth nothing that Leviné was also a Russian national. As David Clay Large explains, “middle-class Bavarians saw a Russian conspiracy at work” that, according to a police from June 1919, was financially supported by Jews. This was important in creating an environment in Bavaria in which the idea of a “Judeo-Bolshevik conspiracy” seemed particularly real and where the anti-Semitic National Socialists German Workers Party (NSDAP) could thrive.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁵ According to the *American Jewish Yearbook, 1920-21* (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1922), 361 the population of European Jews was estimated to have been 11,435,968. Ralph S. Tarr and Frank M. McMurry, *New Geographies, Second Book* (New York, NY: MacMillan, 1920), 424 estimate the Europe’s total population to have been 464,680,000. This places the Jewish population, relative to the total European population at roughly 0.025 percent.

²⁴⁶ Payne, *A History of Fascism*, 268. In the case of Hungary, anti-Semitism must be understood within the context of its extensive territorial losses resulting from the Treaty of Trianon. The heavy concentration of Jews living in Budapest, coupled with the loss of substantial territory on its periphery increase the Jewish portion of the Hungarian population from one percent to just under six percent, giving Hungary the second largest Jewish minority in the world. What is more—as was a recurring theme across Central Europe—the disproportionately high number of successful Jewish professionals in Hungary spurred further resentment within its bourgeois classes.

²⁴⁷ “Report of June 7, 1919,” BHSA, II, MA 99902, cited in Francis Ludwig Carsten, *Revolution in Central Europe* (London, 1972), 256; Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 9; Stephen Eric Bronner,

While effective in beating back the threat of Bolshevism in Germany, the Ebert-Groener Pact was a pyrrhic victory in that it allowed the Prussian militarism that colored imperial Germany to survive. It also set a precedent for government-supported and subsidized Paramilitarism in Central Europe, a precedent that spilled over into Austria and was modeled elsewhere. In this way, it helped inaugurate a cycle of counter-revolutionary political violence that would span the interwar period. The noteworthy number of Freikorps men who would become Nazi Party members also speaks to the significance of Ebert-Groener Pact. It encouraged the development of Freikorps formations, and their use in crushing revolutions provided them opportunities to engage in gratuitous, political violence. The Freikorps experience, to be sure, was formative in solidifying the foundational beliefs of Nazism for many of these members, particularly those of the war youth generation who were too young to have experienced the Great War from the front lines. In any case, National Socialism offered a platform that aligned with their patriotic fanaticism with the brutality inherent to its ideals.

Meanwhile in Austria, state and local governments raised volunteer militia formations to defend communities and cities from marauding bands of deserters and transports full of Hungarian and Czech soldiers passing through on their journey home in the last days of the war. Moreover, these militia units fought to defend the territorial integrity of Carinthia and Styria. Quite apart from the notion that local self-defense groups “sprang into existence...virtually spontaneous[ly],” their formation was recruited, organized, and equipped through the cooperation of the Austrian local, state, and

Modernism at the Barricades: Aesthetics, Politics, Utopia (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 121-134.

provisional governments.²⁴⁸ On November 30, 1918, the ministry of war distributed 1,156 machine guns, 80,345 repeating rifles, 13,627 carbines, 396 hand grenades, 888 sidearms, 8,702,640 rifle cartridges, and 72,891 pistol cartridges to local militia units in an effort to maintain order, keep the peace, and defend citizens and their property.²⁴⁹

Austrian newspapers published appeals for men to form or join local efforts to establish civil defense groups to protect unarmed citizens, homes, railways, factories, communication networks, and food depots. The Lower Austrian newspaper, *Der Bauernbündler*, called on farmers to keep their “head high” in this difficult time and “Form militias that patrol constantly!”²⁵⁰ The national council in Vienna—comprised of representatives of the Social Democratic, Christian Social, and German Freedom Party—urged cooperation among all circles of society. “Should we, however, maintain order, the foundation of home defense is made up from all circles of the population, of workers and citizens, in this most urgent hour of need,” reads the *Österreichische Land-Zeitung*. The Lower Austrian city of Krems, for example, instituted the general conscription of able-bodied citizens between 18 and 36 years of age, not employed by public services and utilities such as the railways, the post office, and electric companies. Those fitting the criteria were required to report to various locations in Krems and its outskirts within three days. These who were required to take part in watches and patrol duty every third day for a 24-hour shift; those on duty were provided lunch and supper as well as coffee at 6:00am

²⁴⁸ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 19; Kondert, “Rise and Early History,” 1.

²⁴⁹ Kondert, “Rise and Early History,” 2.

²⁵⁰ “Die Heimatwehr!,” *Der Bauernbündler*, November 6, 1918, 5.

and 6:00pm. Individuals serving militia duty were paid eight kronen upon completing their service day.²⁵¹

Police and military assistance was required to protect food and weapons depots in its larger, more industrialized cities, which were prone to demonstrations, riots, and looting.²⁵² In Tyrol, the state assembly (Nationalrat) established a defense committee to oversee civil defense.²⁵³ The committee was tasked with three initial goals: the disarming and removal of any non-German-Austrian troops, the removal of all prisoners of war, and the recall of German-Tyrolean troops and Standschützen. Available military supplies were used to establish ad-hoc fortifications throughout the city. Locally garrisoned troops were drafted into Sicherheitsgruppen (security groups) to man these posts and guard against plundering and unrest.²⁵⁴ Beyond the Sicherheitsgruppen, the Tyrolean state assembly also authorized the formation of voluntary Bürgerwehren and Bauernwehren, or citizen militias and farmer militias, respectively.²⁵⁵ The Innsbruck Bürgerwehr company, for instance, was under of the oversight of the mayor, Dr. Wilhelm Greil, and was broken

²⁵¹ “Aufruf des Nationalrates,” *Österreichische Land-Zeitung*, November 9, 1918, 3-4; “Aufforderung zur Aufstellung von Volkswehren durch die Gemeinden,” *Welt Blatt*, November 9, 1918, 3; Kondert, “Rise and Early History of the Heimwehr,” 2.

²⁵² Überegger, *Leben im Krieg*, 237.

²⁵³ “Beschlüsse des Tiroler Nationalrates in der Sitzung vom 31. Oktober 1918,” in *Beschlüsse des Tiroler Nationalrates vom 26. Oktober bis 16. Dezember 1918* (Innsbruck: Buchdruckerei Tyrolia, 1918), 3, <http://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?aid=spt&datum=1918&size=45&page=13>; Lösch, “Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr,” 2; The defense committee consisted of a Hauptmann Dr. Schneider, Oberleutenant Dr. Lassenau, Oberleutenant Engerisser, Standschützenhauptmann Arthur von Wallpach, and a Oberarzt Dr. Bauer

²⁵⁴ Lösch, “Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr,” 2; The Tyrolean state assembly selected Oswald Eccher ab Echo Edler von Marienberg to command the Tyrolean *Sicherheitsgruppen*.

²⁵⁵ Lösch, “Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr,” 3; “Sitzung vom 3. November 1918,” in *Beschlüsse des Tiroler Nationalrates*, 10, <http://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?aid=spt&datum=1918&page=20&size=45>. These formations were called a variety of names: *Arbeiterwehren*, *Heimatschutz*, *Heimatwehr*, *Heimatsdienst*, *Heimatschutzverband*, *Selbstschutzverband*, and the like.

down into four platoons—a total of 140 men—who the city provided meals and six kronen per day compensation for their service. This auxiliary civilian force functioned as a standing formation, serving in six-hour rotations. Less experienced volunteers formed an emergency cadre mobilized only in dire circumstances.²⁵⁶

After the plundering of the Austrian countryside had subsided, there was still reason for provincial militias to remain at the ready. The Social Democratic-led provisional government in Vienna had begun the project of raising a new federal army, tapping Dr. Julius Deutsch, a Landsturm officer during the war and the future leader of the Republikanische Schutzbund. The new army's ranks were filled with unemployed industrial workers. The army's leadership, despite including members of the Christian Social Party and German nationalists, was primarily Social Democrats.²⁵⁷ The markedly urban, Socialist complexion of Austria's new army (the Volkswehr), complete with soldiers' councils (Soldatenräte), a hallmark of the Soviet Red Army, evoked trepidation among conservative provincial officials and gave them cause to support the continuity of their militia groups. The deputy major of Innsbruck and finance committee chairman of the Tiroler Heimatwehr, Fritz Fischer, would liken the Volkswehr to "a red labor union."²⁵⁸

Another significant cause that prolonged the life of provincial militia groups that would form the basis of the Heimwehren, was the fact that bands of Yugoslavian militants

²⁵⁶ "Vom Tiroler Nationalrat," *Allgemeiner Tiroler Anzeiger*, November 6, 1918, 3; Löscher, "Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr," 4-5. Landesgerichtsrat, Dr. Larcher, initially led Innsbruck's Bürgerwehr company.

²⁵⁷ Ludwig Jedlicka, *Ein Heer im Schatten der Parteien. Die militärische Lage Österreichs 1918-1938* (Graz: Hermann Böhlhaus, 1955), 13-14; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr*, 19.

²⁵⁸ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol. 410, 267.

invaded southern Carinthia in an effort to ‘liberate’ its Slovene population. Carinthian Heimatschutz groups and the Volkswehr, under the direction of provincial commander (Landesbefehlshaber) General Ludwig Hügerth, cooperatively fought off the Yugoslav invasion, though not without tension. Lieutenant Hans Steinacher, who recruited 200 volunteers from his former infantry regiment—K.u.k. Infanterieregiment Graf von Khevenhüller Nr. 7 (Klagenfurt)—to join in the defense, for example, was particularly hostile toward the “city slicker” Volkswehr troops. In his memoir he repeatedly refers to them as worthless “Red Guards,” who demonstrated more interest in exploiting the countryside than fighting the Yugoslavs.²⁵⁹ Despite an agreed ceasefire arbitrated by an American mission sent to investigate, the Yugoslav force once more attacked on April 29, 1919, making only minor gains. An Austrian counter attack succeeded in pushing the Yugoslav force back, south of the Drau, recovering Grafenstein and Völkermarkt. Chancellor Renner, ordered Hügerth—the future Landesführer of the Carinthian Heimatschutz—to halt any further offensive operations in order to let the negotiations run their course. Renner’s “defeatist” orders were promptly ignored and Hügerth’s force ejected the Yugoslavians from Carinthian soil all together, illustrating once again the “general tension between Vienna and the provinces, characteristic of all of modern Austrian history.”²⁶⁰

²⁵⁹ Hans Steinacher: *Sieg in deutscher Nacht: Ein Buch vom Kärntner Freiheitskampf*. (Wien: Wiener Verlag, 1943) cited in Thomas Mack Barker, *The Slovenes of Carinthia: A National Minority Problem* (New York: League of CSA, 1960), 113.

²⁶⁰ Barker, *The Slovenes of Carinthia*, 115; Woodrow Wilson tapped Professor Archibald Cary Coolidge to lead a mission to investigate the “questions relating to the succession states.” Lieutenant Colonel Sherman Miles and Lieutenant Le Roy King were members of this mission and were important figures in the arbitration of the south Carinthia between the new Yugoslav state and Austria. See also Siegfried Beer, “Selectively Perceived Legacies of World War I: The Little-Known Halstead Mission in Austria, 1919,” in *From Empire to Republic: Post-World War I Austria*, Contemporary Austrian Studies

The fighting in Carinthia was principal catalyst for the continuity of militia formations in Carinthian and neighboring Styria.²⁶¹ A May 1919 report estimated that paramilitary formations existed in approximately 70 percent of Styria's communities, varying from 15 to 100 men, depending on the size of the community.²⁶² Dr. Willibald Brodmann, a regimental doctor in the Great War, established the first significant paramilitary organization in Styria, the Untersteierischen Bauernkommandos (Lower Styrian Peasant Squad). Brodmann was, according to Pauley, widely popular and "the soul of the south Styrian resistance against Yugoslavian aggression." His sudden death in May 1922, at the age of 39, cut short his career as potentially the most influential Heimwehr leader in Styria.²⁶³

In Tyrol, Social Democratic members of the Tyrolean Landtag balked that Governor Stumpf's refusal of the IMCC request to disband the Bürgerwehr, complaining that his "mercenary army" was costing the state 2,500,000 kronen a year and would bankrupt the state. Tiroler Volkspartei representatives responded by agreeing to disband the Bürgerwehr only if the federal government disbanded the Volkswehr.²⁶⁴

19, ed. Günter Bischof, Fritz Plasser and Peter Berger (New Orleans, LA: University of New Orleans Press, 2010), 110-122 for a useful discussion of the conclusion of the Coolidge Mission and the Halstead Mission that succeeded it.

²⁶¹ Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hakenkreuz*, 34.

²⁶² Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 43.

²⁶³ Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hakenkreuz*, 36-7.

²⁶⁴ Lösche, "Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr," 7-8; "Treaty of Peace Between the Allied and Associated Powers and Austria, Together with the Protocol and Declarations Annexed Thereto, Signed at Saint Germain-en-Laye, September 10, 1919," UK Treaties Online, accessed April 2, 2017, <http://treaties.fco.gov.uk/docs/pdf/1919/TS0011.pdf>. The IMCC, by the Treaty of Saint Germain, was charged with overseeing all of the clauses requiring the seizure and destruction of military, naval, and air assets. Its specific duties are laid out in Section IV of the Treaty of Saint Germain.

Bavarian Humiliation and the Creation of the Einwohnerwehr

The inability of Bavarians to suppress the radical Räterepublik on their own was “a source of great humiliation” and the principal impetus propelling Hoffman and Gustav von Kahr’s project of building a strong paramilitary organization in Bavaria.²⁶⁵ The early vestiges of the Einwohnerwehr would emerge from small units of civilians such as that from Rosenheim, commanded by Rudolf Kanzler, who took part in the first, failed attempt to liberate Munich. Local bureaucrats, like Kanzler, played a leading role in organizing volunteers into paramilitary militias. The other principal figure who would emerge from this process was forestry officer, Georg Escherich, who recruited and commanded a paramilitary unit in Isen and who would become the leader and principal driver of the Einwohnerwehr movement.²⁶⁶ Escherich’s connections to the nobility, which he established during his forestry studies, would get him a post as an organizer and administrator in the Bialowies district of occupied Poland during the Great War. Through this post, he came into contact with Quartermaster General, Erich Ludendorff, who came to admire his “harsh though efficient” style. His post-war career as a lobbyist for wealthy, landed aristocrats only expanded his network of influential contacts.²⁶⁷ These connections would prove crucial in funding and organizing the Einwohnerwehr. With the support of the federal government in Berlin, several Freikorps units had already been established in Bavaria. Freikorps Epp, established by Colonel Franz Ritter von Epp, was comprised of

²⁶⁵ Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 15.

²⁶⁶ The Einwohnerwehr, or Citizen Guard, was a confederation of local, volunteer civil defense (paramilitary) groups throughout Bavaria that worked closely with local authorities as auxiliary police and gendarmerie to maintain law and order. The Einwohnerwehr were centralized in their organization with Munich as its headquarters. Georg Escherich commanded the Einwohnerwehr and Rudolf Kanzler served as his deputy.

²⁶⁷ Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 18.

junior officers, NCOs and soldiers and from his former unit (The Royal Bavarian Infantry Lifeguards Regiment). Freikorps Oberland and Kanzler's Freikorps Chiemgau were among the other, larger formations organized.²⁶⁸

It is worth pointing out that the composition of *Freikorps Chiemgau*—as was the case of most of the militias formed in Bavaria—was quite diverse, drawing from a range of social strata, with Catholic peasants, demobilized soldiers, and university students particularly prominent in filling out its ranks.²⁶⁹ Thus, the diversity of these formations tended to give them a more conventional, conservative outlook that contrasted the “rigid military organization and...grim fanaticism” displayed by the more radical, ultra-nationalist Prussian Freikorps units that have come to symbolize the movement in the popular imagination.²⁷⁰ Nevertheless, in the same way Freikorps Chiemgau became a founding component of the Bavarian Einwohnerwehr, those more radical elements of the Freikorps would go on to serve as the hard core of the Nazi Sturmabteilung (SA). And, whereas the Nazis would attempt their own coup d'état in Munich in 1923, the Einwohnerwehr worked hand-in-glove with the von Kahr government, serving as an

²⁶⁸ Koepp, “Conservative Radicals,” 61-2.

²⁶⁹ Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 14; Koepp, “Conservative Radicals,” 62; Ernst Rüdiger Prince von Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini: Memoirs of Ernst Rüdiger Prince Starhemberg* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942), 13.

²⁷⁰ Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 14. Photos of the *Totenkopf* (death's head) and the swastikas adorning the helmets and vehicles of *Freikorps* units have often been viewed in posterity through the lens of Nazism, giving the misconception that they were the forerunners to the Nazi Party. However, those units had adopted the symbols before the Nazi Party. In the case of the *Totenkopf*, had long been the emblem of German Hussar units, while the swastika is an ancient symbol that acquired a variety of meanings over time, many of which are religious in nature. Robert G.L. Waite, *The Vanguard of Nazism: The Free Corps Movement in Postwar Germany, 1918-1923* (New York, NY: Norton, 1969) argues that the *Freikorps*, as a movement, did not inform Nazi ideology, but it's member's ultra-nationalist outlook, obedience, and violent experiences as *Freikorps* members allowed for those men to transition seamlessly into a dedicated cadre of SA men.

auxiliary police and security force ensuring that revolutions like those taking place in 1918 and 1919 did not happen again.

Though the growth and development of the Einwohnerwehr paralleled fears of “a resurgent Bolshevism,” it also reflected Bavarian separatism and a disdain for their Prussian overlords. As Large explains, in the mind of many Bavarians, Prussia became responsible for the war and, thus, all of their sufferings. At the war front, similar resentment was echoed amongst Bavarians who saw themselves as having been “exploited” by the Prussian General Staff for the benefit of Prussian troops. These tensions remained palpable after the war, as representatives of the Bavarian People’s Party declared prior to the opening of the provincial diet, “We are not going to tolerate being ruled from Berlin in the future... We categorically reject the ruthless one-sided Prussian domination.”²⁷¹ Heimwehr leader, Ernst Rüdiger von Starhemberg, in his memoir, similarly described the Bavarians as maintaining “an old and strong dislike for Protestant Prussianism.”²⁷² These were, however, simply the most recent episodes in a long, strained relationship between Bavaria and Prussia, the roots of which extend as far back as the Protestant Reformation.²⁷³ Turning to its alpine, Catholic neighbors in Austria—as opposed to the Protestant north—is, therefore, not surprising. Large adds, that “[w]hile Bavarians and Prussians eyed each other suspiciously, if not with mutual contempt, Bavarians, Salzburger, Tyroleans, and Vorarlberger tended to see themselves as belonging to a common alpine heritage, even to the same ‘racial stock.’”²⁷⁴ For good

²⁷¹ Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 5-7.

²⁷² Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 13.

²⁷³ Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 7; *Bayerischer Kurier*, November 14, 1918, cited in Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 13.

²⁷⁴ Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 53.

reason, Einwohnerwehr-Heimwehr cooperation evoked the suspicion of Berlin, particularly regarding Bavarian intentions. German Consul General in Innsbruck, Hans von Külmer, quizzed Tiroler Heimatwehr leader, Dr. Richard Steidle, as to the Bavarian attitude toward the German Reich; Steidle assured him, perhaps somewhat disingenuously, of their “absolute Loyaltät.”²⁷⁵

The Bavarian Einwohnerwehr—Clandestine Agent of Anschluss

The Einwohnerwehr-Heimwehr alliance was predicated upon two mutually reinforcing motivations. First, it was intended to strengthen the position of Munich vis-à-vis Berlin.²⁷⁶ As one Einwohnerwehr representative explained, “[t]he Bavarians need above all support in their rear by the Tyroleans and Salzburgers if they should be forced to march to the north.”²⁷⁷ The phrase, “if they (the Bavarians) should be forced to march to the north” implied the possibility of the Einwohnerwehr marching on Berlin, which many Bavarian conservatives viewed as being “entirely oriented towards the left.” The strong anti-socialist reaction in Bavaria emerged in the aftermath of the Räterepublik, infiltrated the Reichswehr. As Captain Ernst Röhm explained to Colonel a.D. Max Bauer—adjutant to Erich Ludendorff and Kapp Putsch conspirator—in July 1922, the German army headquartered in Bavaria “formed the true center of all nationalist

²⁷⁵ The National Archives of the UK (TNA): German Foreign Ministry (GFM) 33/3812/K925/2, “Politische Beziehungen Österreich zu Deutschland – Anschluß von Tirol an Deutschland,” documents stamped K232474, K232479. Henceforth, documents from this record group will be cited TNA: GFM 33/3812/K925/2 followed by the stamped document ID.

²⁷⁶ Ludger Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren und die bayerische Rechte 1920-1923* (Wien: Europa Verlag, 1977), 64-5.

²⁷⁷ “Protokoll der Sitzung am 13 Mai 1920,” Bundesarchiv Koblenz, NS 26, vorl. 648, cited in Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 47.

organizations.”²⁷⁸ Bavarians harbored a longstanding dislike of Protestant Prussia and came to see Berlin as a haven of unscrupulous leftist elements, beneath which communist revolution could bubble to the surface. The dread of this potentiality prompted the second motivation for the alliance between the Einwohnerwehr and the Heimwehr—the continued belief that Marxist revolutionaries were lying in wait for the opportune time.

The best way to buttress the new “center of all nationalist organizations,” in Munich, was the consolidation of resources. Despite being expressly forbidden in the Treaty of Saint Germain, Anschluss (or unification) with Germany was strongly desired by the vast majority of the Austrian population. Not content to simply abide by this edict, the Einwohnerwehr-Heimwehr alliance was also guided by genuine pan-German overtures. These sentiments were articulated quite clearly in the ceremonies surrounding the controversial Landeschießen (provincial shooting contest), staged by the Tyrolean Heimatwehr in November 1920. It was no coincidence that the shooting contest was held at Berg Isel; it was the site of three important clashes in the 1809 Tyrolean uprising in which Tyrolean militiamen defeated the French and Bavarian occupation forces. This also presented a convenient venue for Tyrolean Volkspartei and the Tyrolean Heimatwehr to emphasize the Landeschießen as an important foreign policy event.²⁷⁹ “We welcome the fact that the former opponents of 1809 celebrate with us today firmly in peace a faithful brotherhood,” reads a transcript of one speech.²⁸⁰ A report on the Landeschießen concluded:

²⁷⁸ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 59; See also Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 13.

²⁷⁹ Tiroler Landtag, *Stenographische Berichte*, 1325.

²⁸⁰ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/6, fol.56, 11a.

As the sun of freedom, Tyrol induced the German people to a joint struggle against the proud Corsicans, ever may this Landesschießen of the H.W.—on the blood-soaked battlefield of the heroic struggles of Andreas Hofer and his death-defying heroes at Berg Isel—embellish and further deepen the union of all German crests and begin working in intimate collaboration between the Reiche and us, which has been ever successfully inaugurated in Munich in the interests of the whole German people.²⁸¹

Indeed, there was some truth behind Tyrolean Volkspartei contentions that the Landeschießen was an important “foreign policy” gesture—one couched not just in Tyrol’s tradition of civic militarism but also in a broader South German, Catholic militarism, both of which having adopted a distinctly anti-Marxist hue. Social Democrats were particularly outraged by the planned attendance of Escherich, Kanzler, and units of the Einwohnerwehr. Social Democrat Landtag representative, Martin Rappoldi explained the Tyrolean Heimatwehr “originally similar to earlier shooting clubs, has lost their sporty character by way of the influence of Orgesch and serve its monarchist purposes.”²⁸² Thusly, Social Democrats vehemently opposed the shooting festival on the grounds of the “counterrevolutionary and monarchist character” of the Einwohnerwehr its Heimwehren functionaries. The Landesschießen, therefore, constituted a “provocative monarchist demonstration” by what was little more than a “monarchist mafia” colluding with the Bavarian Wittelsbach dynasty who was “determined to shatter the German Reich, to drown the idea of unity in the blood of the German nation.”²⁸³ The Social Democratic news organ, the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, argued that the reason for the shooting festival was, in fact, to test the “war capability” of the

²⁸¹ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/6, fol.56, 14.

²⁸² “Dringliche Anfrage der Sozialdemokraten im Tiroler Landtage,” *Arbeiterwille*, November 18, 1920, 2.

²⁸³ “Sie wollen Schießen!,” *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, November 19, 1920, 1.

formations and their guns.²⁸⁴ Like the majority of articles published in both left and right-leaning news organs, the facts were sprinkled in amidst the indignant sensationalism. Beyond the sharp criticism of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr and the Landesschießen, Social Democrats armed Tyrolean workers and implemented a general railroad strike in order to grind the rail system to a halt in effort to prevent the participation of the Bavarians. Train engineers removed critical engine parts to prevent Heimatwehr emergency technical assistance section (*Technische Nothilfe*) from restoring the rail system, while armed workers occupied Innsbruck's gas and electricity works. Despite the best efforts of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr, who did manage to get the rail system working again on very limited degree, the strike succeeded in preventing a sizable contingent of Einwohnerwehr men from participating in the competition.²⁸⁵

To be sure, the Einwohnerwehr-Heimwehr coalition was not merely an alliance between two paramilitary organizations, it served as a channel through which Munich—with the blessing of Berlin—collaborated with provincial Austrian officials of politically and culturally compatible Alpine provinces, to establish alternative paths toward unification.²⁸⁶ Kanzler and a staff of liaison officers to Austria, functioned as “unofficial” contacts between Austrian provincial governors and Munich, just as they did for between the Heimwehren and the Einwohnerwehr. Their efforts, naturally, focused on those bordering alpine Austrian provinces—Salzburg, Tyrol, and Vorarlberg.

²⁸⁴ “Sie wollen Schießen!” 1.

²⁸⁵ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 50; As will be discussed later, the Technical Emergency Assistance corps (*Technische Nothilfe*) of the *Heimwehren* were critical components to their strike-breaking efforts.

²⁸⁶ Kondert, “Rise and Early History,” 8; Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 63, 65.

In the case of Tyrol, its Lieutenant Governor at the time, Dr. Franz Stumpf, who was the driving force behind the creation of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr, and colleague, fellow Tyrolean Volkspartei member, Landtag (state parliament) representative, and Landesführer of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr, Dr. Richard Steidle, were the two most influential proponents of Anschluss.²⁸⁷ Stumpf and Steidle, supported by a coalition of pro-Anschluss Christian Social Party members and Großdeutsch Volkspartei representatives within the Landtag, negotiated a general agreement in January 1921 that was designed to bring Tyrol into Bavaria's orbit in the event of Austria's "dissolution." According to the agreement, the Tyrolean government was to inform Berlin of its intentions, but work directly with the Bavarian government to secure any "neighborly aid" needed. If Tyrol were invaded, Bavarian *Freikorps* units were to be sent in to aid in its defense.²⁸⁸

This agreement was also intended to gauge the Allied reaction to the development and to determine if a gradual integration of Tyrol into Bavaria might be possible if conditions in Austria continued to deteriorate. Steidle and the *Tiroler Heimatwehr*, did what they could to expedite the unrest, threatening that:

if there is a conflict with Vienna, it is right on our side, because Vienna has caused our misery. The Balkanization of Austria has proceeded from Vienna; In the last few days there have been unscrupulous people exploiters, foreigners who have found a great witches' sabbath around the market, and the death of the State.²⁸⁹

One can only make inferences based on the language of Foreign Ministry documents as to the source of this "dissolution." References to "enemy states" and the discussion of

²⁸⁷ The *Tyrolean Volkspartei* was the Tyrolean Christian Social Party.

²⁸⁸ TNA: GFM 33/3812/K925/2, K232476-7.

²⁸⁹ TNA: GFM 33/3812/K925/2, K232670. This passage comes from the same clipping cited above, "Was will Tirol? Scharfe Worte des Führers der Tiroler Heimatwehr," *Innsbrucker Nachrichten*, October 1, 1921.

deploying armed force implies an organized foreign invasion. Moreover, Steidle’s alleged “Balkanization of Austria” makes the “Little Entente,”—Romania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia—who threatened military action should Austria or Hungary return the Habsburg dynasty to the throne or if Austria attempted unification with Germany, the most likely candidate.²⁹⁰

Forging the “Ordnungsblock”

The Einwohnerwehr-Heimwehr “Ordnungsblock” was a reaction to Socialist Revolutions in Austria and Germany in 1918 and was designed to oppose any future communist coup attempts, as it proclaimed publicly at the Tyrolean Landeschießen:

1. To protect the constitution
2. To protect the people and their property
3. To support existing protective institutions (primarily Tyrolean police) in keeping peace and order and in the event of natural disasters.
4. To defend the rights of everyone against any Leftist putsch attempts

The speeches delivered at the event—which was the first significant clash between the Heimwehr movement and the Social Democrats—decried Marxist doctrine and the Social Democratic Party. At the same time Escherich and the Heimatwehr leadership appealed to workers, explaining that the Heimwehren were not against the workers, but rather their Marxist leaders. He stressed that the Wehrmänner present were from all “Stände und Berufsklassen” (segments and professions), were men young and old, university professors, officers, workers, officials, and veterans.²⁹¹

²⁹⁰ TNA: GFM 33/3812/K925/2, K232509 discusses the ultimatum issued by Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia in which they would invade Austria in the event that Austria declared itself a part of Germany.

²⁹¹ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/6, fol.56, 5, 11b.

Many of the poorly organized and equipped militias that had remained under arms were retained by provincial governments for fear that the Social Democrats would use the Volkswehr to initiate a communist revolution. The association established between the Bavarian Einwohnerwehr and the Austrian Heimwehren provided essential capital, weapons, and organizational support. Communications and transporting weapons from Bavaria to the Landesleitung (state leadership) in various Austrian provinces, however, proved difficult at times. As such, it required the organizations to utilize a variety of methods—trucks, train car, as well as via the wagons of sympathetic peasants—to transport arms. It also became clear that communications through the mail system were in danger of interception by Social Democratic postal workers. As such, the Heimwehren adopted “cover addresses” (Deckadressen), preventing interference and allowing them to communicate through the mail.²⁹²

According to Kondert, it was the Bavarians who initially contacted the officials in Salzburg. In the spring of 1919, Dr. Hans Oellacher began organizing volunteers for a paramilitary unit in Salzburg, initially funded by Christian Social representative, Dr. Heinrich Mataja and armed by Styrian sources. By the end of November, Oellacher’s group had brokered an agreement with Escherich in which his group would send 400 men to Bavaria in support of Escherich—and vice-versa—in the event of unrest. By February 1920, Kanzler attended the official founding of the Salzburger Heimwehrdienst and

²⁹² Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 74-5, 101. The cover address used by the Styrian *Heimatschutz*, for example, was “Frau Anna Hergeth, Klosterwiesgasse 26/II, Graz;” the address was actually Hanns Router’s. Vorarlberg *Heimwehr* staff leader, Major Moritz von Matt, used a post office box, “Postfach 44,” as a cover address. See TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV (österreich.), XIII/1, fol.1-1175, 1132-1144.

discussed more a more extensive alliance that would help the organization reorganize, receive more extensive military training, and expand. Kanzler returned to Bavaria, leaving 2,000 marks to aid the Salzburger Heimwehrdienst, which expanded dramatically over the course of 1920.²⁹³ Throughout 1920 the Heimwehrdienst received numerous loads of weapons transported from Bavaria by train and truck. Rape details some 1480 rifles, 110,200 rounds of rifle ammunition, 20 light and heavy machine guns, 35,200 rounds of machine gun ammunition, 4 telephones stations, 5 kilometers of telephone wire, 50 pairs of boots, and 200 tunics.²⁹⁴

A month later in Kufstein, Tyrol, Kanzler met with Steidle, Stumpf, and Professor Heinrich von Schullern, Chairman of the Andreas Hofer Bund. At this meeting it was decided that the Tyrolean Heimatwehr would follow the general model of the Einwohnerwehr, which was aligned with Bavaria's administrative districts and precincts.²⁹⁵ By June of 1920, the Einwohnerwehr had delivered 2110 rifles of various types, two machine guns, five light machine guns, 106,000 rounds of rifle ammunition, ten telephone stations with 20 kilometers of cable, and spare machine gun parts to the Heimatwehr.²⁹⁶ In his memoir, Starhemberg admits having direct involvement in stealing weapons from weapons depots around Innsbruck as well as being involved in trafficking weapons across the Austro-Bavarian border during his time in Tyrol.²⁹⁷ In addition to the

²⁹³ Kondert, "Rise and Early History," 9-10. According to Kondert, the Salzburger Heimatdienst expanded from its original estimate of approximately 1,200 members to 15,000 members by the end of 1920.

²⁹⁴ Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 102-3. The rifles were of various types, German 1898 and 1888/05 Mausers, as well as 1888/90 and 1895 Austrian Mannlicher rifles.

²⁹⁵ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 46-7.

²⁹⁶ Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 102.

²⁹⁷ Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 7, 15.

“generous material and moral support” they received thereafter, Einwohnerwehr leaders and Bavarian officials provided the Tyrolean government with much-needed credit, trade, food, raw materials, and supplies.²⁹⁸ Ahead of the Tyrolean Landeschießen, held in November 1920, Steidle had expected to receive a load of 5,000 rounds of rifle ammunition, machine gun ammunition, and pistols, but half of this shipment never reached the Heimatwehr. The Inter-Allied Military Control Commission (IMCC), aided by intelligence supplied by the Social Democratic Party, began deploying patrols on the main roads that intersected the Bavarian-Austrian border. With some success, several weapons shipments headed to the Salzburg and Tyrolean formations in the fall and winter of 1920-21, were confiscated.²⁹⁹

The Einwohnerwehr and Heimwehren redoubled their efforts to keep these routes open for weapons transportation. Closer communication between the two sides and utilizing intelligence from sympathetic locals to help monitor the routes enabled weapons shipments to resume by March 1921. Between March and June 1921, the Einwohnerwehr successfully smuggled some 778 rifles, well over 50,500 rounds of rifle ammunition, 2,500 cartridges, and 1000 ammunition clips, 14 revolvers, 700 revolver cartridges, and two crates of hand grenades. In total, despite the transportation challenges, the Tiroler Heimatwehr received more arms and equipment than any other Austrian formation.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁸ TNA: GFM 33/3812/K925/2, K232682, K232708; Kondert, *The Rise and Early History*,” 13; Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 65.

²⁹⁹ Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 103-5.

³⁰⁰ Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 104-5. In addition to the 50,500 rounds of rifle ammunition, the *Tyrolean Heimatwehr* received another 17 crates. It is not specified how many rounds each crate contained.

Einwohnerwehr representatives had made inroads into Vorarlberg as well, meeting with officials in April 1920. Just two weeks after the founding of the Tiroler Heimatwehr, the “Selbstschutzverband Vorarlberg” was officially founded.³⁰¹ In July 1920, the Vorarlberg organization received 200 carbine rifles with 53,000 rounds of ammunition, four telephone stations with 10 kilometers of phone cable from Bavaria. Thereafter, police reports from districts throughout Vorarlberg documented the proliferation of arms from Bavaria. For example, an August 1920 police report from Bregenz, a small cache of 60 rifles, a machine gun, and ammunition had been smuggled into across the Bavarian border. In another case, police reports from the village of Hittisau documented three wagons full of weapons and ammunition being deposited and held at an inn in Krumbach. Police in the community of Lingenau reported a delivery of 6,000 pounds of rifles, ammunition, and hand grenades.³⁰² The Selbstschutzverband received another 500 rifles and 25,000 rounds of ammunition in October 1920. In early June 1921, Rape notes, 300 more rifles, an additional 34,875 rounds of rifle ammunition, 3,250 rounds of machine gun ammunition, 8,180 ammunition clips, 80 steel helmets, seven munitions crates, and seven ammunition belts arrived from Bavaria.³⁰³

The Austrian-Yugoslavian border dispute over the Slovene-populated areas of south Carinthia offered a logical incentive for a standing Heimwehr organization. Here too, Kanzler and its deputies played a central role in bringing the Carinthian Heimatschutz to fruition. Not only that, in days leading up to the October 1920 plebiscite

³⁰¹ Alois Götsch, *Die Vorarlberger Heimwehr: Zwischen Bolschewistenfurcht und NS-Terror* (Feldkirch: Rheticus Gesellschaft, 1993), 23.

³⁰² Vorarlberger Landesarchiv (VLA): BH-Bregenz, Abt. III, 734/1920, cited in Götsch, *Die Vorarlberger Heimwehr*, 21; Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 107.

³⁰³ Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 106.

to determine the fate of the two disputed zones, they directed a pro-Austrian propaganda campaign in each zone. “Zone A” was occupied by Yugoslavian troops, so these activities were necessarily clandestine and carried out via “advisory councils,” that persuaded residents to vote that the zone remain Austrian. After the successful conclusion of the plebiscite, these resources turned their attention to recruiting and obtaining arms for the Heimatschutz with equal success.³⁰⁴

Even in provinces where the connection between the Einwohnerwehr and the Heimwehren was not as strong still received arms and assistance. The Upper Austrian Heimwehren, for instance, received roughly the same number of arms as the Vorarlberger Selbstschutzverband, but needed some 6,000 rifles to equip their members.³⁰⁵ Most of those arms went to groups around the westernmost Innviertel (Inn Quarter) of the province.³⁰⁶ Despite the refusal of some Styrian paramilitary leaders—particularly the anti-clerical faction under Walter Pfrimer—to join Kanzler’s organization, he worked with Governor Anton Rintelen and Lieutenant Governor Jakob Ahrer to cobble together a cooperative agreement between the two main paramilitary organizations in the province.³⁰⁷ The Einwohnerwehr is known to have delivered 1,000 Mannlicher rifles, 100,000 rounds of ammunition to the Rintelen-Ahrer organization in Graz in November 1920.³⁰⁸

³⁰⁴ Kondert, “The Rise and Early History,” 18.

³⁰⁵ Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 107-8, 114.

³⁰⁶ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 55.

³⁰⁷ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 23; Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 60.

³⁰⁸ Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 103.

In July 1920, Escherich and Kanzler hosted the leaders of the various provincial Heimwehren in Munich “to gather into a single organization all elements who ‘wish to take up the struggle against Bolshevism by upholding the constitution and by maintaining order in the state.’” Steidle proposed to the other Heimwehr leaders present that the Austrian formations be under Bavarian, specifically Kanzler’s, direction.³⁰⁹ The other Heimwehr leaders agreed with Steidle’s proposal and accepted Bavarian leadership. By the end of October 1920, the reach of the Einwohnerwehr even extended into Vienna and Lower Austria, as Kanzler arbitrated an agreement with the retired Field Marshall, Josef Metzger, head of the Selbstschutzverband Wien und Niederösterreich (Self-Defense League of Vienna and Lower Austria).

Indeed, between 1920 and 1923, the Austrian Heimwehr movement received an extensive volume of weapons, military supplies, and equipment from Bavarian sources.³¹⁰ British Foreign Ministry records document frequent transactions of weapons over the Austro-Bavarian border.³¹¹ By contrast, German Foreign Office records note only one, occurring on November 29, 1920, illustrating either the general success of Bavarian and Einwohnerwehr leaders at keeping federal officials “in the dark” regarding their clandestine operations, or the blind-eye federal officials turned toward Einwohnerwehr activities.³¹² The latter is more likely the case given the keen interest

³⁰⁹ “Eine Tagung reichsdeutscher und deutschösterreichischer Heimatwehren in München. Erklärungen für die Einheit des Reiches,” *Neue Freie Presse*, August 1, 1920, 5, also cited in Kondert, “The Rise and Early History,” 32-3.

³¹⁰ Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 71, explains that the smuggling of weapons and material began in the early months of 1920.

³¹¹ See Kondert, “The Rise and Early History,” p.40, footnote 102 for a short list of British Foreign Ministry records noting weapons smuggling.

³¹² TNA: GFM 33/3812/K925/2, K232450; Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 56-7.

Austrian Social Democrats took in exposing this weapons smuggling network. As Kondert indicates, numerous writings of Social Democratic representatives leveled accusations that the Heimwehren were being supplied by international counter-revolutionary elements.³¹³ Provincial party newspapers also documented Social Democratic complaints of the Heimwehren smuggling weapons from Bavaria.³¹⁴ In total, it has been estimated that between 1920 and 1923, the Austrian Heimwehr movement received some 2,500,000 infantry rifles, 130,000 light machine guns, 3,000 heavy machine guns, artillery pieces, howitzers, and cannons, as well as 30 airplanes, from Bavaria.³¹⁵ If Rape's calculation is correct, these figures represented about 90 percent of the Heimwehr movement's weapons stores.³¹⁶

Though the stamp of the Bavarian Einwohnerwehr on the Heimwehr movement was clear, some of these similarities reflected a common Catholic, South German worldview. Like the Heimwehren, the Einwohnerwehr drew inspiration from a similar tradition of civic militarism, one rooted in Bavaria's shared militia tradition, derived from hunting and sport shooting clubs throughout the state.³¹⁷ As Large notes,

The cult of the Schiessstände also embodied the Bavarian peasantry's traditional hostility toward standing armies and official state militarism. The shooting societies stood for a different kind of militarism: not that of the well-disciplined and tightly organized modern military machine, but a kind of home-grown, populist, Lederhosen militarism, which

³¹³ Kondert, "The Rise and Early History," 42.

³¹⁴ "Der Waffenschmuggel aus Bayern," *Salzburger Wacht*, November 25, 1920, 2; "Die Aufrüstung der Konterrevolution," *Arbeiterwille*, November 21, 1920, 7-8;

³¹⁵ Götsch, *Die Vorarlberger Heimwehr*, 22; Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 76.

³¹⁶ Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 100.

³¹⁷ Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 71-2. Such was not entirely unique to the Bavaria or Austria, as the *Francs-tireurs* of Austro-Prussian and First World War infamy were ununiformed French militia units drawn from similar types of local sport shooting clubs. For greater detail regarding the *Francs-tireurs*, see Mark R. Stoneman, "The Bavarian Army and French Civilians in the War of 1870-71" (MA Thesis, Universität Augsburg, 1994). See chapter five for the connections between the imperial *Standschützen* and the *Tiroler Heimatwehr*.

avored extreme decentralization, election of officers from within the ranks, the continued reliance on primitive weapons and styles of combat.³¹⁸

This was the very same style of civic militarism its Alpine Austrian neighbors had long nurtured and the Heimwehr movement embodied. Paradoxically, however, both paramilitary formations materialized with the oversight of their respective provincial governments and were intended to serve as auxiliary forces for the police and, in emergency situations, the military. As such, both claimed to be “non-political” organizations of “patriotic” volunteers, despite their openly anti-Marxist dispositions. As chapter three will illustrate, this “non-political,” open membership policy that served the Heimwehr movement so well in its formative years, would ultimately prove to be its Achilles’ heel.

While both organizations worked hand-in-glove with the state and local governments, they also received significant portions of their funding from private sources, particularly, industrialists and declassed nobles; in relation to the Heimwehren, this will be covered in depth in chapter four. It is unclear how much money the Heimwehren received from Bavarian sources or if those funds were funneled through the Einwohnerwehr or arranged independently, though the latter seems unlikely given the extent of control the Escherich and Kanzler exercised in other aspects of the organizations’ relationship. Archival sources indicate that the Salzburger Heimwehren, for instance, received a monthly stipend of 10,000 marks beginning in March 1920, which was increased to 12,000 marks in July 1920 due to the growth of the outfit.³¹⁹

³¹⁸ Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 42-3.

³¹⁹ Protokoll vom 1. April 1920. Akten der Organisation Kanzler, ehemaliges NSDAP-Hauptarchiv, Bundesarchiv Koblenz, NS 26/vorl. 649, cited in Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 94.

According to Kondert, Social Democratic sources contended that Steidle had received 80,000 marks from German “monarchists” to purchase weapons, supplies, and equipment, however, this claim has never been substantiated by archival sources.³²⁰ Similarly, German Foreign Ministry documents claimed that the Tyrolean Heimatwehr had been receiving 14,000 marks per month, as of the spring 1921, which does not appear to have been substantiated through Einwohnerwehr records.³²¹ It seems unlikely, however, that the Salzburg formations would have been the only to receive any sort of monthly remuneration outside of that which was Kanzler distributed to the Heimwehren to pay his staff in the various Austrian provinces.³²² To this end, the movement’s official history, *Heimatschutz in Österreich*, the Tyrolean Heimatwehr was entirely dependent on Bavarian subsidies in its infancy.³²³ However, as Edmondson notes, foreign subsidies had been dramatically reduced by the end of 1921.³²⁴

There were also many similarities in the social composition of their membership, both groups attracting a broad range of socioeconomic groups with a high number of former officers, civil servants, and middle class professionals serving in leadership positions.³²⁵ Of the 26 members of Kanzler’s staff in Austria, for instance, 13 were former army officers.³²⁶ Similarly, throughout the Austrian Heimwehren, former officers held a high percentage of leadership positions, particularly as organizers and trainers of

³²⁰ Kondert, “The Rise and Early History,” 41. Per Kondert, the July 17, 1920 edition of the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* made this claim, however, this appears to be either the wrong date or the wrong newspaper; Social Democrats published various provincial newspapers as well.

³²¹ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 27. See endnote 24.

³²² Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 95.

³²³ *Heimatschutz in Österreich* (Wien: Verlag Zoller, 1934), 239 cited in Kondert, “The Rise and Early History,” 40.

³²⁴ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 27.

³²⁵ Koeppe, “Conservative Radicals,” 65-6.

³²⁶ Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 71.

its various Sturmtruppen (storm troops) and Jägerbattalion (rifle battalion) combat units. As chapter four will illustrate, only elected officials outnumbered former army officers in the leadership of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr.

Moreover, both frequently functioned as strike breakers, intimidating workers into breaking off labor stoppages and, in other cases, getting trains, buses, and utilities back up and running, thereby weakening the position of strikers. Like the Einwohnerwehr, the Heimwehren established special technical assistance groups (Technischen Nothilfe) intended to cancel out the paralyzing effects of general strikes by temporarily keeping public transportation and basic utilities online. In doing so, it blunted the most significant weapon in the Social Democrats' arsenal.³²⁷ The relationship between the Bavarian Einwohnerwehr and the Heimwehren were close-knit on many levels, particularly with Austria's western-most provinces. Heimwehr leaders quickly developed relations with

Horthy's Hungary: The other side of the Ordnungsblock

With the ascent to power of the Hungarian Communist Party, many Hungarian conservatives fled to Vienna to escape the Red Terror. Amongst them were individuals who would figure prominently in Horthy's regime, such as Gyula Gömbös, Anton Lehár, István Bethlen. Bethlen, in particular, would play an important role in fostering a transnational counter-revolutionary block. While a refugee in Vienna in the spring of 1919, he established the Anti-Bolshevik Committee, which met at the palace of Karl von Schönborn-Buckheim.³²⁸ It was at this same time that Kanzler established contact with

³²⁷ Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 75-6.

³²⁸ Gerwarth, "The Central European Counter-Revolution," 183.

these men, who, upon the collapse of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, returned to Hungary and filled high-ranking positions in the Hungarian government.³²⁹

Hungarian contact with Austrian counter-revolutionaries began in 1919, most likely after the Horthy government took power. A November 1919 article in the Vienna newspaper, *Neues Wiener Journal*, reported that the “foreign club” operated out of the palace of former Habsburg foreign minister, Count Leopold Brechtold. “At the top of the company stands the former Imperial Economic Director, Imperial Councilor (Karl Freiherr von) Priles(z)ky,” the report contends. The “Wiener Kasino,” was a wealthy social club for international aristocrats, businessmen, artists, and scholars, modelled on similar clubs in London, Paris, and other “international cities,” was also a front for a clandestine organization known as the “Association for Law and Order.”³³⁰ Prileszky, a Hungarian noble, would have naturally been well-connected in Hungarian aristocratic circles, which were prominent supporters of Horthy’s government. According to Hungarian historian Lajos Kerekes, the Hungarian Embassy in Vienna made contact with the Wiener Kasino in January 1920. Hungarian officials offered the organization substantial material and financial assistance if it 1) agreed to overthrow of the Social Democratic government in power at that time, 2) establish a conservative authoritarian government, and 3) relinquish any claims to the Burgenland, which was formerly a part of Hungary.³³¹ It is important to note that priest, leader of the Christian Social Party, and

³²⁹ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 21.

³³⁰ “Ein neuer Fremdenklub in Wien. Das „Wiener Kasino“ im Palais Berchtold,” *Neues Wiener Journal*, November 21, 1919, 3; Kondert, “Rise and Early History,” 34-5.

³³¹ Lajos Kerekes, “Die Weiß Allianz: Bayern-österreichisch-ungarnische Projekte gegen die Regierung Renner in Jahre 1920,” *Österreichische Osthefte* 7 (1965): 357, cited in Kondert, “The Rise and Early History,” 34-5.

future Chancellor of Austria, Ignaz Seipel, a member of the Wiener Kasino, was a key figure in these negotiations. The sum of 10,000,000 Hungarian crowns was distributed to Prince Johann von Lichtenstein, a leading organizer of the Wiener Kasino.³³²

In order to bring about such a concession of power from Chancellor Renner's government, a strong, organized paramilitary organization would be needed; in Seipel's mind, the Heimwehr movement was the ideal candidate. In March 1920, he provided an estimate to Hungarian officials that projected roughly 50,000,000 Austrian crowns would be needed to build the Heimwehren into such an organization. In the months that followed, significant funds from Hungarian sources poured into the reserves of Metzger's Selbstschutzverband Niederösterreich und Wien.³³³ This occurred, of course, at this same time the Bavarian Einwohnerwehr was actively working with Austrian provincial officials and paramilitary formations to organize, train, and arm Heimwehren units. The subordination of the Heimwehren to the Einwohnerwehr necessarily brought Kanzler into the scheming for a right-wing putsch.³³⁴ It is also worth noting that Colonel a.D. Max Bauer, Ludendorff's adjutant, had become involved in the Wiener Kasino-Hungarian putsch planning. It is unclear as to how, precisely, Bauer entered into these discussions, though it is well-known that after the failure of the Kapp Putsch, those involved fled to Bavaria and into Austria and Hungary. In doing so, Bauer spent some time in Vienna and Budapest, cultivating relationships with both Austrian and Hungarian counter-

³³² Kondert, "The Rise and Early History," 34-5; Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 64.

³³³ Kerekes, "Der Weiß Allianz," 357-8, cited in Kondert, "The Rise and Early History," 25, 36.

³³⁴ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 25.

revolutionary organizations. It was most likely through these channels that he became involved.³³⁵

During these meetings, held in the summer of 1920, various approaches were discussed, all of which envisaged Hungary undertaking the lion's share of the financial responsibility; an apparently meager price to pay to keep the Burgenland Hungarian. In the midst of their planning, Renner resigned as Chancellor, paving the way for a conservative Christian Social-German National coalition government and a parliamentary majority in the first general election held in October 1920. With the Social Democrats ousted and subdued in the minority, the usefulness of a coup had expired.³³⁶ Nevertheless, the Hungarians still fearful of the potential of Austrian Social Democrats, continued to funnel a monthly stipend of 2,000,000 Hungarian crowns to the Heimwehren formations until the autumn of 1921, when it became clear that the Burgenland was not to remain Hungarian.

Large contends, however, that Hungarian support "continued well into the twenties, despite disappointments in the Burgenland dispute and Austrian foreign policy," but offers no specific source corroborating this claim.³³⁷ Kerekes explains that the Horthy government had maintained contact with the *Heimwehren* among other on the "österreichischen äußersten Rechten," but stops short of saying that they continued to fund the *Heimwehren*.³³⁸ If Hungarian money did continue to flow into the coffers of the

³³⁵ Kondert, "The Rise and Early History," 36; Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 54-5.

³³⁶ Kerekes, "Der Weiß Allianz," 360-3, cited in Kondert, "The Rise and Early History," 36-8.r

³³⁷ Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 64.

³³⁸ Lajos Kerekes, "Akten zu den geheimen Verbindungen zwischen der Bethlen-Regierung und der österreichischen Heimwehrebewegung," *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 11, (1965): 300. Despite their age, Kerekes's research on the relationship between the Heimwehr and the Horthy government remain the definitive works on the topic.

Heimwehr movement it most likely did so through sympathetic private donors or came in the form of irregular contributions, as there is no evidence of consistent contributions from Hungarian sources.

Historians estimate that between 1919 and 1921, Hungary had been the main financial backer of the Heimwehr movement, and Bavaria its main supplier of arms and military equipment—a clear indication of the centrality of Austria and its paramilitary organizations to the cooperative efforts of the counter-revolutionary right in Central Europe.³³⁹ The apparent halt in Hungarian funds, at the same time, demonstrates the subservience of transnational anti-Marxist cooperation to nationalist geopolitical realities in Central Europe. The collapse of the Austro-German cooperation reiterates this point.

The Collapse of the Ordnungsblock

Despite the immense volume of weapons, equipment, and organizational support the Einwohnerwehr supplied the Heimwehren, grumblings emerged both within Kanzler's staff as well as amongst Heimweheren leaders. Those in Austria's eastern provinces complained about the "special status" the westernmost states of Tyrol, Vorarlberg, and Salzburg enjoyed with the Einwohnerwehr. These grievances mirrored the grumbling of Kanzler's staff members assigned to the various provinces to his chief in Austria. All signs indicate that Major a.D. August Hörl, Kanzler's staff leader, oversaw the distribution of weapons and equipment to the various Heimwehren. His appraisal of the political state in the various provinces factored into which were 'favored' over others.

³³⁹ Kondert, "The Rise and Early History," 39; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 27.

Captain Herbert von Oberwurzer, stationed in Upper Austria, and Major Max von Wandesleben, in Vienna, voiced complaints of favoritism, the former writing that, while the southwestern provinces received all the weapons, the rest got “nothing but promises.” To Wandesleben’s protests, Hörl explained that Vienna was “prone to fall to Bolshevism, and that it would serve the Viennese right as they were doing nothing against it.”³⁴⁰ Indeed, the continued uncertainty over Austria’s viability as an independent state factored greatly into such logic. Carinthia and Styria, for their part, were awash with arms and military support from the border conflicts with the Yugoslavian military, so their reliance on the Einwohnerwehr for weapons and monetary support was less immediate.³⁴¹ This left most of the Upper Austrian, Viennese, and Lower Austrian groups to languish without the requisite arms, explaining why the Heimwehr movement did not mature in these provinces until later in the decade.

As a covert instrument of Anschluss, a chief propagator of pan-German Paramilitarism, and leading obstructionist of IMCC operations, the Entente pressure to ‘dissolve’ the Bavarian Einwohnerwehr became too great and Bavaria’s recalcitrant President, Gustav von Kahr, finally caved in June 1921—a year after the Allies had first demanded its disarmament.³⁴² What resulted from its dissolution was the decentralization of Bavaria’s network of local paramilitary formations. The heart and soul of the Einwohnerwehr organization was in its centralized hierarchy. Now beheaded, its constituent parts—local paramilitary units—were left to their own course of action,

³⁴⁰ Carsten, *Facist Movements*, 55.

³⁴¹ Rape, *Die österreichische Heimwehren*, 84-5.

³⁴² For detailed treatment of these negotiations, see Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 66-76.

which meant most devolved back into the localized civil defense groups from which they began.³⁴³

The dissolution of the Einwohnerwehr opened the door to more radical, völkisch paramilitary elements, which emerged into the vacuum left in its wake.³⁴⁴ The void left by Einwohnerwehr was filled, principally by an organization born from its ranks, but far more openly radical in its pan-German, völkisch outlook, called Organisation Pittinger after its leader, Sanitätsrat (health inspector) Dr. Otto Pittinger. Unlike Escherich and Kanzler whose nationalism was tempered by their fondness for the institution of monarchy and Bavarian particularism, Pittinger was a strident anti-Semite, maintaining a völkisch, ultra-nationalist Weltanschauung (worldview); his organization followed suit.³⁴⁵ Indeed, the openly pan-Germanist political agitation of Pittinger's organization, renamed Bund Bayern und Reich, quickly strained relations with influential Christian Social and monarchist leaders, both within and close to the Heimwehren, who held fast to the "Austrian Idea" and preferred Austrian independence over unification and subordination to the Protestant North.³⁴⁶ As a result, clear tensions emerged between segments of Austria's two main bourgeois parties, the Christian Social Party and the Pan-German

³⁴³ Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 76.

³⁴⁴ Koepf, "Conservative Radicals," 170.

³⁴⁵ The German term "völkisch," though somewhat ambiguous, is used here to indicate a racial view of nationalism. That is, the belief that Germans were a distinct race of people, rather than a concentrated population sharing a language and, consequently, similar systems of value, customs, traditions.

³⁴⁶ TNA: GFM 33/3812/K925/2, K232591; The "Austrian Idea" had been long cultivated by Habsburg writers, from Friedrich Schlegel to Hugo Hofmannstal, which contended that Austria had maintained a historically separate (via-a-vis Prussia, who banished Austria from German affairs in 1866) German cultural identity, emphasizing that the ancient political and cultural hegemony Austria enjoyed over German affairs made it the cradle of German culture. For a useful synthesis of Austrian identity and the "Austrian Idea," see Edward Timms, "National Memory and the "Austrian Idea" from Metternich to Waldheim," *Modern Language Review* 86 (Oct. 1991): 898-910; Harry Ritter, "Austria and the Struggle for German Identity," *German Studies Review* 15 (Winter 1992): 111-129.

People's Party, as well as within and amongst the provincial Heimwehren. A letter to Reichstag representative Dr. Max Pfeiffer, from Dr. Hans Wohlmannstetter of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, in April 1921, captured this disposition as it related to the Tyrol:

the mass of the population seems generally favorable to the vote for Germany, but are strongly influenced by the doubts and concerns dominant in leading academic circles. The decisive factor in many circles is, first and foremost, the hardship of the women of the clergy. This clearly stands in opposition to the idea of unification. Even though the majority (of the clergy) are cautious and reserved, the opinion of the leaders of the clergy is much more pronounced, and widely known. The reasons for this attitude are, in part, monarchist-dynastic; on the other hand, considerable anxiety arises against the Reich, which is supposedly dominated by the Protestant Prussians.³⁴⁷

In October 1921 Styrian Lieutenant Governor, Jakob Ahrer, expressed concern over the growing influence of “radical Reich German elements.” Ahrer called an urgent meeting of leading Christian Social Heimwehr members from each of the provinces, which took place on October 29 in Salzburg. Ahrer saw the Bavarians as being behind the ideological split of the Styrian Heimatschutz, complaining that a “united bourgeois front can no longer be observed.” As Steidle notes in his report on the meeting, the Christian Social faction of the Styrian Heimatschutz wanted nothing more to do with Major Hörl, Kanzler's—and, later, Pittinger's—chief of staff in Austria, whom Ahrer “addressed formally as the ‘evil spirit.’”³⁴⁸

This opinion of Major Hörl was not isolated to Ahrer. The Upper Austrian representative at the meeting, Dr. Rudolf Reisetbauer, added to the indictment of the “evil spirit,” complaining that their political activism for Anschluß was too radical and stirred unrest. He continued, with particular distress over the radicalism exhibited by the German

³⁴⁷ TNA: GFM 33/3812/K925/2, K232590-1

³⁴⁸ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol.410, 245. Also cited in Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 53.

paramilitary outfit in Vienna called “Brigade Wandeleben,” under the direction of Major Max von Wandeleben, an associate of Ludendorff’s. The conditions for the Heimwehren in Upper Austria were “very distressing,” as moderate Christian Social governor, Prelate Dr. Johann Nepomuk Hauser, maintained a reasonably cooperative relationship with Upper Austria’s Social Democrats. Christian Socials predominated the Upper Austrian Heimwehren in 1921, as pan-Germanist and Legitimist sentiments were weak.³⁴⁹ The strength of the Christian Socials in Upper Austria might be attributable to the fact that Hauser opposed any sort of collusion with Bavarian elements.³⁵⁰

Similar concerns existed amongst Vorarlberg’s Christian Social leaders. The growing influence of Großdeutsch elements was also evident in Vorarlberg. Dr. Josef Feuerstein—a dedicated Christian Social—explained, however, that “Landesführer, Stefan Kohler from Bregenz, is a very popular man, he belongs to the Christian Social Party, but also enjoys the full confidence of the Greater Germany Party.” Feuerstein characterization of Kohler as an able administrator, but not a politician, perhaps worked in his favor in gaining the trust of both sides and maintaining a comparatively unified front.³⁵¹

The Carinthian Heimatschutz, Dr. Ignaz Tschurtschenthaler reported, was “for the most part in the hands of Pan-Germans.” However, he indicated that existing local Heimwehr groups were well-organized and that Christian Socialists were slowly gaining

³⁴⁹ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol.410, 248-9. Also cited in Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 53-4; Koepp, “Conservative Radicals,” 224.

³⁵⁰ Walter Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr: Eine unwiderstehliche Volksbewegung?* (Wien: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1985), 35.

³⁵¹ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol.410, 246; Ludger Rape, “Die Vorarlberger Heimwehr und die bayerische Richte 1920-1923,” in *Nachträge. Zur neueren Vorarlberger Landesgeschichte*, ed. Meinrad Pichler (Bregenz: Fink’s Verlag, 1983), 77.

ground.³⁵² Landesrat Wilhelm Scherntaner described the Heimwehren in Salzburg as in a “satisfactory” condition, with the Zell am See district having been the best organized. Moreover, he added that relations between pan-Germanist and Christian Social elements were good. Deutsch-Freiheitliche Partei (German Freedom Party) representative and Landesführer, Dr. Anton Christoph was an important linchpin in maintaining good relations between the Pan-Germanist and Christian Social Party, as he was trusted by both factions.³⁵³

In Tyrol, Steidle briefly noted, a united front had been maintained between Pan-German and Christian Social circles.³⁵⁴ Steidle, having received substantial arms and funding from Escherich and Pittinger, maintained a warmer relationship with both than most other Heimwehr leaders and became the Heimwehr representative to Munich. Based on Steidle’s report of the October 1921 meeting, it was only in Styria and Upper Austria that the circumstances seemed especially bleak. The situation in the former is more understandable when placed in context. The Rintelen-Ahrer faction based in Graz, had Dr. Walter Pfrimer’s völkisch, anti-clerical faction to the north, to which it had been hostile. With Pittinger’s takeover of Kanzler’s organization, the Rintelen-Ahrer faction now had to deal with an equally unfiltered völkisch, ultra-nationalist organization in the role of its patron. The sour circumstances in Upper Austria, however, stemmed from Governor Hauser’s hostility toward Bavarian collusion, coupled with the general failure of Bavarian suppliers to make good on their promises of arms and equipment.

³⁵² TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol.410, 247; Tschurtschenthaler added that one group of pan-Germanists in the Carinthian Heimwehr were outspoken activists of the Hohenzollern cause, an illustration of just how many nationalist variations existed within Austro-German camps.

³⁵³ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol.410, 250.

³⁵⁴ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol.410, 245.

The misgivings voiced by Christian Social Heimwehr leaders were expressed in a meeting held on Sunday, March 19, 1922 between the Landesleitung of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr and the Oberleitung of Organisation Pittinger. Steidle's agenda for the meeting made clear the desire of the Heimwehren leaders for more frequent and discrete communication between Munich and the Austrian Heimwehren in order to avoid information being leaked to newspapers. The agenda also expresses their desire for Pittinger's lieutenants to refrain from the radical Pan-German political agitation and the "tactless" attacks the House of Habsburg, which did more harm than good, alienating the legitimist elements of the Austrian right. Steidle stressed, "the Heimwehr wants to organize not politicize." Steidle offered the same message to the Greater German People's Party leadership in January 1922, but with a markedly different tone. "The Heimwehr is, and will be, only a tool for the maintenance of peace and order; it has nothing to do with party politics, and will oppose taking up such a thing from all sides, with all of its power." he warned.³⁵⁵

Their grievances fell upon deaf ears and the factionalism amongst the Heimwehren became even more defined. This, in turn, would cause further chaos amongst the various organizations in Bavaria that were jockeying for the allegiance of the Austrian formations. The distressed Christian Social factions abandoned Pittinger's organization, turning, ironically, to Ludendorff and Bauer.³⁵⁶ The message of the Christian Social members to Bauer was echoed in a communication back to Ludendorff in Munich, explaining that Pittinger's "untruthfulness, secretiveness and well-aimed

³⁵⁵ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol.410, 316-319, 393.

³⁵⁶ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 56.

villany” had prompted the undoing of the alliance.³⁵⁷ Thus, the Heimwehren began dividing along political lines, fraying the very delicate balance the movement needed if it was going to grow into the powerful anti-Marxist bulwark in Central Europe its creators originally envisioned. Among the first of the Austrian organizations to fracture was Metzger’s Selbstschutzverband, as the nationalist faction broke off and formed the Deutscher Wehrbund (German Defense League), led by former k.u.k. general, Alfred Krauss and aligned with Pittinger.³⁵⁸ Conversely, Krauss wrote of Bauer, the new Christian Social champion, that he was “the greatest enemy of the German people and of Austria.”³⁵⁹ The divisiveness between the various Bavarian groups was more acute than those within the Heimwehren but brought about division amongst the latter nonetheless. Efforts to unify the Heimwehren on a national scale found only limited success. The formation of the “Alpine Club” in January 1923 indicated that the clear majority of the Heimwehren groups in Tyrol, Vorarlberg, Salzburg, Upper Austria, and Carinthia maintained allegiance to Pittinger. Carsten, painting with a broad brush, contends that this bloc was representative of the strength of the Großdeutsche sentiment within the Heimwehr movement, and offers an indication of why so many of its ranks would eventually defected to the Nazi SA when it they saw the tide shifting in Austria toward National Socialism. Conversely, by 1923, Bauer and Ludendorff had maneuvered more tactfully and had gained the cooperation of strongly Christian Social and monarchist

³⁵⁷ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 57.

³⁵⁸ Kondert, “The Rise and Early History,” 24-6; Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 55-6.

³⁵⁹ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 58.

formations and was strongest amongst the with the formations in Vienna, Lower Austria, and Styria.³⁶⁰

Ultimately, multiple factors combined to condemn the transnational Ordnungsblock. As noted above, Hungarian subsidies for the Heimwehren dried up in the winter of 1921-22. The political agitation of Bund Bayern und Reich quickly became a source of irritation for Heimwehr leaders attempting to preserve bourgeois unity. Moreover, its agitation for Anschluss caused friction with pro-independence and monarchist segments of the Heimwehr movement as well as their supporters in the Austrian government. The growing tension between the two sides led to pro-independence circles actively undermining the Anschluss activism of their Bavarian counterparts. An October 3, 1921 memo from German General Consul in Innsbruck, Fritz von Gebattel to the Foreign Office in Berlin, warned of misinformation leaked to the French government by “local monarchist circles,” which revealed a scheme in which Tyrol would join Germany as an independent state with Steidle as its president.³⁶¹ While a Steidle presidency was most likely misinformation, the favor for a Tyrolean-Bavarian union, by this time, had indeed shifted. Steidle and the Tyrolean Heimatwehr appear to have been central to this change in direction. In another memo from Gebattel to Berlin, “Dr. Steidle and leading circles of the Heimatwehr are certainly not thinking of a union of Tirol with Bavaria, rather they are seeking unification of Tyrol with the German Reich as an independent federal state.” Gebattel adds, citing a conversation with Steidle, who explained that

³⁶⁰ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 62-3; Rape, *Die österreichischen Heimwehren*, 270-80.

³⁶¹ TNA: GFM 33/3812/K925/2, K232671.

In the event of a catastrophe in Vienna, we will first declare the independence of Tyrol. However, we are thinking of an economic partnership with Bavaria, with the removal of customs barriers that separate us from Germany. Governor, Dr. Stumpf, is also of this point of view.³⁶²

Tyrolean patriotism also factored into this shift. In 1809, Tyroleans had rebelled against their Bavarian rulers, to whom Napoleon had gifted the province for their loyalty to France in the War of the Third Coalition. Voluntarily submitting Tyrol to Bavarian rule would have, thus, undermined the deeds of their forefathers. In a subsequent letter, Gebattel explained, “A proud, self-confident, and conservative people, like the Tyrolese, who are so rigidly strong in all their institutions, whose ancestors as the first among the Germans to try to shake off the Napoleonic yoke, and are now again at the head of a national movement, would surely not be able to give up their own political life, to renounce any sort of self-government and to go wholly into another state.”³⁶³

A 1923 article by journalist Sigmund Münz, illustrated this shift in attitude, “A prominent German diplomat said to me lately: ‘While two years ago more than ninety per cent of the population of the Tyrol was in favor of annexation to Germany, today perhaps not more than twenty-five per cent could be found to favor a union with Bavaria.’ It should be emphasized that the Tyrol has turned against Bavaria in particular, but not against Germany as a whole.”³⁶⁴ While pan-Germanism was a powerful force in shaping the political climate in Austria and Germany, as the Bavarian and Tyrolean cases show,

³⁶² TNA: GFM 33/3812/K925/2, K232672.

³⁶³ TNA: GFM 33/3812/K925/2, K232707.

³⁶⁴ Sigmund Münz, "Austria's Relations with Germany and Italy," *Foreign Affairs* 1 (June 1923): 61-2.

regionalisms offered strong resistance, complicating and limiting the extent to which pan-German ideals guided the agendas of the Einwohnerwehr and Heimwehr movements. Perhaps the main way pro-independence circles worked against pan-German radicals, however, was by cultivating a relationship between like-minded Austrian industrialists and Heimwehr leaders.³⁶⁵ Seipel and Styria Lieutenant Governor, Jakob Ahrer, were two central figures that worked to connect the Heimwehren with domestic patrons, in hopes that it would curb the general Großdeutsch disposition of the movement. This strategy, taking advantage of the existing strains in the Bavarian-Heimwehren relations, proved effective, demonstrating, once more, the limits of pan-German nationalism.

Conclusions

The collaboration of the counter-revolutionary governments and organizations in Central Europe cannot be properly understood without realizing the impact of the First World War on the region. Military defeat caused the fall of the Habsburg and Hohenzollern dynasties that ruled Central Europe. Within the footprint of these empires remained but "shatter zones," which Gerwarth describes as "large tracts of territory where the disappearance of frontiers created spaces without order or clear state authority."³⁶⁶ In these spaces the absence of "clear state authority," combined with inflation, unemployment, and food and material scarcity creating a social and political climate susceptible to radicalism of all persuasions. The cognitive dissonance that developed amongst the officer corps of the German and Austro-Hungarian armies in the immediate

³⁶⁵ Large, *The Politics of Law and Order*, 64-5. See also, Chapter Four.

³⁶⁶ Gerwarth, "Vectors of Violence," 493. As he notes, the term "shatter zone," was coined by Donald Bloxham, *The Final Solution: A Genocide* (London: Oxford University Press, 2009), 81.

aftermath of the Great War, created an alternate reality in which the Central Powers were “undefeated in the field,” only to fall to a “stab-in-the-back” from Judeo-Bolshevik revolutionaries on the home front.

This myth would prove to be a potent mobilizing force for demobilized officers who returned home to “mobs” waving red communist flags, fellow officers being beaten by soldiers and demonstrators or having their war medals and rosettes torn from their tunics and caps.³⁶⁷ Inflation reduced officers’ pensions to a starvation wage and unemployment reduced them to standing in bread lines. In such conditions, manufactured notions of sinister communist Jews pulling the rug from beneath their feet seemed plausible amidst the deteriorating economic conditions juxtaposed with the general success of Jews in white-collar professions. The resultant, general anti-Semitic outlook reinforced these ideas. As one author wrote of Austria in 1922:

It is pointed out that the Jews possess nearly everything worth having in Austria. They own all the newspapers except one little clerical sheet, and therefore they control public opinion. They made practically all the money during the war; they comprise the majority of the medical and legal professions; they control the banks; indeed, they are all-powerful. This, I am told, is particularly true in Vienna.³⁶⁸

In the “culture of defeat” that consumed Central Europe, reconstituting their soiled national pride became something of a quest, and in a sense, a continuity of the war, an opportunity finish what they had started in 1914, by righting the wrongs propagated in these illusions and remedying the ills—Marxism, parliamentary democracy, capitalism, Jewish profiteering, the injustices of the Versailles “diktat,” and the like—of their

³⁶⁷ See Gerwarth, “The Central European Counter-Revolution,” 187-8.

³⁶⁸ “Notes on the Setting in Austria,” 351.

societies. Hungarian social scientist and émigré, Oskar Jászi, captured this mentality quite lucidly and with chilling accuracy, writing in 1923 that

Hungary today, in her mutilated form, is a country incapable of existence. All serious economic and social reforms must await the restoration of her historic frontiers. Therefore, it must be Hungary's sole endeavor to create an efficient army and to get powerful allies for the new war which will come within a short time.³⁶⁹

A principal vehicle through which they pursued this quest was the paramilitary movement that had emerged throughout the region, originally out of necessity, but that remained out of fear of communist revolution, and later, as an instrument of political force.

Indeed, attempts and fleeting successes of communist revolutionaries to overthrow the republics across Central Europe only served to verify the “Dolchstoß mythologie” (stab-in-the-back mythology). By the beginning of 1919, reports of the brutality of Bolshevik “Red Terror” were well-known in Central Europe; these stories became reality for some Hungarians under the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic. At the same time, German “Spartacists” attempted—with some success in Munich, at least—to seize power in Prussia and Bavaria, while Viennese communist cells were planning their own putsch attempt, which were snuffed out before they materialized. The tide of communism in Central Europe, however, was checked with ruthless efficiency by nationalist paramilitary groups such as Horthy’s National Army and the German Freikorps.

The numerous redrawn borders at the Paris Peace Conference also gave significant impetus to rise of Paramilitarism in Central Europe. Hungary’s periphery was awash with bloody fighting, as Bela Kun’s government stubbornly refused to comply

³⁶⁹ Jászi, “Dismembered Hungary and Peace in Central Europe,” 279-80.

with the Allied award of historically Hungarian land to the new Czechoslovakian and Yugoslavian states, Romania, and Austria. At same time, Germany's contested eastern borderlands of East Prussia, Pomerania, and Upper Silesia were the sites of violent clashes with Polish fighters. In Austria, fighting in southern Carinthia and Styria broke out when Yugoslavian troops attempted to seize control and annex these areas due to their sizable Slavic populations. The border disputes throughout Central Europe were expressions of the festering national resentments, as the territorial secessions were viewed as insult piled onto injury, a betrayal of the ideal of national self-determination Wilson pontificated in his Fourteen Points.

The success of paramilitary formations in squashing communist insurrection and defending national borders guaranteed the quasi-official, volunteer groups a future in Central Europe. The largest and most-organized paramilitary organization was the Bavarian Einwohnerwehr, who armed and organized the Heimwehr movement in Austria. The Einwohnerwehr-Heimwehren alliance established in 1920, formed a strong anti-Marxist, civil defense force that also functioned as a quasi-official channel of communication and coordination between both the organizations and Bavarian and Austrian officials. While, the Einwohnerwehr was building up the provincial Heimwehren, Hungarian representatives initiated contact with the monarchist Wiener Kasino organization and offered finance a *coup d'état* to overthrow of the Socialist government in Vienna. Among the potential putschists were Heimwehr leaders in Vienna and Lower Austria, who agreed that the Heimwehren would be the perfect instruments for the coup. Accepting Horthy's offer, financial support poured in from the Hungarian government throughout 1920 and 1921. The establishment of the Austrian Heimwehr

movement was the crowning achievement of transnational counter-revolutionary collaboration in Central Europe during the first-half of the 1920s.

The ulterior motives of their Bavarian and Hungarian patrons proved to be the undoing of their collective efforts. Underpinning Bavarian support for the Heimwehren was the broad distrust of the Social-Democrat-laden government in Berlin. Building up and subordinating paramilitary outfits in bordering Austrian provinces was an imperative, should the Bavarian formations need to advance on the capital city. Moreover, German and Austrian provincial officials planned for an alternative contingency. Should the Austrian government collapse, Bavaria would, in effect, annex its neighboring provinces (Vorarlberg, Tyrol, Salzburg, and perhaps even Upper Austria). The popular desire for Anschluss made this an attractive possibility, at least initially. The dissolution of the Einwohnerwehr, however, and the influx of competing, radical-right elements into Austria triggered destructive factionalism amongst both the Bavarian organizations and Austrian Heimwehren. At the same time, Hungarian support for the Heimwehr movement was predicated on its desire to have a similar, conservative, authoritarian government installed in Austria, but also retain the Burgenland, which was about to be ceded to Austria in yet another territorial secession outlined at the Paris Peace Conference. When it became clear that neither of their aims would come to fruition, the monthly disbursements to the Heimwehren (for the purpose of overthrowing the democratic government) ended.

Though historians of the Heimwehr movement explain that the Bavarian and Hungarian right offered financial and military aid, they have done so only to further the Austro-centric narrative along, failing to appreciate the significance of the movement in

the broader space of interwar Central Europe. Instead, the depiction of the Heimwehren has been one that, in many ways, parallels the narrative of the miserable and chaotic beginnings of the tiny, now-insignificant successor state. While there is certainly truth in those depictions of discord and turmoil, the focus of scholarly literature on this aspect of the movement has, by and large, neglected the fact that the Heimwehr movement was the product of a transnational collaboration that created what would become one of the strongest and most stable paramilitary organizations in Central Europe. Moreover, this collaboration was paramount in the fate of Central Europe in that it forged lasting ties between Germany, Austria, and Hungary, all of whom, along with Fascist Italy, would form the core of the Axis Powers in World War II. Indeed, the continuous presence and increasing politicization of Heimwehr movement over the course of the 1920s and early 1930s, helped create a climate in Austria, and Central Europe for that matter, in which Paramilitarism became an acceptable mode of right-wing political and cultural discourse. The Heimwehr movement paved the way for the militaristic, authoritarian regime of the Vaterländische Front and, ultimately, the Nazi Party in Austria.

As chapter five shall demonstrate, despite the erosion of this collaboration over the course of 1922 and 1923, the foundation for the Heimwehr movement had been laid. Four short years later, the movement would, again, be at the center of a much more extensive coalition of the radical-right that extended beyond Central Europe. In this iteration, the Heimwehren would supply the arms and support Bavarian formations, reconstituting the Einwohnerwehr in the form of the Bavarian Heimatschutz. On the other hand, however, it would, itself, be the recipient of aid, arms, and counsel from a heredity enemy—Italy. Through Hungary, which both the Austrian right and Fascist Italy had

developed close relations, Mussolini funneled arms, money, and political guidance. In the Heimwehr movement he, like Chancellor Seipel, saw an instrument through which to overthrow the republican government and install an authoritarian, right-wing regime. Like the coalition of the early 1920s, conservative government officials on all sides played key roles facilitating the next partnership, whose efforts would lay the groundwork for Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss's authoritarian government in 1933.

CHAPTER III – CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT AND THE MAKING OF THE HEIMWEHR MOVEMENT

As has been demonstrated thus far, the Heimwehr movement was a product of a successful transnational effort to establish firm, counter-revolutionary footing in Austria; Bavarian and Hungarian money, arms, equipment, and organizational guidance created a firm foundation for the Heimwehr movement. Simultaneously, Heimwehr leaders, particularly in Tyrol, identified with the ancient traditions of Alpine militarism, the seeds of which were rooted in the gun culture that materialized with the democratization of firearms. The wartime volunteerism of sport shooting clubs was the paradigm in which Heimwehr organizations understood themselves to be the heirs. This chapter will demonstrate further continuities of the imperial past and how they shaped the Heimwehr movement.

According to social scientist, Edgar Shein, understanding an organization's culture enables one to attain a deeper insight into its identity, behaviors, and beliefs.³⁷⁰ This chapter will examine the organizational culture of the Heimwehr movement in the hopes of doing just that. Shein suggests there are three levels of culture. The first level is what he calls "artifacts," which constitute things such as documents, symbols, style of dress, rituals, songs, slogans, and so forth. In other words, things you can see, touch, or feel. Without very specific explanation, however, "artifacts" can be difficult to interpret accurately.³⁷¹ In the case of the Heimwehren it would constitute its uniforms, rifles,

³⁷⁰ Shein, *Organizational Culture*, 10.

³⁷¹ Shein, *Organizational Culture*, 25-6.

exercises, flag consecration ceremonies, rallies, field Masses, propaganda flyers, and so forth. They also reveal the “tangible, sensory, [or] felt experiences” that underpinned the culture of the movement; in other words, the emotional reactions, often times through sights and sounds, evoked. In short, these artifacts assimilate the emotional responses and aesthetic symbolism into a meaningful, “shared code” that members internalize, which reflects and informs an organization’s culture.³⁷²

The second level of culture, Shein contends, are “espoused beliefs and values.” These are beliefs and values a group collectively validates, adopts, and articulates. As such, they are observable correlations between an organization’s cultural artifacts and its espoused values. The numerous anti-Marxism, anti-parliamentary democracy, anti-liberalism, anti-capitalism, and expressions of the Heimwehr movement reflect some of its central “espoused beliefs.” Thus, the negative, obstinate nature of the movement’s “espoused values” was reflected in its appearance and activities as a self-defense association.

Lastly, is what Shein calls “basic underlying assumptions.” These, he explains, are assumptions that “have become so taken for granted that one finds little variation within a social unit.” In other words, they reflect entrenched, fundamental truths in which behaviors to the contrary are unthinkable. “In an occupation such as engineering, it would be inconceivable to *deliberately* design something that is unsafe; it is a taken-for-granted assumption that things should be safe,” Shein offers as an example. Thus, basic

³⁷² A. Rafaeli and M. Worline, “Symbols in organizational culture,” in N. Ashkansay, C. Wilderom, and M. Peterson, Eds., *Handbook of organizational culture & climate* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000), 71–84 cited in Cathy Mills and Larena Hoerber, “Exploring Organizational Culture Through Artifacts in a Community Figure Skating Club,” *Journal of Sport Management* 27 (2013): 482-484.

assumptions are such deeply ingrained shared values and beliefs that they are followed without question.³⁷³ Basic underlying assumptions offer the requisite context to make sense of the espoused values, the conspiratorial signal to Geertz's wink.³⁷⁴ The "artifacts" and "espoused values" of the Heimwehr movement its artifacts were, thus, predicated on the "basic underlying assumptions" of Catholic social thought and imperial traditions of civic militarism.

Indeed, the Heimwehr movement was driven by the shared historical experiences of its leadership and members as subjects of the former Habsburg monarchy and as Catholic parishioners. That is to say, features of imperial Austrian society continued to influence republican Austria, particularly in the provinces. The Habsburgs' existential fear of nationalism translated into the suppression of that facet of identity and redirection toward cultivating regional identities in each its counties, duchies, and bishoprics. Moreover, the Catholic Church, which enjoyed a most productive relationship with the House of Habsburg throughout its reign, staked its claim to another facet of Austrian identity. This is not to say that German nationalism did not factor strongly into Austrian collective identity, but rather that it had been historically constrained through its pairing with Catholic, Habsburg, and regional identities; they were German Catholics, German Tyrolians, and German Habsburg subjects. Its ubiquity allowed it to be married it to the other more internally unique elements of self. The dissolution of the Habsburg Empire and, therefore, Austrians' identities as Habsburg subjects, only strengthened regional

³⁷³ Shein, *Organizational Culture*, 30-6.

³⁷⁴ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays by Clifford Geertz* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 6.

identity, much of which, however, was rooted in imperial traditions, making the Habsburg influence unshakeable.

Catholic social thought served as the foundation of the two central characteristics that defined the Heimwehr movement—its militarism and its politics. On May 15, 1891, Pope Leo XIII published the Papal Encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* (or On Capital and Labor), which is widely accepted as the foundational text outlining Catholic social teachings.³⁷⁵ It codified the philosophies of Church theorists had held for centuries as well as spoke the Church's position on the social, economic, and political issues caused by industrialization and urbanization. More specifically it spoke to the "misery and wretchedness" of the working class.³⁷⁶ On the fortieth anniversary of the publication of *Rerum Novarum*, May 15, 1931, Pope Pius XI published the Papal Encyclical *Quadragesimo anno* (or On the Reconstruction of Social Order), which laid out the Church's vision for the reordering of society based on concepts laid out in the Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*. It sought a middle ground in the face of the extremes represented by capitalism, fascism, and communism. The juxtaposition of these texts with the assumptions and values articulated in Heimwehr activities and propaganda reveal a strikingly consistent parallel that demonstrates that it was a thoroughly traditional movement. It opposed the greed and individualism of *laissez faire* capitalism. Heimwehr leaders did not entirely oppose democracy, but rather Western-style parliamentary democracy, where corruption and political partisanship belied the "common good." Its

³⁷⁵ Pope Leo XIII, "Rerum Novarum," The Holy See, accessed May 21, 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html.

³⁷⁶ Leo XIII, "Rerum Novarum," para. 3.

federal leaders also proposed a collectivist arrangement of society in the form of corporatism, they rejected the notion of class conflict proposed in Marxist theory and promoted by the Communist and Social Democratic parties; animosity amongst the various strata of society would not lead to the “common good.”

Historians have depicted the Heimwehr movement as being almost entirely negative in its aims, conveying the false impression that the Heimwehr movement lacked a firm ideological basis. It rejected capitalism, parliamentary democracy, and socialism out of its own ideological obedience to the principles of Catholic social teachings. As such, they understood the purpose of the state to be, first and foremost, the promotion of the “common good.”³⁷⁷ Its Korneuburg Oath—along with its frustration with the bourgeois political parties—echoed this overarching belief as well as other fundamental elements of the Church’s teachings.

Within the concept of Subsidiarity, the Heimwehr movement found importance in its role as a voluntary association. Founded on the establishment of local groups, the Ortsgruppen sought to assist their communities--a collection of individuals and families--in protecting their communities and, therefore, improving the quality of their lives. At a higher level, the Heimwehren saw themselves as patriotic, voluntary organizations seeking to renew the pride and prosperity of their Heimat. In this way, they understood the confederation as serving in a valuable role in the decentralized approach of social order conceptualized by Catholic social theorists. As voluntary associations, their members paid no dues and went through no vigorous exclusionary process; its members needed only to be “patriotic” and possess the desire to service their communities and their

³⁷⁷ Charles E. Curran, “Catholic Social Teaching,” *The Good Society* 10, no.1 (2001): 1, 4-6.

Heimat through the movement. Thus, the “renewal” for which they hoped to evoke in Austria was one wholly aligned with Catholic social thought and ultimately began to take shape with the establishment of the May Constitution of 1934.

The traditional patriarchal outlook inherent in Catholic social theory underpinned the militarism of the Heimwehr movement. A central component of masculinity was—as the head of his family—the protection of home and hearth, his community, and his country. As chapter one demonstrated, the “throne and altar” relationship was a particularly potent in Habsburg Austria, most especially in its Alpine regions. Like an altar boy being introduced to the inner-workings of the church, young shooters were introduced to firearms and learned how to shoot and hunt. Familiarity and comfort with firearms served as an important precursor for military service, which after 1867 was mandatory in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The qualities young men learned from compulsory military service—duty, obedience, loyalty, sacrifice, discipline, and so forth—were virtues that Kaiser Franz Josef sought to instill in his subjects, but were compatible with Catholic social teachings, which had been instilled in them from birth. When obligatory military service was outlawed in the Treaty of Saint Germain, private scouting organizations and athletic clubs militarized their activities to help compensate for this loss. Similarly, the patriarchal foundations of the Heimwehr movement were observable in the activities of its women’s auxiliary organizations. The groups were geared toward the growth and development of the movement and the promotion of its social agenda, which was consistent with the main tenants of Catholic social teachings, focusing on the promotion traditional values, protecting children from the corrupting influences of modern society, and aiding families in need.

The close relationship between the Church and the Heimwehren is clear. The Church saw the Heimwehr movement as a protector from the anti-clerical, secular ideals of Marxism. As such, the Church and the Christian Social Party were the movement's most ardent supporters.³⁷⁸ In virtually every Heimwehr event the Church was involved: shooting contests, war memorial dedications, rallies, and flag dedication ceremonies, all consistently included Mass services as a part of the program of events. As such, the alignment of the Heimwehren and the Church was frequently a point of ridicule by its Communist and Social Democratic Party opponents as an indication of the Church's hypocrisy. To that end, not all clergy agreed with this association with the Heimwehren; however, most remained steadfast in backing the movement. Nevertheless, the fundamental tenants of Catholic social thought, cultivated through centuries of Catholic hegemony in the Alpine realms of the Habsburg Empire, shaped the character and outlook of the Heimwehr movement.

The "Tyrolean Example"

The Tiroler Heimatwehr was officially established on May 12, 1920.³⁷⁹ Steidle proposed utilizing the same organizational structure of the old Tyrolean Schützenwesen, with districts and district leaders. Like the old militia system, Innsbruck would serve as its main administrative hub.³⁸⁰ Given that the Standschützen had been outlawed by the

³⁷⁸ See Chapter IV for a detailed discussion of the support of these two groups.

³⁷⁹ Wolfgang Rebtisch, *Tirol—Land in Waffen. Soldaten und bewaffnete Verbände 1918 bis 1938* (Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 2009), 118.

³⁸⁰ Lösch, "Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr," 17; Governor Josef Schraffl and his Lieutenant Governor, Franz Stumpf, had hoped to more or less reconstitute the Standschützen, so Steidle's proposal fell in line with Schraffl's aims. See Chapter Four.

Treaty of Saint Germain, which was enforced by the IMCC, the statutes of the Tiroler Heimatwehr were necessarily vague and open to loose interpretation. Its statutes, coordinated with the Tyrolean government and finalized in October 1920, explain the organization's general purpose, basic structure and hierarchy, parameters for membership, and the electoral process for its leaders.³⁸¹ In §3 of its statutes, the Heimatwehr declared itself a collection of “patriotic-minded people” gathered for the purpose of 1) protecting the constitution from any attempt at “violent constitutional amendment,” 2) protecting the people, their personal property and work, 3) supporting existing authorities in “maintaining peace and order,” as well as 4) “intervention” in natural disasters. It adds, that the Heimatwehr is a private establishment that promotes to the reconciliation of all classes of people and, in particular, “the rebuilding and revival of the patriotic spirit.”³⁸²

The first point and its reference to “violent constitutional amendment” clearly referred to the specter of communist revolution, which threatened to seize all private property and turn it over to the state. This was a point of Marxist theory with which *Rerum Novarum* took particular issue, citing Deuteronomy 5:21, “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife; nor his house, nor his field, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his.”³⁸³ Moreover, the encyclical explains, “every man has by nature the right to possess property as his own. This is one

³⁸¹ The official name of the *Tyrolean Heimatwehr* recorded in the statutes is the “*Selbstschutzverband Tirol*.”

³⁸² TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol.410, 199.

³⁸³ Leo XIII, “*Rerum Novarum*,” para. 11.

of the chief points of distinction between man and . . . animal.”³⁸⁴ As such, the confiscation of private property by a state was “emphatically unjust, for they would rob the lawful possessor, distort the functions of the State, and create utter confusion in the community.”³⁸⁵

The phrase “peace and order,” is used repeatedly by Heimatwehr leaders in writings and speeches and, thus, necessitates unpacking. While the word “peace” is rather innocuous and quite understandable given the turmoil that Tyrol experienced since the end of the Great War. It is the word “order” that is more curious and warrants further examination. One might reasonably interpret “order” as having three different but related meanings. Its most obvious meaning can be derived from a literal interpretation—to regulate or manage, in this case, “keeping peace and order” as auxiliary support for protective institutions such as the police. In an alternative definition of the word “order” carries authoritative connotations in that it can also be interpreted as “commanding” or “directing;” in the context of the close cooperation with and support of the *Heimatwehr* by the Tyrolean state government, “order” takes on an authoritative tone. “Order,” in this setting, entails having control over Tyrolean society by the process of maintaining the peace and regulating the state’s political landscape. Interpreting “order” as a euphemism for tradition or conservatism is not too great a leap of the imagination given Tyrol’s long history as such in the former Habsburg Monarchy. The often-used, related turn of phrase, “order-loving people,” (*ordnungsliebenden Bevölkerung*) thus, might as easily be

³⁸⁴ Leo XIII, “Rerum Novarum,” para. 6.

³⁸⁵ Pope Leo XIII, “Rerum Novarum,” The Holy See, accessed May 21, 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html.

understood as “tradition loving people.” In that sense, then, the “Ordnungsblock” formed between Bavaria and Alpine Austrian paramilitary organizations can just as easily be understood as a “conservative block.”³⁸⁶ Meanwhile, the term “Patriotic” is not given any special definition in the statutes so one must apply a generic definition, which entails devotion and support for one’s country. It is unclear, however, as to what “country” might imply—Tyrol itself, Austria as an independent state, Austria as a part of Germany, or the German cultural nation. The use of the words “rebuilding” and “revival,” however, imply a pre-existing patriotic sentiment in a pre-existing community. One might reasonably infer, then, that the Tiroler Heimatwehr was dedicated to the restoration of Tyrolean-German patriotism.

Beyond its role as a paramilitary auxiliary to the police and gendarmerie, the chief task of the Heimwehren was to maintain a unified bourgeois front. As such, its membership policy was open-ended. The statutes defined the parameters for membership in the Heimatwehren as follows: individuals at least eighteen years of age and of “reputable German descent” (beleumundete Deutschstämmige); Jews were specifically identified as being excluded. Local Heimatwehren leaders (Ortsführer) determined the admission of individuals, while provincial leadership (Landesleitung) determined whether other German associations could join and form their own formation; this allowed the Heimwehr movement to amass substantive membership numbers quickly. The practice also allowed the alignment of interests and the benefit of cross organizational support. Membership would be terminated by death, loss of citizenship, incapacitation,

³⁸⁶ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol. 410, 244-356; TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/6, fol.56, 1.

alcoholism, mental illness, voluntary termination of membership, or ejected by committee for a “severe breach of duty” (schwerer Pflichtverletzung).³⁸⁷

Thus, the Heimwehren considered themselves non-political organizations dedicated to maintaining an organized bourgeois front. Despite their seemingly dubious claim, maintaining its anti-Marxist, non-partisan bourgeois outlook was a task taken with the utmost determination. On numerous occasions, Steidle reiterated this point explaining to the leadership of the German nationalist party (Grossdeutschen Volkspartei), for example, that the Heimwehr “is and will only be a tool for the maintenance of peace and order, it has nothing to do with party politics and will come against such a carrying in the side from which it wants to set with all ounce of strength to fight back.”³⁸⁸ At the same time, they declared that they were “keine Fascisten.”³⁸⁹ The underlying motivation for preserving this equilibrium was three-fold. First, it allowed for the movement to create a sizable financial and material support base from adherents to both pan-Germanist and Christian Social parties. Second, in doing so, the *Heimwehren* could remain appealing organizations to interested recruits of all non-Marxist persuasions. Finally, as a result, it placed the *Heimwehr* movement in a unique position in Austria—and Central Europe for that matter—in that it functioned as a unifying force, a center of gravity if you will, for counter-revolutionary anti-Marxism. So long as the *Heimwehren* remained a source of bourgeois unity, it would be their most powerful weapon against communist revolution.

³⁸⁷ TLA: SSV, Landesleitung, Karton 1, I/1-I/3, 199-200 (§§5-6, 8).

³⁸⁸ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol.410, 393; TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/17, fol. 344, 141 in response to the Deutschösterreichischen Schutzverein (Antisemitenbund); TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV (Österreich), XIII/1, fol.1-1175, 1505 in response to Nazi overtures.

³⁸⁹ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol.410, 154-6.

Though not stated in its charter, Heimatwehr members were not required to pay membership dues, as they were viewed strictly as private citizens volunteering their time and energy. The voluntary nature of the Heimwehr movement reflected its deep-rooted Schützen tradition of war volunteerism and civic militarism throughout its time under Habsburg rule. This had historically been reinforced by the clergy, who drew upon Catholic ideals of service and sacrifice for the greater good of their families and communities. The concept Subsidiarity in Catholic social teachings envisioned voluntary associations as serving important functions in society, as a vehicle for ordering society at local levels.³⁹⁰

The implications of policy were ultimately of grave detriment to the Heimwehr movement. Pabst had implored Steidle and the other provincial leaders to institute membership dues in order to cull the membership of those not committed to the movement; to his consternation, they were not moved.³⁹¹ Equally as critical was the fact this feature made the Heimwehren completely reliant on external sources of revenue.³⁹² As subsequent chapters will point out, this meant that the Heimwehr movement was limited in its ability to maneuver. That is, it was beholden to the interests of its financiers—provincial governments, private aristocratic supporters, financial institutions, industrial associations, as well as foreign supporters.³⁹³ Shackled to multiple, and often, conflicting interests, the Heimwehr movement was greatly reduced in its capability to affect the ideological and political changes it envisaged. This was not clear when the

³⁹⁰ Curran, “Catholic Social Teachings,” 4.

³⁹¹ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 180.

³⁹² Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 7; Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 112-13.

³⁹³ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 7.

principal target of its ire was the Social Democratic Party, as virtually all anti-Marxist circles backed the Heimwehren in this endeavor. It was only revealed when Heimwehr leaders found themselves at odds with the rising tide of the National Socialist German Workers Party, that this fatal flaw revealed itself, and by that time it was too late.

Coupled with the absence of membership dues, the lack of meaningful membership criteria would prove detrimental to the Heimwehr movement in several ways. According to Wiltschegg, the spike in popular interest in the Heimwehren after its smashing the Social Democratic riots in labor strikes of the “July Events,” caused an unsuspected “mass influx of opposing elements,” which he adds, “would... have serious consequences.”³⁹⁴ The fact that Heimwehren began as an anti-Marxist, civil defense organization, admittance of individuals of all anti-Marxist persuasions into its ranks is logical. As was the case with its financial dependence on external capital, its diverse membership had conflicting outlooks that diverged primarily into two camps—those that wanted Austria to unify with Germany (Anschluss) and those who wanted Austria to remain an independent state. When the Nazi Party became the second largest party in the German Reichstag (parliament) in the 1930 general election, the Austrian Nazi Party also began to gain electoral ground, which would split the Heimwehren along these lines.

The general structure and hierarchy of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr is also described in its statutes. Its most fundamental unit was the Ortsgruppe (local group). The leader of the Ortsgruppe, the Ortsführer, along with his deputy and an admissions committee, was elected by the Ortsgruppe members. While maintaining a standard disposition of units, one defending the locality itself, one defending the locality’s infrastructure (train stations,

³⁹⁴ Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 42.

bridges, mills, factories, electrical works), and one defending the perimeter of the location, the Ortsgruppen were given the flexibility to organize their formations to best fit their unique situations.³⁹⁵ Formations protecting larger populations often developed a more sophisticated structure command structure and specialized units. By 1924, Ortsgruppe Hall, for example, created an ordinance service and a specialized platoon of storm troops. The locality was divided into six subsections (Abschnitt), each having its own Abschnittsführer, or section leader.³⁹⁶

Ortsgruppen established in neighboring communities cooperatively created a Schutzgemeinschaft, or defense community. The leaders of the Ortsgruppen would elect a Schutzgemeinschaftsführer and his deputy. Together, the established defense communities would form districts, or Bezirke. Defense community leaders would, in turn, elect district leaders, or Bezirksführer, his deputy, along with a finance committee that consisted of four to ten members.

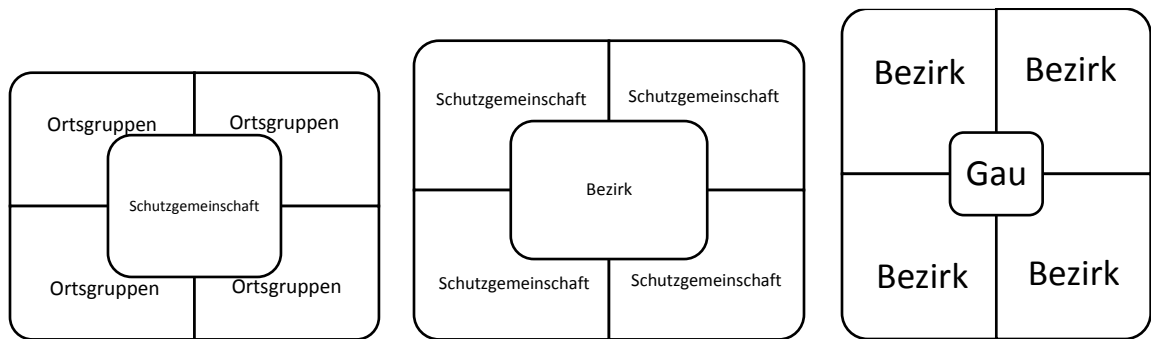


Figure 5. *Organizational Levels of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr*

The chairman of the committee, the deputy to the district leader, and the district leader, himself, formed the district's executive committee. Collectively, the district executive

³⁹⁵ Lösch, "Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr," 33.

³⁹⁶ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), IV/1, fol.777, 196.

committees would be responsible for electing the provincial leadership, or *Landesleitung*. Shortly after the charter finalization of the charter, an additional hierarchical level was added beyond the district level, that of the Gau (section). Tyrol would be divided into four sections initially: Gau Reutte, Gau Mittel- und Westtirol, Gau Unterinntal, and Gau Osttirol.³⁹⁷ By 1928, however, this organizational structure changed slightly, collapsing Gau Reutte into Gau Mittel- und Westtirol and essentially making Innsbruck its own “Gau,” despite retaining the title of “Bezirk Innsbruck-Stadt.” Within these sections, the Bezirke (districts) were to parallel those of the political districts, signaling the changing disposition of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr from a paramilitary, civil defense organization to a paramilitary political pressure organization.³⁹⁸



Figure 6. *The Sections of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr in 1921*

(Modified with permission of the author, OpenStreetMap / Wikimedia Commons / CC-BY-SA-2.0)

³⁹⁷ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol. 410, 202; Löscher, “Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr,” 35-50; See Appendix A for further information regarding the structure and organizational hierarchy of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr.

³⁹⁸ TLA: Landesleitung SSV (Tirol), VII/I, fol. 2090, 858-60; Löscher, “Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr,” 35-40.

The city of Innsbruck, Tirol's capital city, was, itself, a district (Bezirk) and had its own unique organizational structure. It was divided into six subsections, in which one might liken to the Schutzensgemeinschaften. Each of the subsections was defended by groups that were organized into four platoons: a machine gun detachment, a combat detachment (Kampfabteilung) of former soldiers with military training, a watch detachment of typically older men not necessarily suited for fighting, and a school, or training, detachment (Schulabteilung) of teenagers who were trained to handle various types of arms and instilled with military discipline to ultimately take their place in combat detachments.³⁹⁹

The Landesleitung consisted of, first and foremost, the Landesführer, or provincial leader, his deputy, the military leader, chair of the provincial finance committee (Landesschatzmeister), and the leader of the emergency technical assistance wing of the Heimatwehr, tasked with maintaining and restoring infrastructure in the event of a strike, civil war, or natural disaster.⁴⁰⁰ Naturally, the various levels of regional leadership served in supervisory roles beyond their duties as electors. The Landesleitung directed the provincial organization, oversaw the annual gather of the Ortsgruppen, and represented the Tiroler Heimatwehr outside of Tyrol. It made important high-level decisions, distributed funds to local formations, and maintained the ability to modify the organization, its structure, and hierarchy, as needed.

³⁹⁹ Lösch, "Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr," 51. According to Lösch, this organizational structure was assumed in 1925. See Appendix A for a more details on the *Innsbrucker Heimatwehr*.

⁴⁰⁰ TLA: Landesleitung SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol. 410, 201 (§9); TLA: Landesleitung SSV (Tirol), VII/I, fol. 2090, 858-90.

In guidelines laid out in 1928, Steidle defined specific duties and responsibilities of leaders at all levels of the movement. In general, however, all leaders were to work for the betterment of the movement through three areas of action: organizational work, promotional activities, and leadership activities. “Organizational work” involved the leader taking the necessary measures to ensure his group(s) was as effectively organized as possible as it related to deploying it in order to protect the community, district, or section under his charge. “Promotional activities” were undertakings meant to “deepen the Heimatwehr thought in the subordinate Heimatwehr organization(s) in his sphere of action,” with particular emphasis placed on youth groups. Lastly, “leadership activities,” as defined, speaks to the leader directing his organization(s) during the event of mobilization in defense of his sphere of action.⁴⁰¹

Most crucial in securing the success of these activities was the staff leader (Stabsleiter), who was the engine of the Heimatwehr, fulfilling a variety of functions corresponding with the general duties of promoting and organizing their respective Ortsgruppe, district, section, or provincial formations, depending on their place in the organization’s hierarchy. They were also responsible for establishing protocols for mobilization of their group. What all this meant in reality was that staff leaders were expected to function as administrators, promoters, event planners, liaisons between the group leader and the rank and file, the general public, and important groups in their respective community. The position of staff leader, thus, “requires a whole German man, as the glory and the shame falls on him with the success or failure of these united sons of the Heimatwehr when Tirol calls in its hour of need. So goes the staff leader, so goes the

⁴⁰¹ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV Tirol, VII/1, fol.2090, 764-71.

county.”⁴⁰² The centrality of staff leaders such as Herbert von Obwurzer, Waldemar Pabst, and Hanns Rauter, to the Heimwehr movement is no coincidence.

The organization of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr, as was the case in all of the provinces, reflected the dual—military and civilian—character of its purpose as a paramilitary civil defense organization. It utilized the residual imperial infrastructure and assumed a similar character of the traditional Tyrolean militia system (Tyrolean Schützenwesen) and, as did its predecessors, it continued to work in closely with the Tyrolean state government. The Heimatwehr’s admission, finance, reception committees, as well as its executive committee (Landesvorstand) reflected the influence of state and local administrators and councilmen that filled the upper ranks of most of the provincial Heimwehren. Moreover, its “Emergency Technical Assistance” wing, whose primary task was to maintain the function of communication infrastructure in the event of labor strikers, was composed primarily of civilian members with expertise.⁴⁰³ From the standpoint of administration, the Tiroler Heimatwehr resembled a civil organization much more than a paramilitary one. As shall become apparent below, however, the military elements dominated the Heimatwehr from an organizational culture perspective.

The statutes of the Tiroler Heimatwehr, as approved by the Tyrolean state government, were deliberately vague in an effort to allay IMCC scrutiny. As such, the statutes emphasize the Tyrolean Heimatwehr as being a voluntary, “patriotic” self-defense organization that assisted the Tyrolean government and police as an auxiliary peace keeping force rather than disclosing itself as a collection of local, anti-Marxist

⁴⁰² TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), IV/1, fol.777, 163-65.

⁴⁰³ Kondert, “Rise and Early History,” 12.

paramilitary bands. The charter of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr was virtually identical to that of the Salzburger Heimwehrdienst, among others, both of which were based on the statutes of the Bavarian Einwohnerwehr, yet does not mention any affiliation with the Bavarian movement. The Heimatschutzverband Burgenland, formed in the Burgenland in 1927, still maintained virtually identical by-laws, and reflected the formative influence of the Einwohnerwehr on the character and the direction of the Heimwehr movement.⁴⁰⁴

A memorandum to the IMCC in Innsbruck offers further detail, explaining that the first task of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr is the maintenance of “peace and order,” supporting the police in emergency situations as a private security organization. It adds, the Heimatwehr existed as a counterweight to the Volkswehr, which the people in the Alpine lands mistrusted and viewed as an instrument of the Social Democrats, citing as evidence, the “Russian system of soldiers’ counsels.” Moreover, the formation of a workers’ guard (Arbeiterwehr) in Tyrol on May 1, 1920 was presented as a decisive moment prompting (or perhaps justifying) the creation of the Tiroler Heimatwehr.⁴⁰⁵

The Styrian Heimatschutz, for instance, was financed very early on by the Styrian provincial government, financial institutions, and industry and, thus, was not dependent upon Bavarian financial support and arms. As such, its organizational hierarchy was not obliged to follow that of Orgesch and, instead, mirrored that of the provincial government; the Landesleiter (provincial leader) functioning at the level of the

⁴⁰⁴ Kondert, “Rise and Early History,” 10-11; Carsten, *Fascist Movements in Austria*, 130; The relationship of the Austrian Heimwehr movement with Bavarian organizations will be explored in more detail in chapter five.

⁴⁰⁵ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), I/1, fol. 410, 344-56. It is unclear who furnished this memo to the IMCC, though it was most likely someone in the Tyrolean government as it notes an enclosed copy of its statutes and consistently references to the *Heimatwehr* in the third person point of view.

Landeshauptmann (provincial governor). Thus, the Styrian organization had an additional level of leadership in the Kreisleiter (circuit leader) beyond the Gauleiter, Bezirksleiter, and Ortsgruppenleiter that paralleled the hierarchy of its counterparts. Similar to their counterparts, however, the main combat units of the Heimatschutz—the Jägerbataillon (rifle battalions)—were well-equipped detachments consisting of its young, most physically fit and well-trained members. Other fighting units were organized with consideration for marital status, age, and employment and were generally anchored to their local areas. Likewise, Heimatschutz leaders were elected by their immediate subordinates and were expected to obey their elected leaders unbendingly.⁴⁰⁶ Generally speaking, most Heimwehren were ultimately organized around the administrative (“politische Bezirke”) structures of their respective province. As a result, they all maintained similar organizational structures, with minor variations.

The 1929 charter of the Lower Austrian Heimatschutzverband, while maintaining a similar format, offered more specificity around the purpose of the organization and how it intended to achieve its aim. Though still a patriotic association whose aim was to protect citizens, their property and their work, the Heimatschutzverband also described itself as being dedicated to combatting “corruption in public life,” advocating for general well-being against individual interests, and the education of the youth on the “Austrian character in manners and customs,” among other fundamental objectives. Unlike earlier charters, there is less ambiguity around the “ways and means” of achieving its aims, which it defined as: the regular publication of patriotic writings, lectures, meetings,

⁴⁰⁶ Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hakenkreuz*, 64-5.

rallies, and the holding of ski courses and shooting exercises and contests.⁴⁰⁷ The more specific discussion of objectives and means of pursuing those objectives reflected, by 1929, the development of a stable organizational culture. That is, the objectives and activities described in the Lower Austrian by-laws were applicable to any of the provincial Heimwehr formations.

Some historians of the Heimwehr movement have erroneously interpreted it as having been divided into two distinct sections: a political wing and a military wing.⁴⁰⁸ The Heimwehr movement was not a political party with a paramilitary force; it was a paramilitary movement that eventually created a political party (Heimatblock). The provincial Heimwehr organizations were comprised of local groups that, depending on their numbers and composition, were designated specific types of units, such as mobile storm troops, machine gun units, artillery units, local guard formations, or emergency technical assistance groups comprised members with infrastructure expertise, among other specific formations. More accurately, the “military leaders” of the Heimwehren were tasked specifically with overseeing the military preparedness, training, and physical fitness of the local Heimwehren (which is discussed in further depth in chapter three).

The Heimwehr Movement by the Numbers

The lack of membership rolls for the Tyrolean Heimatwehr makes attaining accurate membership numbers a challenge. References to member numbers in the historiography

⁴⁰⁷ TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV (Österreich), XIII/1, fol. 1-1175, 1432-3.

⁴⁰⁸ See, for example, Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hakenkreuz*, 63; Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 248.

are often gleaned from reports written by foreign observers whose sources close to the formations are unclear.⁴⁰⁹ For instance, Kondert, in his unpublished dissertation, relies heavily on correspondences from Sir Francis Oswald Lindley, British Ambassador to Austria in 1920-21, to the British Foreign Office for membership numbers. When compared with figures gathered from other archival sources, Lindley's estimations appear to be consistently inflated and unreliable. For example, in a letter to Lord Curzon, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, dated December 17, 1920, Lindley estimates that the Tiroler Heimatwehr had as many as 25,000 members the time. Several weeks later, that estimation had fallen to 20,000 members, which corresponds to figures found in Rudolf Kanzler's memoir and from the Heimwehr propaganda publication, *Heimatschutz in Österreich*.⁴¹⁰ Lindley's estimate for the Salzburger Heimwehr in December of 1920 was that it had 15,000 members.⁴¹¹ This figure is far more than approximations seven months earlier of no more than 2,000 members, according to a report based on Kanzler's conference with the leaders of the Salzburger Heimwehr.⁴¹² As it were, Lindley's figures cannot be utilized for analyzing approximate membership numbers.

⁴⁰⁹ See, for example, Kondert, "Rise and Early History," 13, footnote, 31;

⁴¹⁰ Lindley to Curzon, Vienna, December 17, 1920, File 11591/3, No. C14276, cited in Kondert, "Rise and Early History," 13. See also *Heimatschutz in Österreich* (Wien, 1934), 239; Rudolf Kanzler, *Bayerns Kampf gegen den Bolschewismus: Geschichte bayrischen Einwohnerwehr* (München: Parcus, 1931), 205; and Lindley to Curzon, Vienna, January 11, 1921 Public Record Office (London), Foreign Office, 404/3, 13; all are cited by Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 23; Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 104-5.

⁴¹¹ Kondert, "Rise and Early History," 21.

⁴¹² "Bericht über die Vertrauensmännerversammlung am 7 März 1920 im Mödelhammerbräu zu Salzburg": Bundesarchiv Koblenz NS 26, vorl.649, cited in Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 46. Carsten notes that Kanzler had met with Salzburg leaders a month earlier and their membership was at 1,200. See also Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 148.

At the same time, Lauridsen finds the Heimwehren figures of the movement's strength in its early years to be questionable, contending that they could, likewise, be inflated but for the purpose of gaining foreign financial support.⁴¹³ Considering the Heimwehren, by 1920-21, had the active support from the Bavarian Einwohnerwehr as well as from the Hungarian government, there was little reason to exaggerate their numbers.⁴¹⁴ Nevertheless, the decentralized nature of the movement makes the figures of questionable and little more than rough estimations. Moreover, they are inconsistent in terms of what point in time they were made. In short, they simply reflect a snapshot of the given provincial formation at the given time and must be treated with caution. Too, it is worth mentioning that the fact that high membership numbers in one province and low in another does not necessarily mean that support for the Heimwehr movement was stronger in that province than in the other, as it might simply indicate that the population was greater and participation in the movement reflects that variance. As such, these figures should be used to compliment qualitative data and should not be taken at face value on their own, for all of the reasons given.

What the existing membership estimates indicate, however, is a pattern of expansion and contraction over the course of the movement's existence and generally correspond to important shifts in Austria's political landscape. As *Table 3* (below) indicates, three events that elicited the attention of contemporary observers to the movement's membership figures, are as follows: the founding of the provincial organizations in 1920-1921, the "Events of July 1927," and in 1933, when Chancellor

⁴¹³ Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 106.

⁴¹⁴ See chapter five for more detailed treatment of these relationships.

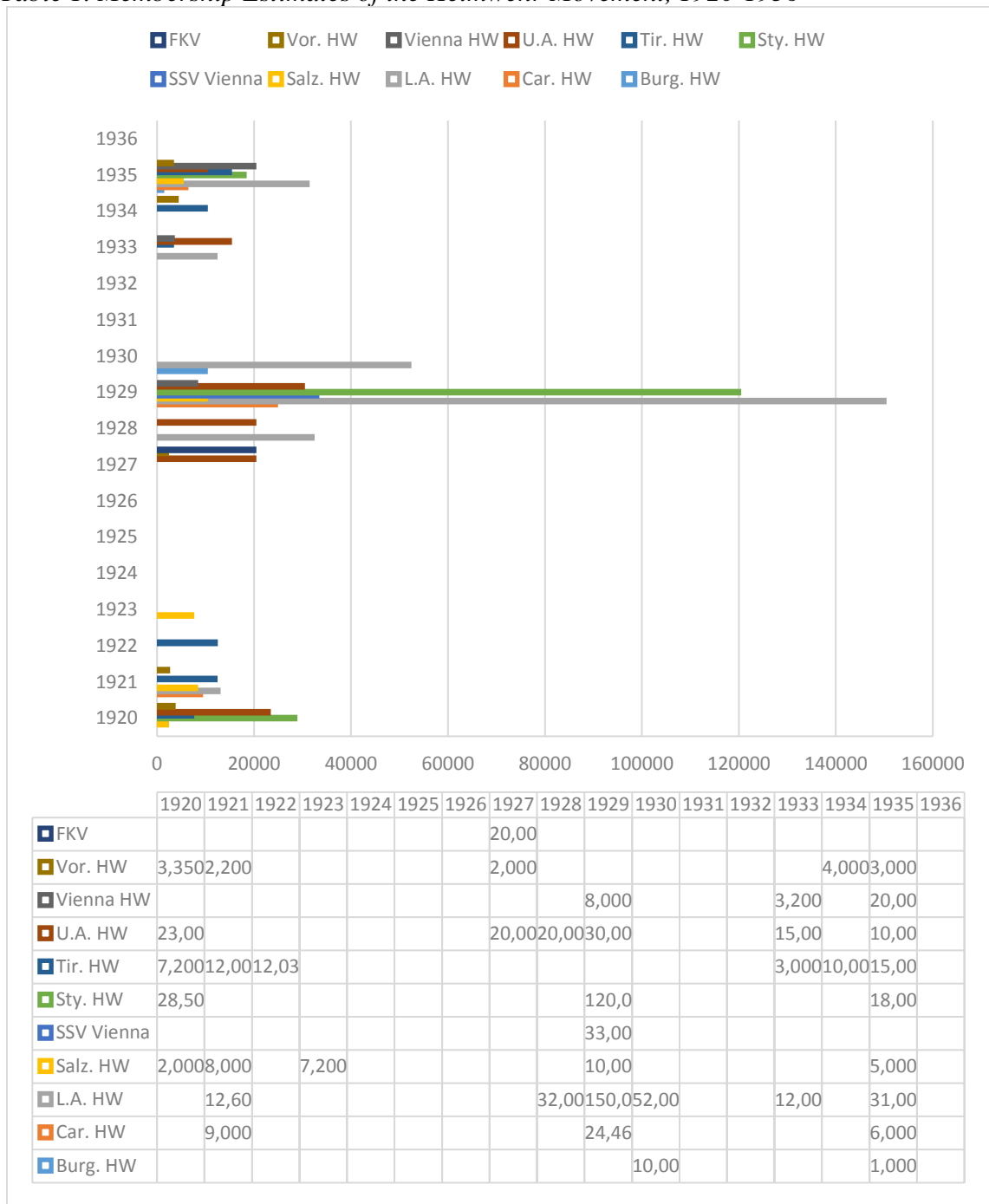
Engelbert Dollfuß seized an improbable opportunity to dissolve parliament and govern by emergency decree. In the case of the latter two events, the attention given to the movement's membership reflected marked increases that amplified the visibility of the *Heimwehr* movement as a powerful instrument of the Christian Social-led federal government.

With the continued growth of the Heimwehr movement, total estimates have varied wildly, topping out anywhere from 200 to 800,000.⁴¹⁵ Lauridsen, who as most recently examined this, places the height of the Heimwehr movement closer to the lower end of those figures, viewing the 227,401 votes the Heimatblock received in the 1930 federal elections as corroborating evidence.⁴¹⁶ While it does offer some indication of membership numbers, it is likely on the low side for reasons outlined in chapter four. One might reasonably surmise that membership figures at its peak lay in somewhere in the middle, most likely between 300,000-400,000.

⁴¹⁵ See Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right in Austria*, 140, footnote 48.

⁴¹⁶ Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right in Austria*, 140. See also Wiltshegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 292.

Table 1. Membership Estimates of the Heimwehr Movement, 1920-1936⁴¹⁷



⁴¹⁷ The for these figures are largely derived primary source material cited in Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 46, 48-9, 52, 114, 128, 131, 218; Wiltsegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 127-8, 136, 148, 154, 160-1, 164-5; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 23, 60, 319, n.29; and Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hackenkreuz*, 61; Rebtisch, *Tirol—Land in Waffen*, 117; Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 104-8, 138-146. Where figures conflict, their average was used.

The Socioeconomic Makeup of the Heimwehr Movement

Demographic statistics for the First Republic are limited due in large part to its chaotic birth in the aftermath of the First World War and its perpetual lack of funds to dedicate to a comprehensive socioeconomic study of its population. Consequently, attaining any sort of empirically dependable information on the composition of the rank and file of the Heimwehren is a difficult task, especially given the decentralized nature of the movement and the inconsistent availability of membership rolls. As such, it is not surprising that the socioeconomic composition of the Heimwehr movement has been a topic of much historiographic confusion.

Franziska Schneeberger argues, quite effectively, that generalizations of the Heimwehr movement being a peasant-oriented is not accurate. This description, she contends, can be attributed to several factors. Schneeberger dedicates the first chapter of her dissertation to unpacking, is the different linguistic interpretations of the word “peasantry” (Bauernschaft). That is, the term in German is more ambiguous and applicable to a variety of different, but related professions. In English, however, the word “peasantry” means “farmers.”⁴¹⁸ As Schneeberger explains, more precise terms are needed to define the necessary delineations between “rural,” “agrarian,” and “peasant.” She defines “rural” as the including the entire population of those not living in urban centers; the “agrarian” population, by contrast, should consist of those livelihoods are connected to the land, but not land-owning farmers, which belong in their own category,

⁴¹⁸ Schneeberger, “Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr,” 8-9.

represented in the term “peasant.”⁴¹⁹ This differentiation, consequently, creates the potential for equally variable worldviews among the rural population.

Schneeberger pinpoints the origins of this myth to a *New York Times* report written by American journalist, Clair Price, who estimated the composition of the Heimwehr movement as being 70 percent farmers, 20 percent members of the “old upper classes of the empire,” and 10 percent being workers.⁴²⁰ The authors of early works in the historiography of the Heimwehr movement, draw heavily from this assessment and, consequently, skew historical interpretations of the Heimwehren as being a largely agrarian, Catholic, militant movement. The broader, politically-oriented research aims of scholarship and the scarcity of reliable socioeconomic information about Heimwehren members, helped propagate this misconception throughout the historiography.⁴²¹ Even as recent as 2008, studies of the Heimwehr movement continue draw from this inaccurate portrait.⁴²²

Indeed, much of the historiography speaks to the socioeconomic consistency of the Heimwehren in very generalized terms, borrowing the same inaccurate portrait from existing works. Edmondson draws on recollections of Guido Zernatto, who described the “active core” of the Heimwehr movement as being:

⁴¹⁹ Schneeberger, “Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr,” 14. Unfortunately, Schneeberger does not define what she considers “urban,” which, for Austria, is essential in order to clearly delineate its difference from “rural,” as most of Austria’s cities are relatively small by comparison to the United States. At what point a space considered urban? What is the threshold of population density that constitutes an urban space as opposed to a “rural” one?

⁴²⁰ Schneeberger, “Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr,” 52-3; Clair Price, “Austria’s Hands Tied by Two Armed Parties,” *New York Times*, December 2, 1928, 4.

⁴²¹ See, for example, Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hackenkreuz*, 60; Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 120; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 59.

⁴²² See Gerwarth, “Central European Counter-Revolution,” 186.

degraded and maligned professional officers and aristocrats, left with a small pension or luckily—if they but realized it—most of their land; reserve officers who were not content to become merely school teachers or white-collar workers; and disillusioned youth who wondered at the military exploits of their bitter elders and who saw no future in a society that tolerated economic depression and unheroic politic.⁴²³

Scholars who do attempt to offer more detailed information on the subject tend to contradict themselves. For example, Carsten contends that “Apart from the peasantry which provided the bulk of the local Heimwehr members, two social groups were particularly prominent, students and officers.”⁴²⁴ He adds that after July 1927, the Heimwehren received a “mass influx” of new members from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds. Carsten further muddies the picture, stating that, based on a detailed police report from August 31, 1929, most members of the Heimwehren were “manual workers,” or “unemployed” men, between 25 and 40 years of age. The balance of the membership consisted of individuals from “all social groups, business circles, officials, employees of the state and of the municipalities, many of whom had joined recently.” He follows this up, stating that “there is no doubt that the Heimwehren were above all a rural movement,” whose leaders were drawn from the old aristocracy, educated upper and middle class professionals, and former military officers.⁴²⁵

To Schneeberger’s point, it is unclear, how Carsten interprets “rural.”

Schneeberger indicates, however, that based on articles from the contemporary press, the success of the Heimwehren in smashing the Social Democratic strikes in July 1927 attracted large numbers of farmers and agricultural laborers, eventually comprising

⁴²³ Guido Zernatto, *Der Wahrheit über Oesterreich* (New York: Longmans, 1938), 71-3 cited in Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 38.

⁴²⁴ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 44-5.

⁴²⁵ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 113, 120.

substantial portions of several provincial formations, particularly the Lower Austrian, Styrian, and Tyrolean organizations. In the case of the Bauernbund (Peasant’s League) of Lower Austria, the association committed the entirety of its 100,000-members to the establishment of the Lower Austrian *Heimwehr* in 1929.⁴²⁶ This seems to contradict Carsten’s assertion that this influx was highly variable, illustrating the contradictory nature of the historiographic discussion of the *Heimwehr* movement’s socioeconomic composition.

Given the local and regional orientations of the Heimwehren movement, each provincial formation had its own unique socioeconomic composition, making it difficult to apply generalizations. For provinces such as Styria, for example, where industry was more prominent than in neighboring provinces, there was a greater concentration of workers in its ranks. Similarly, the Lower Austrian Heimwehr would have a larger concentration of farmers and agricultural laborers, as its fertile plains along the Danube was Austria’s ‘bread basket.’⁴²⁷ According to Verena Lösch’s breakout of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr, replicated below, it attracted a quite diverse membership.⁴²⁸

Table 2. Membership Breakout of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr

| | |
|-------|---|
| 35.2% | Public Officials: State Representatives, Mayors (<i>Bürgermeister</i>), Policemen officials, Government bureaucrats/administrators, etc. |
| 55% | Businessmen: commercial and industrial (frequently lower level functionaries of companies), shopkeepers, innkeepers, master craftsmen, etc. |
| 35% | Former k.u.k. Army officers |
| 37% | White Collar Professionals/Academics: Doctors, Lawyers, Engineers, Professors, Teachers, etc. |

⁴²⁶ Schneeberger, “Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr,” 64.

⁴²⁷ Schneeberger, “Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr,” 64. According to Schneeberger, farmers and agricultural laborers made up 80 percent of the Lower Austrian *Heimwehr*.

⁴²⁸ Verena Lösch, “Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr von ihren Anfängen bis zum Korneuburger Eid (1920 - 1930)” (PhD diss., University of Innsbruck, 1986), 146-7.

| | |
|-----|---|
| 14% | Farmers/Agricultural Laborers |
| 5% | Clergy and/or church functionaries |
| 5% | <i>Hausbesitzer</i> or Landlords/Landowners |
| 4% | Declassed Aristocrats |
| 3% | Industrial Workers |

There is, however, cross-section of the Tyrolean population that played an important role in the Tyrolean Heimatwehr that is absent from this breakout. As Carsten notes, the Heimwehr movement “possessed a strong following...principally among students and peasants,” the former being absent in Lösch’s statistics. Students—some young war veterans and others, who were too young at the time, but who idealized the “front fighter”—played an important role, for example, in the Styrian Heimatschutz.⁴²⁹ In the case of the Frontkämpferverein (Front Fighters Association), students eventually became more prevalent in its ranks than actual war veterans.⁴³⁰ “In the Tyrol too, the mobile Heimwehr units were formed by the student companies of Innsbruck University,” Carsten explains.⁴³¹ As chapter three will reveal in further detail, the Tyrolean Heimatwehr exercised substantial time, money, and effort into “winning” the Tyrolean youth. While offering a useful snapshot of the various socioeconomic groups involved in the *Heimwehr* movement, the absence of such a core social group calls into question the reliability of these figures.

Based on archival records, such as organizational hierarchies and memorandums communicating the results of local and district leadership elections, limited but useful

⁴²⁹ Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hakenkreuz*, 60.

⁴³⁰ Gulick, *Austria*, 718.

⁴³¹ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 113, 45.

indicators can be compiled that indicate the composition of the leadership of the Tyrolean movement. For the sake of consistency, the same groupings specified in Lösch's breakout will be maintained. Table 5, below, provides a statistical snapshot of the information gathered from these records.⁴³²

Table 3. Breakout of Tyrolean Heimatwehr Leadership

| | |
|-----|--|
| 53% | Occupation not given |
| 13% | Public Officials: State Representatives, Mayors (<i>Bürgermeister</i>), Policemen officials, Government bureaucrats/administrators, etc. |
| 9% | Businessmen: Bank Officers, Shopkeepers, Innkeepers, Attorneys, craftsmen (Blacksmiths, Carpenters, Tinsmiths, Saddlers, etc.) |
| 7% | Former k.u.k. Army officers |
| 7% | White Collar Professionals/Academics: Doctors, Lawyers, Engineers, Professors, Teachers, etc. |
| 5% | Land/Property Owners |

Unfortunately, over half of the cases where individuals were identified as filling leadership positions, their civilian occupations were not given. Excluding instances where no occupational information could be derived and focusing on the known quantities, the figures align more favorably with existing evaluations of the composition of Heimwehren leadership across Austria:

Table 4. Breakout of Tyrolean Heimatwehr Leadership excl. Unknown Occupations

| | |
|-----|--|
| 28% | Public Officials: State Representatives, Mayors (<i>Bürgermeister</i>), Policemen officials, Government bureaucrats/administrators, etc. |
| 19% | Businessmen: Bank Officers, Shopkeepers, Innkeepers, Attorneys, craftsmen (Blacksmiths, Carpenters, Tinsmiths, Saddlers, etc.) |
| 15% | Former k.u.k. Army officers |
| 15% | |

⁴³² The percentages illustrated in the table are based on a sample size of 165 *Tiroler Heimatwehr* leader names and, where indicated, their civilian occupations. The rank of the leaders varied from the *Landesführer* to *Ortsführern* within a ten-year span (1920-1929), though most of the information was extrapolated from documents created in the years 1921 or 1928.

| | |
|-----|---|
| | White Collar Professionals/Academics: Doctors, Lawyers, Engineers, Professors, Teachers, etc. |
| 11% | Land/Property Owners |

There are several socioeconomic groupings seemingly absent from the leadership breakout that were present in the general composition of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr: church functionaries, farmers and agricultural laborers, workers, and aristocrats. According to Lösch, her statistics do not accurately reflect the influence of farmers and agricultural laborers in the Tyrolean organization, as in smaller rural communities, farmers often served as *Bürgermeister* (mayor) or in other public office.⁴³³ Moreover, farmers could also constitute landowners, cultivating their own land (as was most often the case in the Tyrol). Similarly, members of the declassed aristocracy also owned estates and were considered landowners as well. Furthermore, they often served as elected officials at local and state levels. Clergy and church functionaries as “members” of the *Heimwehr* movement, must be understood as functioning in the capacity of officiating ceremonies, advocating for the movement, and other public support roles. Simply put, there is a good deal of potential overlap in these figures, meaning that they cannot be interpreted rigidly, but offer concrete suggestions of the social groups leading the Tyrolean movement. The remaining groups (aside from farmers and aristocrats) not present in these leadership statistics—agricultural laborers, workers, and students—represented the core of the “rank and file” of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr.

An examination of a different provincial organization would likely yield varying percentages, but the socioeconomic groups and their positions would have remained

⁴³³ Lösch, “Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr,” 146-7.

reasonably consistent based on qualitative information gleaned from existing studies of the various provincial Heimwehr movements. Lauridsen offers an occupational breakout of the leadership of the Carinthian Heimatschutz in the years 1928 and 1933:⁴³⁴

Table 5. Snapshots of Carinthian Heimatschutz Leadership

| | 1928 | 1933 |
|-------------------------|------|------|
| Former Army Officers | 7 | 3 |
| Aristocrats/Land Owners | 0 | 3 |
| White Collar Employees | 0 | 4 |
| Merchants | 0 | 2 |
| Liberal Professionals | 9 | 0 |
| Industrialists | 0 | 2 |
| Unknown | 2 | 1 |
| Total | 18 | 15 |

While it is unclear as to what exact professions these groupings include or the extent, if any, overlap existed in any of these categories that might skew its results, it indicates a clear turnover in, and diversification of, the organization's leadership over the course of five years. Much of this variation was a product of the movement's expansion, which peaked in 1929.

What conclusions can be drawn from these figures? Early generalizations that the Heimwehren maintained a largely peasant rank and file are over-simplifications that do not account for the wide range of rural and agricultural occupations and socioeconomic conditions. It was not until the Heimwehr's coalition with the Christian Social Bauernbund in 1929, that it could be confirmed that the movement's ranks swelled with farmers and agricultural laborers. Determining the composition of the rank and file is more difficult to prove with empirical data, at least for the Tyrolean Heimatwehr, due to

⁴³⁴ Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 226, footnote 107.

the absence of membership rolls. There is evidence, however, that indicates that this body was composed of the petit bourgeoisie, agricultural laborers, and students. The efforts the movement put into establishing independent workers' unions reflected, at least in part, the fact that a sizable portion of its rank and file were unemployed. As chapter four will explain in further detail, the Heimwehr leaders' connections to industrialists was a tangible benefit for this segment of its members. Lastly, there was a sizable contingent of university students—the core of its storm troop unit—involved in the Heimwehr movement, which, as Löscher's assessment indicates, is not consistently represented.

If the figures of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr are any indication of the composition of the wider movement's leadership, it was local officials who were most frequently founding and leading Heimwehr groups, an indication that the movement was indeed an instrument of entrenched political interests. When considered alongside the fact that the next largest groups were firmly bourgeois and petit bourgeois elements, with the influx of the aristocrats into leading positions in the late 1920s, the composition of the Heimwehr movement's leadership reiterates the fact that it defended socioeconomic interests of the middle class and wealthy elites. As chapter two explained, paramilitary organizations like the Heimwehren offered former k.u.k. army officers an opportunity to continue working in that capacity, often as chiefs of staff who received modest stipends, or as military leaders responsible for the training and operational leadership of Heimwehr units.

The Heimwehr as a Paramilitary Movement

The military character of the Heimwehr movement was its most unmistakable attribute. They wore military-style uniforms that varied from one province to another and

from one point in time to another. Most commonly associated with the Heimwehren is the wind jackets, which ranged in shades of green; the most recognizable one, perhaps, being the stone-green of the Styrian Heimatschutz. The wind jacket was commonly worn with trousers and shoes of all variations, and a leather waist belt with a shoulder strap. More varied was the headgear the formations donned. Most synonymous with the Heimwehr movement was the jägerhut (hunting cap), which varied in color depending on the province. For example, the Styrian, Lower Austrian, Viennese, and Burgenland formations wore stone-green hunting caps with dark green cords and a game cock feather on the side, while the Carinthian Heimatschutz wore a brown hunting cap and the Upper Austrians, a dark green cap. At other times, various formations wore the M1917 steel helmets.⁴³⁵ In the 1930s, the old imperial style field cap with a cock feather, like those worn by the Tyrolean mountain troops (Landeschützen) in World War I, became more common, particularly amongst the Schützenkorps (Defense Corps) formations established by Vienna Heimwehr leader, Emil Fey.⁴³⁶

Wiltschegg argues that the various styles of uniform—among others—are indicative of the movement’s provincial character and its general lack of unifying ideology. To be sure, the regionalism of the Heimwehr movement was a quite strong and stifled its capacity to affect the kind of change its leadership desired. At the same time, however, there is no evidence to indicate that variation of uniform styles was a reliable indicator of regionalism or ideological division. If anything, it is an indication of the

⁴³⁵ Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 250-1.

⁴³⁶ Even within provincial organizations some units wore different color or styled-uniforms. The St. George company, comprised of older Pfadfinder (scout) students wore olive drab wind jackets and gray ski caps. See TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), IV/1, fol.777, 292.

piecemeal manner in which the various Heimwehren were forced to procure clothing and equipment due to the ebb and flow of funds; this has more to do with the absence of membership dues and self-sufficiency than it does with underlying divisions. What is more, when placed in the broader context of the Austro-Hungarian army, variations in uniform reflect something of a continuity of practices not uncommon in the Habsburg army (or many other European armies, for that matter). Austro-Hungarian army units frequently wore differing facing, patch, and button colors on their uniforms.⁴³⁷ Some units wore differing styles of puttees, different shades of gray—the Common Army transitioned from pike gray to field gray uniforms in 1916. Bosnian units wore different caps from the Polish Legion, whose caps differed from the standard field cap; for that matter, the Polish Legion wore a different style of uniform all together.⁴³⁸



Bundesarchiv, Bild 102-00840
Foto: Pahl, Georg | 7. Oktober 1928 ca.

Figure 7. *The Styrian Heimatschutz at Wiener Neustadt, October 7, 1928*
(Bundesarchiv, Bild 102-00840 / Georg Pahl / CC-BY-SA 3.0)

⁴³⁷ See James Lucas, *Fighting Troops of the Austro-Hungarian Army, 1868-1914* (Kent, UK: Spellmount, 1987).

⁴³⁸ See Peter Jung, *The Austro-Hungarian Forces in World War I*, vol.1 (Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, 2003).

As previous explained, provincial Heimwehr organizations were typically organized in conjunction with official administrative boundaries. By the end of 1924, mobilization plans were established that connected various levels of provincial administration to roughly corresponding military unit in terms of size and numbers.⁴³⁹ This structure enabled mutually beneficial arrangements between local groups (Ortsgruppen) and local officials, who, in many cases, leading figures in those Ortsgruppen. These local formations offered their communities a convenient source of auxiliary law enforcement. Given the severe restrictions placed on the Austrian military by the Entente in the Treaty of St. Germain, the Heimwehren was also considered, in conservative circles, a viable auxiliary defense force. These designs, in fact, align quite well with the very definition of “paramilitary,” which is “of, relating to, being, or characteristic of a force formed on a military pattern especially as a potential auxiliary military force.”⁴⁴⁰

Table 6. The Military Organization of the Heimwehr Movement

| Administrative Level | English Translation | Military Unit Size |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Kreis</i> | Circuit | Brigade |
| <i>Gau</i> | District | Regiment |
| <i>Bezirk</i> | Precinct | Battalion |
| <i>Ortsgruppen</i> | Municipal | Company* |

* Companies were to be comprised of four platoons of 20 each

According to Edmondson, the training regimen of the Heimwehren “consisted generally of target practices, lectures and map problems, and during the summer minor

⁴³⁹ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 37-8. According to Edmondson, this plan was the work of Steidle’s Chief of Staff, Waldemar Pabst, as the Seipel and Steidle attempted to negotiate the creation of a national confederation.

⁴⁴⁰ "Paramilitary," Merriam-Webster.com, accessed September 4, 2016, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/paramilitary>.

terrain exercises and practiced marches.”⁴⁴¹ The training program established in October 1928 was much more in-depth, however, laying out seven specific areas of training for infantry and machine gun battalions: shooting and weapons systems, exercise regulations, field service, service regulations, pioneer service, terrain, and military organization.⁴⁴² The aim of the shooting and weapons systems training constituted a substantial part of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr’s program. For the Innsbruck Heimatwehr formations, for example, regularly scheduled drills took place at the Berg Isel shooting range in the summer and autumn under the supervision of the shooting leader and in accordance with shooting range rules (Schießstandordnung). Ironically, though members did not have to pay dues, they did have to pay for the ammunition they used while participating in shooting drills; ten groschen per shot.⁴⁴³ Exercise regulations covered, among other things, marching, facings, falling into formation, troop movements, attack formations, close-quarter and hand-to-hand combat, as well as conducting attacks from up to 400 paces away. The field service training focused on field operations, with sections on proper transmission of commands, announcements, and messages, transporting troops, marches, billeting, securing an area, and sentry duty. The training area of service regulations included the duties and behavior of a soldiers in various circumstances (interfacing with the general public, before the enemy, while on sentry duty, and so forth), personal hygiene and appearance, official channels, inspection service, escorting and

⁴⁴¹ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 61.

⁴⁴² TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VII/1, fol. 2090, 335-342. The documents refer to section numbers, which likely correspond to a military service handbook, but the name of specific handbook is not given.

⁴⁴³ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), V/1, fol.829, 532-546. Ten groschen would be the equivalent to ten cents in U.S. currency.

guarding prisoners, relieving posts, and assisting the public. Pioneer training constituted learning to use infantry equipment such as pickaxes and field shovels to create encampments, dig latrines, cooking trenches, and so forth. It also sought to teach the basics of road and bridge building, using explosives, constructing obstacles, and dugouts for protection against artillery fire. The section on terrain taught Heimwehr troops to use maps, compasses, how to gauge time based on the position of the sun, functioning in mountainous terrain, determining heights, reading layer lines in the rocks, and reading various types of topographical maps. The last area, military organization, was simply learning military ranks, insignias, and badges of the Bundesheer as well as its organization and unit hierarchy.

Apart from their efforts to understand the size of the Heimwehr movement, historians have also sought to establish the military strength and capability of the Heimwehr movement by examining the number and size of mobile, combat troops in each of the provincial formations. Their estimations of the military strength of the Heimwehren have differ quite substantially. A 1925 American intelligence report indicated that the Heimwehr movement could muster 31 brigades, 111 regiments, 405 battalions, and 1,409 companies, but does not offer any figures regarding troop strength for any of these units. Pabst's plan of each company having four platoons of 20 men each, would place the "actual strength," based on the number of units given, 112,270 troops. Edmondson finds this estimation far too high for 1925, when the movement experienced a marked decline in interest and membership numbers.⁴⁴⁴ Yet a June 1928 report filed by American military attaché, Major W.W. Hicks—submitted within the

⁴⁴⁴ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 37-8.

timeframe in which the Heimwehr movement grew significantly—contends that the Heimwehren had 52,000 organized and trained men, of which only 22,000 were readily deployable outside of their home communities. Next to the figure Steidle claimed the Heimwehr possessed in a letter to the Hungarian Premier, Count István Bethlen, this number seems quite conservative.⁴⁴⁵ At the time of Hicks’ account the Heimwehr movement was on the upswing due to the prestige it won in crushing the Social Democratic riots and general strike that occurred in July 1927. Moderate estimates indicate that the Heimwehr movement grew to 300-400,000 members, total, at its peak in 1929.⁴⁴⁶ As such, one must reasonably assume that the military strength of the Heimwehren would have correspondingly grown. Wiltschegg roughly estimates the military strength of the Heimwehr movement as follows:

*Table 7. Military Strength of the Heimwehr Movement, 1930-1935*⁴⁴⁷

| | |
|----------------|---------|
| November 1930 | 146,000 |
| December 1931 | 44,000 |
| September 1932 | 46,000 |
| January 1933 | 35,000 |
| February 1934 | 32,100 |
| 1935 | 121,880 |

The sharp drop in troop strength corresponds with the increasing traction gained by the Nazi Party and its Sturmabteilung (SA). Despite the sharp dip in membership numbers after 1930, the organization arguably got leaner in terms of its military capacity. As Wiltschegg notes, Starhemberg, elected as new federal leader in 1930, established a

⁴⁴⁵ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 61. Steidle claimed that the *Heimwehren* had “150,000 men organized in the ranks if the Heimwehr, who are prepared to risk [everything] for the victory of their Weltanschauung.”

⁴⁴⁶ Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 292.

⁴⁴⁷ Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 292.

federal “Wehramt” (defense office) to improve efficiency by streamlining communication between the Bundesführung to the leaders of the various specialized areas (technical emergency assistance, medical, railway, and air corps) of the provincial Heimwehren.⁴⁴⁸ It is unclear, however, how much more effective the Wehramt was in practice.

Beyond the federal government’s distribution of arms to local communities for self-defense in November 1918, which most local militia groups kept and used to form the basis of the Heimwehr movement, provincial organizations also robbed weapons depots that were to be turned over to the IMCC. In Styria, for example, Governor Anton Rintelen would later recall that 17,000 rifles and rifle cartridges, 286 machine guns, 12 artillery pieces, and even airplanes were stolen from local army stores.⁴⁴⁹ The reported theft of weaponry by the Heimwehren continued to be a trend throughout its existence. As future Bundesführer, Ernst Rüdiger Starhemberg, later admitted, he played a part in the largest theft of artillery—some 22 mountain howitzers—from a store in Tyrol in January 1921.⁴⁵⁰ In a December 16, 1929 article covering the Nationalrat budget debates, Social Democrat, Dr. Julius Deutsch, accused the Tiroler Heimatwehr of “stealing” six mountain guns from a workshop of an army artillery brigade stationed in Innsbruck.⁴⁵¹ Given the close cooperation between the Heimwehren, local, provincial, federal governments, and provincial Bundesheer headquarters, one might reasonably view the “theft” of equipment was much more likely to be something of an arranged “transfer,”

⁴⁴⁸ Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 289-90.

⁴⁴⁹ Anton Rintelen, *Erinnerungen an Österreichs Weg* (Munich, 1941), 126-7, 130 cited in Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 44.

⁴⁵⁰ Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolin*, 7-8.

⁴⁵¹ “Die Budgetdebatte im Nationalrat,” *Vorarlberger Volksblatt*, December 16, 1929, 1.

given the fact that no investigative efforts of consequence ever materialized, outside of that conducted by the Social Democrats.

As it were, Hicks' 1928 report estimated the Heimwehren had ready access to some 10,000 German Mausers and another 30,000 Austrian Mannlicher rifles with sufficient ammunition. Edmondson adds that thousands of men also maintained possession of their rifles. Furthermore, Hicks projected that the Heimwehren also had in its possession 15 howitzers and 500 rounds of ammunition per gun, a surplus of hand grenades, gas bombs, and several armored cars.⁴⁵² Here too, Hicks' report does not reconcile with other sources. Starhemberg's admission—which is also corroborated by other sources—that he and his men stole 22 mountain howitzers in a single theft, by itself, exceeds the total of 15 Hicks estimates *all* the Heimwehren to have possessed in June 1928.⁴⁵³ Hicks' figures here appear dubious. Chapters five and six detail the arms, ammunition, and equipment the Heimwehren received from foreign suppliers—principally Bavaria and Italy.

The Hicks report also indicated that, despite having no formal connections with the Bundesheer (Federal Army), in several provinces Heimwehr groups participated in military exercises with Bundesheer units.⁴⁵⁴ Long-serving Minister of Defense (1921-1933), Carl Vaugoin, maintained a close relationship with the Heimwehr leadership throughout his tenure and actively facilitated cooperation between the Bundesheer and the Heimwehren.⁴⁵⁵ The Heimwehren in Tyrol, Carinthia, and Styria, most frequently

⁴⁵² Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 60.

⁴⁵³ "Der Kannondiebstahl der Tiroler Heimwehr. 22 Geschütze und ein Geschützrohr gestohlen," *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, March 15, 1921, 5.

⁴⁵⁴ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 61.

⁴⁵⁵ "Vaugoin und die Heimatwehr," *Vorlarberger Wacht*, July 9, 1929, 2.

engaged in training maneuvers with the local Bundesheer formations. Schutzbund leader, Dr. Julius Deutsch, naturally took issue with Heimwehr leaders observing Bundesheer maneuvers and vice-versa. Chancellor Seipel's response to his complaint was to point out that it was not uncommon for "functionaries who were closest to the majority parties, such as deputies, federal committees, or provincial officials [to] have participated in such exercises as honored guests."⁴⁵⁶ In other words, Seipel justified the presence of Tyrolean Heimatwehr leaders at Bundesheer maneuvers as having to do with the fact that many were elected officials observing as guests.

The Heimatwehr also participated in exercises with the Tyrolean state police and gendarmerie, which Deutsch pointed out, once more, was also a "transgression of the law."⁴⁵⁷ With a Heimatwehr-friendly chancellor and governor, Deutsch, his Schutzbund, and the Social Democratic Party had little recourse against the favor given the Heimwehren but to stage their own field exercises and openly, and often sarcastically, point out such instances in the numerous party-friendly newspapers.⁴⁵⁸ "The chancellor, of course, cannot search the Heimwehr for weapons," juxtaposing the open Heimatwehr machine gun and rifle drills to the frequent weapons searches of workers' tenements and union halls.⁴⁵⁹

Beyond training exercises, the Heimwehren in Tyrol and Salzburg also collaborated with the Bundesheer to seal off Austria's borders to prevent the infiltration of Nazi terror units from entering the country in 1933. In the brief conflagration in

⁴⁵⁶ "Entpolitisierung der Wehrmacht und die Werbungen," *Reichspost*, January 6, 1929, 4-5.

⁴⁵⁷ "Die Angst vor der Heimatwehr," *Allgemeiner Tiroler Anzeiger*, May 25, 1928, 4.

⁴⁵⁸ "Gegen die feldmäßigen Übungen der Heimwehr," *Das Kleine Blatt*, April 12, 1930, 6.

⁴⁵⁹ "Die Heimwehr macht Übungen mit Maschinengewehren," *Volkspost*, March 16, 1929, 3.

February 1934, as well as in the days after the July 1934 assassination of Chancellor Dollfuss, Heimwehr men performed valuable duties. The fact that the Heimwehr movement was widespread in the provinces gave authorities the ability to react quickly to changing situations. Moreover, Heimwehr troops possessed a more intimate knowledge of the surroundings than did federal troops deployed from elsewhere. Heimwehr units bolstered gendarmerie posts, assisted in weapons searches, guarded bridges, railways, provided traffic control, prisoner escorts, and were able to take over security responsibilities after the withdrawal of federal troops. In this way, the Heimwehren served as effective force multiplier for a severely restricted federal army.⁴⁶⁰

At the same time, Heimwehr military leaders were working to establish war plans. On February 23, 1928, the federal military leadership under Kletus von Pichler, met to discuss potential fighting scenarios based loosely around the events of July 1927. The primary scene consisted of a “red coup attempt” in Vienna, which was setup to kick off the following day (February 29). The plan called for a coordinated effort between the police, federal troops and the Heimwehren to “besiege” Vienna, surrounding the city and cutting off the roads and bridges into and out of the capital. The areas south and east of Vienna—particularly the Social Democratic strongholds of Wiener Neustadt and St. Pölten—were also emphasized in their planning. Any Red forces materializing from these areas would be neutralized by Styrian formations mobilized just to their southeast.⁴⁶¹

With the discussion of this war scenario were also estimations of how quickly and the military capability of formations in and around the areas surrounding Vienna. Major

⁴⁶⁰ Wiltsegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 295.

⁴⁶¹ TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV (österreich), XII/1, fol. 1-1654, 196-9.

Hans von Prankh projected that 2,000 trained troops from Judenburg (Upper Styria) could be mobilized and deployed to Leoben (Upper Styria) by the evening of March 2. Generalmajor Gottwald estimated a force of 1,500 men could be mobilized for operations by March 2—two battalions from Hartberg (Upper Styria) and one from Weiz (Upper Styria), while Major Arthur Karg von Bebenburg predicted that 1,500 men from Wolkersdorf (Lower Austria) could be mobilized by March 2, but lacked the necessary weaponry to be deployable. The small figures in these estimations most likely refer to mobile shock troops and would seem to favor the numbers presented in the Hicks report rather than those communicated by Steidle to Bethelen.⁴⁶² Steidle's estimate was likely in reference to the movement's active membership in general and not its better-trained, mobile combat units.

As it were, the scenario Pichler and Prankh debated for nearly an hour over the potential for a "roten Durchbruch" (red breakthrough) in the Mürztal (Styria). Pichler was adamant that the Styrian Heimatschutz needed a single military command to avoid potentially being defeated if acting individually. Prankh's obstinacy enraged Pichler who resigned his post as federal military leader of the Heimwehr out of sheer frustration.⁴⁶³

Since the Heimwehren were never engaged in any meaningful combat scenarios, save for the several thousand men in the Wiener Heimwehr who saw action—and by all accounts represented themselves well—in the fighting in February 1934, it is difficult to speak to their fighting capacity with any accuracy. On one hand, as Wiltschegg points out, the movement relied entirely on volunteers, which meant that its military

⁴⁶² Lajos Kerekes, "Akten zu den geheimen Verbindungen zwischen der Bethlen-Regierung und die österreichischen Heimwehrbewegung," 309-310.

⁴⁶³ TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV (österreich), XII/1, fol. 1-1654, 200-2.

effectiveness depended entirely upon their level of dedication to the movement, training, and discipline. Moreover, their members were working professionals and could train only in the evenings or on the weekends, thereby limiting their potential preparedness. Furthermore, he argues, the localized basis of the movement made it difficult for those Ortsgruppen to combine with any sort of unified outlook or cohesion. As such, the movement resembled more a “uniformed club.”⁴⁶⁴

Furthermore, contemporary sources indicate that alcohol consumption was synonymous with Heimwehr men. For instance, Heimwehr exercises appear to have been frequently capped off with prolific beer drinking sessions.⁴⁶⁵ The Linz Social Democratic newspaper, *Tagblatt*, frequently made light of their reputation as heavy drinkers, sarcastically calling the “beer table” the “war front” of Heimwehren and complaining of the fanaticism Heimwehr leaders preached from their “beer table pulpit” (Biertisch-Kanzel).⁴⁶⁶ In an October 1929 instance, Steidle received a memo regarding two drunk Heimwehr men present at a Ottakring (Vienna) Christian Social Union meeting. After one’s diatribe against Leopold Kunschak, head of the Christian Social Worker’s Union the other “declared the people’s representatives as inferior.” These men could “not be the ideal of a Heimwehr man,” the memo queried.⁴⁶⁷

Though Wiltschegg makes several valid points around the potential military weaknesses of the movement and its general organization, on the other hand, his

⁴⁶⁴ Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 288-9.

⁴⁶⁵ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), IV/1, fol.777, 288.

⁴⁶⁶ “Neues aus Weyer an der Inns,” *Tagblatt*, June 16, 1929, 11; “Peuerbach. Zu unserer Trutz-Versammlung am Sonntag,” *Tagblatt*, October 18, 1927, 1.

⁴⁶⁷ TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV (Österreich), XIII/1, fol.1-1175, 1018-9.

assessment fails to take into account an important mitigating factor. According to one report Hicks filed, approximately 70 percent of Heimwehr men were Great War veterans, which would mean that the clear majority would have received at least some formal military training and/or would have had combat experience in the war.⁴⁶⁸ If true, a large percentage of its members would have had varying degrees of military training and experience, making the limitations around training time perhaps less detrimental than Wiltschegg surmises. Furthermore, having had the shared experience of wartime military service and being comrades in a common cause, there existed a common basis that could conceivably transcend the potential limitations of the movement's local nature.

Comparatively speaking, even if the Schutzbund had greater numbers than the Heimwehr movement, it is difficult to imagine them being any better trained, equipped, or armed, especially considering the frequency with which the police and gendarmerie raided—many initiated by Fey and Starhemberg in their time as Vice-Chancellor and Minister of the Interior—Schutzbund weapons caches in the early 1930s. In the case the Bundesheer, they were without question better trained and better equipped than the Heimwehren, but was numerically inferior, even after 1930 when Heimwehr troop strength sharply declined they still doubled that of the Bundesheer in 1931 and 1932. For the Heimwehr movement, its Achilles' heel lie not so much in weapons, training, or troop strength, but in its decentralized organization and ideologically diverse membership—these were the forces that limited its overall capacity as a paramilitary organization.

⁴⁶⁸ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 59. Of the 52,000 men trained, only 20,000 were estimated to have been deployable outside their home areas for any length of time. 22,000 were capable of military duty at home, according to Hicks, while 10,000 were trained for supporting, non-combat roles.

The Ideology of the Heimwehr Movement

One of the principle criticisms historians have leveled against the Heimwehr movement was its lack of a unifying ideology, while others have called the movement a fascist movement, thereby lending it at least the base ideology that comes standard with “generic fascism.”⁴⁶⁹ Like in so many other facets of the historiography, there exists a great deal of contradiction in relation to the ideology of the Heimwehren. Lauridsen rightly recognizes that the Heimwehr movement did not suffer from ideological deficiency. He contends, “The “lack” of ideology—rightly understood as ideological restraint—was, however, a necessary precondition for the existence and development of such a politically heterogeneous movement and, not the least, for being not simply tolerated but also supported and promoted by the Austrian bourgeoisie.”⁴⁷⁰ He proceeds to speak to the antisocialism, antiparlamentarianism, anti-Semitism, militarism, and corporatism as ideological “traits.”⁴⁷¹ The Heimwehren exercised little in the way of “ideological restraint,” particularly in juxtaposition to the “traits” he describes; Heimwehr leaders were quite vocal and descript in their views on socialism, parliamentary democracy, Jews, their corporatist platform, while putting the militarism

⁴⁶⁹ Historians who say the Heimwehren had not unifying ideology include Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 252-; Pauley, “Fascism and the Führerprinzip,” 280; Diamant, “Austrian Catholics,” 623; For a detailed discussion of “generic fascism,” see Payne, *A History of Fascism*, 462-70.

⁴⁷⁰ Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 181.

⁴⁷¹ Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 180-94.

on display regularly in their marches and rallies. What is more, in his discussion of these “traits,” he misses an important unifying element—their basis in Catholic social thought.

The Korneuburg Oath, the political manifesto published by the federal Heimwehr leadership in May 1930, according to some historians, reflected a clear turn to fascism influenced by Mussolini and Fascist Italian money.⁴⁷² In reality, however, it was an unconscious affirmation of Catholic social teachings. A translation of the full oath is included below, which the Heimwehren incorporated into their national propaganda publication, *Heimatschutz in Österreich*:

We are determined to rebuild Austria from its foundations!
We are determined to bring into being the Volksstaat of the Heimatschutz.
We demand of every comrade:
 undaunted faith in the fatherland,
 untiring zeal in service, and
 passionate love of his native land.
We are determined to take over the state and to remould it and its economy in the interests of the whole *Volk*.
We must forget our own advantage, must subordinate absolutely all party ties and party interests to the aims of our struggle, for we are determined to serve the whole community of the German *Volk*!
We repudiate western parliamentary democracy and the party state!
We are determined to replace them with government by the corporations (*Stände*) and by a strong national leadership which will consist, not of the representatives of parties, but of leading members of the large corporations and of the ablest, most trustworthy men in our own mass movement.
We are fighting against the subversion of our *Volk* by Marxist class struggle and liberal and capitalist economics.
We are determined to bring about an independent development of the economy on a corporate basis. We shall overcome the class struggle and replace it by dignity and justice throughout society.
We are determined to raise the standard of living of our *Volk* by fostering an economy based on the soil and administered for the good of all.
The state is the personification of the whole *Volk*; its power and leadership ensure that the interests of the *Stände* are contained within the framework of the needs of the whole community.
Let every comrade realize and proclaim that he is one of the bearers of a new German national outlook, namely:

⁴⁷² Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 118, 169-70; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 73, for example, attempt to connect the Oath to Italian fascism, but offer no supporting evidence.

that he is prepared to offer up his blood and his possessions, and that he recognizes three forces only: Faith in God, his own unbending will, the commands of his leaders!⁴⁷³

From the Oath's first sentence the influence of Austria's Catholic heritage: "We are determined to rebuild Austria from its foundations!" "From its foundations" is a clear reference to its historical roots. Rebuilding Austria from its historical roots was tantamount to the restoring the dominance of its German Catholic tradition.⁴⁷⁴ This was, of course, in line with the desires of its Christian Social patrons as well, and would be realized in the May Constitution of 1934.

The Heimwehr movement's rejected "western parliamentary democracy," the "subversion of our Volk by...liberal and capitalist economics" and its goal of the "subordination of all party ties and party interests." This was, in part, a reaction to the staunch support of the republic by the Social Democratic Party and the degree of parity it allowed them to achieve.⁴⁷⁵ Moreover, the arrival of Heimwehr leadership to the Korneuburg Oath was gradual and reflected a mounting frustration with parliamentary democracy, the Christian Social, and German National parties for their failure to more aggressively suppress, or their agreement to allow the Heimwehren to destroy, the Social

⁴⁷³ Jedlicka, "The Austrian Heimwehr," 138-9; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 98-99; *Heimatschutz in Österreich*, 2nd ed. (Vienna, 1935); Heimwehr ideologues, Hans Riehl and Walter Heinrich, both students of Othmar Spann, crafted the Korneuburg Oath.

⁴⁷⁴ As Diamant, "Austrian Catholics," 603 notes, 91 percent of Austria's population was Catholic, not to mention its preponderance across the Habsburg Empire, seated in Vienna.

⁴⁷⁵ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 74-5; Diamant, "Austrian Catholics," 608.

Democratic Party.⁴⁷⁶ They admonished the bourgeois parties for having “bowed” to the Social Democrats, beginning a “permanent state of cowardice.”⁴⁷⁷

Heimwehr views were also consistent with the Catholic Church’s skepticism toward Western parliamentary democracy. The individualism and greed inherent to classical liberal capitalism lent itself to the corruption of the institution of parliamentary democracy.⁴⁷⁸ Thus, the corruption led to the favoring of party interest and ties over the “common good.” The Papal Encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno*, published a year later, spoke to Pope Leo XIII’s efforts, “boldly breaking through the confines imposed by Liberalism, [he] fearlessly taught that government must not be thought a mere guardian of law and of good order, but rather must put forth every effort so that “through the entire scheme of laws and institutions... both public and individual well-being may develop simultaneously out of the very structure and administration of the State.”⁴⁷⁹ In other words, the liberal democratic states must do more than preserve the population for the sake of maintaining the health of commerce, it must make the best interests of the whole population its priority. Pope Pius XI reminded the Catholic faithful, “let all remember that Liberalism is the father of this Socialism that is pervading the morality and culture and that Bolshevism will be its heir.”⁴⁸⁰ Indeed, as Diamant points out, several official

⁴⁷⁶ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 168-70 notes that Heinrich and Riehl delivered a series of lectures in the winter of 1928-9 at Deutscher Klub in Vienna. Further illustrating the lengthy flirtation of corporatism, Carsten points out that as early as 1919, Tyrolean officials contemplated reorganizing provincial society by “estate.”

⁴⁷⁷ *Der Weg zu Österreichs Freiheit*, 5, 17.

⁴⁷⁸ Pope Pius XI, “*Quadragesimo Anno*,” §10, The Holy See, accessed May 26, 2017, http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19310515_quadragesimo-anno.pdf speaks to the “inhumanity of employers and unbridled greed of competitors” in western liberal capitalism.

⁴⁷⁹ Pius XI, “*Quadragesimo Anno*,” §25.

⁴⁸⁰ Pius XI, “*Quadragesimo Anno*,” §122.

communications from the Austrian Church described liberalism as the “principal enemy of Catholicism because it had undermined the place of religion in Austrian life and had thereby become the pacemaker of socialism and, ultimately, communism.”⁴⁸¹ Among them was Prelate Ignaz Seipel—twice chancellor, a stalwart supported of the Heimwehren, and leading personality of the far-right wing of the Christian Social Party—who believed that this was precisely why Austria’s parliamentary democracy had to be swept away; political partisanship prohibited the government from administering to “the interests of the common good” and therefore contradicted Catholic social theory.⁴⁸²

Like the lamentations of Heimwehr leaders, Pope Pius XI indignantly described the ills brought about by free market capitalism. “Free competition has destroyed itself; economic dictatorship has supplanted the free market; unbridled ambition for power has likewise succeeded greed for gain; all economic life has become tragically hard, inexorable, and cruel,” he laments. “To these are to be added the grave evils that have resulted from an intermingling and shameful confusion of the functions and duties of public authority with those of the economic sphere – such as, one of the worst, the virtual degradation of the majesty of the State, which although it ought to sit on high like a queen and supreme arbitress, free from all partiality and intent upon the one common good and justice, is become a slave, surrendered and delivered to the passions and greed of men,” Pius XI adds.⁴⁸³

The Church and the Heimwehren did find agreement with capitalist liberal democracy in their fear of socialism, as it gained more adherents in latter half of the

⁴⁸¹ Diamant, “Austrian Catholics,” 617.

⁴⁸² Diamant, “Austrian Catholics,” 611.

⁴⁸³ Pius XI, “Quadragesimo Anno,” §109.

nineteenth century and into the early twentieth. Marxism's secular, anti-clerical stance threatened the Church as well as liberal principals of private property and free market economics were existential threats. "The notion that class is naturally hostile to class, and that the wealthy and the working men are intended by nature to live in mutual conflict...[is] irrational and so false is this view that the direct contrary is the truth," Leo XII criticized.⁴⁸⁴ He adds, "every man has by nature the right to possess property as his own. This is one of the chief points of distinction between man and...animal."⁴⁸⁵ Pius XI notes, that in the 40 years since Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, socialism "has sunk into Communism," which intensified class warfare and the assault on private property. "To achieve these objectives there is nothing which it does not dare, nothing for which it has respect or reverence; and when it has come to power, it is incredible and portentlike in its cruelty and inhumanity," he explains, referring to the communist revolutions in Russia and, perhaps, Hungary.⁴⁸⁶ Christian anti-Semites also frequently viewed Marxism as an "apocalyptic conspiracy, a coordinated international assault on Christian values."⁴⁸⁷ Heimwehr propaganda articulated this fear of Marxism, as illustrated above, in much more venomous, metaphoric terms, likening it to intellectual poison, bacteria, disease, or illness.

In reality, it was not the fear of socialism that so much disturbed conservative Catholic and nationalist circles, rather it was the fear of Marxist revolution and the onset of communism. As Pius XI explains in *Quadragesimo Anno*,

⁴⁸⁴ Leo XIII, "Rerum Novarum," §19.

⁴⁸⁵ Leo XIII, "Rerum Novarum," §6.

⁴⁸⁶ Pius XI, "Quadragesimo Anno," §112.

⁴⁸⁷ Hastings, *Catholicism and the Roots of Nazism*, 49, 51-2.

[Socialism] not only professes the rejection of violence but modifies and tempers to some degree, if it does not reject entirely, the class struggle and the abolition of private ownership. One might say that, terrified by its own principles and by the conclusions drawn therefrom by Communism, Socialism inclines toward and in a certain measure approaches the truths which Christian tradition has always held sacred; for it cannot be denied that its demands at times come very near those that Christian reformers of society justly insist upon.⁴⁸⁸

Its emphasis on the protection of the working poor and their interests, in particular, were congruent with Catholic social teachings. As such, there existed some overlap between it and the Church's ambiguous proposal of corporatism. While Leo XIII lamented the disappearance of occupational guilds, Pius XI called for their reintroduction, as the fundamental component of the "Christian reconstruction of human society." The revived occupational guilds would be charged with the duty of selecting their "apostles" among themselves who "should demonstrate that they are men possessed of the keenest sense of justice, who will resist with true manly courage the dishonest demands or the unjust acts of anyone, who will excel in the prudence and judgment which avoids every extreme, and, above all, who will be deeply permeated by the charity of Christ, which alone has the power to subdue firmly but gently the hearts and wills of men to the laws of justice and equity." The Church would, naturally, play a central role in this "reconstruction" by providing Christian education, establishing "study groups guided by principles in harmony with the Faith," and utilizing "Spiritual Exercises" within the occupational milieu.⁴⁸⁹

As its Korneuburg program outlined (above), Heimwehr leaders also sought to establish a Christian corporatist government in Austria, a middle path between the

⁴⁸⁸ Pius XI, "Quadragesimo Anno," §113.

⁴⁸⁹ Pius XI, "Quadragesimo Anno," §142-3.

extremes of socialism and parliamentary democracy. Its language was also similar to the expressions of Catholic social thought: “we are determined to serve the whole community;” replacing class struggle with “dignity and justice throughout society;” “for the good of all;” “of the needs of the whole community,” all of which are consistent with the Church’s fundamental understanding of the purpose of government. As Leo XIII explained, “the object of the government of the State should be, not the advantage of the ruler, but the benefit of those over whom he is placed;” in other words, it should “serve the common good.”⁴⁹⁰

Heimwehr ideologues, Walter Heinrich, Hans Riehl and Odo Neustädter-Stürmer had been traditionally portrayed as the chief architects of its corporatist vision and were inspired chiefly by Catholic social theory and the writings Heinrich and Riehl’s mentor, Othmar Spann. Spann, Riehl, and Heinrich, among others, had been tireless critics of Austria’s democratic system. Spann, whose writings Catholic thinkers “drew heavily” upon, contended that there could only be two types of society, individualistic and universalistic. Individualistic societies were comprised of atomized individuals in pursuit of their own, selfish aims, at the expense of the well-being of the collective whole. In universalistic societies, Spann argues, people functioned more naturally as a part of a collective, which prioritized the general well-being of society over selfish individualism. This is also the overarching philosophy of Catholic social thought, which praises the righteousness of the “common good.” Spann blamed liberal individualism for the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, which destroyed medieval “organic unity” of

⁴⁹⁰ Leo XIII, “*Rerum Novarum*,” §32, 35.

European society.⁴⁹¹ The latter, of course, corresponded with the ideals of Catholic social theory, as it “reinforced the Romantic tendencies introduced into Austrian Catholic social thought by [Adam] Müller (1779-1829) and [Karl von] Vogelsang (1818-1890).”⁴⁹²

The Korneuburg program, and later, the May Constitution of the “Austrofascist” corporative state, extended beyond the rather cryptic, open-ended directive Pius XI to establish an *authoritarian* framework that reflected the theories initially forwarded by Vogelsang and refined by Heimwehr theoreticians. Heinrich explained at a Heimwehr leadership meeting in January 1930, “The goal is the national, Christian, and social German state, the basis of which are indicated in German history.” As Edmondson notes, “in his view the corporative state would overcome class warfare, expertly promote the economy, advance the common welfare, and be the guardian of social justice.”⁴⁹³ The influence of Italian fascism on the Korneuburg program has been greatly overstated. Furthermore, it did not mark a sudden and radical shift in ideology as historians have described, at least not inside the leading circles of the Heimwehren.⁴⁹⁴ Dr. Raimond Günther, an “ardent nationalist and anti-socialist,” whose work, according to Edmondson, helped inspire Pfrimer’s 1931 coup attempt in Styria, was no stranger to the Heimwehr leadership. He had supplied a basic framework for corporatist, authoritarian platform to

⁴⁹¹ Diamant, “Austrian Catholics,” 625.

⁴⁹² Diamant, “Austrian Catholics,” 610, 623. Haag, “Othmar Spann and the Politics of Totality,” 15-18. Vogelsang envisioned a corporatist government based on occupation rather than political party or geographic considerations.

⁴⁹³ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 93. Heinrich also delivered a series of lectures to Heimwehr leaders at the Deutcher Klub in Vienna in the winter 1928-9 in an effort to establish a unifying program.

⁴⁹⁴ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 172.

the Heimwehren in February 1927.⁴⁹⁵ Interest in pursuing the corporatist direction is most likely to have begun at least as early as 1926.

What the Korneuburg program did reflect, however, was a longer, more gradual drift toward nineteenth century Catholic social theory that saw authoritarianism and corporatism as a more organic combination—given the history of the region and people—to ordering society as compared to the foreign, unnatural, and degrading effects of liberal democracy, capitalism, and reactionary Marxism. The interpretation of the Oath as being fascist and its rejection of various Heimwehr leaders indicates a widespread misunderstanding of the foundations of Catholic social thinking from which it drew. Carsten notes the potential for misunderstanding corporatism, questioning “how it was possible to foist this child of a German professional brain on to the Heimwehren most of whose members could not have made any sense out of Spann’s complicated and highfaluting theory of ‘universalism’, or could even have been expected to read his turgid prose.”⁴⁹⁶ Interpreting the Korneuburg Oath as fascist is, therefore, tantamount to interpreting Catholic social theory as fascist.⁴⁹⁷ Lastly, the Korneuburg Oath was very much indeed a “challenge” to their bourgeois political party patrons whose complacency,

⁴⁹⁵ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/17, fol.344, 91, 342-4; See Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 131-2 for his brief discussion of Günther.

⁴⁹⁶ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 169.

⁴⁹⁷ There exists a great deal of evidence of Church support for Fascist regimes in interwar Europe. See Karlheinz Deschner, *God and the Fascists: The Vatican Alliance with Mussolini, Franco, Hitler, and Pavelic* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2013); David I. Kertzer, *The Pope and Mussolini: The Secret History of Pius XI and the Rise of Fascism in Europe* (New York: Random House, 2015); Mark Aarons and John Loftus, *Unholy Trinity: The Vatican, The Nazis, and The Swiss Banks* (New York: St. Martins, 1998).

they felt, had allowed the Social Democratic Party, and the potential for communist revolution, to grow into and remain a strong force in Austrian politics.⁴⁹⁸

Heimwehr Ideals in Practice

The activities and propaganda of the Heimwehr movement married traditional militarism and Catholic social thought. In addition to various types of print media, including posters, pamphlets, newspapers, books, leaflets, flyers, as well as radio broadcasts, the ideals of the movement found expression through events such as flag consecration ceremonies, rallies, war memorial services, as well as shooting competitions, among other types of events.⁴⁹⁹ Consistent amongst these gatherings was the presence of religious ceremony. Almost always held on weekends, each of these core types of events incorporated Sunday morning field Mass services where Church fathers reiterated the duties of the Heimwehren to defend God, the homeland, and its spirit.⁵⁰⁰ The Heimwehr rally would become the calling card of the movement and a powerful political weapon, toppling one government and inspiring another.

The Heimwehr rally, which at times included each of these various activities, served multiple purposes. To Lauridsen's point, Heimwehr rallies were primarily intended to promote *esprit de corps* amongst the local and provincial formations and

⁴⁹⁸ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 171 offers the text of Steidle's speech at the Korneuburg states this clearly: "Because we have seen that none of the parties really has the serious will to create a new foundation of the state we must take our political aims into our own hands..."

⁴⁹⁹ For an extensive examination of Heimwehr propaganda see Georg Götzl, "Die Agitation und Propaganda der Heimwehrbewegung gegen das Parlamentarisch-Demokratische System der Ersten Österreichischen Republik in den Jahren 1927-1933" (PhD diss., University of Vienna, 1987).

⁵⁰⁰ See, for example, "Große vaterländische Kundgebung in Pfaffenhofen," *Allgemeiner Tiroler Anzeiger*, May 16, 1934, 9.

reiterate the movement's aims and ideals to the rank and file.⁵⁰¹ However, rallies were also intended for public consumption, creating a backdrop for the recruitment of new members and inspiring public support.⁵⁰² Federal leader, Dr. Richard Steidle, explained the reason the Heimwehr held their rallies:

We hear so often that it would be better to spend money on other purposes than on our marches. These are, however, necessary and have paid off amply. We want to show our strength through our marches, and thus eliminate the organizing battles on the so-called bourgeois side, and, on the other hand, show the workers, who are forced to organize with the Social Democrats, to find shelter with us. Our marches have to take place mainly in the industrial areas and cities, because there can be no red reservations in Austria and in particular, Vienna cannot be a red one.⁵⁰³

In other words, in their uniforms, and some cases bearing their rifles, they were intended to display the movement's numbers, uniformity, discipline, and, thus, to project its military strength to the encouragement of their supporters and intimidate their Social Democratic and Republican Schutzbund opposition.

The rallies and counter-demonstrations of the Heimwehren and the Republican Schutzbund normalized the militarization of politics in the First Republic. The series of "monster" rallies in the autumn of 1928, which Steidle tabbed as "the fight for the freedom of the streets," the cities of Wiener Neustadt and Innsbruck were each transformed into a "large military camp."⁵⁰⁴ At the tension-filled October 1928 rally at Wiener Neustadt, the city's population was more than doubled by the over 19,000 Heimwehr men, 14,000 Schutzbund members, who were there to stage their own counter-

⁵⁰¹ Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 181-2.

⁵⁰² TNA, GFM33/2585/6080, E451036-50

⁵⁰³ Richard Steidle, *Von Wiener-Neustadt bis Gmunden: Reden des 1. Bundesführers der österreichischen Selbstschutzverbände* (Innsbruck: Alpenländische Heimatwehr, 1929), 14.

⁵⁰⁴ "Die Heimatwehrkundgebung in Innsbruck," *Vorarlberger Tagblatt*, November 13, 1928, 1; Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 121; Lajos Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie: Mussolini, Gömbös und die Heimwehr* (Wien: Europa Verlag, 1966), 203-6; Kondert, "The Rise and Early History," 107-8.

demonstration, and the 8,000 gendarmerie and police officers to keep the peace, flooded into the city.⁵⁰⁵ Many observers—both inside and outside of Austria—feared that the rally would spark a civil war between the two paramilitary forces.

Less than a month later, a Heimwehr rally held on November 12, 1928—the tenth anniversary of the republic—saw over 17,000 Heimwehr men from across Austria descend on Innsbruck. The anniversary was, according to Steidle, “purely a family matter for the Austro-Marxists,” insinuating that it was most definitely not a day of celebration for non-Marxist circles. Instead, he added, it was up to the Heimwehren to re-sow into the Austrian ground, the “Christian and national ideals of old” to remedy the contamination of “non-German cultural heresy” of Marxism.⁵⁰⁶ The result of the two-and-a-half-hour long Heimwehr procession before Tyrolean Governor, Dr. Franz Stumpf, was indeed reminiscent of the Austria of old.⁵⁰⁷ An account in the *Vorarlberger Tagblatt* described the “triumphal procession” through Innsbruck:

Along the streets there formed innumerable rows of people. All windows of the houses were occupied. Everyone rejoiced, a rain of flowers spilled over the Heimatwehr men. It was an enthusiasm that has not been seen in Innsbruck for a long time. The most impressive moment of the whole event was the heroic feat. The peak of the train, surrounded by the exultation of the population, had just reached Maria-Theresa Street. Then the chime of all the churches began, the parade halted, followed by an impressive silence as a respect for the fallen members of the army. The impression of this honor was indescribable. Throughout the city there was a great silence.⁵⁰⁸

The Heimwehr units carried their rifles over their shoulders as they paraded through the city, acknowledging the traditional Tyrolean “right to bear arms.” Indeed, according to a

⁵⁰⁵ Kondert, “The Rise and Early History,” 107-8.

⁵⁰⁶ Richard Steidle, *Von Wiener-Neustadt bis Gmunden*, 11.

⁵⁰⁷ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 121.

⁵⁰⁸ “Die Heimatwehrkundgebung in Innsbruck,” 1.

report to the chancellor's office in Vienna, the Heimwehren "made the best possible impression in view of their equipment and discipline."⁵⁰⁹ After, Stumpf would liken the mood of the city during the rally to the outpouring of jubilation in 1914, when the people of Innsbruck sent their young men off to front.⁵¹⁰

The desire and efforts of the Heimwehr movement to re-institutionalization the prewar culture of militarism as a central feature of Austrian state was not unique to the Heimwehr movement, nor to Austria. Rather it was a consistent feature of the "culture of defeat" that emerged in radical right circles in the footprint of the defeated Central Powers. The virtues extolled in the militarism of the Habsburg army framed the militarism of the Heimwehren.⁵¹¹ It was "[n]ot the drill was the distinguishing mark of the old army, but discipline. An undisciplined people are resigned to the decay without rescue."⁵¹² Within the Heimwehr movement, regional expressions of militarism, often couched in local mythology and patriarchal militarism, were also recognizable in its gatherings. In the case of Tyrol, for instance, this is evident in the continued veneration for the patriots of the Tiroler Freiheitkampf of 1809, most especially Andreas Hofer. As Gauführer (district leader) of the Lower Inn Valley (Tirol), Ludwig Psenner, explained to his subordinates, the Heimatwehr wanted to "to protect the home and hearth from the of a breakup of the country in order to preserve the inheritance which others have left us and to renew our lives for our children and their children... Whoever does not defend his home is not worthy of having a home."⁵¹³

⁵⁰⁹ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 121.

⁵¹⁰ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 121.

⁵¹¹ Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 188.

⁵¹² *Der Weg zu Österreichs Freiheit*, 73.

⁵¹³ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), V/I, fol.829, 611.

One of the ways the Heimwehr movement glorified Austria's legacy of civic militarism was through its participation in war monument dedications. If the estimations of American military attaché, Major W.W. Hicks, are to be believed, roughly 70 percent of the Heimwehr members had been in the military during the war, so such ceremonies also had personal resonance for many Heimwehr members.⁵¹⁴ Furthermore, war memorial ceremonies provided the Heimwehren a platform to reiterate their credibility as quasi-official auxiliary peacekeeping troops, particularly given the fact that many Heimwehr leaders were, themselves, government officials on various levels. At commemorations in smaller cities, local Heimwehr groups often played a more prominent role, helping to officiate the ceremonies.⁵¹⁵ They also presented the movement with opportunities to gain the approval of former high-ranking officers of the old k.u.k. army, whom remained respected figures in Austrian public life.⁵¹⁶

Usually held on Sundays, the war memorial ceremonies were typically concatenated with Mass services. Given solemn atmosphere of the occasion and the fact that many war memorials were on church grounds or inside the churches themselves, the centrality of the Church and the clergy to the events becomes obvious.⁵¹⁷ In a particularly extraordinary case was the sermon from the war memorial dedication at Brixlegg (Tyrol)

⁵¹⁴ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 59.

⁵¹⁵ See for example "Helden-Denkfeier in Schwarzach-St. Veit," *Volksfreund*, November 19, 1927, 2.

⁵¹⁶ At the June 1923 celebration of the Viennese Deutschmeister Regiment No.4 and its Great War dead, for example, Field Marshal Alexander Freiherr von Krobotin and Colonel-General Alois Prince von Schönburg-Hartenstein stood out among others of the old Habsburg officer corps. See "Der Regimentsfeiertag der Deutschmeister," *Reichspost* (June 18, 1923), 4.

⁵¹⁷ Überegger, *Erinnerungskriege*, 132. In Tyrol for example, 88.8 percent of war memorials erected in the interwar period (1918-1938) were erected on church grounds or inside the churches themselves.

in August 1926. Delivered by Prelate Anton Müller, a patriotic, Catholic priest and adamant German nationalist who wrote under the pseudonym of “Bruder Willram” during the Great War, and won acclaim for his glorification of war. His sermon did not disappoint, remaining consistent in his glorification of the war dead. “Death on the battlefield is a holy death,” he explains. Adding that “the hero’s death is like a sunset” in that it is “enveloped in quiet beauty.”⁵¹⁸ Müller’s romantic view of death in battle echoes Hermann von Gilm’s idealized views of the masculine virtues civic militarism and the war volunteerism of the Standschützen.

Following Mass, the planned orators would speak—lamenting the fallen, praising the courage of the veterans and the army in the Great War, extolling the necessity of perseverance, and preaching the need to restore the prestige and prosperity of German culture—, and the ceremonies would be closed out with musical arrangements. As the *Reichspost* detailed in one example memorializing the dead of the Deutschmeister Regiment No.4, “Particularly poignant was the laying of fir-wreaths by the orphans of the Deutschmeister Association, while the Regimental band played the song “Ich hatt’ einen Kameraden” (I had a comrade), hardly one eye remained dry.”⁵¹⁹

The rallies, memorial dedications, commemorations, and flag consecration services of the Heimwehren reflect a clear alignment of the behaviors and actions of the Heimwehr movement with its core values and assumptions. The central role of religious ceremony in all of these events reflected the fundamental connection between the Church

⁵¹⁸ “Der Heldenhain in Brixlegg,” *Allgemeiner Tiroler Anzeiger*, August 9, 1926, 4.

⁵¹⁹ “Der Regimentsfeiertag der Deutschmeister,” 4. For other examples, see “Einweihung des Kriegerdenkmals,” *Vorarlberger Tagblatt*, September 9, 1930, 6-7; TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol) VI/17, fol.344, 184-5, 216-7; See TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/17, fol.344, 43-45 regarding Heimatwehr donations of wreaths for memorial commemorations in Tirol.

and the movement. Likewise, the gatherings, in each case, paid homage to vestiges of the monarchy or lamented its passing. The passing of the dynasty was not so much lamented as was the values bourgeois circles came to associate with it. Moreover, the rise of social democracy corresponded with the fall of the empire, giving further reason to bemoan its death. The ideology, behaviors, and activities of the Heimwehren, including its gendered conceptualizations of militarism, mirrored the teachings of Catholic social thought that undergirded the movement.

Conclusions

The Heimwehr movement—not unlike the Freikorps (volunteer corps) and the Einwohnerwehr in Bavaria—materialized from the political instability, economic ruin, and social upheaval in the wake of the First World War. The successful implementation of social democracies in Germany and Austria, the communist triumph in the October Revolution in Russia, followed by various, admittedly short-lived, communist governments in Hungary and Bavaria, and coup attempts in Vienna and elsewhere in eastern and central Europe, triggered widespread alarm in the conservative bourgeoisie and upper classes. The paramilitary groups that had originally been mustered to combat civil unrest and foreign invasion became anti-Marxist formations tasked with defeating any leftist attempt to seize power. The Heimwehr movement—beyond its role in maintaining “peace and order”—also served as a source of unity among the non-Marxist Christian Social, German National, and agrarian parties. Its latter aim depended wholly on the first, defending Austria from the grave threat of Marxist revolution. So long as the

Social Democratic Party and its paramilitary wing, the Republikanischer Schutzbund, remained strong, the Heimwehren would remain relevant and its survival assured.

The charter of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr and those of the other Heimwehren, were derived from that of the Bavarian Einwohnerwehr, and not only proscribed their general organizational structure, but also included rudimentary parameters for membership; specifically, one only need be of “reputable German descent” to join the Heimwehr movement. This purposefully open-ended membership policy was designed to appeal to non-Marxists of all political persuasions, which was what allowed it to be the unifying factor that it was. Thus, its socioeconomically diverse membership ranged from elected public officials, to members of the declassed aristocracy, to industrial workers. This basic membership criteria, thus, prized numbers over a specific ideological uniformity—disdain for anything “*Rot*” was sufficient. As such, it allowed the movement’s ranks to swell between 300,000-400,000 members at its zenith in 1929.⁵²⁰ Furthermore, a significant percentage of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr’s local and regional leaders were elected officials, which offered numerous benefits and reflected the organization’s attachment to, and dependence upon, local and provincial governments.

This membership model was satisfactory for building a unified bourgeois, anti-Marxist defense organization, but proved problematic when the Heimwehren became increasingly disenchanted with the perceived negligence of their political, industrial, and financial patrons in the mid-1920s. Moreover, it indicates that the Heimwehr movement’s eventual desire for independence from its patrons was not planned, but was an organic

⁵²⁰ Kondert, “The Rise and Early History,” 86-7; Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hakenkreuz*, 61; Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*,

development born of the unwillingness of their patrons to allow for the overthrow of the republic and the institution the Christian, corporatist state Heimwehr leaders came to view as the only viable option for Austria's survival. Be that as it may, Heimwehr leaders remained true to the Schützen tradition of volunteerism and chose not to adjust its membership parameters.

The tradition of civic militarism and war volunteerism of the Schützen were not the only virtues the Heimwehr movement retained. It also reflected and cultivated the traditional patriarchal attitude of conservative Catholic circles in Alpine society. The defense of home and hearth were foundational duties of men, which were to be inculcated from childhood. This was naturally intertwined with the gun culture of Alpine states like Tyrol, where hunting and shooting were taught from youth by their fathers and through the Schießstände. Combined with the institution of compulsory military service, hunting, shooting, and military service were fundamental experiences shaping the worldview of Austrian men and became foundational components of Heimwehr militarism. The establishment of youth formations complimented the militarization of scouting organizations in post-war Germany and Austria in the creation of a “new militarism” that would propel the revitalization of the German cultural nation.

Like its traditional notion of militarism, its ideals were also informed by Catholic social theory. This has been a point of misinterpretation by historians who have depicted the movement as being purely negative in its orientation. The anti-Marxism, anti-Liberalism, anti-Capitalism, and anti-parliamentary democracy was driven by Church teachings, particularly after Leo XIII's encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*. Catholic social thinkers such as Adam Müller and Karl von Vogelsang constructed the foundation upon

which University of Vienna Professor, Othmar Spann, built his argument for corporatism in study, *The True State (Der wahre Staat)* and his students, Walter Heinrich and Hans Riehl, wrote the Korneuburg Oath. The call of Heimwehr theorists for a corporatist government was reiterated by the Pope Pius XI's encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* published a year later, which called for the resurrection of occupational systems of representation as a middle between Marxism on one side and liberal parliamentary democracy on the other. The May Constitution of 1934 would marry the two, establishing an authoritarian, Christian corporatists government in Austria, replacing the 1920 constitution.

The rallies and events of the Heimwehr movement reflected the convergence of its conservative ideals and its brand of militarism that melded regional flavors with Habsburg imperial traditions. As such, the Heimwehr rally reiterated the movement's purpose—as a paramilitary defense association and a source of unification for the bourgeois right—and aims—the destruction of the Social Democratic Party, constitutional reform, and ultimately, the implementation of an authoritarian, Christian, corporatist state—for to its supporters and to foster camaraderie in its ranks. At the same time, Heimwehr rallies were staged for public consumption to disseminate propaganda, cultivate public support, and recruit new members. In this way, it served as an instrument of political intimidation that helped normalize the militarization of politics in the First Republic.

As chapter four will demonstrate, the Heimwehr movement enjoyed a broad basis of support, most especially from those social groups who wielded influence in Habsburg society, further echoing the its thoroughly traditional, mainstream character. The

provincial governments, dominated by the bourgeois right, particularly the Christian Social Party, created, supported, and protected the Heimwehr movement; Catholic clergy legitimized it, the Habsburg aristocracy gave it standing and panache, while Austrian banking and industry filled its coffers. While some scholars contend that the Heimwehr movement was never a mass movement, it enjoyed much broader support than most historians have given it credit for having.

CHAPTER IV – THE HEIMWEHR: “AN IRRESISTIBLE POPULAR MOVEMENT”

Charles Gulick, in his two-volume study of Interwar Austria, posits that the Heimwehr movement was never a “mass” movement based on its numerical strength.⁵²¹ Edmondson, contends that only at its peak—by the summer of 1929—was the Heimwehr movement “something approaching a popular movement.”⁵²² To reduce perceptions of the influence and support the Heimwehr movement garnered throughout interwar Austria was a principal aim of the post-World War II “coalition historiography.” Austrian historians advanced the interpretation that the movement was propelled by foreign influences and, thus, not widely supported by the Austrian people. From this angle, the realization of the movement’s aims of rolling back the republic and destroying the Social Democratic Party once more depicts Austrians as the victims of foreign fascist designs. This interpretation has remained the orthodox narrative but is problematic in that it does not reconcile with the empirical evidence, nor with the overwhelming popular support for the Nazi dictatorship.

How does one, then, define a “mass” or “popular” movement? What is the threshold that must be crossed in order for an organization or idea to be considered as having mass popular appeal? The illustration below offers a snapshot of approximate membership figures of the Heimwehr movement at the peak of its strength:

⁵²¹ Gulick, *Austria from Habsburg to Hitler*, 8.

⁵²² Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 47.

Table 8. Heimwehr Membership per Capita

| | | |
|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Total Population in 1929: ⁵²³ 6,664,000 | Heimwehr Membership: ⁵²⁴ 300-400,000 | Population percentage: 4.5-6% |
|---|--|----------------------------------|

A comparison to current American membership organizations offers some useful perspective. At the outset of 2016 the U.S. Census Bureau estimated the American population to be 322,761, 807.⁵²⁵ If one takes this total, multiplied by the estimated percentage of Austrians who were Heimwehr members in 1929 (between 4.5 and 6 percent), that would equate to an American organization having between 14,524,281 and 19,365,708 members. By population percentage, the Heimwehr movement boasted three to four times as many members—at its peak—as the National Rifle Association, according to the most recently released membership estimates. Put differently, there were eleven to fifteen times as many Heimwehr members than there are active service members in the United States military.⁵²⁶ Just as membership numbers for the National Rifle Association are not representative of the totality of gun enthusiasts in the United States, membership figures for the Heimwehr movement, alone, did not represent the sum of all those who supported the its objectives and the ideals it represented. Like the figures for active military personnel do not include veterans who served before them, nor do they account for the families and friends of both soldiers and veterans that respect and support American troops and veterans in a variety of capacities, the Heimwehr movement’s

⁵²³ Statistik Austria, “Bevölkerung,” Statistik.at, accessed June 12, 2016.

⁵²⁴ Kondert, “Rise and Early History,” 86-7; Pauley, *Hahenschwanz und Hakenkreuz*, 61.

⁵²⁵ “U.S. Population Clock,” United States Census Bureau, accessed June 12, 2016, http://www.census.gov/popclock/?epl=gd&intcmp=home_pop&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery.

⁵²⁶ “U.S. gun control: What is the NRA and why is it so powerful?,” BBC News, accessed June 12, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-35261394>; “Department of Defense (DoD) Releases Fiscal Year 2017 President’s Budget Proposal,” U.S. Department of Defense, accessed June 12, 2016, <http://www.defense.gov/News/News-Releases/News-Release-View/Article/652687/department-of-defense-dod-releases-fiscal-year-2017-presidents-budget-proposal>.

membership figures, alone, do accurately represent the broader popular support the movement enjoyed. Thus, membership numbers cannot account for alternative demonstrations of support in the form of monetary donations from provincial governments, bourgeois political parties, private donors, and conservative media outlets within Austria.

Thus, to determine the mass appeal of a movement by membership numbers alone ignores numerous other important factors. As sociologist, William Kornhauser, explained, “[m]ass movements mobilize people who are alienated from the going system, who do not believe in the legitimacy of the established order, and who therefore are ready to engage in efforts to destroy it. The greatest number of people available to mass movements will be found in those sections of society that have the fewest ties to the social order.”⁵²⁷ Scholars studying the Heimwehren have, by and large, considered it to have not had a mass following, yet their depiction of the Heimwehr movement aligns closely with Kornhauser’s classification and achieved a support from a significant percentage of the population.

A more accurate way to engage this historiographical contradiction is to examine the relationship of the Heimwehr movement with various segments of Austrian society during the First Republic. The diverse membership of the Heimwehren would indicate that had a wide appeal among various socioeconomic groups. Gulick suggests that:

The real impetus and support within Austria for Heimwehr-Clerical Fascism came primarily from the following groups: 1. Big business. 2. Big finance 3. A few relatively big landowners such as Prince Starhemberg. 4. Many Roman Catholic political leaders of whom the most important were the priest, Ignaz Seipel (who was chancellor in several cabinets), Steidle, Dollfuss, and Schuschnigg. 5. Many Roman Catholic priests who, without identifying their Church with the movement, gave it substantial and important

⁵²⁷ William Kornhauser, *The Politics of Mass Society* (New York: Free Press, 1959), 212.

support. 6. Disgruntled army officers and aristocrats who had been declassed by the disintegration of the empire. 7. Political adventurers, not to say "thugs," of the type who flocked into Hitler's S.A. and S.S. formations. 8. Large groups of peasants. 9. Middle-class and "new" middle-class groups; that is, professional and small businessmen and white-collar proletariat.⁵²⁸

If not mass in number, the socioeconomic groups which provided the Heimwehr the greatest degree of support were substantial in their influence over virtually every meaningful facet of life (political, social, religious, economic). The influence these groups held in Austrian society was a force multiplier; their preeminence in crucial areas of society enabled the Heimwehr movement to succeed with, perhaps, numerically less popular support than their Schutzbund rivals. Though the historiography of the Heimwehr movement has followed narrow numerical assessments, the wider support base of the movement deserves further attention in order to achieve a more sophisticated understanding as to the support it enjoyed.

This section will demonstrate, most especially in the Tyrolean case, that the Heimwehren often drew their most dedicated supporters from those social groups that were most prominent and faithful in the former Habsburg monarchy, many of which Gulick identifies: the declassed aristocracy, former k.u.k. army officers, Catholic clergy, financiers and industrialists, as well as farmers and agricultural laborers. There was also a significant degree of overlap between these groups, particularly as it related to the aristocracy, industrialists, financiers, and the former officer ranks. That is to say, contrary to how they have been portrayed in the historiography of the Heimwehr movement, these were not entirely discrete social groupings; there are numerous examples of nobles being former officers or leading figures in the financial and industrial sectors. In this way, facile

⁵²⁸ Gulick, *Austria from Habsburg to Hitler*, 7-8.

assertions that one social group or another supported the Heimwehren, must be considered with greater care.

Moreover, Gulick neglects to include the numerous government officials at all levels of administration, who were integral in establishing provincial Heimwehr groups, helping to secure funding and weapons as well as offering a legal basis for their very existence; without participation and support of local and provincial officials, the Heimwehr movement could not have materialized, much less survived. The establishment and development Heimwehr movement did not follow the grass-roots, revolutionary trajectory of contemporary “fascist” movements in Europe. Provincial Heimwehr organizations were thoughtfully created by, for the support of, those state governments who feared the advance of Marxism after 1917; thus, it was a product of the political crises spawned by the First World War and collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy. As such, the Heimwehr movement was an extra-legal vehicle through which mainstream conservative circles of Austrian society combatted the foreign ideals of Marxism and attempted to reassert a Church-guided authoritarianism that would, therefore, restore traditional German culture and destroy the international worldview of Marxist ideology and its subjugation to Western parliamentary democracy.

Provincial Governments and the “loyal aspirations” of the Heimwehren

Most fundamental in the foundation, survival, and expansion of the Heimwehr movement was the support of local, state, and federal government officials. In virtually all of Austria’s provinces, particularly in the movement’s early years, government officials worked closely with Heimwehr leaders. Numerous other provincial governors

played important roles in establishing the Heimwehr formations in their provinces.

Kondert offers several illustrative examples, noting how Upper Austrian Governor Franz Langoth worked diligently to secure and distribute the necessary weapons to Heimwehr formations in the province. Vinzenz Schumy, a figure of later Heimwehr disdain, helped subsidize the Carinthian Heimwehr while provincial governor from 1923-1927.

Vorarlberg Governor, Dr. Otto Ender, was instrumental in protecting the Heimwehren in his province, arguing in the Vorarlberger Landtag (Vorarlberg Diet), that the formations had the right to receive arms from Bavaria. Arguably the most strident supporter of the Heimwehr movement, among provincial governors, was Styrian Governor, Anton Rintelen. Rintelen aided in securing an immense stockpile of weapons and, with Lieutenant Governor, Dr. Jakob Ahrer, helped obtain an equally immense amount of money for the Styrian Heimatschutz.⁵²⁹ Further instances of collusion were offered in one particular speech delivered by Dr. Julius Deutsch, leader of the Social Democratic paramilitary organization, the Republikanischer Schutzbund, he spoke, as Gulick notes, at length about:

the cooperation between the Heimwehr and local officials, both city and state, he went on to the matter of arms smuggling, giving precise dates, the license number of an automobile seized in Innsbruck, the character of the weapons being transported, and similar details. The most convincing item in his indictment was the official report of a gendarmerie inspector in Salzburg stating that every night between October 10 and 15, 1920, some 30 to 40 men had crossed from Bavaria bringing arms.⁵³⁰

In Tyrol, the state government supported the Heimatwehr in much the same fashion it had the Standschützen before the Great War, granting it semi-official

⁵²⁹ Kondert, "Rise and Early History," 44-6.

⁵³⁰ Gulick, *Austria from Habsburg to Hitler*, 127.

recognition as a, more or less, national guard and financing its operation.⁵³¹ Against the demands of the Interior Ministry, concerned over violations of the Treaty of Saint Germain, the Christian Social and German nationalist officials played a key role in the creation of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr. Governor of Tyrol, Dr. Franz Stumpf, justified the formation of the Heimatwehr by pointing to civil unrest such as the hunger riots that took place in Innsbruck the year before, explaining that the “organization...serves to maintain peace and order and [is] therefore quite legitimate.”⁵³² The Heimwehr organizations, most especially in Austria’s Alpine provinces where Christian Socials dominated state and local governments, functioned in similar auxiliary capacities. According to Gulick, their “peace keeping” mission as a euphemism for suppressing Social Democratic influence, labor unions, and workers’ strikes.⁵³³

The 1920 Landesschießen (statewide shooting contest), staged by the Tyrolean Heimatwehr in conjunction with the Tyrolean government, is a useful example that illustrates the ardent support of the Heimatwehr by conservative state officials. The announcement of the Landesschießen sparked a national controversy. The close collaboration between the Tyrolean government and the Tyrolean Heimatwehr in planning the shooting festival prompted fear that it would violate Article 133 of the Treaty of Saint Germain, which stated:

Within three months from the coming into force of the present Treaty, all arms, munitions, and war material, including any kind of anti-aircraft material, of whatever origin, existing in Austria in excess of the quantity authorized shall be handed over to the Principal Allied and Associated Powers. Delivery shall take place at such points in

⁵³¹ Gulick, *Austria from Habsburg to Hitler*, 130; Messner, “Landeshauptmann Franz Stumpf,” 53.

⁵³² Messner, “Landeshauptmann Franz Stumpf,” 55.

⁵³³ Gulick, *Austria from Habsburg to Hitler*, 130.

Austrian territory as may be appointed by the said Powers, who shall also decide on the disposal of such material.⁵³⁴

According to the IMCC, the shooting festival was in “certain contradiction” of the treaty. The general fear was that the Allies would respond by reducing or withholding the food aid being poured into Austria, which Austrian citizens desperately needed to stave off malnutrition and starvation. In response, the Federal Foreign Ministry directed the Interior Ministry to compel the Tyrolean government to distance itself from the Landeschießen.⁵³⁵ Tyrolean Volkspartei (the Christian Social party in Tyrol) officials flouted pleas from Vienna to distance themselves from the shooting competition and, instead, took the opportunity to remind the federal government and the IMCC of the centuries-old right to bear arms Tyrol had enjoyed under the House of Habsburg, stating that “the use of rifles is a holy right of which no one can deprive the Tyrolese.”⁵³⁶

Stumpf was the key figure in the creation of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr and it functioned largely at his discretion, especially in the early years of its existence. The police force in Tyrol’s larger cities and, especially its capital city, Innsbruck, were, in Stumpf’s opinion, sympathetic to local Social Democratic leaders and, therefore, unreliable. He used the Heimatwehr as a counterweight to this problem and demanded that police leaders, and their subordinates, become Heimatwehr members. In this way, Stumpf essentially subordinated the police to the Heimatwehr prompting, then Minister of the Interior, Johann Schober, to counter that public confidence in the police would be

⁵³⁴ “Treaty of Peace between the Allied and Associated Powers and Austria; Protocol, Declaration, and Special Declaration,” Section I, Article 133.

⁵³⁵ “Politische Nachrichten,” *Deutsches Volksblatt*, November 18, 1920, 5; “Das Tiroler Landeschießen,” *Reichspost*, November 19, 1920, 2.

⁵³⁶ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 51.

shaken if it were not completely impartial.⁵³⁷ The Governor responded to Schober's warning, stating that:

The policeman is civil servant; he must not be impaired in his civic rights. These include memberships in clubs. I am not aware of a single club that would prohibit the policemen. . . But the Selbstschutzverband (the Tiroler Heimatwehr) with its loyal aspirations focused on the restoration of our destroyed nationality is forbidden.⁵³⁸

While no doubt this was Stumpf's sincere belief, his rebuttal ignored the reality of the situation in the province—that he was using the Heimatwehr as, to use Charles Gulick's words, “an instrument of force” to intimidate Tyrolean factory workers, police leadership, and the Arbeiterwehr (Workers' Guards).⁵³⁹ As it were, Heimatwehr men—normally unemployed members—continued to function as auxiliary policemen, usually in emergency situations. On other occasions, such as in the autumn of 1924 when Tyrolean police forces were considerably shorthanded, Heimatwehr men filled the gap for an extended period of time.⁵⁴⁰

In May 1929 the federal government, in an effort to protect summer tourism, prohibited “all parades of uniformed paramilitary associations” during the summer months.⁵⁴¹ Stumpf as well as the Governor of Styria, Anton Rintelen, did not enforce the ban, allowing the Heimwehren to continue their rallies and parades, “in open contempt for (Vinzenz) Schumy's directive.” In Lower Austria blood was shed in a couple of

⁵³⁷ Messner, “Landeshauptmann Dr. Franz Stumpf,” 113-4.

⁵³⁸ Messner, “Landeshauptmann Dr. Franz Stumpf,” 115.

⁵³⁹ Gulick, *Austria from Habsburg to Hitler*, 717.

⁵⁴⁰ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV Tirol (Heimatwehr) IV/1 fol.777, 11-30. Steidle offered the *Heimatwehr's* services to Police Director Albert Degischer in a letter dated October 4, 1924. The string of correspondences regarding *Heimatwehr* supplying men for police duty continued into May 1925, perhaps longer; the paper trail ends there.

⁵⁴¹ “Die Aufmärsche am Sonntag. 14 Umzüge der Sozialdemokraten. –Aufmarsch der neuen Bezirksgruppen des Heimatschutzverbandes mit höchstens 2000 Mann. –Das Aufmarschverbot des Bürgermeisters gilt erst ab Montag,” *Reichspost*, Mai 11, 1929, 1.

different instances in which the Heimwehren defied the moratorium.⁵⁴² Despite the determination of the Styrian Heimatschutz to initiate a violent confrontation at St. Lorenzen, the incident illustrated disregard for the Vice Chancellor's edict by both the Heimatschutz as well as the Republikanischer Schutzbund.⁵⁴³ Despite the fact that Allied governments continuously dangled loans as incentive for Austrian governments to press harder for the disarmament of paramilitary organizations, their efforts failed to gain traction, as the constitution afforded the provinces significant autonomy. As in the case of Tyrol, the Landtag simply passed measures to activate the Heimatwehr as an emergency police force, placing it under the protection of the Tyrolean government.⁵⁴⁴

Stumpf not only protected the Tyrolean Heimatwehr from the federal government in Vienna, he also insulated the formation inside Tyrol. In strictly confidential directives issued to district-level party officials, he declared that they were to 1) become Heimatwehr and Technischen Nothilfe (Technical Emergency Assistance) members themselves, 2) protect Heimatwehr members from threat of punishment, and 3) exempt Heimatwehr members from motor vehicle driving bans.⁵⁴⁵ The Heimatwehr was, for all intents and purposes, given *carte blanche* in Tyrol.

In addition to functioning as an auxiliary police force, and counterweight to the comparatively modest Arbeiterwehr and, after 1923, the Republikanischer Schutzbund, Stumpf also tasked the Heimatwehr to initiate preparations for an "eventual Italian

⁵⁴² Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 76; Kondert, "The Rise and Early History," 123; One of those incidents occurred in Mödling in Lower Austria. See, for example, "Alarm in Mödling! Nach einem Zusammenstoß zwischen Heimwehr und Schutzbund. Beide Gruppen haben mobilisiert!," *Der Morgen*, June 3, 1929, 1.

⁵⁴³ Kondert, "The Rise and Early History," 125.

⁵⁴⁴ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 156.

⁵⁴⁵ Messner, "Landeshauptmann Dr. Franz Stumpf," 118.

invasion.”⁵⁴⁶ The basis for this directive is not entirely clear, though it is likely predicated on the tensions between Austria and Italy over South Tyrol. It is clear, however, that he distrusted Italy. This makes the agreement that Steidle and Pabst eventually struck with Mussolini in June 1928 all the more ironic; in exchange for Italian financial and military support, they promised that the new authoritarian government they intended to install would clamp down on anti-Italian sentiments expressed in the Austrian media, which were due in large part to the annexation of South Tyrol in 1919. Günther Messner contends, however, that was unlikely that Stumpf was aware of the specifics of their agreement, as he would have otherwise rejected it because of his commitment to the South Tyroleans.⁵⁴⁷

Indeed, the Heimatwehr alliance with Fascist Italy cemented a new trajectory for the Heimwehr movement and challenged the generally close relationship with their respective provincial governments. Mussolini’s military and financial support allowed the Heimwehren to distance itself from Austria’s bourgeois parties, which it had previously relied upon and served, and develop its own, more radical, anti-democratic platform in-line with Mussolini’s. According to Messner, when information regarding the relationship between the Heimwehr movement and Fascist Italy was exposed by Social Democrats in the Tyrolean Landtag (Tyrolean parliament) in December 1929, it put the Tyrolean Heimatwehr and its supporters in an unenviable position and hastened the codification of

⁵⁴⁶ Messner, “Landeshauptmann Dr. Franz Stumpf,” 116; See TLA: Landesleitung der SSV Tirol (Heimatwehr) V/I fol.829, correspondences with *Nationalrat* Ing. Hans Illmer with regarding a “fascist invasion” in connection to the tensions surrounding South Tyrol. This is also evidenced in numerous “Italien” files in the TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol) collection that document the strength of the Italian army at various points in time.

⁵⁴⁷ Messner, “Landeshauptmann Dr. Franz Stumpf,” 228.

the movement's commitment to an anti-democratic, authoritarian regime in the form of the Korneuburg Oath. The information revealed to the public highlighted not only Heimatwehr cooperation with Italy, but worse, its willingness to acquiesce to Italian possession of South Tyrol in exchange for Italian money and arms. Additionally, it also exposed the cooling of attitudes among Heimatwehr leaders toward the unification of Austria with Germany. Tyrolean Social Democrats adeptly exposed the "duplicity" of the Heimatwehr leadership and, by association, their bourgeois party supporters, particularly in their willingness to forgo the issue South Tyrol.⁵⁴⁸

At the same time, however, suspicions of a relationship between the Heimatwehr leaders and Mussolini should not have been a shock by December 1929. A November 3, 1927 article in the conservative *Allgemeiner Tiroler Anzeiger*, for example, dismisses a report from the previous day's *Münchener Neuesten Nachrichten* warning of right-wing putschist activity in Austria, stating that "circles in Austria, which have long sympathized with fascism and say that the active assistance of Italy in establishment of a fascist-like dictatorship in Vienna would not be too dearly bought with the final renunciation of German-South Tyrol." The *Anzeiger* article continues, by dismissing earlier reports which claimed that Steidle had seen departing a Heimatwehr leadership meeting in Baden (Germany), accompanied by Italian and Hungarian representatives. Social Democratic propaganda was behind this ludicrous idea.⁵⁴⁹ It was not the cooperation with Fascist Italy that so much strained the relationships between the governments and the Heimwehren, rather it was the escalating anti-democratic hostility of Heimwehren

⁵⁴⁸ Messner, "Landeshauptmann Dr. Franz Stumpf," 238-9.

⁵⁴⁹ "Phantasien über Putschpläne in Oesterreich," *Allgemeiner Tiroler Anzeiger*, November 3, 1927, 1; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 53.

rhetoric that created rifts between the movement and its provincial supporters. So long as the Heimwehren continued to function as an anti-Marxist instrument of the Austrian bourgeois parties, connections to Italy could be overlooked. Open threats and ultimatums to the government could not be glossed over, as the foreign aid that kept Austria afloat was predicated on the stability of its political climate.

Whatever tensions that emerged between the Heimatwehr and the Tyrolean government as a result of the ‘revelations’ presented by Tyrolean Social Democrats were not readily apparent. The publication of Steidle’s Korneuburg program evoked resolute action from Chancellor Johann Schober. It was Schober’s belief that Pabst had been the “evil” force behind this turn toward fascism and had him deported to Italy. It was no surprise that Steidle criticized the government’s actions, but Stumpf’s reaction was an indication of the close personal relationships he had developed with the members of the Heimatwehr Landesleitung (state leadership) and his reluctance to readily abandon his creation.⁵⁵⁰ According to Stumpf, Pabst was:

taken into custody without prior consultation with the Tyrolean government and removed from Austria. It sees this as an assault not only on the person of Major Pabst, but also on a movement which much of the state-abiding population closely adheres. The Tyrolean Government regrets this incident all the more as it is due apparently to a member of the Federal Government opposed to the Heimwehr and is regarded as an act of weakness against elements hostile to the state.⁵⁵¹

Furthermore, in letters to Schober and Vice-Chancellor Carl Vaugoin Stumpf appealed Pabst’s case and eventually petitioned the Administrative Tribunal in Vienna to have the expulsion order overturned, to no avail.⁵⁵²

⁵⁵⁰ Messner, “Landeshauptmann Dr. Franz Stumpf,” 240.

⁵⁵¹ TLA: TLR 1932, Präs. 1123 XII-66, Stellungnahme der Tiroler Landesregierung am 15. Juni 1930 cited in Messner, “Landeshauptmann Dr. Franz Stumpf,” 244.

⁵⁵² Messner, “Landeshauptmann Dr. Franz Stumpf,” 244.

With the publication of the Korneuburg Oath, combined with Mussolini's pressure for more decisive action, the new Bundesführer, Ernst Rüdiger Prince von Starhemberg, called for the Heimwehren to enter a list of candidates for the forthcoming federal election, which further soured relations with bourgeois party leaders. As a result, Christian Social and pan-German party leaders cut off what financial support they had either arranged or could influence. Starhemberg's decision also aggravated Heimwehr members who were bourgeois party representatives, most especially of the Christian Social Party. Despite being couched firmly in Catholic social theory, the Korneuburg Oath evoked mixed reactions that spanned the gambit of complete support to outright rejection among the provincial Heimwehr leaders in attendance and was an immediate strain on the confederation. Division within and among the provincial organizations emerged between those favoring the Korneuburg course and Heimwehr leaders who favored continued cooperation with the bourgeois parties.⁵⁵³

The political challenge the Korneuburg program issued to the bourgeois parties placed the Heimwehren firmly at odds with many influential government officials who had, heretofore, supported the movement or, at the very least, did not oppose them or their activities. Many of the leading members of the Tyrolean Volkspartei, not Heimatwehr members, chided Steidle and his oppositional program and demanded that the Tyrolean government "break" with the Heimatwehr and create a new, government-subordinate civil defense force.⁵⁵⁴ Stumpf acquiesced. It was not until the autumn of 1932

⁵⁵³ Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hakenkreuz*, 86. He explains that some Upper Styrian industrialists vowed to withdraw their support of the Styrian *Heimatschutz* due to the internal divisions that emerged in its ranks over the *Heimwehren*'s entrance into the election.

⁵⁵⁴ Messner, "Landeshauptmann Dr. Franz Stumpf," 245.

that the Heimatwehr and the Tyrolean government resumed close cooperation. In the meantime, however, it was clear that Italian funds alone were not enough to sustain the organization; as one report complained, the organization nearly withered away.⁵⁵⁵

Nevertheless, the Heimwehren persevered and after March 1933, with suspension of parliament and end of democratic government, gained substantial power funding in Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss's new authoritarian government. Dollfuss appointed Heimwehr men to high ranking federal government positions. Vienna Heimwehr leader, Emil Fey, was made Vice Chancellor, Starhemberg was given leadership over the Fatherland Front, the state political party, Odo Neustädter-Stürmer assumed the position of State Secretary, Steidle now served as the Federal Commissioner and Vice President the state radio system (RAVAG), and Dr. Ludwig Draxler—who would later serve as Finance Minister under Schuschnigg—became legal counsel for Austria's national bank, Creditanstalt-Wiener Bankverein. The Heimwehren assumed the familiar role of an auxiliary peace keeping force, only this time at the behest of the federal government. Most importantly at this time, Heimwehr units served as border patrol forces to prevent the potential smuggling of weapons and equipment into the country from foreign supporters of the Social Democrats and most especially, a new enemy—the German National Socialist Workers' Party (DSNAP).⁵⁵⁶ The Heimwehr movement, in terms of political clout, peaked under the Dollfuss government, only to be whittled down and eventually dissolved in October 1936 by his successor, Kurt von Schuschnigg.

⁵⁵⁵ Rebtisch, *Tirol—Land in Waffen*, 129.

⁵⁵⁶ Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 77. The Austrian Nazi Party (DSNAP), whose name was slightly different from that of the German Nazi Party (NSDAP), was not directly affiliated with the German Nazi Party, despite its proclaimed devotion to Hitler. It was not until the arrival of Theodor Habicht in 1931, who Hitler selected as his representative in Austria, that the two were connected.

The paramilitary Heimwehr movement was a creation of the provincial governments of the new Austrian republic. The formations reflected the widespread fear of Marxism and the threat of communist revolution, which had overcome eastern and central Europe in the wake of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia. For many conservative-minded Tyroleans like governors Schraffl and Stumpf, the Heimatwehr also represented the continuity of its centuries-old militia system, which, by the outset of World War I, had become an integral part of Tyrolean culture and symbolized its regional identity of independence and historic opposition to centralized authority.

Clerics, Political Catholicism, and the Heimwehr Movement

The protection and backing the Heimwehren received by provincial governments, and eventually by the Dollfuss government, was underscored by the broad support of Catholic clergy, church functionaries, and the Christian Social Party (CSP). Church fathers officiated flag consecrations, field masses at Heimwehren rallies, and performed invocations at events such as shooting contests, not to mention recruiting the support of prominent members of Austrian society. Clerical support for the Heimwehren also translated into the participation of Catholic associations in the movement, such as student groups, labor unions, agricultural associations and sporting clubs. Given the historical prominence of the Catholic Church in Austria, clergymen played a particularly vital role in legitimizing the Heimwehr movement in the minds of their parishioners.⁵⁵⁷ Moreover, the Christian Social Party, in which Catholic clerics such as Dr. Ignaz Seipel played

⁵⁵⁷ Kondert, "The Rise and Early History," 66; Schneeberger, "Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr," 80-81.

integral roles in guiding, dominated the government on the provincial and federal levels and supplied political support, which translated into flexible interpretations of the ambiguous statutes of the Treaty of Saint Germain, the passing of legislation to essentially protect party-friendly, anti-Marxist paramilitary formations, and, lastly, monetary support to the always-needy provincial Heimwehren.⁵⁵⁸

One of the principal ways clerics exhibited their support for the Heimwehr movement was by officiating flag dedications and field Masses at Heimwehr rallies. The Heimwehr newspaper, the *Alpenländische Heimatwehr*, detailed the flag dedication ceremony of the Innsbrucker Heimatwehr in December 1925. On the hallowed ground of Berg Isel, with Landeshauptmann (or Governor) Dr. Franz Stumpf, numerous Tyrolean officials in attendance, Auxiliary Bishop of Brixen, Dr. Sigismund Waitz, presided over the ceremony, concluding his benediction with, “Tiroler Heimatwehr, your flag is blessed, it is raised and flutters in the wind, follow your flag, the blessing of God accompanies you!”⁵⁵⁹ In 1935, at the fifteenth anniversary of the Heimwehr movement, Starhemberg called Waitz, now Archbishop of Salzburg, “an old, loyal friend who has done much for the (Austrian) Heimatschutz and the enforcement of the Heimatschutz idea.”⁵⁶⁰

Beyond their support in ceremonial capacities, clergy members leveraged their place in Austrian society to support Heimwehr objectives. Throughout Austria, Heimwehren, with the cooperation of Church clergy, used flag dedication ceremonies as a

⁵⁵⁸ Again, the refusal of the Heimwehren to charge membership dues made it wholly dependent on the generosity of external (and sometimes internal) sources, as will be demonstrated below and in the chapter that follows.

⁵⁵⁹ “Die Fahnenweihe der Innsbrucker Heimatwehr,” *Alpenländische Heimatwehr*, January 10, 1926, 3.

⁵⁶⁰ Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 261.

way to circumvent the previously mentioned ban of public demonstrations by paramilitary organizations during the summer of 1929. Because the flag dedications included a Mass ceremony led by a Catholic priest, they could be considered church-sanctioned events and were, therefore, had to be permitted under the law.⁵⁶¹ One “Heimwehr-Priester,” Father von Rastbach, went so far as to consecrate a shooting range so as to permit the Heimwehr to hold an event that summer.⁵⁶² Later that summer, Styrian Bishop, Dr. Ferdinand Pawlikovski, who was the Military Vicar of Austria, accompanied a Heimwehren delegation who met with Chancellor Schober, intent on pressing their calls for constitutional reform.⁵⁶³

Catholic clergymen portrayed the Heimwehren as defenders of the Church in the tradition of the Habsburg Monarchy. Their politicized sermons that warned that Christianity was being threatened by the “godless” Marxists of the Social Democratic Party and their paramilitary wing, the Republikanischer Schutzbund, made their portrait of the Heimwehren all the more palatable to rural, traditional-minded Austrians.⁵⁶⁴ As Schneeberger explains, the smaller and more rural the community, the greater the influence of the parish church in the religious, social, and, consequently, the political outlook of its congregation. As such, local clergymen utilized their position in the Church and the Church’s position in the community to mobilize support among their worshippers for the Heimwehren and the Christian Social Party through sermons that depicted the

⁵⁶¹ Kondert, “The Rise and Early History,” 123; See, for example, “Eine heftige Rede Dr. Steidles. Bei einer Heimwehrkundgebung in Hötting,” *Neue Freie Presse*, May 21, 1929, 4.

⁵⁶² “Sogar Schießstätten weihen die ‘Heimwehr-Priester,’” *Volkspost*, August 3, 1929, 5.

⁵⁶³ Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 261.

⁵⁶⁴ Kondert, “The Rise and Early History,” 67-8.

struggle against Marxism as a holy crusade of good against evil in which the very survival of Christianity was at stake.⁵⁶⁵ To be sure, the electoral success of the Heimatblock in Upper Austria during the 1930 national election, for instance, was aided greatly by the support of the clergy, who emphasized the positive relationship between the Church and the Heimwehr movement.⁵⁶⁶

This does not mean that the relationship between clerics, the Christian Social Party, and Heimwehren was free of challenges and setbacks. Despite the outward appearance of unanimity, many Christian Social representatives were reluctant to support the Heimwehr movement. Despite the success of the Heimwehren in smashing the riots of July 1927 in Vienna and breaking the subsequent national railroad strike, most Christian Social representatives were disinclined to agree with Steidle's—himself a Christian Social National Council member (Bundesrat)—request for financial subsidies, which he and Seipel were hoping to attain.⁵⁶⁷ Instead, party representatives called for the reduction of the Heimwehren, while others suggested that that money would be better served in dealing with the multitude of the unemployed. As Wiltschegg notes, numerous other Christian Social functionaries reflected their mistrust of the Heimwehren, arguing for the creation of the party's own paramilitary organization (just as the Social Democrats had done in creating the Republican Schutzbund), as the Heimwehren represented an “tremendous danger.” Furthermore, the Christian Social Party's labor union secretary,

⁵⁶⁵ Schneeberger, “Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr,” 81-2.

⁵⁶⁶ Schneeberger, “Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr,” 84.

⁵⁶⁷ Steidle was a member of the *Tyrolean Volkspartei*, which was the Tyrolean Christian Social party and served on the National Council or *Bundesrat*.

Hans Müller, claimed that local Heimwehr groups “were terror organizations against Christian workers.”⁵⁶⁸

Such discord was not limited to political representatives, as there were also clergy members who opposed clerical support of Heimwehr ideals and activities. Wiltschegg offers one particularly extraordinary example where the Bishop of Linz, Dr. Johannes Maria Gföllner, a strident opponent of the Heimwehren, had retired army chaplain, Josef Schorr, at the time the parish priest for Laufen in Bad Ischl and supporter of the Upper Austrian Heimwehr, transferred to Lower Austria, where Schorr proceeded to tend to the 4th Lower Austrian Heimatschutz Brigade. Gföllner would also see to the resignation of Christian Social Party member and Chairman of the Catholic People’s Association for Upper Austria, Dr. Josef Aigner. Moreover, Gföllner forbade priests under his supervision to perform flag dedication ceremonies, while also forbidding Catholic women from participating in the Heimwehr Women’s Auxiliary (Heimatwehr-Frauengruppen).⁵⁶⁹

The close association forged between Catholic clergy members and the Heimwehr movement did not proceed without criticism. Social Democratic newspapers attacked the sermons and speeches of clerics with biting sarcasm and disgust at what they perceived to be hypocrisy in Christian prelates condoning the rabid anti-socialist, anti-Semitic rhetoric of the Heimwehren. On Sunday June 12, 1920, the Shooting League of the Catholic Workers Unions—whose members were in the Tyrolean Heimatwehr—held a shooting contest at Berg Isel shooting range, in Innsbruck. As was typical, the contest was

⁵⁶⁸ Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 42, 48. Wiltschegg notes, only Heinrich Mataja agreed in favor of Steidle’s request for government subsidies.

⁵⁶⁹ Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 261-2.

preceded by a Mass service. The communist party newspaper, *Die Rote Fahne* (The Red Flag), disdainfully remarked, “So, first church and then practice for homicide! This Christianity to be proud of!”⁵⁷⁰ On another occasion, *Die Rote Fahne*, called the attendees of a Styrian rally in August 1928, “sponsors of murder.” The article continued, suggesting that perhaps Bishop Pawlikowski would “issue a pastoral letter, wherein he can request entry for the Heimwehr in God's name and his holy spirits, Amen.”⁵⁷¹ The juxtaposition of the “hate speech” of Heimwehr leaders and the Catholic clergy members who officiated their events prompted wider criticism. A May 1929 article commenting on a Heimwehr event in Vienna, contrasted the fact that in one moment the priest blessed the flags of the newly established Heimwehr formations to enthusiastic applause, only to be followed minutes later by Steidle and Pfrimer’s hateful political diatribes that tactlessly railed against “the red whore,” meaning, of course, Marxism or communism.⁵⁷²

Beyond officiating Heimwehr ceremonies and advocating for the movement, clergy members also took a more active role in supporting the movement. For example, in Kollerschlag, Upper Austria, the parish priest, a Father Pichler, founded a Heimwehr group. He explained that founding a Heimwehr group “would prevent ‘whole villages, such as Hinternebelberg, from burning down’” in a Social Democratic terror attack.⁵⁷³ There are numerous other cases of clergymen allowing their churches to serve as weapons depots for the Heimwehren.⁵⁷⁴

⁵⁷⁰ “Die Aufrüstung in Tirol,” *Die Rote Fahne*, June 17, 1920, 2.

⁵⁷¹ “Klerikalismus und Faschismus in einer Front,” *Die Rote Fahne*, August 24, 1928, 5.

⁵⁷² Schneeberger, “Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr,” 87.

⁵⁷³ “Der Priester der Nächstenliebe,” *Tagblatt*, June 15, 1927, 4.

⁵⁷⁴ See, for example, “Der Waffenschmuggel aus Bayern,” *Salzburger Wacht*, November 23, 1920,

As previously stated, the decision of the Heimwehren to seek out Mussolini's counsel, funding, and military aid enabled the movement to express its disapproval of the lax position of Austria's bourgeois parties vis-à-vis the Social Democrats. This was evident not only in the publication of the Korneuburg Oath, but also in the establishment of the Heimatblock, the movement's own political party. Moderate Christian Social party officials saw this shift as an ominous development toward the imminence of a *coup d'état*. Thus, in December 1930, future Chancellor, Kurt Schuschnigg, founded the paramilitary Ostmärkischen Sturmscharen, which was intended to compete with the Heimwehren in recruiting Catholic youths. The Sturmscharen represented the realization of the aforementioned desires for the Christian Social Party to forge its own paramilitary wing.⁵⁷⁵ At the same time, the more moderate Christian Social representative and leader of the Lower Austrian Heimwehr, Julius Raab, and his followers withdrew from Starhemberg's confederation, vowing to hold true to the movement's pre-Korneuburg ideals. In a letter written to the *Ybbstal Zeitung*, rail worker, member of the Union of Christian Germans Transportation Workers, and Heimwehr member, Franz Bartik, defends the Christian Social Party, stating that they are not at fault for their split and that the Christian Social Party "prepared and paved the ground upon which the former Heimwehr was born and lived." Imploring his rail worker colleagues to join him, adding, the "Richtung Raab," is the "true idea of the Heimwehr."⁵⁷⁶

⁵⁷⁵ Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hakenkreutz*, 84-5; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 125.

⁵⁷⁶ Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hakenkreutz*, 84-5; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 125; Franz Bartick, "Zur Aufklärung! An alle Kollegen!," *Ybbstal Zeitung*, May 2, 1931, 11. By "Richtung Raab" Bartik means Raab's 'school of thought' or vision of what the Heimwehr should be (as opposed to the authoritarian direction the movement was heading).

Indeed, anti-clerical, pan-German leaders within the Heimwehr movement—most prominently, Walter Pfrimer—consistently opposed close cooperation with the Church and the Christian Social Party. In April 1931 Christian Social members of the Styrian Heimatschutz became so exasperated with Pfrimer’s—and likely overall—opposition to the Christian Social Party and his tirades against its affiliated labor unions, that several formations in the provincial capital of Graz, split from the Heimatschutz and formed their own organization, the Grazer Heimatschutzverbandes and elected as their leader, Oberstleutnant a.D. (Ret.) Ernst Haffenbauer.⁵⁷⁷

Nevertheless, the relationship between the Heimwehren, the Christian Social Party, clergy, and their parishioners was reciprocal. Congregation members utilized the infrastructure and voice of the Church, the Christian Social Party, and the Heimwehren as a means of furthering their own economic interests. Through the Heimwehren’s opposition to the secular ideals of Marxism, ecclesiastical circles viewed the movement as one of potential renewal of German Christianity.⁵⁷⁸ Thus, the Christian Social clergy sought to integrate their devout Christians into the Heimwehr movement in order to insure its reliability as a force to protect the Church. An exchange between Steidle and pastor Thomas Tember in Strassen (Lienz, Tyrol), provides an excellent illustration of how this relationship worked. In his letter dated February 22, 1928, Tember explained that the Catholic Workers Association in Strassen sought to form for a “Wehrgruppe,” and requested from the Landesleitung, a supply of rifles to be sent via post (“for the sake of safety”) to the association’s office. Steidle graciously responded that he would gladly

⁵⁷⁷ Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hakenkreutz*, 85-6; See also “Die Vorgänge im Grazer Heimwehrlager,” *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, May 1, 1931, 4.

⁵⁷⁸ Schneeberger, “Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr,” 85-6.

supply the new “Wehrgruppe” with the rifles and would also write to district captain, Nationalrat Erich Kneussl and Oberforstrat Karl Ritter von Worzikowsky-Kundratitz, informing them of the transaction and to offer his support for the new group.⁵⁷⁹

Chief among the clerical supporters of the Heimwehr movement was prelate and Christian Social Party leader, Chancellor (1922-1924, 1926-1929) Dr. Ignaz Seipel. Almost immediately upon Seipel’s appointment to the chancellorship, he attempted to seize upon the potential power of the Heimwehr movement to unify conservative Heimattreue Bevölkerung against the Social Democrats.⁵⁸⁰ Seipel brokered a deal in which sympathetic industrialists would provide 150,000,000 kronen per month to the Chancellor who would then distribute the funds to the provincial Heimwehren organizations. Despite Steidle’s efforts to unify the Heimwehren in support of Seipel’s proposal, the leaders of nationalist, anti-clerical formations in Vienna, Styria, and Carinthia opposed aligning their organizations with the Christian Social Party.⁵⁸¹

In Seipel’s second term as Chancellor, he again made clear his support for the Heimwehren. Amidst the tensions leading up to what has come to be known simply as the “Juli Ereignisse von 1927,” or the “July Events of 1927,” Social Democratic appeals to the Chancellor to disarm the Heimwehren were deflected by half-hearted claims that the federal government did not have the authority. While not entirely disingenuous, as the constitution granted the provinces substantial autonomy in administering to their internal affairs, Seipel had no intentions of even attempting to disarm the Heimwehren.

⁵⁷⁹ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV Tirol, VII/1, fol. 2090, 485-8.

⁵⁸⁰ Kondert, “The Rise and Early History,” 94.

⁵⁸¹ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 60-1; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 29. The Viennese formation had to have been the *Frontkämpferverein* (Front Fighters Association), as no *Heimwehr* organizations existed in Vienna at that time.

Furthermore, any attempt to do so would have most assuredly triggered civil war, as Steidle made clear the resolute resistance the Heimwehren would offer. On two occasions in October 1927, Seipel publicly commended the protection the Heimwehren offered against the “enemies of Jesus Christ,” meaning, of course, the Social Democrats. In the meantime, with the Chancellor’s encouragement, Steidle made another attempt to unify the Heimwehren. This time, the financial assistance Seipel facilitated was successful in creating a federal Heimwehr front—the Bund österreichischer Selbstschutzverbände.⁵⁸²

Quite to the contrary of Jedlicka’s assertion that the Heimwehren utilized rallies and parades, such as that which occurred in Wiener-Neustadt in October 1928, to “drive the hesitant government, and above all Dr. Seipel, into altering the constitution, perhaps through some kind of putsch or coup d’état,” it was Seipel who utilized such demonstrations to press for the passage of controversial legislation and amendments to the constitution.⁵⁸³ In fact, in September 1928, prior to their march on Wiener-Neustadt, Steidle three and other Heimwehr leaders met with Seipel to ask for his backing should hostilities breakout with the Social Democratic Republican Schutzbund during the course of the demonstration. Seipel replied to the affirmative, so long as they did not intend to purposefully initiate hostilities.⁵⁸⁴ True to their word, the Heimwehren “Aufmarsch” (parade) and rally in Wiener-Neustadt occurred without incident.

⁵⁸² Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 42, 51; Kondert, “The Rise and Early History,” 98; Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 42.

⁵⁸³ Jedlicke, “The Austrian Heimwehr,” 136. Jedlicka’s assertion illustrates the “coalition historiography” common in the interpretations of the majority of Austrian historians in the 1960s. His portrayal of Seipel as reluctant in the face of *Heimwehren* pressure, is empirically false and was simply an effort to deflect culpability on Seipel’s part. There was, however, marked reluctance on the party of many Christian Social representatives. To this end, Jedlicka’s claim has more credence. See Jürgen Steinmar, “Der Priesterpolitiker Ignaz Seipel und der Heilige Stuhl. Ein Konflikt der Loyalität?” (PhD diss., University of Vienna, 2012), 124.

⁵⁸⁴ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 123; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 66.

Indeed, throughout this term as Chancellor, Seipel “encouraged [Heimwehr] activity in hopes of forcing the socialists to make concessions on bitterly contested legislation, including the revision of the constitution that he hoped would pave the way for a more authoritarian form of government.” During the tension-filled days leading up to the Wiener-Neustadt rally, Seipel was resolute in his defense of the Heimwehren against Social Democratic calls to forbid the march, which many in Austria feared would trigger a civil war. As Edmondson notes, Seipel refused to restrict their activities and actively working to strengthen the movement in Vienna—the stronghold of the Social Democrats.⁵⁸⁵ The Seipel government continued to subsidize Heimwehren activities until its very end, as indicated in a March 2, 1929 letter Steidle wrote to Seipel, requesting “100,000 Schilling für den Grazer Aufmarsch.”⁵⁸⁶

Seipel’s abrupt resignation in April 1929 was an indictment of the alleged failure of parliamentary democracy, which he viewed as Austria’s greatest crisis. Thus, his resignation was quite possibly a single move in a larger plan to undermine the parliamentary system. That is, Seipel, as the leader of the political Catholic Christian Social Party, perhaps believed that he could effect change more efficiently behind the scenes and outside of the office of Chancellor, which, by the very mechanisms of a republican state, limited the ways in which he could maneuver. He remained a devoted supporter of the Heimwehren, calling the movement a “strong populist movement which wants to free democracy from party rule!” To be sure, Seipel supported the Heimwehr movement to see his own designs for Austria come to fruition, which were most likely

⁵⁸⁵ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 47, 66, 68-9.

⁵⁸⁶ TLA: Bundesleitung der österreichische SSV, XIII/1, fol.1-1175, 509.

not aligned with the more fascist, corporative state that sections of the Heimwehren would come to openly espouse. Nevertheless, as the German ambassador to Austria, Hugo von Lerchenfeld, reported to the German Foreign Ministry, Seipel supported the Heimwehr movement's goals "from a to z."⁵⁸⁷ Seipel remained a close and influential advisor to Steidle, as well as Lower Austrian Heimwehr leader, Julius Raab. While this aggravated the more radical anti-clerical elements in the Heimwehr movement who felt their cooperation with the Christian Social Party was hampering the changing objectives of the movement, Seipel continued to work to keep the Heimwehren unified.

Eventually, the strong political position of the Christian Social Party within Austria proved irresistible to the new Bundesführer of the Heimwehr movement, Ernst Rüdiger Prince von Starhemberg, who had previously aligned himself with Pfrimer and the Nazi-friendly, German nationalist elements with the Heimwehr movement. The former Freikorps Oberland member publicly divorced himself from the Nazis and entered into an alliance with Seipel and Mussolini and renewed cooperation with Steidle and Fey. In the face of the defections that resulted, particularly amongst Styrian and Lower Austrian formations, Seipel worked to reaffirm and solidify their reconciliation.⁵⁸⁸

Though the primary source of support within Austria's federal government, Seipel was but one of many of the Christian Social officials who supported the Heimwehr movement. As has already been demonstrated, Franz Stumpf was the central figure in the creation and preservation of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr throughout the course of its

⁵⁸⁷ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 74, 77, 83; Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 124; Kondert, "The Rise and Early History," 124.

⁵⁸⁸ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 145-7.

existence. Christian Social deputy, Dr. Heinrich Mataja, secured funds and arms from Styria for the fledgling Salzburg Heimwehr in 1919.⁵⁸⁹ Early on, Heimwehr formations in Vienna and Lower Austria won the support of the Christian Social Party, who connected the formations with the financial backers in the form of the Wiener Kasino, also known as the Vereinigung für Ordnung und Recht (Association for Law and Order).⁵⁹⁰

The close cooperation between the Heimwehren and the Christian Social Party and the Church did not end with Seipel's death in 1932. In fact, he did not live to see the fruits of his labors in the form of the "May Constitution."⁵⁹¹ Implemented on May 1, 1934 and establishing what its preamble described as a "Christian, German State on a corporatist basis," the constitution reflected the collaboration of Heimwehr and Christian Social leadership in its marriage of Catholic social teachings and corporatism. Chiefly among those teachings underpinning the new authoritarian constitution was Pope Pius IX's encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. As Robert Pyrah contends, despite the institution of a contradictory governmental structure, the "spirit" of the encyclical was evident in the "anti-modern Catholic thinking" inherent in corporatism, itself a medieval construction.⁵⁹²

To be sure, Catholic clergymen and many central figures in their political party played leading roles in creating and maintaining the Heimwehr movement throughout Austria. Without their financial, propagandistic, and political support the Heimwehren

⁵⁸⁹ Kondert, "*The Rise and Early History*," 10.

⁵⁹⁰ Kondert, "*The Rise and Early History*," 26. As Kondert points out, Kerekes, "Die 'Weisse Allianz'," 357, alleges that this group had close connections to conservative Hungarian circles as well.

⁵⁹¹ Engelbert Dollfuß, *Dollfuß an Österreich. Eines Mannes Wort und Ziel*, Edmund Weber, ed. (Wien: Reinhold-Verlag, 1935), 236-7.

⁵⁹² Robert Pyrah, "Enacting Encyclicals? Cultural Politics and 'Clerical Fascism' in Austria, 1933-1938," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (June, 2007): 374-5.

would have never survived, much less matured into the driving force for authoritarian government. The Church-Heimwehren relationship reflected a continuity of traditional Habsburg civic militarism, reflected not only in its rituals and ceremonies, but also in the social groups that it drew its support—those of the leading stratum of the dissolved Monarchy. Particularly for the more traditional elements of the Heimwehren, their movement took on, for them, the feel of a holy crusade against the secular, anti-clerical ideals of Marxism. It reflected not only an assault on their economic and individual property rights, but also an assault on traditional forms of German cultural expression in the Catholic Church. "It is not without deeper reason we almost never hold our rallies without ecclesiastical assistance, without field mass, and as a symbol, it should be considered that our speaker standing often before the altar as upright men, to speak to you," explained one Heimwehr member.⁵⁹³ Thus, the relationship between the Church and the Heimwehren was a natural alliance in the protection of true (Southern Catholic) German values.

Nobles, Industrialists, and Bankers: Money, Prestige, and the Rise of the Heimwehren

The Heimwehr movement found many of its most prominent adherents from the leading social groups of the old Monarchy. Not unlike the clergy, members of the Habsburg aristocracy—despite having lost governmental recognition of their titles—continued to carry much influence in Austrian society. As Carsten notes

[T]he great aristocratic names, which became prominent in the Heimwehren about this time (1929), simply looked like a revival of noble and dynastic claims. According to a report sent by the German legation in Vienna to Berlin, these circles were now thinking

⁵⁹³ *Österreich Volkszeitung und Grenzpost*, June 8, 1930, 2, cited in Schneeberger, "Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr," 81.

of a come-back: ‘The Starhembergs and Czernins, the Hohenbergs and Morseys scent the new air; they even form cavalry detachments, the horses of which they keep and feed. One thinks the Middle Ages have returned...’

Though Pabst, according to one Hungarian diplomat, complained that a great many who of them who had flooded into the Heimwehren were “incapable” leaders who “did more damage to the movement than their names were worth.”⁵⁹⁴

Furthermore, the primary supporters of the “Ständestaat” would also come from the “old ruling circles,” particularly the Catholic clergy, and the former aristocracy, who leveraged the new authoritarian state as a means of “defending their established positions against the threats from the left and the right.”⁵⁹⁵ Those nobles active in the Heimwehren employed their social standing and wealth to help propel the movement into an instrument of political influence. The ascent of the Heimwehren to the highest ranks of political power in Austria, thus, restored them to a place of political prominence commiserate with their old imperial titles and legacy. Moreover, many of the aristocrats that became involved in the Heimwehr movement were former officers during or before the Great War, so their involvement in paramilitary organizations like the Heimwehren allowed them to again fulfill leadership positions, which also helped restore the legitimacy of their former status.⁵⁹⁶ Indeed, the Heimwehren, beyond their primary mission as the vanguard of the anti-Marxist front in Austria, through its deeply conservative sensibilities, its endorsement by the clergy, and rituals such as parades, flag consecration ceremonies, field Masses, and rallies, evoked a sense of nostalgia for the

⁵⁹⁴ German Legation Vienna to von Bülow, 23 August 1929: Auswärt. Amt, Abt. II, Akten betr. Heimwehr, 6080H, E451049, cited in Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 134, 181.

⁵⁹⁵ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 237.

⁵⁹⁶ Wiltshchegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 275.

ritual pomp and pageantry of the empire, among many nobles. The broad backing of the Austrian nobility highlights the residual culture of militarism inherited from the Habsburg Monarchy.

Wiltschegg, pointing to the Association of Catholic Nobles in Austria as an example, contends that of its 1393 total members, only twenty-six—1.9 percent—were members of the Heimwehr movement.⁵⁹⁷ He then goes on to identify a total of 55 nobles who served in middle and high-ranking positions within the Heimwehren.⁵⁹⁸

Table 9. Nobles in High-Ranking Positions within the Heimwehr Movement

| | |
|-----------|----|
| Archdukes | 4 |
| Dukes | 2 |
| Princes | 2 |
| Counts | 28 |
| Barons | 19 |
| TOTAL | 55 |

Thus, he concludes, “In the group of the highest leaders [of the Heimwehr movement] the nobility was in no way a strong presence.” Be that as it may, Wiltschegg does not consider those who were involved throughout the regional and local levels of leadership within the movement. Take, for example, the son of Karl Matz Graf von Spiegelfeld, Franz Xavier, who was a local Heimwehr leader in Lower Austria, Major Baron Karl Skrbensky, who was active in the Upper Austrian Heimatwehr, or Karl von Arbesser, a

⁵⁹⁷ Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 276.

⁵⁹⁸ Figures derived from Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 276.

district leader in the Styrian Heimatschutz.⁵⁹⁹ It is also worth reiterating that throughout European history, the nobility was always small and exclusive socioeconomic class, so size has never been an accurate barometer of influence in this case. Despite the fact that Austrian nobles had lost official recognition of their titles less than a decade earlier; many remained wealthy and influential figures in Austrian society and maintained much of their prestige in popular culture.⁶⁰⁰ Furthermore, the participation of nobles in the Heimwehr movement, was indicative of broader a counter-revolutionary trend. For example, of the 132 Freikorps known formations in Germany, 42 were led by aristocratic former officers. In Hungary, 86 of the 163 members of the Prónay paramilitary unit were nobles who frequently used them to intimidate estate servants, thus, maintaining their place in post-war Hungarian society. Thus, as Gerwarth notes, “aristocrats were highly overrepresented in the counter-revolutionary movements of Central Europe.”⁶⁰¹

Beyond active membership in the Heimwehr movement, it is necessary to address an important discrepancy between numbers and influence. As this chapter has demonstrated in the case of government officials and Catholic clergy, just because few of their numbers were uniform-wearing members, should not be taken as an absence of support for the Heimwehren. Edmondson notes, the “great land owners” (the nobles) were counted amongst the principal financiers of the Heimwehr movement as early as the

⁵⁹⁹ TLA: Bundesleitung der österr. SSV, XII/1, fol. 1-1654, 305-7; XIII/1, fol. 1-1175, 1132-44; Marina Brandtner, *Diskursverweigerung und Gewalt. Dimensionen der Radikalisierung des politischen Klimas in der obersteierischen Industrieregion 1927-1934* (Innsbruck: StudienVerlag, 2011), 232.

⁶⁰⁰ See, for example, bi-weekly *Wiener Salonblatt*, for which coverage of the lives of the old aristocracy was its mainstay.

⁶⁰¹ Gerwarth, “The Central European Counter-Revolution,” 189; Bodo, “Hungarian Aristocracy,” 712-14.

spring of 1921.⁶⁰² An outstanding illustrative example can be found in the October 14, 1930 edition of the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, which published the names and land holdings of some 139 nobles who were either themselves Heimwehren members or had donated money to the movement. The article carped, “If you leaf through the Year and Address Book of Agriculture and Forestry, you believe yourself, at first, to have a noble directory from the Middle Ages.”⁶⁰³ Among the names on the list were indeed among the most illustrious houses of imperial history: Habsburg-Lothringen, Bourbon-Parma, Czernin, Schwarzenberg, Starhemberg, and so forth and so on. The source from which the names of these aristocratic donors were gathered is not declared beyond the vague explanation of “member lists and donor cards,” which would have likely not been freely accessible to Social Democratic news organs.

The front page of the October 23, 1930 edition of the left-leaning Linz newspaper, *Tagblatt*, continued to push for land reform, as Social Democrats hoped to gain the support of agricultural laborers and, simultaneously, weaken the conservative, Heimwehren-supporting aristocracy. A graphic accompanying the article depicts the considerable portion of Upper Austrian land owned by nine “Heimwehr Nobles.” The schematic points out not only land owned by the families of well-known Heimwehr members such as the Ernst Rüdiger Prince von Starhemberg, Count Karl Othmar von Lamberg, and Count Peter Revertera-Salandra, but also the land owned by the Rothschild, Kinsky, Sachsen-Coburg und Gotha, Württemberg, Almeida, and Arco-Valley

⁶⁰² Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 27; See also Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 52.

⁶⁰³ “Heimatschützer und Heimatbesitzer. Wem gehört der österreichische Heimatboden? –Heraus mit der Bodenreform!” *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, Oktober 14, 1930, 2-3.

families were included among these “Heimwehradels.”⁶⁰⁴ Those identified by the Social Democratic press cannot, however, be considered comprehensive. The *Arbeiter-Zeitung* list was limited to those nobles who owned 1,000 hectares (2471 acres) or more of land. Thus, any aristocrat owning less than that was omitted. Absent from the list was, for example, Count Karl Matz von Spiegelfeld. In a letter dated April 8, 1928, Spiegelfeld requested that Steidle investigate why his son, an Ortsgruppenführer in the Lower Austrian Heimwehr, was yet to receive his 250 schillings monthly salary, reminding the Bundesführer of his “material support” in an effort to compel Steidle into investigating the matter.⁶⁰⁵ Clearly, the financial, material, and political support of Austrian nobles was an important pillar in the movement’s growth and popularity.

The aristocracy and Austria’s banks and industry began funneling large sums of money into the Heimwehren as early as 1921. An article in the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* detailed that a meeting that reportedly took place on Saturday March 5, 1921 in Graz, in which Christian social representatives deputy governor Jacob Ahrer and Dr. Emanuel Weidenhoffer, the “Hauptverbandes der Industriellen,” and representatives of the “Grazer Großbankfilialen und Banken,” which comprised fourteen financial institutions. The results of the meeting, according to these articles, was an agreement that the industrialists would donate 2,000,000 kronen, the banks would contribute another 2,000,000 and

⁶⁰⁴ “Die Notwendigkeit der Bodenreform! Der Besitz des Heimwehradels in Oberösterreich,” *Tagblatt*, October 23, 1930, 1. These names were almost surely taken from the list that appeared in the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* some nine days earlier.

⁶⁰⁵ TLA: Bundesleitung der österr. SSV, XII/1, fol. 1-1654, 305-7. It would appear that Steidle referred the matter to Fey’s staff leader, Fritz Stahl. Kondert, “The Rise and Early History,” 100, notes that the substantial financial backing the *Heimwehren* received after 1927 made it possible to pay local leaders small monthly salaries of roughly 300 schillings. This is no doubt what Spiegelfeld is referencing.

Austria's "Großgrundbesitzer," another 1,000,000 kronen annually.⁶⁰⁶ Hauptverband der Industrie Österreich President, Ludwig Urban, admitted the association's contributions to the Heimwehren in a June 1923 general assembly of its members.⁶⁰⁷ Vinzenz Schumy, in his memoir, attributed a 25,000 schillings per month stipend to the Heimwehren from Austrian financial institutions, though he offers no firm dates as to when these contributions began and ended.⁶⁰⁸

The reach of the nobility was not limited, however, to owning large estates. Quite contrary to the orthodox narrative, the important industrialists, bankers, and aristocrats who subsidized the Heimwehr movement were not the discrete groups portrayed in the historical literature; there was a significant degree of intersection. That is, prominent bankers and industrialists who financed the Heimwehren could be counted, first, among the nobility. Placed in this context, the role of aristocracy in the movement emerges as being much greater than previously acknowledged. One prominent example of this intersection is Robert Freiherr von Ehrhart, vice-president of the Hauptverband der Industrie Österreich. The relationship between Hauptverband President Ludwig Urban and Vice President, Baron von Ehrhart and the Heimwehren is largely absent from the historiography—save for a brief mention that the Hauptverband had been donors to the Heimwehr movement since 1922, and Ehrhart's efforts to smooth tensions between

⁶⁰⁶ Kondert, "Rise and Early History," 44; Lauridsen, *Radical Right*, 119; "Die Großbanken finanzieren in Steiermark die Heimwehren!" *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, March 24, 1921, 3. Kondert misinterprets those funds being entirely for the Styrian Heimatschutz, when in fact, those funds were to be spread amongst the existing Heimwehren throughout Austria.

⁶⁰⁷ Lauridsen, *Radical Right*, 120.

⁶⁰⁸ Kondert, "The Rise and Early History," 100. For the sake of clarity, it should be pointed out that Austria replaced the crown (*krone*) with schillings with the Schilling Act, passed in December 1924. Per the legislation, one schilling equaled 10,000 kronen. The first schillings entered into circulation the following March.

Starhemberg and executives of the Styrian-based Österreichisch-Alpine Montangesellschaft (AMG) or, the Alpine Mining Association,—despite being an important figure in financing the movement.⁶⁰⁹ Kevin Mason’s study, which relies heavily on Ehrhart’s papers, housed at the University of Vienna, despite focus its focus on his political outlook, mentions nothing of the Baron’s contributions to the Heimwehr movement.⁶¹⁰

The Heimwehr movement experienced exponential growth upon crushing Social Democratic riots in Vienna, and the national railroad strike that followed during the tumultuous “Events of July 1927.” Seipel’s goal of establishing a strong presence in Vienna was fully underway with the creation of three formations in Vienna under the Bund österreichischer Selbstschutzverbände umbrella in December 1928. In addition to nobles such as Prince Heinrich von Schwarzenberg, who “selflessly” recruited new members and solicited financial support, Ehrhart played a crucial role in helping cement the presence of the Heimwehr movement in Vienna through mediating financial contributions from the Hauptverband to the Viennese groups under Dr. Franz Hemala, Major a.D. Emil Fey, and Hofrat Eduard Pichl.⁶¹¹

Within a week of the creation of the Heimwehr umbrella organization, Bund österreichischer Selbstschutzverbände (Federation of Austrian Self-Defense

⁶⁰⁹ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 60, 180-1.

⁶¹⁰ Kevin Mason, “Building an Unwanted Nation: The Anglo-American Partnership and Austrian Proponents of a Separate Nationhood, 1918-1934” (PhD diss., University of North Carolina, 2007). Mason’s emphasis is on the fact that Ehrhart opposed *Anschluss* with Germany from both a business (due to Austrian industry’s weakness compared to that of German’s which would result in Austrian-owned manufacturers being forced out of business or having to sell out to German industrialists) and ideological standpoint (as a pro-Austrian “patriot” with monarchist sympathies).

⁶¹¹ In reference to Schwarzenberg, see TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV österr., XIII/7, fol.1-510, 158-60

Associations), it was supplied with 55,000 Austrian schillings from “Austria’s bankers’ and manufacturers’ associations,” which, over the course of the next two and a half years, would total some 1,500,000 Austrian schillings.⁶¹² Baron Ehrhart and the Hauptverband der Industrie Österreich were subsidizing the Heimwehren at this time with a monthly stipend of 17,500 schillings. By March 1928 it would appear that the Bund had received an additional 115,000 schillings in special subsidies.⁶¹³ In addition to the monthly subsidies from Ehrhart and the Hauptverband, the association also created a reserve fund for which the Heimwehren could request advances from to help pay for larger rallies or extenuating circumstances, which is precisely what they did to help pay for the Wiener-Neustadt rally in October 1928. Correspondences between Ehrhart, Steidle, and Pabst indicate that the Baron and his associates contributed at least 125,000 schillings toward preparations for the rally, with 40,000 schillings remaining in the reserve fund.⁶¹⁴

The paper trail throughout spring 1929 shows frequent correspondences Pabst, Steidle, and Ehrhart. Already by January 1929, Pabst had wrote to Ehrhart requesting a monthly increase of 400 schillings in addition to the 1,000 schillings the Hauptverband was already contributing to Fey and Pichl’s formations. Fey’s organization was in poor shape financially, having added 400 new members in less than a month. Additionally, Pabst requested a one-time grant of 5,000 schillings to a new reserve fund to be used specifically for the Viennese formations; the Hauptverband met both requests. Ehrhart granted another 4,100 schillings to Pichl to procure equipment for his Selbstschutz Wien in February. By the beginning of March, the monthly stipend the Bund received from the

⁶¹² Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 51.

⁶¹³ TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV österr., XII/1, fol. 1-1654, 284.

⁶¹⁴ TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV österr., XII/3, fol. 1-708, 69-71, 168-9.

Hauptverband had increased to 23,900 schillings per month, 53,000 schillings in one-time contribution, and 25,000 schillings to the Styrian Heimatschutz, which was to be paid monthly through August at 4,000 schillings per month. At the same time, Pichl added a fifth Viennese group, led by former Styrian Stabsleiter, Leutenant a.D. Otto Gallian, under his banner, adding further to the financial needs of his organization. The Hauptverband delivered once more, adding 300 more schillings to Pichl's monthly stipend and 700 schilling contribution for equipping the new "Gallian Gruppe."⁶¹⁵ Despite the fact that the archival paper trail of communications between Steidle, Pabst, and Baron Ehrhart ends in August 1929, it is clear that the Hauptverband der Industrie Österreichs played a significant role in the growth and expansion of the Heimwehr movement into the last remaining Marxist stronghold in Austria. Moreover, it represented the core industrial supporter of the implementation of the Ständestaat in the May 1934.⁶¹⁶

According to an article originating from London's *Daily Telegraph*, alongside the AMG, Ludwig Freiherr von Rothschild was the central financial backer of the Heimwehr movement. Despite the generally anti-Semitic disposition of the Heimwehren, the article contends, Baron von Rothschild allied himself with the Heimwehr movement and the Christian Socials in order to combat Social Democratic-supported luxury taxes.⁶¹⁷ The subsequent, and previously mentioned, *Arbeiter-Zeitung* article, which listed the major

⁶¹⁵ TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV österr., XII/7, fol.1-510, 11, 20-1, 23, 31, 53, 67-8, 75, 87-8, 116, 120; TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV österr., XII/1, fol.1-1654, 578. The "one time" contribution included 8,000 S. for *Heimwehren* initiatives in the Burgenland, 2,000 S. for equipment for the Viennese formations, 8,000 S. for "Radio" (presumably military radio equipment), \$10,000 S. for an upcoming rally in St. Polten, and 25,000 S. to the Styrian government to pay off debt the *Bundesleitung* (Steidle and Pfrimer) had apparently previously accumulated.

⁶¹⁶ Lauridsen, *Radical Right*, 271. See note 86.

⁶¹⁷ "Rothschild und die Heimwehren," *Die Unfriedene*, September 7, 1929, 5; "Warum Rothschild den Heimwehren Geld gibt," *Volkspost*, September 28, 1929, 5-6.

aristocratic landowners backing the Heimwehr movement, named Baron von Rothschild among them.⁶¹⁸

Like Ehrhart, Baron Rothschild, save for a single instance in which he reportedly advised Steidle and Pabst, in November 1930, that a putsch executed quickly and with minimal bloodshed would not cripple the Austrian schilling, is virtually absent from the *Heimwehr* historiography.⁶¹⁹ It seems more likely that his business dealings with Christian Social leaders and important industrial backers of the Heimwehr movement, as the chairman of Austria's largest bank, Creditanstalt, placed him in the cross-hairs of the Marxist press whose penchant for sensationalism likely positioned Rothschild in much closer proximity to Heimwehr movement than was actually the case.⁶²⁰ On a personal level, however, Rothschild did help Heimwehr Bundesführer Ernst Rüdiger Prince von Starhemberg overcome his own financial difficulties that resulted from the heavy investment of his own money into his personally loyal Heimwehr jäger (rifle) formations.⁶²¹

However close Rothschild was to the Heimwehr movement, the financial backing by Jewish businessmen was not incredible. Indeed, despite the aggressive anti-Semitic

⁶¹⁸ "Heimatschützer und Heimatbesitzer," 3.

⁶¹⁹ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung*, 49, 91; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 284, endnote 49; Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hackenkreuz*, 109; Kondert, "Rise and Early History," 150. This also appears to have made it into the Social Democratic press, "Was halten Sie von einem Putsch, Herr Rothschild?" *Vorarlberger Wacht*, August 28, 1930, 2-3, which contradicts the Kerekes's assertion, which claims Rothschild advised that a quick and virtually bloodless coup d'état would not damage the shilling, and supports the evidence Lerchenfeld reported on November 21, 1929, that a putsch would compromise the shilling.

⁶²⁰ See, for example, "Der Streit um Strafella. Creditanstalt kontra Alpine—Für die Faschisierung aber sind alle Kapitalsgruppen und auch die Sozialdemokraten," *Die Rote Fahne*, March 21, 1930, 3.

⁶²¹ Bruce F. Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution: A History of Austrian Anti-Semitism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 177.

rhetoric of some Heimwehr leaders, Jewish bankers and businessmen came out in support of the movement's opposition to the high taxation leveled by Vienna's Social Democrat-dominated city government.⁶²² Moreover, some Jewish business owners acquiesced to Heimwehr demands that they dismiss employees who were members of the Social Democratic Party. Some Jewish bankers like Rudolf Sieghart, for example, industrialists such as Fritz Mandl, and businesses, like Phönix (Phoenix) Life, an insurance and financial company, the third largest company in continental Europe, in fact, sympathized with the strident anti-Marxism of the Heimwehren and indeed subsidized the movement.⁶²³

There are much more concrete connections between the Heimwehr movement and AMG, however. The financial support and membership numbers the association contributed to the Styrian Heimatschutz and the Heimwehr movement in general, was well known. The AMG began funding the Heimwehren in 1921, as the lieutenant governor of Styria, Jakob Ahrer, secured 5,000,000 kronen in financial support for uniforms and equipment.⁶²⁴ While the Hauptverband der Industrie contributed between 17,500 – 23,900 shillings per month to the Heimwehren, the AMG—Austria's largest industrial company—made monthly contributions to the Heimwehren, which according

⁶²² President of the Hauptverband der Industrie, Ludwig Urban complained to Steidle in December 1928 about Pfrimer's vitriolic anti-Semitic speeches; Steidle agreed with Urban. TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV (österr.), XII/1, fol. 1-1654, 625-7.

⁶²³ Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 176; Gerald D. Feldman, *Allianz and the German Insurance Business, 1933-1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 150-3.

⁶²⁴ Pauley, *Hahnenschwanz und Hackenkreuz*, 65.

to Kondert, came to the sum of approximately 300,000 shillings annually, between the years 1927 and 1930.⁶²⁵

AMG employees at all levels, were members of the Heimatschutz. The association's General Secretary, Dr. Felix Busson, was the leader of the Styrian Heimatschutz's "Rechtskampfgruppe," or litigation group, while head of the blast furnace plant in Donowitz and former K.u.k. Army officer, Ing. Josef Oberegger, was the military leader of the Upper Styrian Heimatschutz and served as the industry representative in the Heimwehr's abortive Bundeswirtschafts- und Ständeamt, or the Federal Economic and Corporation Office.⁶²⁶ Additionally, over half of the employees of the Donawitz works joined the Styrian Heimatschutz.⁶²⁷ In fact, preference was given to Heimatschutz members in the hiring and promotion process.⁶²⁸ Membership in the Heimatschutz was encouraged by the AMG, and eventually, in conjunction with the Heimatschutz, those employees formed their own, "independent" labor union. So successful was this marriage, that the AMG began hiring only non-Socialist workers, weakening the grip of the Social Democratic party in Styria.⁶²⁹ In 1930, the AMG fired hundreds of its workers for being members of the Social Democratic party or sympathizers.⁶³⁰ Indeed, the two sides worked hand-in-glove throughout the 1920s, while the Heimwehren crushed

⁶²⁵ Kondert, "Rise and Early History," 99. Kondert's math does not add up as he says that each of the provincial formations received roughly 4,000 shillings each from the *Montangesellschaft*, would be closer to 400,000.

⁶²⁶ Lauridsen, *Radical Right*, 202; Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 175; Andreas Fraydenegg-Monzello, *Volkstaat und Ständeordnung: Die Wirtschaftspolitik der steierischen Heimwehren, 1927-1933* (Wien: Böhlau, 2015), 65.

⁶²⁷ Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 175; Monzello, *Volkstaat und Ständeordnung*, 65.

⁶²⁸ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 122.

⁶²⁹ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 57; Lauridsen, *Radical Right*, 146-7.

⁶³⁰ Lauridsen, *Radical Right*, 148.

workers' strikes and Social Democratic labor unions, AMG filled its coffers, ranks, and openly defended the movement.⁶³¹

The close relationship between the AMG and the Heimwehr movement continued until the new Heimwehren Bundesführer, Ernst Rüdiger Prince von Starhemberg, took the side of the independent labor unions, of whom so many were Heimwehr members, against the Montangesellschaft over laying off massive numbers of employees and reducing the wages of others. Unsurprisingly, the AMG cut off its subsidies to the Heimwehren in January 1931.⁶³² In spite of the efforts of Seipel and Baron von Ehrhart to repair the relationship, AMG began throwing its money, instead, behind the Austrian Nazi Party (DSNAP) in 1932.

Such efforts were not limited to the Styrian Heimatschutz, the Tyrolean Heimatwehr, along with other provincial organizations, actively sought to help find employment for its jobless members. As previously mentioned, unemployed members were given preference when opportunities arose to work shifts as auxiliary police arose. Moreover, their close connection with the Tyrolean Manufacturers Association, a major financier, the Heimatwehr gained for its members, preference in the hiring process.⁶³³

Chancellor Ernst von Streeruwitz later confessed in his memoir that "Indeed, [Austrian] industry had raised substantial sums of money in order to strengthen the

⁶³¹ Lauridsen, *Radical Right*, 205 points out AMG general director Anton Apold's public defense of Heimwehren opposition to Chancellor Schober's proposal of disarming all Austrian paramilitary organizations, including the Heimwehren for the purpose of gaining foreign economic aid.

⁶³² Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 180-1; Lauridsen, *Radical Right*, 221-2. According to Lauridsen the Hauptverband also refused to pay their monthly stipend to the Heimwehren, but only temporarily and for a different reason—the divisiveness that wracked the movement in late 1930 and early 1931.

⁶³³ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 41; See also TLA: Landesleitung der SSV Tirol, VI/12 Stellenvermittlung; TLA: Landesleitung der SSV Tirol, VII/10 Stellenvermittlung; TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV österr., XIII/12 Stellenvermittlung.

Heimwehr movement, without ever denying it. Often enough I cooperated in these resolutions by counsel and vote."⁶³⁴ The general theme amongst historical writings on the interwar Austrian republic has been that it was a state nobody wanted. Less emphasized is that parliamentary democracy was a system of government that the majority of Austrians at the time did not want. This was particularly true for Austrian industrialists who had, during the Monarchy, utilized connections to the royal court to maintain a favorable for doing business. The dismantling of the Empire left this group without a patron. At the same time, in the new government, organized labor grew substantially in power and were able to force concessions such as increases in wages and workplace improvements and protections through legislation and labor strikes. According to manufacturers, this accounted for between 22 to 25 percent of their annual expenses. This was, no doubt, the primary motivation for their cooperation with the Christian Social Party to fund the Heimwehr movement, which both sought to use as an instrument of force to break Social Democratic trade unions.⁶³⁵ Thus, as Gulick concludes, "Austrian industry furthered...with the greatest vigor the destruction of parliamentary democracy."⁶³⁶

An "Irresistible Popular Movement?" Popular Support for the Heimwehren

This chapter has demonstrated how the Heimwehr movement enjoyed from a significant degree of support from the leading social circles from the old Monarchy who retained prominence in new Austrian republic. The question remains, however, did the Heimwehr movement enjoy popular support as well, and if so, to what extent? This

⁶³⁴ Ernst von Streeruwitz, *Springflut über Österreich* (Wien-Leipzig, 1937), 212, 216, 230, 242 cited in Gulick, *Austria from Habsburg to Hitler*, 129.

⁶³⁵ Lauridsen, *Radical Right*, 122-3.

⁶³⁶ Gulick, *Austria from Habsburg to Hitler*, 130.

section will expand on the initial observations made in chapter two and seek to supply a more definitive answer to the question posed above.

Generally speaking, one could divide Austrian society along three principal socioeconomic lines: the urban proletariat, the rural peasantry and agricultural laborers, and the bourgeoisie, which is the most diverse of these basic groupings, including lawyers, university professors, business professionals, mid-level bureaucrats, and skilled craftsmen among others. As chapter two demonstrated, the social composition of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr and its leadership was quite diverse. In its efforts to unite the main conservative bourgeois political parties behind it, the Heimwehren drew its membership from a wide range of socioeconomic and educational strata and ideological outlooks. Logically, such diversity would imply the potential for broad popular support.

At the same time the federal umbrella organization, the Bund österreichischer Selbstschutzverbände, actively worked to increase Heimwehren presence in Vienna, it also initiated efforts to more firmly establish its formations in the Burgenland. Police reports from the provincial capital of Eisenstadt indicated that “a large part of the population” sympathized with the Heimwehr movement; even Social Democratic workers were joining the Heimwehren. Moreover, a separate report added that local Heimwehr groups could be found “in nearly all places.” Yet the same report claimed that the Heimwehr groups were inactive due to a “lack of interest.” The inactivity of the Heimwehren was much more likely due to a lag in being sufficiently furnished with money, uniforms, weapons, and supplies, as the focus on the Viennese formations would have received preference over those in the Burgenland. Altogether, over 300 local Heimwehr groups were established in the Burgenland after 1927, the vast majority of

which mustered from small villages, which likely meant that the size and strength of those Ortsgruppen were negligible.⁶³⁷

The prominence of the Heimwehr movement in numerous small communities in the Burgenland is exemplary of the broader trend throughout Austria's provinces and would seem to corroborate Schneeberger's assertion that the movement found broad support in tight-knit, traditional, "kleiner sozialsysteme," or small social systems, where Catholic social thought was reinforced by local priests and where community officials were able to reiterate the virtues of the anti-Marxist movement more effectively. At the same time, she also finds that rural communities on the periphery of larger cities were also frequently 'pro-Heimwehr.' Their proximity to urban centers meant that their farms, as Heimwehr propaganda claimed, would be the first to be "burned down" by the "Reds."⁶³⁸ Her caveat to these generalizations is that each community's unique economic, social, and cultural make-up often played into the degree to which the Heimwehr movement found success in establishing local formations and support in the community. In communities that were more diverse and demonstrated clear political fault-lines, the Heimwehr movement tended to be able to establish more active, enthusiastic local groups.⁶³⁹

In Tyrol's long legacy of civic militarism, the historic preponderance of the Catholic Church in the province, and the traditionally independent-mindedness of its population, the Heimwehr movement found its most ardent supporters. This seems

⁶³⁷ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 129-30.

⁶³⁸ Schneeberger, "Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr," 69, 81; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 32-3.

⁶³⁹ Schneeberger, "Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr," 156.

particularly the case in the Lower Inn Valley (Unterinntal) and its side valleys. An August 1928 report submitted by Oberst a.D. Ludwig Psenner, representative for the Gau Unterinntal, to Steidle details the money donated by numerous private donors and communities throughout the region, when the money was received, and what it was used to purchase. The donations ranged from a five-schilling contribution from Wörgl shopkeeper named Johann Gollner that went toward the purchase of a signal flag to 1,650 schillings in private donations collected in Kufstein that went toward the purchase of 13 half-liter oil cans, 10 Heimatwehr badges, labor costs for a construction of one artillery support crate (Requisitenverschlag), 2000 rounds of ammunition, and “repair costs.” The last page of the report also documented contributions of room and board and use of space for donations of accommodations in various communities in the Unterinntal. A letter November 1928 letter addressed to the “Landesleitung” of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr from a supporter in Tux who requested promotional copies of the Heimatwehr newspaper to distribute amongst the community, illustrates a shared outlook many conservative Tyroleans. For this segment of Austrian society, the Heimwehr movement represented “German men coming together to rescue our state from the rot to which it had fallen prey.” Furthermore, he adds, there were many “enthusiastic supporters of the Heimatwehr cause” in his community.⁶⁴⁰ Even after its falling out with Stumpf and the Tyrolean government after the publication of its Korneuburg program (May 1930), there remained “much sympathy” and “extraordinary enthusiasm” demonstrated by the Tyrolean public for the Heimatwehr.⁶⁴¹

⁶⁴⁰ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VII/1, fol. 2090, 241-2, 1035-9.

⁶⁴¹ Rebtisch, *Tirol—Land in Waffen*, 129.

Statistics from the national elections held in November 1930—the first and only national election in which the Heimwehr movement entered candidates for the Nationalrat—have also been used to indicate of popular support for the Heimwehr movement. Lauridsen offers a detailed examination of these electoral results, which paint a complex picture. The statistics indicate that of the total number of votes the Heimatblock—the political party of the Heimwehren, created in 1930—received, 68 percent came from districts where the population was under 10,000 people.⁶⁴² These areas were predominantly rural, which would seem to corroborate Schneeberger's conclusion that the Heimwehr movement was most successful in smaller communities. Yet compared to the overall percentage for those districts, the Heimatblock received only 7.84 percent of the total number of votes. The assertion that the movement was comprised largely of peasants is much less compelling in this light.

In districts where the population was 10,000 or greater, the Heimatblock received 7.76 percent of the overall vote total, which represents the remaining 32 percent of the total votes it received. The difference between 68 percent and 32 percent, however, indicates a greater degree of support from rural populations. At the same time, these figures must be used with caution, as they are not representative of the unique socioeconomic attributes possessed by each province, as regional electoral results would naturally vary from one to the next. As Lauridsen points out, Styria was—not surprisingly—the Heimatblock bastion, followed by the Tyrol, where the party received 12.36 percent and 9.28 percent of the vote, respectively.⁶⁴³

⁶⁴² Lauridsen, *Radical Right*, 233.

⁶⁴³ Lauridsen, *Radical Right*, 233, 235.

Overall, the meager 6.17 percent of the total popular vote the Heimatblock collected would seem to indicate that the Heimwehr movement was not the “irresistible popular movement” Seipel touted. At the same time, the results of the November 1930 elections should not be entirely taken at face value as a referendum of popular support. As mentioned above, the 1930 election was the first and only attempt of the Heimwehr movement to field candidates for public office; to that point in time, the movement had been loose confederation of paramilitary organizations, not a political party that also had a paramilitary wing as was the case with the Social Democrats (Republikanischer Schutzbund) and Nazis (Sturmabteilung or SA). Moreover, the number of candidates running under the Heimatblock banner at the national and provincial levels was, comparatively speaking, quite limited; in Vorarlberg the Heimatblock was not permitted on the ballot. In Vienna and Lower Austria, votes cast for the “Christlichsoziale Partei und Heimatwehr” ticket might also be considered an indication of popular support for the Heimwehr movement in the same way it counted as a vote for the Christian Social Party.

Popular support for the Heimwehr movement has been a much more difficult phenomenon to measure compared to the more tangible evidence left by its financial backers or well-documented evidence of the measures taken by provincial governments to protect the groups. Provincial and national electoral results have been leveraged by historians as a vehicle for understanding general backing amongst the population, but those results are problematic as a true barometer in that the Heimwehr movement was not a political party and entered the 1930 elections as such—a paramilitary organization submitting its leaders for election to public office. Prior to the election, it was entirely possible, and quite probably, for a conservative Austrian to be a member of the Christian

Social or Greater German People's Party as well as sympathizing and backing the Heimwehren. As it were, there is concrete evidence of sizable popular support among conservative circles of all stripes, which increased greatly after the summer of 1927.

Conclusions

Framed around the question of whether or not the Heimwehr movement was, indeed, the popular movement it had claimed to be, this chapter demonstrated that the Heimwehr movement enjoyed a significant degree of support from the provincial and national governments, prominent social groups such as the Catholic clergymen, many members of the former Habsburg nobility, wealthy industrialists, and Austria's most powerful banks, not to mention a substantial segment of the general population. The governmental cooperation, and financial backing of these groups makes it clear that the Heimwehr movement was not a radical, right-wing political party like the Nazis, to whom it is typically compared. The Heimwehren were creations of provincial conservatives who distrusted the Social Democratic provisional government in the early months immediately following the establishment of the Republic. Many of these men were, themselves, high-ranking public officials, such as Franz Stumpf in Tyrol and Anton Rintelen in Styria, or who had close connections to those who did fill those offices. Provincial governments leveraged the 1920 Constitution, which gave them significant autonomy, which they used to shield the Heimwehren from the IMCC and the federal government, frequently utilizing Ortsgruppen as auxiliary policemen, giving them a quasi-official status.

At the same time, Catholic clergy members sold the Heimwehren to their congregations as an instrument of God to combat the mortal danger of Marxist secularism posed to traditional German culture. While not all members of the priesthood were supporters of the Heimwehr movement, a substantial number of clerics across Austria officiated Heimwehren events and, in the process, provided the movement with credibility among the devout Catholic population. Most prominent among those priests who enthusiastically supported the Heimwehren was Chancellor Ignaz Seipel. It was not Steidle or Starhemberg who was the lynchpin for the creation of a federal Heimwehr organization, but Seipel. His connections to great noble land owners, industrialists such as Baron Robert von Ehrhart, and bankers like Ludwig von Rothschild was absolutely essential in subsidizing the creation of a federal umbrella organization and facilitating the movement's meteoric expansion following the events of July 1927.

Indeed, as has been detailed in the historiography of the Heimwehr movement the Hauptverband der Industrie Österreich, of which the Alpine Montangesellschaft was a part, were its chief sources of industrial money. While breaking labor strikes was the principal reason for their financial support for the Heimwehren, important figures in both associations were ideologically aligned with conservative, anti-Marxist core of the movement. Baron von Ehrhart, a confidant of Chancellor Seipel, was a staunch monarchist and opposed the parliamentary system in the Republic. Similarly, AMG General Secretary, Dr. Felix Busson, and, plant foreman and head of the "independent" labor union formed by AMG employees, Josef Oberegger, were both active members in the Styrian Heimatschutz.

Alongside Austrian, industry, its financial institutions also funneled extraordinary sums of money into the Heimwehr movement. From as early as 1921, Austria's major banking houses began financing the Heimwehren with monthly stipends. Next to AMG, Rothschild's Creditanstalt—the state's largest financial institution—was said to have been the movement's greatest patron. Despite the anti-Semitic rhetoric of several high-profile Heimwehr leaders, Rothschild's business interests, like those of other Jewish companies, aligned with the anti-Marxist stance of the Heimwehr movement. Not unlike the AMG or the Hauptverband, their reasons for funding the movement were primarily economic, but much less ideological.

Conversely, the various modes of support offered by the general public were, however, based entirely on the conservative ideals the Heimwehren represented. Beyond the anti-Marxist ideals shared with the Heimwehr movement by the peasantry and the bourgeoisie, the lamentation with which its leaders spoke of the weak and fragile state of Austria echoed the sentiments of traditionally-minded circles who desperately missed past times of pre-war economic prosperity. In the Heimwehr they found a movement whose militarism and activism not only represented their traditional worldview, but who vowed to renew German or Habsburg culture, even at the expense of parliamentary democracy.

There is little question that the Heimwehr movement rested on a firm popular base.

CHAPTER V – AMBITIOUS OPPORTUNISTS OR INSTRUMENTS OF FOREIGN INFLUENCE?

On October 28, 1922 Benito Mussolini and some 25,000 “Blackshirts,” the paramilitary wing his *Partito Nazionale Fascista* (National Fascist Party) arrived in Rome. Rather than suppressing the insurrection with violence, the following day King Victor Emmanuel III asked Mussolini to lead the Italian government, appointing him Prime Minister. Mussolini won many admirers among radical right-wing nationalist organizations in Central Europe and his “March on Rome” became something of a blueprint from which to model their own machinations. Hitler was an admirer of Mussolini’s and his bold move to gain political power for himself and the National Fascist Party. In November 1923, Hitler contrived his own, ill-fated attempt to seize power in Germany, starting with the overthrow of the Bavarian government in Munich a little over a year later.⁶⁴⁴ Hitler was not the only one inspired by Mussolini and his rise to power. The leaders of the Austrian Heimwehr movement, too, fantasized about undertaking their own “Marsch auf Wien” and rolling back the Socialist constitution of 1920.

As it were, by the end of 1928, Mussolini had become a central financial backer of the Heimwehr movement. Its federal leader, Dr. Richard Steidle, and his Chief of Staff, Major Waldemar Pabst, further connected Mussolini with Franz Seldte and Theodor

⁶⁴⁴ Alan Cassels, who examined Italian connections with right-wing German nationalist organizations at this time, points to circumstantial evidence of Italian involvement, or at the very least, knowledge of the Hitler’s putsch plans in Munich. Cassels indicates that Hitler and Mussolini were in communication with one another through an intermediary, Kurt Ludecke. See Alan Cassels, “Mussolini and German Nationalism, 1922-1925,” *The Journal of Modern History* 35 (June 1963): 137-57.

Duesterberg, the leaders of the largest paramilitary organization in Germany, Der Stahlhelm, Bund der Frontsoldaten (The Steel Helmet-League of Front Soldiers), to whom Mussolini provided political support as they sought to enter the upcoming German general elections. Particularly important in the Heimwehr movement securing Italian support was Hungarian Minister President, István Bethlen, who had, over many years, established a close relationship with the Heimwehr's Tyrolean leadership. Between August 1928 and September 1929, through the Hungarian government, Mussolini funneled millions of Italian lira into the Heimwehr movement's anti-Marxist and anti-democratic campaign of provocation and propaganda aimed, ultimately, at expunging socialism and its influence from Austria. After a year of fits and starts the Heimwehren ultimately failed to meet their expectations, Italy pulled the plug on its joint "österreichischen Aktion" (Austrian action) with Hungary.

Nevertheless, Mussolini understood that winning Austria, despite its diminutive size and struggling economy, was an important piece in helping make Central Europe a sphere of Italian influence. By 1932 the Heimwehr movement had a new, young leader at its helm in Ernst Rüdiger Prince von Starhemberg, who, once again, looked to Mussolini for help. This time, however, Mussolini had the added motivation of an aggressive, ultra-nationalist Nazi Party that was gaining recognition and influence in mainstream German politics and in its government, signaling an increasing likelihood that an aggressive pan-Germanist foreign policy could be on the horizon. Moreover, many Germans and Austrians still resented the Italian annexation of South Tyrol, in which a vocal German minority was split away from its German brothers in the north. As such, *Il Duce* feared a resurgence of Anschluss sentiment among the German and Austrian populations, making

decisive action more urgent than it had been in 1928, as a unification of Austria and Germany would bring a potentially belligerent, expansionist-minded Germany to Italy's doorstep. The success of the network of reactionary paramilitary defense organizations in Germany and Austria and the authoritarian regimes of Hungary and Italy was, therefore, crucial to both Italian interests, as well as those of the hegemonic strata of Austrian government and society—the Catholic clergy, the declassed aristocracy, industrialists, high-ranking officers of the former k.u.k. Army, and most Christian Social officials—who sought to maintain Austrian independence, the arch patrons of the Heimwehr movement.

This network also reflected the fact that sizable segments in German and Austrian society were disenchanted with what they viewed as frivolous political posturing and idle chatter of the various political parties. These circles rebuked Western-style parliamentary democracy as corrupt; the German people were hostages of political partisanship. Ideologically, the republics were amalgams of socialism and liberal capitalism, both of which were un-German and abhorrent. It also represented the developing view among radical-right circles that a fascist-style government—conservative, ultra-nationalist, authoritarian, and militaristic—was a potentially viable alternative to monarchy and democracy. Furthermore, it was not coincidental that the states in which these anti-Marxist, anti-democratic sentiments found expression were those where revisionist 'cultures of defeat' had firmly taken root, nor that the parties involved in this network were representative of what would become the core of the Axis Powers in a seemingly inevitable second world war.

“From Self-Defense to Self-Help”⁶⁴⁵

As the previous chapter demonstrated, the Heimwehr movement was at the center of counter-revolutionary activity in Central Europe in 1920-1. From the outset in 1920, the intention of its collaboration with German defense organizations and the Hungarian government was not simply to establish an anti-Marxist coalition to rebuff Bolshevik revolution, as stated in the bylaws of the Heimwehren. Rather, theirs was a loftier goal of ultimately remaking the governments in Germany and Austria, which they understood to be a decisive blow against Marxism by reversing the socialist revolutions of 1918. In doing so, they would help remake Central Europe into an authoritarian, anti-Marxist bulwark. While this aim, at times, receded into the background at times and became subject to the interests of its patrons, it never subsided, as it evidenced in the very fact that it approached like-minded foreign governments and organizations for financial and material assistance.

Historians of the Heimwehr movement have interpreted the recurrent putschist designs as a confluence of foreign influences and the boundless ambition of its leaders to gain political power for themselves. Such assertions that Heimwehr leaders harbored ceaseless personal ambitions to rule Austria is overstated, attributed, in part, to disagreements among provincial Heimwehr leaders, at various times, over the direction of the movement. More specifically, scholars viewed the personal feud between Bundesführer Ernst Rüdiger Starhemberg and Emil Fey (leader of the Vienna Heimwehr) as the most outstanding example. While both jockeyed for the allegiance of the movement’s provincial leaders, and did little to conceal their desire to head the

⁶⁴⁵ “Vom Selbstschutz zur Selbsthilfe,” *Allgemeiner Tiroler Anzeiger*, November 10, 1926, 1.

movement, they still acknowledged and respected the authority of the governments in power and acquiesced when demoted from cabinet positions, rather than moving to take power for themselves.⁶⁴⁶ It would, of course, be foolish to believe that the Heimwehr's leaders were selfless ideologues with no personal ambitions of their own. However, the evidence indicates that their commitment to the movement, in the firm belief that Marxism reflected an existential crisis for German culture and elected to actively combat that threat and obtaining a voice for it in the direction of the country, surpassed any motives of seizing power for personal gain.⁶⁴⁷

To understand why the Heimwehr movement sought the assistance of neighboring governments and defense organizations, it is necessary to reiterate its quandary inside Austria. Two insurmountable and intertwined factors, which have been discussed in greater depth in prior chapters, hamstrung the Heimwehr movement in its efforts to achieve its ultimate objective. First, the extremely limited powers of its federal leadership allowed provincial leaders to retain much of their authority and the general independence of their formations, preventing the confederation from functioning as a cohesive whole. In addition, the Heimwehren, being voluntary organizations, had maintained the volunteer Schützen custom of electing their leaders, which only exacerbated those regionalisms. Second, the movement's financial reliance—the refusal to initiate membership dues being the main culprit—upon its domestic patrons made the

⁶⁴⁶ Fey served as Vice-Chancellor from September 1933 to May 1934 and, subsequently, Minister of the Interior from July 1934 to October 1935. Starhemberg also served as Vice-Chancellor from May 1934 to July 1936, acting briefly as Chancellor after the assassination of Engelbert Dollfuss. Starhemberg also served as federal leader of the Fatherland Front (*Vaterländische Front*).

⁶⁴⁷ Lajos Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 22. Kerekes notes that in a conversation between Steidle and Bethlen regarding the overthrow of the Austrian government, Steidle recommended that it would be most beneficial to Austria if the head of the new government was someone “internationally-known personality,” rather than himself.

Heimwehren prisoners to their interests. Generally risk-averse, they preferred the status quo over the uncertainty of an attempt to roll back the socialist republic. Approval to do so would require virtually all of its patrons—bankers, industrialists, nobles, provincial governors, and the bourgeois political parties—in all of its provinces to be in harmony with that aim, which had proved an impossibility. Moreover, so long as the bourgeois parties could sustain a majority in parliament and, therefore, keep the SDP suppressed, support for radical measures such as remaking the government on a corporatist basis were not seriously considered. Thus, it became clear that the only way the Heimwehren could end Austria's wretched parliamentary democracy, to which they attributed Austria's continued misery, was to look outside for the requisite money, arms, and resources.

As illustrated in previous chapters, the legacy of civic militarism and war volunteerism of Alpine Austrian communities inspired the vision of the Heimwehr movement in Austria. This tradition was especially prominent in the Tyrol, which had long defended its own borders, rather than depending on the Habsburg dynasty in Vienna. At the ideological and logistical core of Tyrol's provincial defense system were the *Standschützen*, volunteer sharp-shooter units comprised of members of local shooting clubs. In times of war, when a threat to Tyrol's sovereignty was imminent, these units were mobilized around their local shooting ranges and deployed to protect their communities from foreign invaders. Though this institution perished in 1918, the voluntary and democratic civilian identity of the *Standschützen* was a hallmark of its collective memory and was adopted by the paramilitary Heimwehr movement. In the politically charged climate of First Republic Austria, however, the continuity of these

features remained foundational characteristics of the Heimwehren, despite undermining the ‘expanding’ mission envisaged by its leadership.

By the autumn of 1926, Steidle and Pabst had already made efforts to reconnect with their old Bavarian associates, while also having developed a close connection with Hungarian Prime Minister, István Bethlen.⁶⁴⁸ They also briefly entertained potential alliances with Yugoslav nationalist organizations as well as attempted to gain the support of the Italian government. The catalyst compelling this outreach was the new party program the Social Democratic Party published on November 3, 1926, which has come to be known as the “Linzer Programme.” In it, the Social Democratic Party declared itself ready to utilize revolutionary violence, if necessary, to attain power, vowing to “preserve the working-class in a permanent, organized intellectual and physical readiness for the defense of the republic [and] cultivate the closest intellectual union between the working-class and the soldiers of the Federal Army... But if, despite all these efforts of the Social Democratic Labor Party, a counter-revolution of the bourgeoisie succeeded in breaking up democracy, the working class could only conquer the power of the state in the civil war.”⁶⁴⁹

The preface of “if a counter-revolution of the bourgeoisie succeeded in breaking up democracy,” seems to have allayed moderate fears of a Marxist revolution. The Heimwehr movement and its leadership, however, were indignant, and drummed up sensational fears of the inevitability of a Marxist revolution among its membership and

⁶⁴⁸ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV Tirol, V/I, fol.829, 718.

⁶⁴⁹ Hans Jörg Sandkühler and Rafael de la Varga, eds., *Austromarxismus. Texte zu Ideologie und Klassenkampf* (Frankfurt: Europäische Verlaganstalt, 1970), 383-6.

constituency. They leveraged those fears to whip up hostility throughout the movement's rank and file, and according to some provincial leaders, struggled to contain that aggression.⁶⁵⁰ When asked in November 1926 why the Heimwehren had become more active in public and increasingly vocal in recent days, Steidle responded that the aggressive new party program and the "terror and street demonstrations of the Republican Schutzbund have forced the Austrian Heimwehren to expand of self-defense to one of self-help."⁶⁵¹ In other words, the Social Democrat's new, aggressive party platform had compelled the Heimwehr movement to shift gears from being an organization oriented around defending bourgeois ideals and interests to one that would now take the initiative and more actively agitate for those ideals and interests, which they believed underpinned traditional German culture. As a result, movement undertook a concerted effort to reorganize and consolidate. The various Heimatschutz groups in Styria merged into one under Pfrimer. The leaders of the provincial Heimwehr organizations agreed to create something of a federal command structure, banding together under the banner of the "Bund alpenländischer Selbstschutzverbände" (Federal Alpine Self-Defense Associations, alternatively referred to as the "Alpine Club"), with Steidle serving as its nominal leader.⁶⁵²

The increased aggression demonstrated by the Heimwehren disturbed foreign observers. The German Consul General in Innsbruck, Hans von Saller, expressed concern

⁶⁵⁰ TNA: GFM 33/2585/6080, E450979, E450997-E451003.

⁶⁵¹ "Vom Selbstschutz zur Selbsthilfe," 1; "Eine machtvolle Kundgebung der wehrhaften Verbände Oesterreichs," *Innsbrucker Nachrichten*, October 27, 1926, 1; TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), V/I, fol.829, 726, 727; TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), V/I, fol.829, „Der Kampf um die Macht im Staate, das versagende Parlament und die Aufgaben der vaterländische Wehrverbände. Rede des Landesführers der Tiroler Heimatwehren Dr. Richard Steidle Gehalten in den Innsbrucker Stadtsälen am 26. Oktober 1926."

⁶⁵² Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr*, 38-9; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 40.

over the potential for civil war inside Austria as the Heimwehr leaders intensified their agitation. “I am not of the opinion that the Heimwehr movement within Austria is defensive,” Saller reported, adding that Steidle “expresses quite frankly that the Heimatwehr also wants to take an offensive approach.” In this statement, he is referring to a speech Steidle delivered at a Heimwehr rally in Klagenfurt (Carinthia) on January 30, 1927

We want to be a movement of freedom to the people, not content with merely warding off... Is it not time to assert the will of our side, if necessary, outside the laws of Parliament? Are we not officially compelled to assert the wish for order in the state, in a different way? I do not conceal from myself, that we might soon test this example. We have been patient for too long. I do not hesitate to explain that the members of the Alpine defense associations feel the sacred obligation that after the fist is driven from its pocket in indignant holy wrath once, it will no longer be content with parliamentary delicacies.⁶⁵³

It was with the release of the “Linzer Programme” that was the decisive turning point for the Heimwehr movement. Its leaders saw the opportunity to “expand” its mission and transform the waning self-defense movement into a political pressure group to compel the bourgeois parties toward constitutional reform.⁶⁵⁴ The “July Events” of 1927 (Juliereignisse) represented the first opportunity for the Heimwehren to act in accordance with this new offensive trajectory, their success, and the international recognition it gained among right-wing and fascist circles. Steidle’s often-cited May 1928 letter to Bethlen, where he explains that the Heimwehr movement was no longer content with being the “chained watch dog, crouching until the owner... releases it... only to chain it again... after it has done its job,” simply reiterated sentiments he had expressed in the days after the Social Democratic Party Congress. Their success in aggressively

⁶⁵³ TNA: GFM 33/2585/6080, E450997-E451003.

⁶⁵⁴ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 9 and Schober, “Aufstieg und Fall,” 171-2 have interpreted the “July Events” to be the turning point for the Heimwehr movement.

suppressing the riots of Social Democratic workers and thwarting the party's general strike, won the movement widespread prestige, attracting a significant number of new members, prompting historians to point to the "July Events" as a critical turning point for the Heimwehr movement. The shift was, in fact, a more gradual process that was also an expression of its need to remain relevant in order to survive. The Linzer Programme proved to be the right medicine and the right time.

A second factor stirring the Heimwehren to again look for allies beyond its borders in 1927, was the threat of war between Austria's neighbors, Italy and Yugoslavia. As had been the case with virtually all of the redrawn borders of the Paris Peace Conference, two territories—Dalmatia and Albania—became ongoing sources of tension between Italy and Yugoslavia that ebbed and flowed over the course of the 1920s. In particular, the Treaty of Friendship and Security signed between Italy and Albania in November 1926, proved to be a source of consternation for the Yugoslavian government, as it made any sort of attempt to alter the state of affairs in Albania—whether by official Yugoslavian institutions or organizations manifesting in Yugoslavia—as potential grounds for war. Yugoslavia, for its part, feared that the treaty would establish a basis for the Italian annexation of Albania, as the agreement, for all intents and purposes, positioned it as a protectorate of Italy.⁶⁵⁵ Of particular concern for Austria and the *Heimwehren* was its southern alpine borders in Styria, Carinthia, and Tyrol. Heimwehr leaders expressed the fear, to their reactionary German counterparts, that either Italy or Yugoslavia—perhaps both—would use an outbreak of hostility as a pretext

⁶⁵⁵ H. Wickham Steed, "Italy, Yugoslavia, and Albania," *Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs* 6 (May, 1927): 174-8.

to encroach on Austrian border regions. Pabst wrote to Oberstleutnant a.D. Julius von Reichert, Staff leader to the Bavaria Stahlhelm chief, Major a.D. Carl Wänninger, in May 1927, explaining that the situation had become “extraordinarily critical,” based on conversation Carinthian Heimatschutz members had had with ethnic German refugees fleeing Yugoslavia. Furthermore, Pabst requested that he and fellow Stahlhelm member and friend, Emil Bems, seek an audience with the German Chancellor to discuss the matter of providing aid to the Austrian army and the Heimwehren in the event of war between the two, adding that Steidle and Oberst a.D. Thomas Klimann, leader of the Carinthian Heimatschutz were in Vienna, speaking to the Austrian Chancellor on the same matter. Nothing ever materialized out of the Pabst’s appeals to his contacts in Germany. In a subsequent letter to Reichert, Pabst discussed a conversation he had with an “influential member of the Foreign Office in Berlin” in which the official told him that Germany would not be able to offer any military or material support, as its foreign policy actions were limited by the French occupation of the Rhineland.⁶⁵⁶

Concerns proved great enough that Steidle and Pabst reached out to Yugoslavian nationalist organizations such as Orjuna (Organisation of Yugoslavian Nationalists), Matica, and Sokol. In one instance, two leaders from the Orjuna had met with a Heimatwehr representative in Innsbruck, Dr. Walther Pembauer, but no agreement appears to have ever been reached regarding the establishment of an alliance between the two organizations in the event of war. Orjuna representatives offered to supply the Heimwehren sufficiently with arms to ensure that the Bludenz-Bischofshofen rail line in Austria was accessible for use against Italy. Negotiations appear to have broken down

⁶⁵⁶ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/1, fol. 127, 8, 14.

when the Orjuna representatives insisted on the inclusion of officials from the Yugoslavian War Ministry in Belgrade. As the German Consul General to Innsbruck noted, one could assess the importance of the negotiations solely based on the fact that the Orjuna leaders were negotiating with Pembauer, rather than Steidle or Pabst. Given the fact that Yugoslavian troops had once tried to annex sections of southern Carinthia, it is not surprising that the province's governor and supporter of the Heimwehr movement at that time, Vinzenz Schumy, was opposed to any sort of negotiations with Yugoslavian elements.⁶⁵⁷

There was indeed legitimate concern over the potential of an Italian-Yugoslavian conflict over Albania in the spring of 1927. The efforts of Heimwehr leaders to establish contingency plans involving German paramilitary organizations, particularly in Bavaria, was a concern for the German Foreign Office, which followed these developments closely, discouraging Bavarian officials and paramilitary leaders from embroiling themselves in the foreign affairs of Austria and, potentially, other European states. As it were, the threat of an Italian-Yugoslavian conflict was settled by the League of Nations and the matter was soon forgotten. The cynical Consul General to Innsbruck, Hans von Saller, contended that Steidle and Pabst overemphasized the potential threat facing Austria in a Yugoslav-Italian war "because it is believed that it is easier to get material support from outside in this way," as opposed to placing their requests for arms and equipment in the context of escalating tensions with the Social Democrats.⁶⁵⁸ Saller knew, however, that the *Heimwehren* were in bad financial condition at the outset of

⁶⁵⁷ TNA: GFM 33/2585/6080, E450980-1, E451024-6.

⁶⁵⁸ TNA: GFM 33/2585/6080, E450982-3, E451000, E451004-6, E451019-21.

1927, which was why they were reaching out to their Bavarian counterparts; Heimwehr documents confirm the organization's poor financial shape.⁶⁵⁹ The Tyrolean Heimatwehr was so poor it could only afford to pay for a section of the organization to attend the soldiers' monument dedication ceremony in Brixlegg (Tyrol) on August 8, 1926.⁶⁶⁰ Despite receiving money from Austrian bankers and industrialists, the Heimwehren remained insufficiently funded, which can be attributed, once more, to its identity as a volunteer organization.

Dr. Ignaz Seipel, Catholic priest, leader of the Christian Social Party, and twice Chancellor of Austria, publicly supported parliamentary democracy in the beginning, but was ideologically inclined toward the authoritarian, Catholic social thought. Over the course of his second term as Austria's Chancellor, his disenchantment with the self-interested, partisanship of parliamentary democracy became increasingly clear. The release of the controversial Social Democratic Party's Linzer Programm, on November 3, 1926, and the rioting and burning of the Justice Ministry in Vienna by Social Democratic workers on July 15, 1927, however, proved decisive in eroding the façade of support for what he would term a "sham democracy."⁶⁶¹ Steidle, who later explained to Hungarian Minister President, István Bethlen, that as President of the Austrian Federal Council (Bundesrat), he spent a good deal of time in Vienna and frequently spoke with Seipel about preparations for an inevitable government change in Austria.⁶⁶² His turn toward an

⁶⁵⁹ TNA: GFM 33/2585/6080, E450997-451003. Little had change by the autumn of that year, as Pabst wrote in a correspondence to von Reichert that the "organization is poor." TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/1, fol. 127, 118-9.

⁶⁶⁰ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), V/1, fol.829, 608, 611. In total, it was estimated that they could only afford for 350 men to attend the monument dedication.

⁶⁶¹ Rath, "Authoritarian Austria," 29-30; Diamant, "Austrian Catholics," 614.

⁶⁶² Kerekes *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 22.

authoritarian solution, historians have argued, became evident with his open support of the Heimwehr movement, whose rhetoric had become increasingly anti-democratic. Indeed, in the Heimwehren, he saw a force that could be utilized to destroy the Social Democratic Party, despite resistance within his own party, stating that “true democracy”—as opposed to the republic’s parliamentary democracy—was “one of the strongest driving forces of the Heimwehr movement.”⁶⁶³ However, Seipel’s support for the Heimwehren—as chapter four demonstrated—had been ongoing, from 1920 onward, as his aversion to the republic grew. The only difference between Seipel’s support for the Heimwehr movement in 1920 and 1928, is the fact that he made it public.

Seipel’s efforts to establish closer relations with Fascist Italy in his second term as Chancellor was, in this context, not surprising. Mussolini had successfully crushed Social Democratic opposition in Italy and, as one Austrian Social Democratic newspaper pointed out, “it is certain that all anti-Marxists in Austria see their ideal in Mussolini.” The article continued, sarcastically, adding that if they could elect a king, “the ‘Duce’ would have long since moved into the Vienna Hofburg. Mussolini and Seipel hand in hand!”⁶⁶⁴ Similarly, Steidle, as the *Bundesführer* of the *Heimwehr* movement, was christened by the Social Democratic press as the “Tyrolean Mussolini,” and “little Mussolini.”⁶⁶⁵ Beyond a shared aversion of Marxism, there were several more explicit

⁶⁶³ “Seipel für die Heimwehren,” *Die Rote Fahne*, December 19, 1928, p.1; Diamant, “Austrian Catholics,” 613.

⁶⁶⁴ “Der teilbare Hakenkreuzler,” *Arbeiterwille*, March 26, 1926, 11.

⁶⁶⁵ See, for example, “Korrespondenzen. Aus dem Kohlenrevier,” *Tagblatt*, July 29, 1927, 7-8; “Otto Bauers Absage an den Bürgerkrieg,” *Neues Wiener Journal*, November 1, 1927, 4; “Drohungen der Heimwehrleute,” *Volkspost*, August 25, 1928, 4.

indications that Seipel sought to improve relations with Italy. In an interview given to an American journalist, the Chancellor said of Mussolini:

I have known Mussolini since 1923. He is a great man. Austria sees him with great sympathy, particularly because he triumphed over Bolshevism. Mussolini is not just a man of violence, he is a man of ideals.⁶⁶⁶

Furthermore, in October 1926 Seipel sent Mussolini, through the Austrian embassy in Rome, a copy of a recently published compendium of his speeches, inscribing it to “His Excellency, the head of the Italian government and renewer of Italy, as a reminder of lasting friendship.”⁶⁶⁷ Despite the fact that Seipel’s friendly gestures received widespread negative attention in the Austrian press, they were signposts of a desire for closer relations between the far-right elements of the Christian Social Party and Fascist Italy. U.S. and German diplomatic reports indicated that the Heimwehren had also reached out to Fascist Italy. In 1925 Styrian governor, Anton Rintelen, through Camillo Castiglioni, an Italian entrepreneur living in Vienna at the time, sought—to no avail—financial and material support from Fascist Italy.⁶⁶⁸ In a February 4, 1927 memo, German Consul General, Hans von Saller indicated to the German Foreign Office in Berlin, that Steidle had been engaged in “exhaustive negotiations” with Italians to secure financial assistance for the Tyrolean Heimatwehr, contrary to the wishes of the President (Friedrich) Reitlinger of the Tyrolean Industrial Association, who was a major donor to the Tyrolean formation. In Saller’s view, Steidle was “foolish” and his endeavor was bound to “end

⁶⁶⁶ "Unerhört: Dr. Seipel über Mussolini," *Tagblatt*, June 22, 1926, 9.

⁶⁶⁷ "Eine Widmung Dr. Seipels an Mussolini," *Salzburger Chronik*, October 12, 1926, 6. The book Seipel sent Mussolini was *Seipels Reden in Österreich und anderwärts: Eine Auswahl zu seinem 50. Geburtstag*, ed. Josef Gessl (Vienna: Heros-Verlag, 1926).

⁶⁶⁸ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 37.

with great disgrace.”⁶⁶⁹ Despite the fact that German ambassador in Rome, Constantin von Neurath, indicated in October 1927, that Italian money and arms were going to Austria for the purpose of undertaking a change of government, there seems to be no tangible evidence that this ever took place, as the Heimwehr movement’s financial situation remained quite poor.⁶⁷⁰

To be sure, the generally accepted notion that the Italian and Hungarian governments had the “idea to use the Heimwehren to achieve a right-wing take-over in Austria was mentioned by the Hungarians for the first time in conversations between Bethlen and Mussolini in Milan in April 1928: a right-wing Austria would form a bridge between fascist Italy and revisionist Hungary,” is simply not the case.⁶⁷¹ The fact that Rintelen and Steidle, on separate occasions, had actively engaged official Italian channels at least as early as 1925 and had long maintained contact with representatives of the Hungarian government, signifies that the idea of supporting the Heimwehr movement to implement a new system of government was not a new idea, nor does it indicate that the Heimwehren were passively acted upon by opportunistic Italian and Hungarian governments—quite the opposite. Moreover, as the previous chapter detailed, the Hungarian government had supplied Heimwehr formations with substantial sums of money for just this aim in 1920-1. Indeed, by April 1928, a Heimwehr putsch of the Austrian republic had been germinating for quite some time.

⁶⁶⁹ TNA: GFM 33/2585/6080, E451007-8. Graf von Zech agreed with Saller that Steidle’s attempts to secure aid from Italy would go nowhere. See TNA: GFM 33/2585/6080, E451011.

⁶⁷⁰ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 53; TNA: GFM 33/2585/6080, E451007-8; TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/1, fol. 127, 118-19.

⁶⁷¹ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 114. Carsten draws on Kerekes here.

While Kerekes contends that “Italy was not able to achieve any success on the official diplomatic path,” Chancellor Seipel’s overtures to Mussolini in the latter half of 1926 certainly indicated that he was quite open to improving relations between the two countries.⁶⁷² The lack of success to which Kerekes refers was, no doubt, connected to Seipel’s criticism of discriminatory Italian policies in South Tyrol, which prompted Mussolini to recall Italy’s ambassador to Austria for nearly the first half of 1928.⁶⁷³ In addition to the condition that the Heimwehr movement would initiate a new system of government in Austria, the new government would censure any discursive discussion of the South Tyrol question.⁶⁷⁴ Both illustrate the extent to which the question of South Tyrol obstructed the development of Austrian and Italian relations, but also underpinned Mussolini’s support of the Heimwehren.

When Bethlen met with Mussolini in April 1928, and proposed their joint “österreichischen Aktion,” he had been contacted by Steidle and Pabst, who had requested the support of the Hungarian government in the form of 300,000 schillings and arms the previous August, as their ranks were greatly expanding in the months following their successful quashing of Social Democratic strikes and demonstrations in July 1927.⁶⁷⁵ Moreover, Steidle outlined in a letter to Bethlen in May 1928, the Heimwehr movement’s reorganization to aggressively “force the so-called bourgeois parties to alter the half-Bolshevik constitution that came into being under the pressure of the red streets

⁶⁷² Lajos Kerekes, “Akten zu den geheimen Verbindungen zwischen der Bethlen-Regierung und der Österreichischen Heimwehrbewegung,” 300.

⁶⁷³ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 62.

⁶⁷⁴ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 21-2.

⁶⁷⁵ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 10; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 61.

of Vienna, regardless of the resistance or events unleashed thereby.”⁶⁷⁶ To be sure, Steidle and Pabst were using the Hungarians and Italians as much as the Hungarians and Italians were using them.

This picture runs contrary to the prevailing notion among histories of the First Republic and the Heimwehr movement have interpreted its cooperation with Mussolini as having been one-sided; the Heimwehren were merely an “Italian foreign legion.”⁶⁷⁷ The continuity of this narrative reflects the creep of Social Democratic propaganda on a receptive audience of scholars more than it does the result of historical analysis and interpretation. The source of this narrative can be tracked to the Social Democrats’ discovery that the Heimwehren had been receiving financial support from Mussolini in January 1932. Social Democratic newspaper such as the *Salzburger Wacht* declared, referring to the Heimwehren, that “the Austro-fascists are in the pay of Mussolini,” while headline of the article that appeared in *Die Unzufriedene* read, “The Austrian Heimwehr in the Service of Mussolini!”⁶⁷⁸ To be sure, the reason Mussolini and Horthy supported the Heimwehren was that their action would lead to a similarly authoritarian-style government that would work in harmony with their own. Equally as certain was the fact that this was also what Steidle and Pfrimer—the movement’s two federal leaders—wanted as well; both had made their disdain for the frivolous posturing of partisan

⁶⁷⁶ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 14-5; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 61.

⁶⁷⁷ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 61. See also Jedlicka, “The Austrian Heimwehr,” 143; Rath, “Authoritarian Austria,” 32; Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 169.

⁶⁷⁸ This information came to light after Steidle filed a suit against the editors of two Christian Social papers, the *Volkszeitung* and the *Arbeiter* for contending that Steidle had “lost his honor” (*verlorenengegangenen Ehrenwortes*) by dealing with Mussolini. See “Die Heimwehr hat von Mussolini zwei Millionen Lire bekommen!”, *Salzburger Wacht*, January 12, 1932, 1-2; “Die österreichische Heimwehr im Dienste Mussolinis!”, *Die Unzufriedene*, January 23, 1932, 2. See also, “Die Heimwehr hat von Mussolini zwei Millionen Lire bekommen!”, *Vorarlberger Wacht*, January 16, 1932 2;

politics clear at every opportunity. The assertion that the Heimwehr movement was an instrument of foreign influence is true only in so far as it coincided with its own agenda.

For Italy's part, Mussolini's arrangement with the Heimwehren, finalized in July 1928, was but a single agreement in wider Italian foreign policy geared toward weakening French influence in the Balkans, which was exercised primarily through the "Little Entente," comprised of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania. Italian relations with Yugoslavia had been particularly rocky, as both states attempted to lay claim to what was Habsburg Dalmatia and Albania after World War I. In September 1926, Italy and Romania signed a friendship agreement, two months later a treaty with Albania was signed, followed by a friendship pact with Hungary in April 1927, and, finally, a treaty with Greece in November 1928.⁶⁷⁹ Furthermore, Mussolini had established a close relationship with Bulgaria—a vanquished ally to the Central Powers who lost territory to members of the Little Entente at the Paris Peace Conference—which was reinforced with the marriage of Princess Joanna of Savoy to the Bulgarian King, Boris III in 1930.⁶⁸⁰

Mussolini's efforts to weaken French influence in Central Europe continued with consistent criticism of France for not allowing Germany to rearm itself on the "basis of equality with other nations."⁶⁸¹ Shortly after the Nazi's seizure of power in the spring of 1933, Hitler ordered that the Propaganda Ministry curb discursive press about the "Italianization" of South Tyrol, which the Führer had hoped would be sufficient to ease Mussolini's opposition to Anschluss. To Hitler's chagrin, it did not appease Mussolini's

⁶⁷⁹ Kerekes, "Bethlen-Regierung und der Österreichischen Heimwehrbewegung," 300.

⁶⁸⁰ G.E.W. Johnson, "Mussolini Muscles In," *The North American Review* 238 (August, 1934): 122.

⁶⁸¹ Johnson, "Mussolini Muscles In," 123.

heretofore staunch opposition to the unification of Germany and Austria. As one contemporary observer pointed out, the whole reason Italy went to war with Austria-Hungary in the first place was to get rid of its hereditary enemy (and annex as much of its territories as the Allies were willing to concede) that had loomed large over its northern borders; too allow Germany to annex Austria would simply replace one Goliath with another, still greater Goliath, effectively neutralizing the main benefit of the Great War.⁶⁸² Ironically, of all of the major powers of Europe, including Great Britain, only Italy demonstrated the willingness to stand up to Hitler's aggressive foreign policy prior to 1939. In the wake of Engelbert Dollfuss's assassination by Austrian Nazis on July 25, 1934, Mussolini ordered Italian Army divisions to the Austrian border, should German troops cross over into Austria.

Hungarian foreign policy and its long-time connections with the *Heimwehr* movement made it a natural accomplice in this plot. Its designs for restoring its lost territories naturally put it odds with the Little Entente, all of whom gained as a result. This also placed Hungarian foreign policy aims in opposition to that of the French, the primary benefactor of the Little Entente. An alliance with Italy, despite their opposition in the Great War, helped solidify the Hungarian position in this new Central European setting. The establishment of a like-minded, authoritarian regime in Austria, which it would play a part in installing, would further fortify Hungarian interests in Central Europe. At the same time, it would weaken the grip of the French and Little Entente, who exercised influence in Austria in the form of promised economic aid and the threat of military intervention should monarchist elements attempt to restore the Habsburg

⁶⁸² Johnson, "Mussolini Muscles In," 123.

dynasty.⁶⁸³ Furthermore, Bethlen's good relations with Steidle and Pabst and his persuasiveness with Mussolini was key in the development of this plan.

At Bethlen and Mussolini's meeting in April 1928, it was agreed that Bethlen would mediate between Mussolini and the Heimwehr leadership. The Minister President was, by that point in time, very familiar with and trusted by Steidle and Pabst. Also, with Hungary functioning as the 'go-between', it masked the fact that the Heimwehr movement was receiving funds from Italy, for which there remained much resentment among the general Austrian population over its annexation of South Tyrol in 1919. The silence of contemporary sources indicates some degree of success of this strategy, as there was virtually no indication that the Heimwehren were receiving money or weapons from Italy. Even Social Democratic newspapers, which consistently proved themselves adept at exposing the Heimwehr's illicit activities surrounding the theft and transportation of arms, among its other clandestine operations, were silent until late June 1929 when they accused the Heimwehren of receiving money and support from Italy and Hungary.⁶⁸⁴ The well-informed, well-connected, and knowledgeable observer, C.A. Macartney, pointed to the same 'unproven rumors' that Pfrimer's Styrian outfit had received money from Italy and that in 1927, Styria had "made a treaty with Italy in case of an Italian-Yugoslav war."⁶⁸⁵ The German Foreign Office also speculated that the

⁶⁸³ Kerekes, "Bethlen-Regierung und der Österreichischen Heimwehrbewegung," 300-1; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 61-2.

⁶⁸⁴ "Die Heimwehr will Krieg führen!" *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, June 27, 1929, 1; Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 40. A typographic error lists the date of the edition as July 27, 1929, rather than June 27, but Kerekes correctly implies that the Social Democrats were tipped off Pabst's presence in Italy in the previous week.

⁶⁸⁵ C.A. Macartney, "The Armed Formations in Austria," *Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs* 8 (November, 1929): 630. Macartney was a British historian of Central Europe who

Heimwehren were receiving money from Italy, though it had no definitive proof. Eduard Hoffmann wrote to Bernhard von Bülow in September 1929, astonished that “the Italian ambassador here had the imprudence to say in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that Italy welcomed the development of the Heimwehr,” but offered nothing else in the way of concrete evidence.⁶⁸⁶

In the weeks after their meeting, the Hungarian delegation in Vienna began facilitating a dialog between Bethlen and Steidle.⁶⁸⁷ Hungarian envoy, General Béla Jánky, contacted Steidle requesting an outline of the financial and military needs of the Heimwehren, which Steidle supplied on May 23, 1928. Bethlen and Steidle met in early June to discuss Steidle’s requirements, which Bethlen had also forwarded to the Hungarian embassy in Rome, who in turn relayed it Italian Foreign Minister Dino Grandi.⁶⁸⁸ In the meantime, Jánky met not only with Steidle’s military commander, Feldmarschalleutnant a.D. Kletus von Pichler, on June 11, but also held a separate meeting the following day with several other key Heimwehr leaders in Vienna, Lower Austria, and Styria, securing their full, military cooperation in the planned putsch.⁶⁸⁹ Days later, Grandi informed the Hungarian envoy, András Hory, that the Italian government agreed

wrote extensively on Austro-Hungarian history, spent a great deal of time in both countries, and was intimately connected to official circles in both Vienna and Budapest.

⁶⁸⁶ TNA: GFM 33/2585/6080, E451054, E451056-8.

⁶⁸⁷ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 10-14.

⁶⁸⁸ It is worth noting that at this time, the *Heimwehr* movement was not centrally organized. While Tyrolean attorney and politician, Dr. Richard Steidle, was recognized as the *Bundesführer*, or “federal leader,” his position, in reality, resembled something more akin to a spokesperson, rather than a leader that would wield authority over the other provincial groups. The Styria outfit, headed by Styrian attorney, Dr. Walter Pfrimer, had, from the outset, while remaining largely independent from various efforts to establish a unified, federal Heimwehr, typically worked in harmony with the other provincial organizations and, for a period, served as the “*zweiten Bundesführer*,” or “second federal leader.”

⁶⁸⁹ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 18.

to meet needs of the Heimwehren on the condition that once the new government is established in Austria, it would cease claims to South Tyrol.⁶⁹⁰ After some negotiation on the wording of the written declaration agreeing to forgo efforts to regain South Tyrol, Bethlen confirmed with Rome that he had the signed declaration on August 1, 1928, and on August 23, Banca d'Italia released the equivalent to 1,620,000.00 *lira*—roughly the equivalent of 606,741 Austrian schillings—to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry in the form of two checks. The checks were delivered to the embassy in Vienna, where they were exchanged into Austrian schillings and personally delivered to Steidle by General Jánky.⁶⁹¹

According to the detailed breakout Steidle supplied to Jánky, the money was to be allocated to five areas, extending from the autumn of 1928 to the general election in November 1930. During this time, the Heimwehren would “raise the political temperature” against the Social Democrats and their party army, the Republikanischer Schutzbund, or “Republican Defense League,” through provocative propaganda, violence, and intimidation on the way to the 1930 election.⁶⁹² Italian funding would be used first and foremost to the provinces for “organizational purposes” such as smaller rallies (*Aufmärsche*) with 643,016.59 schillings allocated for these purposes. The amount of 224,186.72 schillings were allocated for the purchase of needed equipment, while another 241,540.04 schillings were estimated to be needed to fund large-scale Heimwehr rallies such as that planned for the Vienna suburb of Wiener Neustadt on October 7, 1928.

⁶⁹⁰ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 18; Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 161.

⁶⁹¹ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 18-23; Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 161.

⁶⁹² Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 71.

This rally would mark the first of its “fight for the freedom of the streets” (Der Kampf um die Freiheit der Strasse) and expected nearly 20,000 Heimwehr members. Over this period of time, Heimwehr leaders planned several provocative demonstrations in Social Democratic strongholds like Wiener Neustadt, in the hope to prompt a violent response from the Social Democrats and give them, Seipel, and Minister of Defense, Carl Vaugoin, the pretext to destroy the Social Democratic Party and install a new, more authoritarian system of government. Another 321,113.50 schillings were estimated to be needed for the print and propaganda. Lastly, Steidle projected that another 63,462.72 schillings would be needed for the next general election in 1930.⁶⁹³

Even though Steidle’s original breakout clearly illustrated the reality that achieving their shared aims might take some time, their Italian and Hungarian allies were disappointed by the failure of the rally in Wiener Neustadt to goad a violent response from the Social Democrats, which they hoped the Heimwehren would parley into a coup d’état. Their disappointment, however, does not illustrate a failure of the Heimwehren, as has been the prevailing notion in the literature.⁶⁹⁴ Rather it speaks more to the failure of the Italians to understand the situation in Austria. As Hungarian envoy to Rome, Andor Wodianer, tried to explain to a skeptical Dino Grandi

...the situation in Austria was different from that of the Fascists in Italy. While liberals had shown themselves to be decidedly too weak to slow down Communist propaganda, the Fascists' action had found the approval of almost all bourgeois society, and Seipel had so far succeeded in restraining the movements from the left. It is, therefore, to a certain extent, understandable that Steidle, as far as possible, is to be provoked. I could not convince Mr. Grandi completely, but he concluded the conversation with the remark that at the moment there was nothing to do but to hope that the matter would soon be better.⁶⁹⁵

⁶⁹³ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 201.

⁶⁹⁴ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 70;

⁶⁹⁵ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 30.

Seipel, who gave his sanction of the rally and of action by the Heimwehren, should the Social Democrats respond with violence, secured an agreement from Heimwehr leaders that neither they nor their men would initiate violence. The Chancellor did much to defuse the situation, “compelling” both sides to agree to demonstrate at different times of the day and to accept an overabundance of army and police forces on-hand to cordon off the Heimwehren from the Schutzbund. Seipel had also encouraged the Heimwehr leadership to reduce the men they were planning on bringing, to which Steidle acquiesced. Edmondson notes, “Seipel hoped to realize that political goal by his own political maneuvering and by the threat of force.”⁶⁹⁶ As such, Seipel was simply unwilling to commit to Wiener Neustadt being the turning point for realizing their shared aim of destroying the Social Democratic Party and, ultimately, remaking the Austrian government.⁶⁹⁷

At the same time, Pabst, who not surprisingly figured centrally in orchestrating the event, should have foreseen the real potential that their plans to provoke a violent response from the Schutzbund would not take place. Moreover, why would the Heimwehr leadership have demanded that the government forces present guard their gathering during the program of events, effectively preventing “Marxist attacks or other hindrances”?⁶⁹⁸ If the true desire is to provoke a suitably belligerent response from the opposition, would it not have been more favorable to allow for as many opportunities for such “attacks and hindrances” as possible in the hope that they develop into the chance to violently suppress the Social Democrats? Moreover, why would Steidle have agreed to

⁶⁹⁶ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 64, 66, 70.

⁶⁹⁷ Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 165 implies as much in his assessment of the event.

⁶⁹⁸ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 66.

reduce the number of Heimwehr men participating in the rally? Did Heimwehr leaders expect the Schutzbund to be so aghast at their invasion that the requisite attack was assured? What becomes increasingly evident when one looks at the lengthy, if not prophetic, document of planned Heimwehr events Steidle provided Italian officials, coupled with the extensive security preparations made around the Aufmarsch in Wiener Neustadt, is that the event never intended to be the flashpoint that their Italian patrons had envisaged.⁶⁹⁹ Instead it was, as Steidle had made clear, a single event in a lengthier plan to demonstrate the movement's growing strength in the run up to the 1930 general election. This is not to say that preparations were not made to take advantage of the situation, should hostilities erupt, but rather that the event was never intended to be the flashpoint Mussolini had envisioned. From this standpoint, the harmony between Seipel's vision of implementing an authoritarian government via legal channels and armed intimidation, and the plan Steidle laid out for his Italian backers, is quite clear.

As it were, Steidle justifiably declared the rally a victory for the Heimwehren, citing that the federal government stood firmly beside it, having defended its right to demonstrate in the face of strong Social Democratic resistance.⁷⁰⁰ The numerous letters Steidle received also praised his leadership and the Heimwehr's "victory of Christian power and of the 'Right.'" ⁷⁰¹ Seipel, at the same time, parlayed the strong Heimwehr stand into Social Democratic concessions on rent control, a hotly contested issue on

⁶⁹⁹ A series of correspondences between Steidle and Seipel, in addition to referenced conversations are indicative of the safeguards they worked to put into place in the months leading up the rally. TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV (Österreich), XII/3. fol. 1-708, 18-19, 26, 9-10, 20-21, 30, 318, 320-1.

⁷⁰⁰ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 120; Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 166.

⁷⁰¹ TLA: Bundesleitung der SSV (Österreich), XIII/11, Karton 14, "Jonak-Freyenwald to Steidle, October 8, 1928." This folder was unnumbered as it was only found recently (10/2/2013).

which they had, to that point in time, stood resolute.⁷⁰² With Seipel's encouragement and Italian money, the Heimwehren continued staging large rallies and parades where Steidle and Pfrimer sustained their aggressive attacks on the Social Democrats and on the republic into the winter of 1928. With the toxic political discourse cultivated by the Heimwehren, the political situation inside Austria worsened, while unemployment figures climbed to quarter of a million by the spring of 1929.

In March 1929, Bethlen and Grandi met in Budapest to discuss the situation of the Heimwehr movement and the political conditions inside Austria and agreed that a decisive action by the Heimwehren could tip the republic to its breaking point. As the Heimwehr movement steadily expanded, so too did its financial needs. Steidle explained that it needed another 970,000 Schillings to help the provincial organizations keep pace with their growing ranks. Upon Bethlen's advice, Grandi made half of the 970,000 Schillings available immediately, but withheld the remainder until the autumn, at which time they would once more reevaluate their continued cooperation.⁷⁰³ In early April, the Heimwehren received a lucky break in the fact that Seipel resigned the Chancellorship. Though Seipel had proven a consistent supporter of the Heimwehr movement and confidant to Steidle, he had opposed transforming the government by putsch and was a much more formidable politician. Moreover, Seipel's long-time support of the movement and relationship with Steidle, no doubt created an uncomfortable situation on both sides. By the end of June 1929, with Seipel out of the way, Steidle would unleashed the full weight of the Heimwehren and its resources on a blistering campaign of brinkmanship.

⁷⁰² Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 65-6; Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 30.

⁷⁰³ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 34, 36-7.

The matter of supplying the Heimwehren with the requested arms and equipment would prove to be an unexpected source of consternation. The first shipments of weapons and supplies were to be delivered to its Lower Austrian formations and those in the eastern section of Upper Austria, some 5,000 rifles accompanied by 1,000,000 rounds of ammunition, and 40 machine guns with 4 belts each.⁷⁰⁴ Pabst's deputy, Oberstleutnant a.D. Jaromir Diakow, was tasked with overseeing the shipments with the Hungarian embassies in Vienna and Rome. On September 22, 1928, Diakow left for Rome to pick up the first shipment. It is not entirely clear what transpired while Diakow was in Rome and on his return trip on September 25, but in a correspondence from Bethlen to Steidle, it was clear that he had made "a very unfavorable impression" on Italian officials, to the point that Grandi made clear that they would not have any future dealings with Diakow, requesting that he send another, more trustworthy representative for future transactions.⁷⁰⁵

Steidle wisely charged Pabst with this critical task and in a subsequent communication Steidle finalized his request to Italy for 18,000 rifles with bayonets, 300 rounds of ammunition for each, and 190 machine guns.⁷⁰⁶ It was agreed that Pabst would arrive in Rome on June 17, 1929 to take possession of the next shipment of weapons and equipment. Upon arriving in Rome and discussing the logistics of the weapons transport with the Hungarian envoy in Rome, András Hóry, Pabst realized the significant risk of

⁷⁰⁴ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 23-5.

⁷⁰⁵ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 24-5; D. Nemes, "Die österreichische Aktion der Bethlen-Regierung," *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 11 (1965): 208-9. Hungarian documents do offer any detail as to what happened on Diakow's return trip to Austria, however there appeared to have been some sort of issue at the Austrian-Italian border in which the shipment was confiscated either by Austrian or Italian border guards.

⁷⁰⁶ Nemes, "Die "österreichische Aktion" der Bethlen-Regierung," 202; Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 15.

transporting a large shipment of arms across the border. Instead, they agreed that a request should be made of the Italians of between 500,000 to 600,000 lira in lieu of weapons and that they place the originally promised arms in a weapons depot near the Austrian-Italian border, where the arms could be retrieved “without any danger immediately after the beginning of the ‘Aktion’.”⁷⁰⁷ Mussolini, frustrated with the “hesitation” of the Heimwehr leaders, reluctantly agreed to release the funds and to deposit the promised weapons, but with the caveat that they would be required to provide a written statement declaring that he would undertake “decisive Action to modify the Austrian state constitution” by March 15, 1930. On August 24, 1929, Mussolini was handed the statement signed by Steidle, Pfrimer, and Pabst.⁷⁰⁸

In the weeks following their written promise to *Il Duce*, Austrian Defense Minister, Carl Vaugoin, who had been kept up-to-date by Steidle and Pabst on the developments with Italy and Hungary, discussed plans for a joint action between the Austrian army and the Heimwehr with Hungarian military attaché Dr. Daniel Fábry. The plan was to seize the Rathaus (City Hall) in Vienna, while the Lower Austrian Heimwehr would block Schutzbund forces in Wiener Neustadt from coming to the aid of the Viennese units. The borders would be sealed in specific locations to prevent the intervention of the Reichsbanner in Germany, specifically at Hainburg an der Donau on the Lower Austrian border with Czechoslovakia. According to Fábry’s report to Hungarian Foreign Minister Lajos Walkó, the scheme was to unfold out of a planned

⁷⁰⁷ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 40.

⁷⁰⁸ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 41; Nemes, “Die “österreichische Aktion” der Bethlen-Regierung,” 218.

demonstration in Vienna on September 29, 1929.⁷⁰⁹ Moreover, the Heimwehr's propaganda printed in conservative newspapers read as an ultimatum to the Steierwitzer government, eliciting concern from foreign governments crucial Austria's economic stability.⁷¹⁰ On September 21, the Heimwehr held a rally in Vienna where some 10,000 members gathered at the Heldenplatz (Place of Heroes) where Steidle excoriated the failures of the "Reds," in addition to the planned September 29 "March on Vienna." Amid fears that the Heimwehren would initiate a civil war with the Social Democrats, Steierwitzer stepped down.⁷¹¹

Forcing Steierwitzer to resign the Chancellorship won the Heimwehren "considerable prestige" and is indicative of the influence the movement carried in Austrian politics at its pinnacle. Vinzenz Schumy would later write that the Heimwehr leadership would look to Steierwitzer's successor, Johann Schober, "as the man who would change the structure of Austria and bring the Heimwehren to a position of power or even predominance." However, as Upper Austrian Heimwehr member, and future architect of corporatist Austria, Odo Neutstädter-Stürmer, explained several years later, the Heimwehren were strong enough at that time to have carried out any constitutional change they desired, but made the mistake of putting their confidence in Schober and elevating him to the Chancellor.⁷¹² Schober had cooperated with the Heimwehr in past

⁷⁰⁹ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 43; Nemes, "Die "österreichische Aktion" der Bethlen-Regierung," 220.

⁷¹⁰ Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 169-70.

⁷¹¹ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 49.

⁷¹² Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 125; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 83; Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 171. Lauridsen contends that the *Heimwehr* movement was not the "driving force" behind Steierwitzer's resignation, rather it was the provincial governors and influential circles on the far-right that protected the *Heimwehren*. As such, the *Heimwehr* was simply a tool. While critiquing Edmondson for not appreciating this, Lauridsen does not seem to appreciate the fact that this

schemes in his capacity as Federal Chief of Police, in addition to putting down the Social Democrat-incited riots in July 1927. These instances of cooperation, and other expressions of sympathy for their aims, naturally gave Heimwehr leaders the impression that Schober maintained a similar vision for Austria's future.

Immediately after his appointment as Chancellor, Schober held a lengthy meeting with the leaders of the Heimwehr movement. Steidle laid out their overarching objective—the “final liberation of the Austrian people from the rule of the Social Democrats,” which could only be achieved peaceably through constitutional reform. In particular, the Heimwehren had long been campaigning for reforms that gave increased power for the presidency, a parliament based on estates, not political parties, and the revocation of Vienna's status as its own province. For Schober's part, he requested that Steidle utilize his connections in the Hungarian and Italian governments to help Austria secure the League of Nations loan. On both matters, Schober and the Heimwehr leaders were in agreement. Steidle subsequently approached the Italian ambassador in Vienna, Giacinto Auriti, requesting Mussolini's approval for the loan. Steidle added, however, that if *Il Duce* did approve of loan, he should do so on the condition that Schober oversees the successful reform of Austria's constitution.⁷¹³

Two simultaneous developments would rob the Heimwehren of the momentum the movement had built up toward achieving the constitutional reform they desired. First,

“tool” their shared aim of removing Steierwits's moderate government would not have been achieved. Moreover, he, like his predecessors, fails to appreciate the fact that Heimwehr leaders had consistently been at the forefront of calling for the reforms these same circles had desired. It was the intimidation of their threats of a putsch and civil war with the Social Democrats—not harmless partisan bickering—that brought about Steierwits's fall.

⁷¹³ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 51; Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 126.

Mussolini changed direction with Schober's appointment as Chancellor. He believed that Schober could achieve the change in course he had hoped to achieve with the Heimwehren. As such, he encouraged Steidle to support Schober. Second, the relationship between Schober and the Heimwehr leadership quickly turned adversarial. Schober found out about Steidle's recommendation to the Italians that they make their support for Austria's League of Nations loan conditional on Schober's passage of their desired reforms to the constitution.⁷¹⁴ At the same time, Pfrimer's thinly veiled threat to 'implement the constitutional reform that we seek or else,' did little to maintain good will, no doubt.⁷¹⁵ Moreover, the constitutional reforms Schober ultimately put to parliament were passed unanimously, as they were watered-down compromises he had made with the Social Democrats. Not only were none of the reforms passed those demanded by Heimwehr leaders, Schober had compromised, both of which were intolerable to Steidle and Pfrimer.

It was a very public and humiliating defeat for the leadership of the Heimwehr movement that was only compounded by the fact that their Italian benefactors now supported the Chancellor, concluding that further financial support of the Heimwehren unnecessary.⁷¹⁶ In fact, Mussolini agreed to provide Schober with a requested 20,000 rifles and 500 machine guns to help buttress his position against a potential Heimwehr coup d'état. Bethlen and Mussolini conveyed once more to Steidle that their sympathies toward the Heimwehren were unchanged, but saw no reason for maneuverings against the

⁷¹⁴ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 126.

⁷¹⁵ Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 171.

⁷¹⁶ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 126; Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 53.

Schober government for which they were confident would position Austria in an agreeable orientation toward Italy and Hungary. Should the situation change, however, they would be ready to once again offer their support to the Heimwehren.⁷¹⁷

Steidle and Pfrimer remained bitter and continued holding anti-government rallies in February and March 1930. Their continued opposition prompted Schober to request that Urban and Baron von Erhardt, the President and Vice-President of Hauptverband der Industrie Österreich, withhold their regular subsidies to the Heimwehren as well.⁷¹⁸ With the movement's two major sources of funding cut, it effectively paralyzed the Heimwehren. In early December 1929, both Steidle and Pfrimer had offered to resign their positions as leaders of the confederation. Only after persistent appeals did Pabst convince the two to remain as the heads of the Heimwehr movement.⁷¹⁹ Adding insult to injury, Schober followed through on his threats to have Pabst—a Reich German émigré—deported. In early June, 1930 Pabst was arrested and deported to Italy; despite claiming that he no intentions of continuing his activity in the Heimwehr movement, he remained an important figure in mediating compromises between the Heimwehr leadership and brokering Italian and German aid for the Heimwehren.⁷²⁰ What is more, Schober played a central role in Starhemberg's meteoric rise in through the ranks of the Heimwehr movement; in the course of a year, the prince rose from a section leader in Upper Austria to challenging its federal leadership. Replacing its present, obstinate leadership with a

⁷¹⁷ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 70.

⁷¹⁸ Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 76.

⁷¹⁹ Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 176.

⁷²⁰ Schober's government collapse in September 1930 and his successor, Carl Vaugoin, permitted Pabst to return to Austria in November 1930.

young, charismatic, impressionable, and more moderate alternative was Schober's aim in supporting Starhemberg.⁷²¹ Despite the perceived failure of Steidle, Primer, and Pabst to achieve its goal of constitutional reform, it had been the weight of the Heimwehr movement and the pressure it exerted on the Steeruwitz government that brought Schober to power and delivered to Mussolini the man that both he and they believed would bring about the constitutional changes that would reorder Austrian society. After all, Bethlen and Mussolini understood that the Heimwehren would, by themselves, not be able to implement the changes necessary for a successful, sustainable right-wing government.⁷²²

The relationship between the Heimwehren and Mussolini in 1928-30 was but a brief indication of the much larger and more direct role he would play in aiding the movement under Starhemberg. While a student at the University of Innsbruck, Starhemberg was active in the Tyrolean Heimatwehr, undertaking various duties surrounding the procurement of weapons through "theft" and smuggling arms across the Austro-Bavarian border.⁷²³ After this brief stint, it would not be until 1929 that Starhemberg would reemerge as a section leader in the Upper Austrian Heimwehr, raising and personally funding a rifle battalion of some 2,000 men. According to his memoir, Starhemberg, in separate conversations with Hitler and Bethlen, both suggested he meet with Mussolini and try to establish an alliance with him. Starhemberg, as a self-proclaimed "prominent member of the Heimatschutz" in the spring of 1930, would have

⁷²¹ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 103; Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 76. Starhemberg, despite Schober's support in taking leadership over the Heimwehr movement, acknowledged him as an enemy to the *Heimwehren*, calling the fall of his government in the autumn of 1930, "not unwelcome." See Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 33.

⁷²² Kerekes, *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 14; Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 160.

⁷²³ Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 6-7.

surely been aware of the fact that the movement had already established an alliance with the Hungarian and Italian governments.⁷²⁴ As such, his presentation of it as a path-breaking maneuver is dubious and represents a recurring pattern of self-aggrandizement and whitewashing of his motives and ideals, making caution necessary in utilizing his memoirs. While Hitler and Bethlen may have indeed encouraged Starhemberg to meet with Mussolini, it was through a letter *Il Duce* sent to his mother, Princess Fanny Starhemberg, that their meeting was arranged.⁷²⁵ Schober arranged for Starhemberg to meet Italian Foreign Minister Dino Grandi to meet with Starhemberg in early June 1930. At this meeting, Grandi informed Starhemberg of Italy's "wasted financial 'sacrifices'" for the Heimwehren to that point in time. Schober's intention for arranging this meeting was to seize upon energetic support the young Starhemberg was receiving within the ranks of the movement to upend Steidle and Pfrimer.⁷²⁶

In July 1930 Starhemberg met with Mussolini. According to his account of their discussion, Mussolini reaffirmed Austria's importance to Italian foreign policy, stating that "[a]n independent Austria is essential to the maintenance of order and peace in Europe. For that reason it is absolutely imperative for Europe that Austria should be developed and made strong, and, if you get vigorously to work, you can count on my full support."⁷²⁷ Subsequently, by his own admission, the meeting energized Starhemberg who began immediately upon his return, consolidating his support base in preparation for his challenge for the leadership of the Heimwehr movement; Starhemberg was of course

⁷²⁴ Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 21.

⁷²⁵ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 288. See footnote 32.

⁷²⁶ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 103; Kerekes *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 74-6.

⁷²⁷ Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 24.

strongest in Upper Austria, but also enjoyed a great deal of support in Lower Austria and Vienna, in particular. At the September 5, 1930 leadership meeting Schladming (Styria), Starhemberg charged Steidle and Pfrimer with “incapacity and feebleness of purpose.” To his surprise, the two leaders did not challenge his indictment, but resigned. In the electoral process that followed, Starhemberg was voted Bundesführer, but by only a “small majority.” His narrow election was a clear indication of the lack of unity and purpose of mind among the movement’s provincial leaders.⁷²⁸

Shortly after being elected Bundesführer, Starhemberg was invited to Hungary to meet the Hungarian Minister of Defense at that time, Gyula Gömbös. By Starhemberg’s account of their meeting, a principal topic of discussion was procuring arms. As it were, both the Heimwehren and the Hungarian government encountered difficulties in obtaining small arms, the latter, against protocols of the Treaty of Trianon, was secretly rearming and rebuilding the Hungarian army. Gömbös explained that after the war Italy had confiscated some 100,000 rifles and machine guns while occupying Austria. Their plan was to persuade Mussolini to release those rifles—which according to their estimations, would have had only limited stores of ammunition due the different caliber from Italian rifles—to the Heimwehren and to Hungary whereupon they would split their windfall.⁷²⁹

Procuring arms was only one part of Starhemberg’s discussion with Gömbös. While in Hungary Starhemberg was informed of the collapse of his benefactor’s government, with the resignation of his cabinet on September 25, 1930. In his place,

⁷²⁸ Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 30.

⁷²⁹ Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 32.

stepped Chairman of the Christian Social Party, Carl Vaugoin. Vaugoin was a long-trusted supporter of the Heimwehren and asked Starhemberg to serve as Minister of the Interior. Additionally, he also appointed Dr. Franz Hueber, head of the Salzburger Heimatwehr to be his Minister of Justice. Fortune, it appeared, had turned in favor of the Heimwehren; it had prominent members and a trusted friend in the highest seats of power in the land. Starhemberg's position, as Minister of the Interior, was especially important for successfully carrying out a coup d'état, as he tasked with maintaining order within Austria and had authority over the police and gendarmerie. He joined the Vaugoin government with the intent to do just that. Gömbös, unsurprisingly, supported his intended putsch, and encouraged Bethlen to do the same. On October 16, 1930 Starhemberg informed the Hungarian envoy, Jenő Biró, that the Heimwehren intended to seize power on October 26. Pfrimer's Styrian Heimatschutz would undertake the operation as planned by General a.D. Otto Ellison. Rumors quickly spread, however, about the ill-kept secret putsch and Seipel, Bethlen, and Mussolini all prevailed upon Starhemberg to shelve the planned putsch.⁷³⁰ While the historiographic view of aborted Heimwehren putsch plans have consistently painted the movement as an almost comical portrait of dithering ineptitude, it was more often than not, the vacillation of its allies and patrons that—one hand supported the idea of a putsch, but on other, feared the uncertainties that accompanied the reality of a putsch—that was the picture of fear and indecision.

⁷³⁰ Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 34; Kerekes *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 85-7; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 115-6.

Be that as it may, Starhemberg and the Heimwehren had the November (1930) general election to attend to, which Mussolini and Bethlen had placed an undue faith. The election campaign of the Heimatblock, the movement's political party, was funded largely by Italian money. Italian Foreign Minister, Dino Grandi, explained to Starhemberg that some of the money allocated to the election, as well as funds earmarked for other areas, should be used to pay for their campaign. In the meantime, Mussolini sent another large contribution to the campaign.⁷³¹ In addition to funding the campaign, Mussolini also counseled Starhemberg, advising him not to

leave the field free to the National Socialists. An election offers the best scope for political militancy, and political militancy is what is needed. Therefore, do not miss the opportunity, but take up the fight against the Nazis.⁷³²

As such the Heimatblock entered the election campaign, in some provinces in association with the Christian Social Party and independently in others. This decision was not received well by Chancellor Vaugoin—who had been appointed Chancellor after the collapse of the Schober government—as he believed that Heimwehr candidates should run under the banner of the mainstream parties. Starhemberg, however, believed that running as a Christian Social or German People's Party candidate would leave the door open to the Nazis to serve as the sole representative of the anti-parliamentary radical-right, which both Seipel and Mussolini agreed—the Heimwehr candidates would run on an independent ticket.⁷³³ As detailed in chapter four, the results of the election gave the Heimatblock eight seats in parliament.

⁷³¹ Kerekes *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 74-6; Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 48.

⁷³² Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 48.

⁷³³ Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 48; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 114.

“Again, the Italian and Hungarian governments had been deceived by the Heimwehr,” Kerekes explains. Though election results were disappointing, the fact remained that the orientation of Austria was pivotal to Italian and Hungarian foreign policy and still required “the greatest of attention.”⁷³⁴ The year that followed did nothing but reiterate the continued need for their “österreichischen Aktion,” as Pfrimer’s Styrian Heimatschutz, in particular, drew closer to the Austrian Nazi Party. The Nazis were also gaining influence within Austrian industrial circles as well as in local elections, winning 15 seats in the Viennese Diet, for example. In June 1932 Starhemberg flew to Italy to ask for financial support, weapons, and diplomatic support from Mussolini. “If you are still interested in the independence of Austria, then help us,” Starhemberg pleaded.⁷³⁵ To be sure, as Kerekes notes, “The prospect of not having the jovial Austrian customs officials at the Brenner, but Hitler’s ever-determined Brownshirts, would be, in the eyes of the Italian Bersaglieri, unpleasant.”⁷³⁶ The growing strength of the Austrian Nazi Party was not just a grave concern for Mussolini, but also for the leadership of the Heimwehr movement and the newly appointed Dollfuss government.

Mussolini agreed to support the Heimwehren once more; “Europe needs Austria. Italy needs Austria,” he reportedly said. According to Kerekes, he promised Starhemberg 15,000 rifles and between 200-250 machine guns, though this does not match the figure of 100,000 Austrian rifles Starhemberg purportedly agreed to split with Gömbös. By

⁷³⁴ Kerekes *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 88; Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 49-50. Starhemberg’s evaluation of the election results were more realistic, taking into consideration that it was the first time the *Heimwehr* movement participated in an election of any sort. He made a valid point in his memoir that running independently and being the primary anti-parliamentary party, they took seats that might have otherwise went to the Nazis, who were shut out of the *Bundesrat* all together.

⁷³⁵ Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 81, 90.

⁷³⁶ Kerekes *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 118.

Starhemberg's account, he mentioned to Mussolini that Gömbös was to receive 50,000 rifles, implying that the Heimwehren would receive the other 50,000 rifles. As it were, in the first week of January 1933, forty truckloads of rifles and machineguns—which had been preceded by ten truckloads of “hardware” in last days of December 1932—arrived at Austrian arms factory Hirtenberg for reconditioning, after which they were distributed to the Heimwehren and to the Hungarians.⁷³⁷ It is unclear how many were sent to Steyr for reconditioning. Ever-vigilant Social Democratic workers made this transaction quickly known, which exposed Hungarian rearmament—a violation of the Treaty of Trianon. In doing so, it broadcast the dealings of Austria, Hungary, and Italy to the Little Entente and their French patrons. The “Hirtenberg Affair,” as it came to be known, despite its widespread attention ultimately came to nothing, as it was soon forgotten with Hitler's inauguration as Chancellor of Germany on January 30, 1933 and Dollfuss's March 4, 1933 declaration of the Bundesrat's “self-elimination.” Some of the arms were smuggled into Hungary in the spring, while the remainder—84,000 rifles and 980 machine guns—were split evenly between the Heimwehren and the Hungarians.⁷³⁸

The close relationship Starhemberg forged with Mussolini paved the way for Italian support of Dollfuss's government. In August 1933, they met for the first time in Rome. In addition to the money and arms Mussolini had provided the Heimwehren, he also aided Dollfuss with international diplomatic support, helping the Bundeskanzler gain approval for a temporary increase in law enforcement and defense forces to combat the Nazi terror

⁷³⁷ Kerekes *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 105-7; Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 93; “Italienische Waffen für Ungarn gehen über Österreich!”, *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, January 8, 1933, 1.

⁷³⁸ Kerekes *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 125.

campaign in Austria during the summer of 1933.⁷³⁹ Mussolini also worked with Dollfuss and Gömbös to establish several political and economic agreements between Italy, Austria, and Hungary the following spring. Politically, the three agreed “to pursue a common policy directed to promote effective collaboration among European States, particularly among Italy, Austria and Hungary. For this purpose the three governments will proceed to common consultation whenever any one of them considers it desirable.” Economically, Italy and Austria agreed to purchase a set amount of wheat from Hungary above the market rate in one arrangement. In another, Hungary and Italy agreed to lower tariffs on imports from Austrian manufacturers. Italy also agreed to open the ports of Trieste and Fiume to Austria and Hungary, which they agreed to use as their primary ports for foreign trade. In short, they established a customs union amongst themselves, mutually conceding tariffs amongst themselves.⁷⁴⁰

In addition to this economic pact, to which Dollfuss ‘capitulated’, Mussolini agreed to help the Bundeskanzler in his efforts to secretly increase the size and rearm the Austrian army, while agreeing to “regulate the flow of subsidies to the Heimwehr” as a means of keeping Fey and Starhemberg and, thus, the Heimwehren, “in line.”⁷⁴¹ Though Mussolini had greater confidence in Fey, who demonstrated himself to be more aggressive and single-minded, he called Starhemberg to Rome in April 1934 and confirmed his (financial) support for Starhemberg as the undisputed leader of the

⁷³⁹ H.L., “Herr Dollfuss and the Nazis. II,” *Bulletin of International News* 10 (Sept. 1933): 3; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 197.

⁷⁴⁰ Johnson, “Mussolini Muscles In,” 125; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 227-8.

⁷⁴¹ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 227-8. Kerekes *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 118. Kerekes notes that Mussolini and Gömbös were in agreement that keeping the *Heimwehren* aligned with the Dollfuss government was the only way his government would remain in power.

Heimwehr movement so long as he kept the Heimwehren reigned in and aligned with the Dollfuss government. Upon his return to Austria, Starhemberg's position was further buttressed by his appointment as vice-chancellor, replacing Fey. In aligning himself clearly with Starhemberg, Dollfuss had effectively ended any debate over who was the top Heimwehr leader in Austria.⁷⁴²

On July 25, 1934 Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss was assassinated in an abortive coup d'état; a small group of Austria Nazis infiltrated the chancellery building. Accompanying the events in the chancellery, armed Nazi groups in Styria, Carinthia, and Upper Austria rebelled against the government. After several days of fighting and bloodshed, the army and the Heimwehren put had crushed the Nazi putsch. While the putsch was thwarted, they had succeeded in killing their most steadfast opponent in Chancellor Dollfuss. In one last show of support for Austria, Mussolini mobilized Italian troops on the Italy's borders with Tyrol and Carinthia, should Hitler make further attempts to takeover Austria by force.⁷⁴³ Close Italian support of Austria effectively died with Dollfuss. Italy's subsequent war with Ethiopia not only diverted Mussolini's attention from Austria, but increasingly isolated Italy diplomatically, which pushed him closer to Hitler, ultimately giving way to his consent to the annexation of Austria.

The Heimatwehr, the Stahlhelm, and the Nazis

The failed Hitler-Ludendorff putsch in November 1923 effectively ended meaningful cooperation between Munich-based paramilitary organizations—particularly

⁷⁴² Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 230.

⁷⁴³ "Italienische Vorkehrungen an der Brenner- und Kärntnergrenze," *Reichspost*, July 27, 1934, 1.

Ludendorff's own network of patrons and Bund Bayern und Reich—and the Austrian Heimwehren. This break proved to be only temporary. While the Tyrolean Heimatwehr might have not made contact with the VVVD in Berlin, as German Foreign Office diplomats posited, they were most certainly in communication with VVVB members.⁷⁴⁴ In the summer of 1926, Pabst reached out once more to Forstrat Dr. Georg Escherich, — former head of the Einwohnerwehr, to whom the Tyrolean Heimatwehr, among other Heimwehr organizations, had owed their allegiance—who remained closely connected to members of what had collectively become known as the Vereinigte Vaterländische Verbände Bayerns (VVVB), or the United Patriotic Associations of Bavaria, a confederation of independent defense and political organizations, which was part of the larger Vereinigte Vaterländische Verbände Deutschland (VVVD), or the United Patriotic Associations of Germany.⁷⁴⁵

In December 1926, Escherich set up two meetings to take place on January 15-16, 1927 at the Hotel Deutscher Kaiser in Munich. The first, on Saturday, January 15, was to be limited to the “closest circle,” which included himself, Steidle, Pabst, Bavarian noble, Baron von Voithenberg, and the staff leader of the Bavarian Stahlhelm, Oberstleutnant Julius Ritter von Reichert. The second meeting was scheduled for the following day and was to include representatives from Bund Isengau, Bund Chiemgau, Bund Oberland, Schwabenbanner – Württemberg, Reichsflagge – Nürnberg, and Bund Bayern und Reich.⁷⁴⁶ These meetings effectively revived active collaboration between the

⁷⁴⁴ TNA: GFM 33/2585/6080, E450977.

⁷⁴⁵ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), V/1, fol. 829, 614.

⁷⁴⁶ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/1, fol. 127, 2.

Heimwehren with German paramilitary organizations that would continue into the early 1930s.

The underlying reason behind these meetings was two-fold. First, Heimwehr leaders sought to obtain support from the Bavarian paramilitary organizations in the event that civil war broke out in Austria. In wake of the Linzer Programm, Heimwehr leaders, while vociferously condemning the Social Democrats' new party platform, began reorganizing their organizations to reflect their "expanded" mission to actively combat the threats posed by Marxism.⁷⁴⁷ Furthermore, rumblings from Vienna indicated that Social Democrats were negotiating military support from the German Reichsbanner Schwarz-Rot-Geld—the pro-Weimar, republican paramilitary organization—in the event of civil war, underscored the Heimatwehr's initial outreach to The Stahlhelm, Bund der Frontsoldaten and the other VVVB organizations. In particular, the Heimatwehr leadership sought an agreement in which the Stahlhelm would move to check a Reichsbanner advance on Vienna. According to one memo to the Foreign Office in Berlin, the Bavarian Stahlhelm's response was noncommittal.⁷⁴⁸ The overwhelming attitude of German officials was averse to any Reich defense organizations becoming embroiled in Austrian affairs, which they feared would rouse international suspicions of German designs for Anschluss. Moreover, German Foreign Office delegates were leery of leadership of the newly confederated "Alpenländische Heimatwehr."⁷⁴⁹ Steidle and Pabst,

⁷⁴⁷ TNA: GFM 33/2585/6080, E450979, E450997-451003; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 41.

⁷⁴⁸ TNA: GFM 33/2585/6080, E450978.

⁷⁴⁹ In July 1927, Heimwehr leaders from Salzburg, Vorarlberg, Tyrol, Carinthia, and Styria established a confederation under the nominal leadership of Steidle and Styrian Heimatschutz leader, Walter Pfrimer, with Pabst serving as their chief of staff.

according to Hans von Saller, the German Consul General in Innsbruck, were reckless in their schemes, lacking “political vision.”⁷⁵⁰ Continued French occupation of the Rhineland, however, was the main reason officials discouraged such activities. The second reason was to seek further material and financial assistance from their Bavarian counterparts. As the previous chapter documented, the main source of arms and equipment to the Heimwehr movement in the early 1920s came from Bavarian organizations—the Einwohnerwehr and its predecessor, Bund Bayern und Reich, which had since fallen from its place atop Bavaria’s paramilitary community. Moreover, Bavarian aristocrats, for a time, had been sizable donors to the Heimwehren. Bavaria had been the land of milk and honey for the Heimwehr movement before and it was the hope of their leaders that it would be once again.

While the Heimwehren sought financial and material support through both its Bavarian counterparts as well as from the Hungarian and Italian governments, its leadership maintained quite a different relationship to its neighboring Bavarian organizations. For obvious reasons, its relationship with Hungarian and Italian officials was necessarily discrete and quite limited, which generally prevented the establishment of close relations, save for, perhaps, the case of Hungarian Minister President István Bethlen, for example, who forged a quite close relationship with Steidle and Pabst over an extended period of time. Though comparatively limited in the monetary and material support that came from neighboring Bavarian organizations, Heimwehr leaders established much closer working relationships than was possible with their Italian and Hungarian patrons for several reasons. First, both the Heimwehren and their Bavarian

⁷⁵⁰ TNA: GFM 33/2585/6080, E450982-3.

counterparts were only quasi-official paramilitary organizations, so there was a basis for empathy and camaraderie in their similar positions vis-à-vis state and local authorities. Second, they maintained similar anti-Marxist, anti-democratic orientations. Third, many of those individuals in regular contact across organizations were former officers and veterans of the Great War, so there was also the shared experience of soldiering that bonded these men. Fourth, they maintained a shared cultural and historical experience, which contributed greatly, of course, to the fact that they shared a reasonably similar system of values, customs, and organizational structures. In sum, these likenesses provided a useful platform for the exchange of ideas, which fostered close collaboration.

While Heimwehr leaders were in contact with various member organizations of the VVVB, the one with whom it would maintain the closest and most meaningful connection was Der Stahlhelm, Bund der Frontsoldaten. The Stahlhelm was the largest right-wing paramilitary organization in Germany, headquartered in Magdeburg (Saxony) and led, similarly to the Heimwehr movement, by two federal leaders—Franz Seldte and Theodor Duesterberg. Though contacts were established with the Stahlhelm's Bavarian formation at least as early as January 1927, open cooperation between the two groups did not begin until later that year. The thorny issue of the Bundesleitung (federal leadership) of the Stahlhelm recognizing the establishment of local groups in Kufstein (Tyrol) and in Graz (Styria), was an issue that first had to be navigated.⁷⁵¹ Much better funded and organized, recognition of Stahlhelm groups Kufstein and Graz by its federal office in Magdeburg represented an intrusion and threat to the Heimwehr movement as the hegemonic paramilitary organization in Austria. In particular, the Tyrolean Heimatwehr

⁷⁵¹ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/1, fol. 127, 87-88.

had a storm trooper formation in Kufstein that Steidle and Pabst feared would suffer from the presence a local Stahlhelm group.⁷⁵² While “discrete” efforts were made by Gauführer (Section Leader), Ludwig Psenner, to “win” the leadership of the new Stahlhelm group in Kufstein, for the Heimatwehr, Pabst and his counterpart in the Bavarian Stahlhelm, von Reichert, proposed that, with the blessing of the federal leadership of both organizations, the Heimatwehr would administer these local groups. In general, Pabst sought to establish an “Arbeitsgemeinschaft,” or “working group” with the Stahlhelm.⁷⁵³

Such collaboration would have to remain “unofficial,” however, as in September 1927 the League of Nations—which Wäninger cynically referred to as the “Entente”—had called on Chancellor Seipel to dissolve the Heimwehren as a condition for financial assistance. Steidle and Pabst had been assured by Seipel that he would reject those calls, but they understood that they need not draw further attention onto the Heimwehren, while other options were proposed. Nevertheless, there was a mutual interest in establishing closer cooperation between the Bavarian Stahlhelm and the Heimwehr movement. On September 2, 1927 Pabst and Major Carl Ritter von Wäninger, Stahlhelm leader in Munich, and thus over Bavaria, met in Innsbruck to discuss a formal groundwork for “unofficial” relations between the Heimwehren and the Stahlhelm. It was agreed that the “formation of local Stahlhelm groups hurts the unity of the Heimwehren and consideration should be given to the position of Austria and the upcoming events and must be necessarily maintained. I have promised that such foundings on our side will be omitted and will not be acknowledged.” Moreover, as Wäninger indicated to the federal

⁷⁵² TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/1, fol. 127, 91.

⁷⁵³ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/1, fol. 127, 93, 89. For a detailed breakout of the hierarchy and structure of the Tiroler Heimatwehr, see Appendix A.

office in Magdeburg, “In addition to the most active connection, a lively exchange of ideas between the Austrian Heimatwehr and the Stahlhelm over the political situations relevant to both in this working community. It is also intended to send representatives to each other’s leadership meetings.” Wäninger also suggested that the Bavarian Stahlhelm manage this relationship and function as the singular channel of communication between the federal Stahlhelm office and the Heimwehren in this “working group.”⁷⁵⁴

Bavaria also continued to be a source of arms, ammunition, and military equipment. The Stahlhelm and its associate organization, Bund Chiemgau, appear to have been a principal supplier of arms and equipment to the Heimwehren.⁷⁵⁵ These transactions continued, in spite the German Foreign Office’s repeated calls for the Bavarian government to tighten up on paramilitary organizations who continued to supply the Heimwehren with arms, ammunition, and equipment. The involvement of private German paramilitary organizations, which usually entailed the complicity of local officials on some level and, potentially, even provincial officials, was tantamount to Germany being involved in Austrian affairs.⁷⁵⁶ In either case, drawing further international scrutiny would be detrimental to Germany, as well as Austria.

Likewise, German nobles also contributed money to the Heimwehr movement. In this regard, former Einwohnerwehr leader and mentor to Steidle, Georg Escherich, played a key role due to his close connections with the declassed Bavarian nobility, which was not limited to business interactions. For example, in August 1927 Escherich informed

⁷⁵⁴ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/1, fol. 127, 112-13.

⁷⁵⁵ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/1, fol. 127, 40, 47-50, 52, 54, 68, 100-1, 115, 119.

⁷⁵⁶ TNA: GFM 33/2585/6080, E451019-21, E451043-4, E451059-60.

Steidle that he was unable to attend the upcoming Heimatwehr's Jugendtag (youth day) in Wörgl (Tyrol), as he was going to hunting with His Royal Highness Prince Leopold of Bavaria.⁷⁵⁷ Thus, he connected Steidle to aristocrats like Baron von Voithenberg and Count Rudolf von Marogna-Redwitz—executed in July 1944 as one of the central figures in the attempt to assassinate Hitler—who was a supporter of the VVVB and the Heimatwehr.⁷⁵⁸

The Heimwehr's close connections to Bavarian Landesleitung of The Stahlhelm led to closer relations with its federal leadership. In early January 1929 newspaper tycoon and influential figure in the German Nationalist Party, Alfred Hugenberg, invited Pabst to come to Berlin and speak to a small group about the development and objectives of the Austrian Heimwehren. Among this closed session were the federal leaders of The Stahlhelm, Franz Seldte and Theodor Duesterberg. Both would have most certainly known Pabst or known of him through the many contacts he maintained in German paramilitary circles. Upon hearing about their collaboration with the Hungarian and Italian governments, Seldte and Duesterberg expressed interest in establishing contact with Bethlen and Mussolini and requested that Pabst facilitate the connection. In addition to agreeing to connect Seldte and Duesterberg to Rome via Budapest, Pabst also secured monetary support from Hugenberg.⁷⁵⁹

Shortly after Pabst returned to Innsbruck, he penned a letter to Bethlen explaining Seldte and Duesterberg's desire for an active cooperation with the Hungarian and Italian

⁷⁵⁷ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/1, fol. 127, 57

⁷⁵⁸ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), V/I, fol.829, Pabst to Marogna, October 23, 1926; TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/1, fol. 127, 48.

⁷⁵⁹ Kerekes *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 32-3; Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 115-7.

governments, where “conservative and paramilitary circles...and anti-Marxist elements have seized the leadership of the state.” Steidle continued, assuaging concerns over resistance to situation in South Tyrol, explaining that Seldte and Duesterberg viewed Hungary and Italy to be natural allies in their “common aims;” Steidle proposed a “White International.”⁷⁶⁰ The “lukewarm response” from Bethlen and Mussolini to the idea of a White International was indicative of their leeriness toward establishing any sort of climate in which pan-German sentiment might be fostered.⁷⁶¹ Nevertheless, Bethlen and Mussolini agreed to establishing closer links to the Stahlhelm, advising Hugenberg, Seldte, and Duesterberg in the 1930 general election in Germany.

Broadly speaking, Bethlen’s lack of enthusiasm, in particular, was illustrative of the perpetual predicament in which Heimwehr leaders found themselves. Too close of an alignment with German nationalist circles would frustrate pro-Austrian independence circles, while they feared collaborating too closely with pro-Austrian independence elements would similarly prompt the retraction of German nationalists. This conundrum can be attributed to three specific causes: the Heimwehren generated none of its own revenue and was entirely reliant funding from external sources, it continued to maintain an open-ended membership policy, and the scatter-shot method its leadership employed to recruit patrons. As a result, the movement was forever boxed-in and limited in the action it could take without alienating one important revenue stream or another.

Consequently, it was an indication of the strength of the Social Democratic Party and its

⁷⁶⁰ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 115.

⁷⁶¹ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 71; Kerekes *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 32-3. Kerekes contends that it was Bethlen that was somewhat skeptical of the idea of a “White International.”

paramilitary Schutzbund, against which Heimwehr leaders saw maintaining widespread support from all anti-Marxist circles to be of the utmost importance. In this way, it forsook one aim—effecting the constitutional change—for another—functioning as a unifying anti-Marxist front.

Another demonstration of this conundrum occurred around joint rallies of the Heimwehren and The Stahlhelm. These joint rallies, shooting competitions, memorial ceremonies, flag dedication ceremonies, and other public events were expressions of solidarity and cooperation between the Heimwehren and their Bavarian counterparts.⁷⁶² In the May 23, 1929 edition of the communist newspaper, *Die Rote Fahne* announced that the Tyrolean Heimatwehr planned to host a delegation of the the Stahlhelm at memorial celebration of Andreas Hofer, on Berg Isel, Innsbruck following a massive Stahlhelm rally to be held in Munich on June 1-2.⁷⁶³ When Bethlen received word of the joint rally, he expressly forbid it; the pan-Germanist implications, he feared, would cloud the Hungarian-Italian “Aktion” and infuriate Mussolini whose motivations for funding the Heimwehr movement were diametrically opposed to fostering pan-Germanist sentiment.⁷⁶⁴ Thus, in the June 4 edition of the *Tyrolean Allgemeiner Anzieger*, Steidle denied that any such event had been planned, claiming the report was no doubt “consciously malicious libel” on the part of the Reichsbanner leader, Otto Hörsing.⁷⁶⁵

⁷⁶² TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/1, fol. 127, for example, contains numerous invitations among the various organizations to events such as a “Totenfeier” or “celebration of the dead (of the Great War)” and Mid-Summer Festival in Isengau, Bavaria on June 25-27 1927, a Heimatwehr “Jugendtag” or Heimatwehr “Youth Day,” that took place on September 18, 1927, a week-long shooting festival and competition in Isengau on October 1-9, 1927 to commemorate Hindenburg’s 80th birthday.

⁷⁶³ “Der Stahlhelm kommt nach Tirol,” *Die Rote Fahne*, May 23, 1929, 1.

⁷⁶⁴ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 71.

⁷⁶⁵ “Lüge über die Heimatwehr,” *Allgemeiner Tiroler Anzieger*, June 4, 1929, 1.

The *Tyrolean Allgemeiner Anzeiger* reported three days later, however, that “A troop of the Reich German Stahlhelm from the Greater Berlin group” just happened to arrive in the town of Kitzbühel where they were warmly greeted by the local Heimatwehr group.⁷⁶⁶ This situation, too, illustrates the value Steidle and Pabst placed on attaining and maintaining anti-Marxist support across all geopolitical boundaries—however tenuous the balance—over achieving constitutional reform, which it stood a better chance of attaining through a concerted effort in tandem with their Italian benefactors.

As it were, their collaboration with the Stahlhelm and other German defense formations continued. Joint events such as the “Frontsoldatentag” in Weis (Upper Austria), which took place on September 13-15, 1929. To Bethlen and Mussolini’s point, the event was markedly pan-Germanist in tone, encapsulated in the conclusions of Upper Austrian Frontkämpfervereinigung (Front Fighters Association) leader, “May the flames of enthusiasm blaze in all your hearts, into a great, holy fire which will be blown away in the wind of the storm, all the impurity and the non-peoples will emerge from this, and our free, great Fatherland - All - Germany!”⁷⁶⁷ To the dismay of the German and Austrian governments, no doubt, the close relations between the Heimwehren and the Stahlhelm was well-known to the French government by the end of 1929. French Social Democrat, Alexander Bracke, complained that the activities of the Heimwehr movement was “not an internal Austrian matter,” adding that “one their leaders, Herr Pabst, is not even an Austrian and that Heimatwehr is in closest of contact with the German Stahlhelm, which

⁷⁶⁶ “The Stahlhelmabend in Kitzbühel,” *Allgemeiner Tiroler Anzeiger*, June 7, 1929, 6.

⁷⁶⁷ “Allddeutschland – die Parole,” *Tages-Post*, September 17, 1929, 1; “Frontkämpfer- und Heimwehrtagung in Weis,” *Tages-Post*, August 30, 1929, 14.

supports them not just morally, but also with money and weapons.”⁷⁶⁸ Indeed, its desire to maintain a broad support base frequently put the movement at odds with its patrons, but demonstrated conflicting facets of the its collective composition. Edmondson contends:

the Heimwehr marched to the beat of two, and at times three, different drums. The most regular ones were beat by Ignaz Seipel and István Bethlen, whose tempo much of the time was the same; then at crucial moments their rhythm was disturbed by Mussolini’s big boom and by the discordant notes coming from the west.⁷⁶⁹

There was a fourth, disparate drummer, however, in pan-Germanism. German nationalism was a constant presence that added yet another beat that made it impossible for the movement to maintain a crisp, uncomplicated rhythm. While this drummer generally stayed in time with the Seipel-Bethlen beat when the Heimwehren were focused on their Social Democratic nemesis, the increasing traction of National Socialism in Germany would bring about an adversary that could disrupt its complicated tempo.

At the outset of the 1930s, German nationalism in the ranks of the Heimwehren would become increasingly vociferous with the ascent of the Nazi Party in Germany. According to Starhemberg, Nazi Party members “bribed” Heimwehr leaders to demand the establishment of a coalition with the Nazis.⁷⁷⁰ In the 1930 German federal election, the Nazi Party increased its presence in the Reichstag from 12 seats to 107, putting it behind only the German Social Democratic Party. This extraordinary increase had ripple effects in Austria. While the Austrian Nazi Party was only able to garner three percent of the total votes cast in the general election of 1930, the municipal elections in 1931 saw a

⁷⁶⁸ “Was die Marxisten wollen,” *Vorarlberger Tagblatt*, December 30, 1929, 1.

⁷⁶⁹ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr Movement and Austrian Politics*, 70.

⁷⁷⁰ Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 36.

marked increase in those percentages. In Eisenstadt (Burgenland), they received 9.1 percent of the total votes cast, while 25.9 percent of the votes cast in Klagenfurt (Carinthia) were for the Austrian Nazi Party.⁷⁷¹ The corresponding uptick was also demonstrated in Austrian municipal elections the following year. Despite Starhemberg's contentions to the contrary, these gains can no doubt be attributed to the arrival of German Nazi, Theodor Habicht, in July 1931. Hitler appointed Habicht to oversee the Austrian Nazi Party and authorized him to speak on his behalf, which finally gave the Austrian party the cachet and financial backing it had previously lacked.

Along with reorganizing the Austrian Nazi Party, Habicht set about seeking an alliance with the Heimwehren. Most receptive to his overtures were, of course, Pfrimer and his Styrian organization. On October 31, 1931, the Styrian Heimatschutz held a joint rally with Austrian Nazis. Despite the fact that Austrian Nazi Party, to that point, had no electoral successes to speak of, Habicht's terms of alliance were that the Heimwehr had to recognize Hitler as their leader and to fight against any and all forces that opposed Anschluss. Pfrimer's staff chief Hanns Rauter, pointed out that both their Landesleiter (Pfrimer) and Steidle wanted Anschluss and that their Bundesführer, Starhemberg, needed to join the coalition of the German nationalist leaders. Sufficiently pleased, Habicht concluded that the "National Socialist Party and Heimatschutz will fight shoulder to shoulder against this system and for the great Third German Reich."⁷⁷² The

⁷⁷¹ Evan Burr Buckey, *Hitler's Austria: Popular Sentiment in the Nazi Era, 1938-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 12.

⁷⁷² Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 183; Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 144; Lauridsen, *Nazism and the Radical Right*, 229.

Nazi Gauleiter of Vienna, Alfred Frauenfeld, followed Habicht's program, calling for an alliance with Heimwehren.⁷⁷³

The alliance to which Rauter spoke was that of the Harzburg Front, an alliance between the Nazis, the German National People's Party (Deutschnationale Volkspartei or DNVP), and the Stahlhelm. By 1931, Pabst, in particular, had well-established connections with Seldte, Duesterberg, and Hugenberg, and who had been a patron of the Heimwehr movement. Through the Harzburg Front, the DNVP and the Stahlhelm would move increasingly closer to the Nazis as they gained more traction in German politics. In February 1933, Pabst invited Seldte and Duesterberg to Vienna to discuss the parameters of continued close relations between the Stahlhelm and the Heimwehren. Pabst believed it would behoove both the Heimwehren and the Stahlhelm to establish good relations with the Nazis and benefit from Hitler's appointment as chancellor.⁷⁷⁴ Seldte clearly shared the same opinion, as in April 1933, Seldte became a Nazi Party member and declared that the Stahlhelm was at Hitler's disposal.

Rauter, among others, pressed Starhemberg negotiate an alliance with the Nazis. As it were, Starhemberg had already refused what would be his most handsome offer from Gregor Strasser, in which the Führer was

prepared to recognize the Heimatwehr as the only Austrian defense force. Accordingly, all defense and sport organizations of the NSDAP (in Austria) will be incorporated in your organization under your sole leadership. For the settlement of political questions a supreme council of leadership will be set up, drawn from the Heimatwehr and the NSDAP. You will be the president of this council and will be assisted by representatives from the National Socialist camp, in all political questions you will be bound by the assent of the council or their representatives. In the event of a victory of the National Socialist revolution in Germany, Adolf Hitler would recognize you as his deputy in Austria. As regards to the material side of the arrangement, considerable financial resources would be made available; a subsidy of approximately 500,000 schillings a

⁷⁷³ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 194.

⁷⁷⁴ Kerekes *Abenddämmerung einer Demokratie*, 130.

month is suggested for defraying the expenses of the defense movement. For the joint electoral front, 2,000,000 schillings would immediately be placed at your disposal, of which 500,000 would be for your personal use. In return you will create a national front composed of NSDAP and Heimwehr and will acknowledge Adolf Hitler as the supreme head of this movement.⁷⁷⁵

Whether or not these were the actual terms Strasser offered is not clear; there remains a possibility that Starhemberg exaggerated the extent of this “utmost accommodation” to distance himself from the Nazis, with whom he was connected in the early 1920s.⁷⁷⁶ To assuage the growing pro-Nazi segments within the Heimwehren, he agreed to meet with Habicht in January 1932. The meeting went nowhere. Starhemberg, by his account, “felt antagonistic to both men (Habicht and Andreas Bolek) and thought the whole interview a needless formality, from which I expected no result.” After Habicht refused to abandon his mission in Austria and allow the Austrian Nazi Party to be absorbed by the Heimwehren, Starhemberg ended the meeting.⁷⁷⁷

Starhemberg’s meetings with Strasser, Habicht, and, later, in Berlin with Röhm and Himmler, and finally, with Hitler, in April 1932, all ended in failure. The sticking point seems to have been the demand that Starhemberg subordinate himself and the Heimwehren to Hitler and the Nazis, though according to a letter Habicht sent to Hitler, Starhemberg was open to joining the Nazi Party, but wanted several of its Austrian leaders removed.⁷⁷⁸ As Edmondson notes, “Starhemberg could have went either way” at

⁷⁷⁵ Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 38-9.

⁷⁷⁶ Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 39. As a member of the Freikorps Oberland, Starhemberg fought in Upper Silesia, serving with numerous other future Nazi party members, including Heinrich Himmler, Emil Maurice, and famed historian, Fritz Fischer. Starhemberg was also among the Nazi ranks during the ill-conceived Munich Beer Hall Putsch in November 1923.

⁷⁷⁷ Starhemberg, *Between Hitler and Mussolini*, 79-80. Starhemberg claims that Bolek was of Czech descent; he was actually from Galicia, near Lemberg (present-day Ukraine) and was, therefore, more than likely of Polish or Ukrainian descent.

⁷⁷⁸ Carsten, *Fascist Movements*, 215.

this stage, and “[h]is concern was more practical than ideological.”⁷⁷⁹ On one hand, he had Mussolini, Gömbös, and an alliance with the Christian Social governments in Austria, and on the other he had Hitler and the Nazi Party who was making significant gains in Germany. The fact that he would have the backing of established governments in Austria, Hungary, and Italy was decisive; despite the advances National Socialism was making in Germany, they did not command the authority and resources potentially available to the Heimwehren from the governments already in power in Italy and Hungary; in the end he would throw his lot in with the former, pitting the Heimwehren against the Nazis. The Heimwehr/Vaterländische Front conflict with the Nazis would frame the existence of the Austrian Ständesstaat (corporatist state) until the Anschluss in March 1938. It will also serve as a useful construct to frame the conclusion of the study, as it will accentuate the unique characteristics of the Heimwehr movement in juxtaposition to that of the National Socialists.

Conclusions

In order to understand the political activities and decision-making of Heimwehr leaders, it is necessary to examine the movement’s interaction with the governments and movements in neighboring states. The crux of the matter returns, once again, to the fact that Heimwehr leaders understood the movement to be a part of Austria’s ancient tradition of volunteer defense formations. As such, its members could not be, in keeping with traditional protocol, required to pay fees to start or join local Heimwehr groups. Thus, the movement did not generate any of its own income and was entirely reliant on

⁷⁷⁹ Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics*, 145.

the donations of private patrons and subsidies of the provincial governments. Their principal reasons for establishing the connections with German defense organizations and the Hungarian and Italian governments, among others, was twofold. First, they sought financial and material support to help the Heimwehr movement keep pace with its grown membership. The industrial associations that were the largest donors inside Austria contributed enough to satisfy the pressure of Christian Social officials who favored the movement, but not enough to enable its provincial organizations to expand, which they did, especially after smashing the Social Democratic revolt and general strike in July 1927. Second, Steidle, Pabst, and Pfrimer sought to create an external support base to allow them to function with greater freedom inside Austria by loosening the shackles to their domestic patrons.

The active search outside Austria's borders was provoked by the challenge laid out in the Linzer Programm, the product of the Social Democratic Party congress in the autumn 1926, which threatened civil war in the event of a Heimwehr putsch. This challenge aroused a more active opposition to the Social Democrats and its paramilitary *Schutzbund*. The transition from a policy of "self-defense" to one of "self-help" prompted Heimwehr leaders to set about reorganizing their formations to be more politically aggressive and to be more combat ready. As such, more money and more arms were necessary, neither of which were in great supply inside Austria.

It has long been the prevailing notion in the secondary literature that the Heimwehr movement was an instrument of foreign fascist influence in Austria. This was only true insofar as it aligned with the designs of the Heimwehr leadership and their allies inside Austria. It had been Steidle and Pabst who had sought the financial and material

support from Hungary and Italy before Bethlen had recommended that Mussolini aid the Heimwehren to help bring about a more Italian-friendly, right-wing, authoritarian government in Austria in April 1928. These were designs were in line with the aims of Heimwehr leaders as well as that of Chancellor Seipel, who was committed, however, to bring it about through legal channels and not a coup d'état. Thus, even in its collusion with Hungarian and Italian interests, the Heimwehr movement was not out of sync with the right-wing of the Christian Social Party. Furthermore, the limits of Italian influence on the Heimwehren was illustrated in their disregard of Mussolini's suggestion that Steidle and Pfrimer back Schober, who had turned on them once in power; they continued their protest of the Austrian government and campaign for reform unabated.

Schober, without protest from Mussolini, worked to weaken the Heimwehr movement in Austria, dealing them a humiliating political setback by ignoring the demands they made for constitutional reform after they had essentially put him into office. Schober, then, preceded to remove the driving force behind the Heimwehr movement, if but temporarily, by having Pabst deported to Italy in June 1930. What is more, he tapped a young prince, Ernst Rüdiger von Starhemberg, to challenge Steidle and Pfrimer for supremacy over the movement. Armed with intelligence from Mussolini and Hungarian diplomats, Starhemberg confronted Steidle and Pfrimer, accusing them of being weak-willed and no longer fit to lead the Heimwehren; clearly demoralized from their setbacks, they stepped aside without a fight.

Under Starhemberg's nominal leadership, the Heimwehr movement maintained its close alignment with the radical right-wing of the Christian Social Party, but faced an even greater foe than the Social Democrats. The Nazi Party's electoral success in

Germany had a ripple effect in Austria. Hitler had sent one of his deputies, Theodor Habicht, and large sums of money to clean up and organize the Austrian National Socialist Party in the summer of 1931. Habicht's leadership and party funds—while being subsidized by big business, the Nazi Party also charged membership dues, which meant that it was a much better-funded organization than the Heimwehr movement—paid immediate dividends as the Nazis showed marked improvement in provincial and local elections in 1931 and 1932. Habicht also embarked on a campaign to weaken the Heimwehr movement by appealing to provincial leaders to press Starhemberg to establish a united fighting front with the Nazis, against Austria's mainstream political parties. While he made no progress with Starhemberg, he proved successful in provoking dissent and division with provincial organizations and causing a considerable number of defections from the Heimwehren.

In the summer of 1932, Starhemberg successfully appealed to Mussolini to once more provide arms and money to the Heimwehren, to combat the National Socialist invasion, which *Il Duce* desperately wanted to prevent. The failure of several more appeals by the upper echelons of the National Socialist Party—including Hitler himself—to persuade Starhemberg to align the Heimwehr movement with the Nazis and the commitment of most of the prominent Heimwehr leaders to the Dollfuss government, meant that, by the end of 1933, the political battle lines were drawn between the Heimwehr and the Nazis.

Interestingly, Steidle and Pabst's efforts to reconnect with their Bavarian counterparts would also lead back to the Nazis. In the summer of 1926, Steidle had reconnected with Georg Escherich, to whom the Heimwehren had once owed their fealty

as leader of the defunct Einwohnerwehr. Despite the group's dissolution, Escherich remained an influential member of the defense community in Bavaria. He set up a meeting with the leaders of the various defense groups in Bavaria that comprised the Vereinigte Vaterländische Verbände Bayern (VVVB). Most prominent among these organizations was The Stahlhelm, Bund der Frontsoldaten, which was the largest right-wing paramilitary organization in Germany at that time. Steidle and Pabst, in particular, would establish a close working relationship with leadership of the Bavarian Stahlhelm Major Carl Wäninger and staff chief, Julius von Reichert.

Their collaboration with the Bavarian Stahlhelm would eventually connect Steidle and Pabst to its federal leaders, Franz Seldte and Theodor Duesterberg. Stahlhelm supporter, Newspaper magnate, and influential member of the Deutschnationale Volkspartei (DNVP), Alfred Hugenberg, invited Pabst to come to Berlin in January 1929 and speak to a small audience about the developments within and activities of the Austrian Heimwehr movement. Pabst's revelation that the Heimwehren were being funded by Mussolini by way of the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, proved of great interest to Seldte, Duesterberg, as well as Hugenberg. As such, they asked Pabst to assist them in establishing closer relations with Hungarian and Italian officials. Sufficiently impressed with the Heimwehr movement in Austria, Hugenberg would offer a subvention of his own. Shortly thereafter, Steidle wrote to Bethlen, explaining the desire of Seldte and Duesterberg to connect with Hungary and Italy, proposing a "White International" alliance between the Stahlhelm, the Heimwehren, the governments of Hungary and Italy. Sufficiently pleased with this idea, Mussolini agreed to advise Seldte and Duesterberg—

running as a part of the Hugenberg-Papen-Seldte “Kampffront Schwarz, Weiß, Rot” ticket in the forthcoming 1930 presidential election in Germany.

Through the close relationship between Hugenberg and Seldte and Duesterberg, the Stahlhelm became essentially the paramilitary wing of the DNVP, joining the Harzburg Front, alongside the Nazi Party. Pabst, himself a German of völkische national outlook, sought to maintain close contact between the Heimwehr movement and Stahlhelm in the hopes that they might benefit from a Nazi ascent to power in Germany. By mid-1933, the Stahlhelm, as an independent defense organization, ceased to exist and would ultimately be collapsed into the SA. While Dollfuss and the leaders of the Heimwehr movement attempted to strike various compromises with the Nazis that would give the party a say in Austrian affairs, while allowing it to remain independent. A resolution to the violent political struggle that would emerge between the two sides proved elusive. The fight for Austria would last from 1933 to 1938, as the Nazis, who quickly amassed broad support of among the Austrian population, chipped away at the Fatherland Front that Dollfuss established, in many respects, as an Austrian alternative to the Nazi Party.

CONCLUSION

Scholarly interest in the Heimwehr movement over the course of the 80 years since its dissolution has been disappointingly limited. Disappointing because the movement offers a window into many complex subjects like national identity, the militarization of politics and society, the impact of total war on a people, the impact of military defeat in total war on a people, the relationship between militarism and religion, fascism as an analytical construct, as well as political revolution and counter-revolution on a national and transnational level, among others. Of the studies that are available, early interpretations suffer from political biases that continued to be perpetuated for in the historiography for decades. In such studies, the movement became the scape-goat for the fall of the republic, depicted as an instrument of foreign influence driving Austria to wrack and ruin. In the aftermath of the Second World War, this allowed Austrian politicians to escape blame for their part in the death of Austrian democracy. For that matter, the common narrative of the Heimwehr movement erroneously depicts it as a typical anti-clerical, pan-German “fascist” movement that emerged in the wake of the Great War.

It has been the aim of this study to contribute to the body of literature on the Heimwehr movement by challenging these notions. By highlighting important pre-war continuities evident in the values, rituals, ideals, and support base of the Heimwehr movement, this work has illustrated that the Heimwehr movement cannot be understood by simply examining interwar Austria without consideration of the Habsburg past. Its organization and culture was inspired by the rituals and values of a long legacy of Alpine civic militarism, as chapter one demonstrated. As the patriotic-minded, voluntary

defenders of the mainstream provincial right, the Heimwehr movement was firmly grounded in the traditions of provincial Alpine society, particularly in the Austrian states of Tyrol, Vorarlberg, Salzburg, Carinthia, and Styria. Especially formative was the legacy of civic militarism and war volunteerism in these provinces, perhaps best embodied by the Standschützen militia units of Tyrol and Vorarlberg and their provincial defense system (Landesverteidigung) that had long protected their borders from foreign invasion. These institutions originated from the provinces' numerous local shooting ranges and the sport shooting clubs that formed around those ranges. In the early eighteenth century, shooting club volunteers formed sharp shooter regiments who fought off French invaders in the summer of 1703 during the War of Spanish Succession. Thus, the roots of provincial militarism could be traced to a thriving gun culture, which developed around hunting and sport-shooting. The Tiroler Heimatwehr recognized these influences in a variety of manners, chiefly through the staging of provincial shooting contests in Tyrol and Vorarlberg--the first since the outbreak of the Great War--and the veneration of hunting as a rite of passage into manhood and requisite for military service, which it viewed as the picture of patriotism.

Over the centuries, as Habsburg authorities sought to bring Tyrol and Vorarlberg into the imperial military hierarchy, provincial militarism was increasingly colored by Habsburg military culture. This transpired primarily through imperial subsidies to build new shooting ranges and maintain existing ranges, as well as of private veterans' associations. These subsidies were not without a price, however. In exchange for these subsidies, veterans and shooting club members agreed to muster as war-time volunteer rifle companies. This was an important step in that it formalized provincial militarism and

brought it closer into the dynastic orbit. By the start of the Great War, the Standschützen were no longer “volunteers,” but were rather emergency reserve forces comprised of old men beyond the age for military service, and adolescents who were not old enough yet to be conscripted. Nevertheless, their call to duty in 1915 to defend Tyrol’s southern borders against the new Italian enemy gave the Standschützen a new lease on life as fodder for ideological consumption. Though a motley crew, they displayed the best virtues of Tyrolean civic militarism and, in the framework of its broader tradition of war volunteerism and patriotism, served as the basis for the Tiroler Heimatwehr and its understanding of duty and patriotism, as was evident in its regular commemoration of Andreas Hofer and his Standschützen, the personification of Tyrolean civic militarism.

At the same time, it is necessary to acknowledge that the “culture of defeat” emerging in central Europe following the Great War provided fertile ground for it to take root and grow. What made the Heimwehr movement a modern movement was simply these political realities into which it was born. The defeat of the Central Powers in the Great War crushed central Europe militarily, economically, politically, socially, and culturally. Despite being culturally rooted in the traditions of Alpine civic militarism, chapter two illustrated that the founding of the Heimwehren was not simply an Austrian development, but was the product of the transnational cooperation among counter-revolutionary circles in Germany, Austria, and Hungary. Driven principally by what they believed to be the degenerative effects of the social democratic revolutions in 1918 and spread of communist revolution into central Europe, anti-Marxist circles in Germany and Hungary collaborated with their Austrian counterparts and, in many cases, provincial governments to fund, arm, equip, reorganize, and train the remnants of the local militias

that had been mustered in the last days of the Great War. These groups were the foundation of the Heimwehr movement. Local groups were organized under wider provincial umbrellas which owed their allegiance to Bavarian Einwohnerwehr head, Georg Escherich.

This cooperative reflected the reactionary circles of the Central Powers attempting to regain their footing and restore “order” to their worlds turned upside-down. The new republican constitutions enabled the social democratic parties to challenge traditional power bases with greater parity than ever before. The Heimwehr movement represented a weapon through which those power bases could defend their besieged places of prominence. The wider trend of paramilitary organizations emerging across the German and Austrian landscape is a testament to this development, while at the same time indicating the severe restrictions the Allies meted out at the Paris Peace Conference, which resulted in insufficient numbers of police and gendarmerie to keep the peace in times of emergency. As a “patriotic” movement of renewal, the Heimwehren, like the countless other paramilitary organizations that emerged in Germany and Austria, sought to restore the dignity and pride to the German cultural nation. As such, they saw the “halb Marxistische” constitutions and partisan corruption of the republics created in November 1918 as principal obstacles in the way of their endeavor. The anti-Marxist, “Ordnungsblock” this triumvirate forged in the aftermath of World War I would foreshadow the direction of the future governments of central Europe.

This examination has also shown that the Heimwehr movement was grounded in Alpine tradition in virtually every respect. Even the Bavarian Einwohnerwehr drew heavily from these same traditions of civic militarism associated with shooting clubs and

sharp-shooter companies, as chapter three established. The influence of Tyrolean Standschützen was especially influential on the organization and culture of the Heimwehr movement in several ways. For example, members elected their immediate superiors, from local groups electing their leader to provincial leaders electing the Bundesführer. The very same shooting ranges that had served as the basis for the Landesverteidigung of imperial Tyrol, served as a basis of mobilization and training for Heimatwehr groups. Schützen rituals such as parades, flag dedications, and shooting competitions, were also carried on by the Heimwehren. Similarly, they maintained a generally unrestricted membership criteria like their Standschützen forerunner. The voluntary character of the Heimatwehr, which it likened to its Standschützen predecessors, prevented it charging its members association fees; unlike its predecessors, however, it did not enjoy the same degree of support from local, state, and imperial coffers, placing the Heimwehr movement in virtually a perpetual search for funding.

This chapter also argued that the deeply entrenched tenets of Catholic social thought were influential in two principal areas of the Heimwehr movement. First, through its activities and propaganda the movement illustrated a traditional outlook on gender roles and paralleled those expressed in Pope Leo XIII's Papal Encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, which explained that the proper role of women was in the home, rearing children. This view was similarly articulated in Heimwehr newspapers; mothers were the first line of indoctrination of the national youth. Moreover, the activism of its women's auxiliaries proved consistent with this outlook. They advocated not only the xenophobic ideals propagated by the Heimwehren, calling for mothers to protect their children from the corrupting influence foreign fads and Jewish intellectualism. Instead, children should

be taught traditional German songs, dances, literature, and music and instilled with Catholic values.

Conversely, the militarism of the Heimwehr movement was innately connected with traditional Catholic notions of masculinity. As heads of their households protecting the home and hearth from danger was the duty of the father/husband. As such, they were taught as young boys to use firearms recreationally for hunting and in sport shooting contests; these were precursors to prepare them for military service, once of age. The Heimwehr similarly began youth programs that taught their members not only how to shoot military rifles but also how to maintain them, throw hand grenades, navigating with maps, terrain exercises, marches, and other military exercises. The increasingly aggressive militarization of youths, exhibited in the Heimwehr groups, was a result of the loss of compulsory military service as a feature of Austrian society via the Treaty of Saint Germain.⁷⁸⁰ Without compulsory military service, Austrian youths would not receive the military training that many conservative circles believed was vital to instilling virtues like loyalty, discipline, duty, honor, courage, service, and sacrifice.

Catholic social thought also exercised great influence on the broader worldview of most Heimwehr leaders. This can most readily be seen in the parallels demonstrated in the Korneuburg Oath, Heimwehr rhetoric, and propaganda with the Papal Encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*, particularly in its aversion to the Marxist idea of class conflict, the atomization of society inherent to classical liberalism, the frivolous

⁷⁸⁰ The reason the Allies, particularly the French, prohibited compulsory military service in Germany and Austria was to cull the formative influences of Prussian and Habsburg militarism from their respective societies. By removing obligatory military service from the lives of average Germans and Austrians, the militarism that had previously been quite influential, especially in Prussia, would fade, thereby reducing their war-like tendencies.

partisanship of parliamentary democracy, and the greed and corruption that had become part and parcel of free market capitalism. Furthermore, the theories of Austrian Catholic social thinkers such as Adam Müller and Karl von Vogelsang were also apparent in the writings of Othmar Spann, his students, as well as Heimwehr ideologue, Odo Neustädter-Stürmer, for whom the May (1934) Constitution is attributed. The authoritarian, corporatist direction taken by the Heimwehren reflected the confluence of these elements, which only found further reassurance in the movement's close connections to the Fascist Italian government. Claims that Seipel introduced Heimwehr leaders to the idea of a corporatist state in 1928 are mistaken, as archival evidence indicates that this introduction occurred years earlier.⁷⁸¹

Lastly, chapter three also explained that the close ties between the Heimwehr movement and the Catholic Church was perhaps most evident in the events it staged. Presided over by sympathetic clergy, these events were indicative of the similarly close relationship the Heimwehr movement cultivated with Catholic officials, just as their Schützen forerunners had enjoyed prior to the Great War. This was an intrinsic element of all Heimwehr gatherings (war memorial dedications, shooting competitions, rallies, and flag consecration ceremonies), most typically in the form of Sunday field Mass service.⁷⁸² While they served their primary religious purpose, clerics used the pulpits to remind the ranks of the movement that they were defenders of Church and religion from Marxism. Beyond the field Mass, Catholic priests proved effective propagandists for the

⁷⁸¹ See, for example, *Lauridsen, Nazism and the Radical Right*, 264, f.59; TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VI/17, fol.344, 91, 342-4.

⁷⁸² The Social Democratic newspaper, *Volkspost* indignantly cited one instance, a "Heimwehr-Priester," Father von Rastbach, consecrating a shooting range. "Sogar Schießstätten weihen die "Heimwehr-Priester"!" *Volkspost*, August 3, 1929, 5.

Heimwehren, preaching the movement's virtues to their parishioners, supporting the movement politically through the Christian Social Party, and illicitly through allowing the Heimwehren to use their churches as weapons caches.

Indeed, as chapter four determined, Church clerics were just one of several historically influential social groups that supported the Heimwehr movement. The disenfranchised nobility, provincial officials, as well as Austrian industrialists and bankers overwhelmingly supported the Heimwehr movement. The thoroughly traditional outlook of its leadership meshed well with that of the clergy and nobility who sought to protect their long-held positions atop Austrian society, while state and local officials—who themselves frequently held leadership positions within the local and provincial Heimwehr organizations—utilized the Heimwehren not only as auxiliary police forces to maintain “peace and order” but also to intimidate and suppress local Social Democrats. Beyond minor violent altercations between Heimwehr men and Social Democrats or Schutzbund men, the principal way the Heimwehren bottled-up local Social Democrats was by undermining labor strikes. Its emergency technical assistance formations were frequently able to restore, at least to a limited extent, the services halted by striking Social Democratic labor unions. To take it a step further, the Heimwehren began organizing their own independent (from any one political party) labor unions and in provinces such as Styria and managed to establish agreements with the industrialists to lay off Social Democratic workers and hire only men who were members of their union. In doing so, they weakened the power of the Social Democrats' most potent political weapon.

Financially, Austrian industrialists, bankers, and nobles were the major domestic patrons of the Heimwehr movement, contributing monthly stipends to the provincial organizations. Despite federal and international calls for the Heimwehren to be disarmed and disbanded, provincial governments held firm in protecting the groups, emphasizing their quasi-official roles as emergency police detachments. Staunch Heimwehr defenders on the Christian Social right such as Chancellors Ignaz Seipel, Carl Vaugoin, and Engelbert Dollfuss, had no interest in dissolving the Heimwehren. The powers granted to the provincial governments would have made it quite difficult for the federal government to have legally taken on the task even if it had wanted (which it did not after the 1920 election placed the Christian Social and Greater German People's Party firmly in control of the federal government). The rise in support and participation of Austrian aristocrats in the late 1920s further insulated the Heimwehr movement, offering, through their money, titles—despite being legally annulled—and familial legacies from the Habsburg Monarchy, prestige and legitimacy. This development reiterated the fact that the Heimwehr movement was no fringe, populist enterprise like the Nazi Party or Mussolini's fascist party; it was organized and supported from the outset by state and local officials and remained—even in its most disruptive moments—an association that worked in lock-step with the right-wing of the major bourgeois parties throughout its existence. As one Social Democratic newspaper lamented in a 1929 article, the Christian Social Party shouldered the blame for instigating the Great War in 1914 and were, fifteen years later, as the “makers of the Heimwehr,” fomenting civil war.⁷⁸³

⁷⁸³ Laurenz Genner, “Vor Fünfzehn Jahren—und heute!” *Die Unzufriedene*, July 27, 1929, 2.

As chapter five documented, in order to confront the perceived threat posed by “Linzer Programm,” published in the autumn of 1926 and vowing to institute a “dictatorship of the proletariat” should the bourgeois parties attempt to overthrow the constitution, the Heimwehren, in Steidle’s words, had to transition from a passive “self-defense” confederation to an active “self-help” movement. Put differently, the movement needed to take a more active part in Austrian public life, pressing their bourgeois party patrons. As such, Steidle and Pabst had to look beyond Austria’s borders for military and financial support for this transition. Pabst had successfully established a close working relationship with the Stahlhelm, while Steidle reached out to Hungarian Minister President István Bethlen, who eventually connected Steidle with Italian Prime Minister, Benito Mussolini. Mussolini agreed to fund Steidle’s endeavor to press the bourgeois parties to push through constitutional reforms empowering the executive. By August 1928, flush with Italian funds, the Heimwehr movement staged a series of rallies and corresponding propaganda campaign that chided the bourgeois parties for placing partisan interests above those of Austria, of cowardice for failing to mount a staunch opposition against the 1918 revolution, and for negotiating with the Social Democrats thereafter.

Furthermore, this investigation has established that, while the Heimwehr movement indeed sought to destroy social democracy in Austria, it was not merely the tool of fascist Italy as historians have erroneously argued. Both sides were in general agreeance as to the desired outcome of this campaign. Mussolini naturally exercised the final word regarding what activities Italy would fund and not fund, but Steidle, Pabst, Pfrimer, Seipel, and Vaugoin, among others, executed the plan Steidle had laid out with

crystal clarity. For that matter, Seipel exercised far more influence over the plan than did Mussolini or Bethlen. With Seipel's "unexpected" resignation in April 1929, the chancellorship fell into the lap of moderate Christian Social politician, Ernst von Steierwitz, who Steidle and Pfrimer did not trust to take a strong position against the Social Democrats. They ratcheted up the pressure, spreading rumors of a coup d'état to be kicked off under the guise of a large Heimwehr rally in Vienna, set for September 29, 1929. Steierwitz resigned. The Heimwehren pushed out the chancellor they did not trust and chose the next Chancellor, Johann Schober. This would prove to be a humiliating setback as Schober had no plans to work with Steidle and Pfrimer. In fact, he worked to systematically undermine the Heimwehr movement, helping to topple the two as federal leaders of the movement, and deporting Pabst to Italy. In their place, with the input of Mussolini, he helped position Ernst Rüdiger Prince von Starhemberg as the new Bundesführer, which created a great deal of dissention among the provincial leadership of the movement, most especially between he and head of the Vienna Heimwehr, Major a.D. Emil Fey. Their rivalry would weaken the Heimwehren and the Ständestaat throughout its struggle with the Nazis over the fate of Austria.⁷⁸⁴

The original intent behind this study was to take a deeper look at the organizational culture of the Heimwehr movement, using the Tyrolean Heimatwehr as a

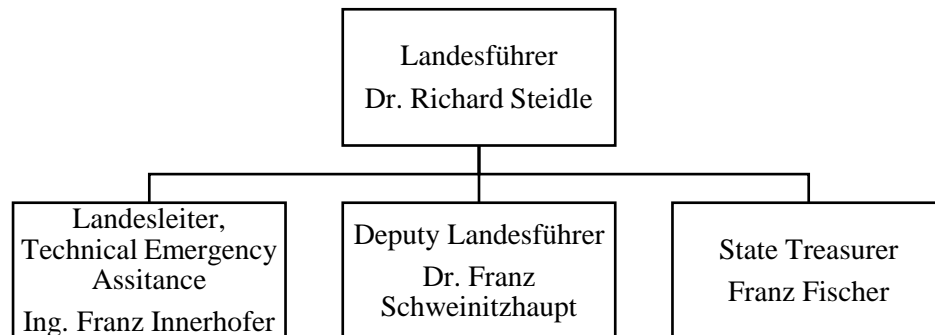
⁷⁸⁴ In particular, Julius Raab, leader of the Lower Austrian Heimwehr leader and future Chancellor of Austria after World War II, took the boldest stand against the Korneuburg program (after having initially agreed to the oath) in 1930. Exiting the federal association, Raab created division in the local and regional organizations of in Lower Austria. This opened the door for Starhemberg, as the newly elected Bundesführer, to create a competing group in Lower Austria. This development did not sit well with Fey, who had already begun mobilizing his own, anti-Starhemberg faction, which included Steidle, among other provincial leaders. Pfrimer, among others, sided with Starhemberg, compelled by the latter's Nazi past and ephemeral outbursts of German nationalism. Prior to these developments, however, the Heimwehr leadership worked in a generally cooperative fashion, with Pfrimer and the Styrian Heimatschutz being the only consistent outlier.

case study. As the research progressed it became clear that more fundamental gaps in the literature needed to be addressed first. It became the aim of this investigation to bridge the gap between political studies, which represent the clear majority of the literature, and social and cultural lines of inquiry. Thus, this study has attempted to lay a stepping stone away from the political narrative of the movement toward understanding the cultural influences at work within and around the Heimwehren. Given that the leadership of the Tyrolean Heimatwehr played such a prominent role in the movement throughout much of its existence, it remained a worthwhile approach to use the Tyrolean organization as a window into the wider confederation. Nevertheless, the regional nature of the movement leaves many potential stones unturned that could further refine or recast interpretations of the Heimwehr movement.

APPENDIX A – Organizational Hierarchy of the Tiroler Heimatwehr

With no existing membership records, the information available regarding Ortsgruppen varies, though references are typically limited to the groups' elected leadership and initial member numbers. This appendix contains information pertaining to the organizational structure and hierarchy, gleaned primarily from the organizational records of the Tiroler Heimatwehr (1920 – 1929). The baseline for this appendix is, however, comes from the organizational files from 1921.⁷⁸⁵ Where possible changes in positions and dates are included where possible. The unpublished dissertation of Verena Lösch was most helpful in establishing dates for later alterations to the organizational structure of the Tiroler Heimatwehr and its hierarchy.

Below is a snapshot of the provincial leadership of the Tiroler Heimatwehr as of December 1921:⁷⁸⁶



⁷⁸⁵ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV Tirol, I/1, fol. 410, 284-8.

⁷⁸⁶ Schweinitzhaupt was replaced by Großdeutschen Volkspartei Rep. Dr. Friedrich Schmidt in July 1922; Schmidt was replaced by Ekkehert Pesendorfer in June 1923. Fischer appears to have been replaced by Ing. Richard Lazzar at some point after December 1921 and before October 1923; Lazzar was replaced by Julius Kinz in October 1923.

The Staff serving the Landesleitung in December 1921 was as follows:⁷⁸⁷

- 1) Chief of Staff: Major (Ret.) Hans von Voith⁷⁸⁸
- 2) Chief of Staff: Oberstleutnant (Obstlt) Johann Oberndorfer

Registrar and Personnel Officer: Obstlt (Ret.) Josef Schröder

Bursar: Obstlt (Ret.) Artur Schuschnigg

Artillery Officer: Obstlt (Ret.) Haubold

Leader of Technical Emergency Assistance: Ing. Richard Lazzar

Officer of Technical Emergency Assistance: Major (Ret.) Erich Rodler

Armory Ward: Guido Jenisch

Railways: Dr. Felber

Weapons Maintenance: Gunsmith Gasser

Press Officer: Dr. Walter Leonardi

* * *

Existing organizational documents list the leadership of these regions was as follows:

- 1) Region Reutte Leadership⁷⁸⁹
 - a. Region Leader: School Superintendent Josef Knittel⁷⁹⁰

⁷⁸⁷ The composition of the Landesleitung and its staff—aside from Steidle—underwent numerous changes over the course of the 1920s and 1930s.

⁷⁸⁸ Oberleutnant Gasteiger served as the first Stabsleiter and was replaced by Hauptmann Herbert von Obwurzer; “As a result of internal disputes” Obwurzer was ousted and departed for the Upper Austrian Heimwehr and was replaced by Major Hans von Voith by September 1921; Voith was replaced by Waldemar Pabst (aka Walter Peters) in May 1922. See Peter Broucek: „[Obwurzer, Herbert von](#),“ *Österreichisches Biographisches Lexikon 1815–1950*, Band 7 (Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien 1978), 202.

⁷⁸⁹ Region (Gau) Reutte existed as a separate area until 1927 and when it was collapsed into Region (Gau) Middle and Western Tyrol.

⁷⁹⁰ At some point before 1928, church painter, Hermann Praxmair, replaced Josef Knittel. See Löscher, “Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr,” 49-50.

- b. Deputy Region Leader/Treasurer: G. Riesler⁷⁹¹
- 2) Region Middle and Western Tyrol Leadership:
- a. Region Leader: Hans Oettl (Bürgermeister, Steinach am Brenner)
 - b. District Innsbruck-Land
 - i. District Leader: Hans (Johann) Oettl (Bürgermeister of Steinach am Brenner)⁷⁹²
 - c. District Imst
 - i. District Leader: Franz Kepp⁷⁹³
 - d. District Hall in Tirol
 - i. District Leader: Josef Schiesser⁷⁹⁴
 - 1. For the city of Hall, in 1924, its local leadership looked as follows:⁷⁹⁵
 - a. Leader: School Director, Josef Egg
 - i. Deputy: Innkeeper, Hermann Bartl
 - ii. Adjutant: Martin Berger
 - iii. Ordnance Service: City Treasurer Dr. Ernst Verdross

⁷⁹¹ At some point before 1928, Josef Ahorn replaced Riesler. See Lösch, "Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr," 49-50.

⁷⁹² Innkeeper Franz Schreiring replaced Hans Oettl as the leader of District Innsbruck-Land at some point prior to 1928. Schreiring's deputy, in 1928, was artist, Andreas Einberger. See Lösch, "Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr," 35-51.

⁷⁹³ School Director, Philipp Barth, is listed as the District Leader of Imst in 1925, apparently replacing Kepp. Barth's deputy was a Shopkeeper named Leopold Pischl.

⁷⁹⁴ Johann Parth appears to have replaced Schiesser as District Leader. An Innkeeper Franz Tiefenthaler is listed as Parth's deputy. See Lösch, "Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr," 35-51.

⁷⁹⁵ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV Tirol (Heimatwehr) IV/1, fol.777, 196; Apparently there was a miscount in the local group elections and suspected rigging of votes: "The previous sub-leaders remained provisionally to their posts. The present situation is quiet difficult...It is the desire to include only those people in the local group to which one can rely completely in all respects," 208.

- iv. Storm Troop Company Commander: Karl Corazza
- v. Similar to the organization of Innsbruck, Hall was divided into six sections:
 - 1. Section I: Dr. Max Staufer
 - 2. Section II: Cavalry Captain Herold
 - 3. Section III: Josef Ebenbichler
 - 4. Section IV: “Gruppe der Gewerbetreibenden”
 - 5. Section V: Josef Kofler
 - 6. Section VI: Eduard Ebenbichler
- e. District Landeck⁷⁹⁶
 - i. District Leader: Director Josef Jöchler
- f. District Wipphthal⁷⁹⁷
 - i. District Leader: Hans (Johann) Oettl
- g. City Captaincy Innsbruck
 - i. City Captain: Ing. Otto Vesely
 - ii. Deputy City Captain: Shopkeeper Paul Schneider

⁷⁹⁶ The information presented here for District Landeck is drawn from Löschi, “Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr,” 35-51, who states that the information represents the organization in 1928. Jöchler’s deputy was Innkeeper, Karl Kusche.

⁷⁹⁷ Hans (Johann) Oettl served both as the Region leader and the district leader of the District Wipphthal, which appears to have been created after 1921 and before 1928. Count Anton von Wörtz-Sprengenstein served as Oettl’s Deputy District Leader. See Löschi, “Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr,” 35-51.

1. Section I Captain: Engineer Bruno Larsen⁷⁹⁸
 - a. Section I Storm Troop Leader: Ernst Presepevisi
2. Section II Captain: Paul Schneider⁷⁹⁹
 - a. Section II Storm Troop Leader: Alfred Neuhaus
3. Section III Captain: Engineer Auer⁸⁰⁰
 - a. Section III Storm Troop Leader: Dr. Hämmerle
4. Section IV Captain: Mathias Leitner
 - a. Section IV Storm Troop Leader: Karl Papseh
5. Section V Captain: Epp⁸⁰¹
 - a. Section V Storm Troop Leader: Johann Danninger
6. Section VI Captain: Albert Harpf⁸⁰²
7. Section VII Captain: Rasim⁸⁰³
 - a. Section VII Storm Troop Leader: Jun. Zösmayr
8. Machine Gun Detachment Leader: Dr. Walter Leonardi
- h. Region Middle and Western Tyrol Representative: Artur Speckbacher

⁷⁹⁸ Bruno Larsen was promoted to Deputy City Captain by 1925. Section I Captain was taken over by Director Hohenauer. Hohenauer's deputy was a Major Larcher. See Lösch, "Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr," 35-51.

⁷⁹⁹ Scheider was replaced as Section II Captain by an Oberstleutenant Reiter, whose deputy was Hermann Greil. See Lösch, "Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr," 35-51.

⁸⁰⁰ An Oberst Matz replaced Auer as the Section III Captain. Matz's deputy's last name was Lill, according to See Lösch, "Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr," 51.

⁸⁰¹ According to See Lösch, "Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr," 51, Epp is apparently replaced by Ignaz Platter, whose deputy was a Direktor Schuster.

⁸⁰² The information about the Section VI Captain comes from See Lösch, "Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr," 51, and is based on information as of 1925 (not 1921 as is the rest of the names). Also, Harpf's deputy was a *Hauptmann* Kratz.

⁸⁰³ Innsbruck was divided into six sub-sections as of 1925, which indicates a realignment of the section borders and the apparent consolidation of Section VII.

- i. Region Middle and Western Tyrol Representative/Armory Ward: Guido Jenisch
- j. Region Middle and Western Tyrol Administrator: Dr. Schaufler
- k. Region Middle and Western Tyrol Administrator: Alois Holzer
- l. Region Middle and Western Tyrol Office and Registry Leader: Ferdinand Thaler

3) Region Unterinntal Leadership

- a. Region Leader: State Rep. Andreas Thaler
- b. Deputy Region Leader: State Rep. Theodor Scheffauer
- c. District Kufstein⁸⁰⁴
 - i. District Leader: State Rep. Andeas Thaler⁸⁰⁵
 - ii. Deputy District Leader: Former Mayor Josef Egger
 - iii. Deputy District Leader: Shopkeeper Anton Huber
 - 1. City Captaincy Kufstein
 - a. City Captain: Master Tinsmith Berkmann
 - 2. Protection Community Leader Brixlegg: Shopkeeper Anton Huber
 - a. Deputy Protection Community Leader: Property Owner Johann Leitner

⁸⁰⁴ Protection Community Leaders or their deputies (*Schutzgemeinschaftsführer*) for the following communities had yet to be elected: Langkampfen, Thiersee, Untere Schranne, and Schweich. By 1928, District Kufstein had been split between District Kufstein and District Rattenberg (under the direction of Georg Kögl and his deputies Property Owner Johann Leitner—listed above as Brixlegg Deputy Protection Community Leader—and, Farmer and deputy Major of Reith, Josef Rieser.

⁸⁰⁵ As of 1928, the District Leader of Kufstein was Police Inspector Johann Galehr. His deputy was Property Owner Stefan Feuersinger (listed above as the Protection Community Söll Leader).

- b. Deputy Protection Community Leader: Josef Kögl
 - 3. Protection Community Leader Kramsach: Property Owner
Sepp Emberger
 - 4. Protection Community Leader Kundl: Teacher Arnold
 - 5. Protection Community Leader Söll: Property Owner Stefan
Feuersinger
 - a. Deputy Protection Community Leader: Property
Owner Andreas Guggenberger
 - 6. Protection Community Leader Wildschönau: State Rep.
Andreas Thaler
- d. District Kitzbühel
 - i. District Leader: Property Owner Hans Karl⁸⁰⁶
 - ii. Deputy District Leader: Kitzbühel Mayor Hans Hirnsberger
 - iii. Deputy District Leader: Hopfgarten Mayor Hans Jessacher
 - 1. Protection Community Leader Hopfgarten: Mayor Hans
Jessacher
 - 2. Protection Community Leader Kitzbühel: Mayor Hans
Hirnsberger
 - 3. Protection Community Leader St. Johann: Property Owner
Hans Karl

⁸⁰⁶ Hans Karl and Hans Hirnsberger appear to have shifted roles by 1928, with Hirnsberger as District Kitzbühel's leader and Karl as his deputy along with Jessacher. As close observation of the *Tyrolean Heimatwehr's* leadership shows, this degree of continuity in the same leadership positions was rare. See Lösch, "Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr," 35-51.

4. Protection Community Leader Fieberbrunn: Peasant
League Section Chief Feidl
- e. District Schwaz
 - i. District Leader: State Rep. Theodor Scheffauer⁸⁰⁷
 - ii. Deputy District Leader: Property Owner Alois Graus⁸⁰⁸
 1. Protection Community Leader Schwaz: State Rep. Theodor Scheffauer
 2. Protection Community Leader Vomp: Head Teacher Hans Geiger
 3. Protection Community Leader Rotholz: Property Owner Alois Graus
 4. Protection Community Leader Achenkirchen: Property Owner Schrattenthaler
 5. Protection Community Leader Zillertal: “*wird erst organisiert*”⁸⁰⁹
- f. Region Unterinntal Leader of Technical Emergency Assistance: Works Inspector Überreiter
- g. Region Unterinntal Treasurer: Dr. Wippen
- h. Region Unterinntal Press Lawyer Staff: Dr. Pickert

⁸⁰⁷ Innkeeper Alois Schaller appears to have replaced Scheffauer at some point prior to 1928. See See Lösch, “Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr,” 35-51.

⁸⁰⁸ Graus appears to have been replaced as Deputy District Leader by Co-Deputy District Leaders Romed Angerer, who was Deputy Mayor of Schwaz at the time and, Forester, Hans Fleckel.

⁸⁰⁹ By 1928, the Protection Community Zillertal (Schutzgemeinschaft Zillertal) had become its own district. Its leader was Dr. Karl Kreidel. Kreidel’s deputies were Shoemaker, Franz Sandhofer, and Farmer, Josef Egger. See See Lösch, “Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr,” 35-51.

- i. Region Unterinntal Representative: Col. (Ret.) Ludwig Psenner
 - j. Region Unterinntal Administrator: Lt. (Ret.) Heinrich Mast
 - k. Region Unterinntal Typist: Col. (Ret.) Karl Binder
- 4) Region East Tyrol^{810*}
- a. Region East Leader: Politician Gottfried Hassler
 - b. District Lienz
 - i. Section Leader Sillian: Webhofer
 - ii. Section Leader Matri: Mühlstatter
 - iii. Section Leader Nikolsdorf: Gottfried Hassler
 - c. Region East Tyrol Representative: Property Owner Jakob Obersteiner

* The East Tyrolean Heimatwehr, by the Spring of 1928, was divided into three districts:⁸¹¹

- 1. District Sillian
 - a. Local Group (*Ortsgruppe*)Untertilliach
 - i. Local Leader: Sebastian Innwinkl
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Johann Prünster
 - b. Local Group Obertilliach
 - i. Local Leader: Josef Obmascher

⁸¹⁰ Mayors of the city of Lienz, Franz Henggi and Theodor Hibler also played a role in the leadership of the East Tyrolean Heimatwehr organization, though it is not clear what specific positions they held. It is likely, however, they served in the role of deputy leader(s). See Lösch, “Die Geschichte der Tiroler Heimatwehr,” 35-51. By 1928, the East Tyrolean Heimatwehr looked dramatically different in terms of organizational structure.

⁸¹¹ TLA: Landesleitung der SSV (Tirol), VII/1, fol. 2090, 529-31. There is an additional local group for the community of Strassen that had not been allocated to a district as of that time; its elected leader was Josef Ortner, his deputy was master carpenter Ludwig Mayer and the Secretary was Alois Aichner.

- c. Local Group Kartitsch
 - i. Local Leader: Master Bricklayer Johann Walder
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Blacksmith Leonhard Klammer
 - d. Local Group Abfaltersbach
 - i. Local Leader: Jakob Duregger
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Franz Webhofer
 - e. Local Group Sillian
 - i. Local Leader: Shopkeeper Webhofer
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Inspector Paul Amhof
 - f. Local Group Sillianberg
 - i. Local Leader: Josef Senfter
 - g. Local Group Panzendorf
 - h. Local Group Ausservillgraten
 - i. Local Leader: Anton Leiter
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Josef Perfler
 - iii. Secretary: Friedl Bachmann
 - i. Local Group Innervillgraten
 - i. Local Leader: Kassian Lanser
 - j. Local Group Anras
 - i. Local Leader: Josef Oberhofer
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Hermann Lercher
2. District Lienz
- a. Local Group Assling

- i. Local Leader Bichl: Josef Mairer
 - ii. Local Leader Thal: Josef Lukasser
 - iii. Secretary: Bürgermeister Johann Libiseller
- b. Local Group Lavant
 - i. Local Leader: Anton Klocker
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Bürgermeister Josef Brunner
- c. Local Group Tristach
 - i. Local Leader: Andreas Buntschuh
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Johann Felder
 - iii. Secretary: Johann Klocker
- d. Local Group Dölsach⁸¹²
- e. Local Group Nikolsdorf
 - i. Local Leader - Nikolsdorf: Gotthard Winkler
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader - Nikolsdorf: Hans Brunner
 - iii. Local Leader - Langberg: Josef Rossbacher
 - iv. Local Leader – Norsach: Franz Plautz
 - v. Secretary: Sylverter Stranganz
- f. Local Group Leisach
 - i. Local Leader: Josef Hanser
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Peter Senfter
- g. Local Group Thurn

⁸¹² As it is laid out in the document, it is not clear who was elected to what position, the names are simply listed in the following order: Stefan Buchacher, Johann Eichholzer, Peter Gasser, and Peter Mairl.

- i. Local Leader: Anton Bacher
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Paul Unterweger
- h. Local Group Gaimberg
 - i. Local Leader: Luis Kollnig
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Josef Hintersteiner
- i. Local Group Oberlien⁸¹³
- j. Local Group Ainet
 - i. Local Leader: Florian Forcher
 - ii. Co-Deputy Local Leader: Gottfried Oberhauser
 - iii. Co-Deputy Local Leader: Bürgermeister Thomas Pedarnig
- k. Local Group Schlaiten
 - i. Local Leader: Florian Pedarnig
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Matthias Steiner
- l. Local Group St. Johann
 - i. Local Leader: Josef Oblasser
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Andreas Vergeiner
- m. Local Group Bannberg
 - i. Local Leader: Alois Salcher
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Josef Weiler
 - iii. Secretary: Principal Franz Ude

3. District Iselthal

⁸¹³ It is not clear who was elected to what position aside from Principal Gutwenger who was elected as the group's administrator. The other names were listed in the following order: Josef Ruggenthaler, Leo Neumaier, and Principal Johann Polt.

- a. Local Group St. Jakob
 - i. Local Leader: Georg Schreiber
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Peter Ladstätter
- b. Local Group St. Veit
 - i. Local Leader: Police Inspector Hafele
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Josef Ortner
 - iii. Secretary: Head Teacher Josef Mallaun
- c. Local Group Hopfgarten
 - i. Local Leader: Hyazinth Blassnigg
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Chauffeur Anton Blassnigg
- d. Local Group Kals
 - i. Local Leader: Peter Payer
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Stefan Schneider
- e. Local Group Matrie
 - i. Local Leader: Peter Brugger
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Josef Presslaber
- f. Local Group Praegraten
 - i. Local Leader: Urban Kratzer
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Johann Steiner
- g. Local Group Virgen
 - i. Local Leader: Police Inspector Josef Fleckinger
 - ii. Deputy Local Leader: Josef Dichtl

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IV/6 Bez. Jugend, 1925

V/1 Bez. Organisation – Versammlung, 1926

VI/1 Bez. Organisation, 1927

VI/11 Bez. Radio, 1927

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VI/14 Bez. HW-Zeitung, 1927

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Neues Wiener Tagblatt
Österreich Volkszeitung und Grenzpost
Österreichische Land-Zeitung
Reichspost
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Salzburger Volksblatt
Salzburger Wacht
Tagblatt
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