The Reichswehr has recently again been the subject of political speculation, centering around the attitude of the general staff and the officers toward the National Socialist Party and its subsidiary organizations. The conflicting opinions expressed in the press referred to the undeniable increase in domestic political tension in the Third Reich and mention, in this connection, an article by Lieutenant General Reichenauf, in which it was stated that the defensive forces of National Socialist Germany can only be National Socialist, and that the soldier must for this reason take his position squarely on the National Socialist platform; consequently the press has drawn far-reaching conclusions out of the transfer of Reichenauf, who up to this time was the chief of the Wehrmachtamt, to active duty in a provincial post. An article of the Reichsleiter Buch, the chairman of the National Socialist Party Court, has recently given further support to the press stories concerning the relationship between the leadership of the state and the leadership of the army. In his article, Buch went into the question of the suspension of membership in the National Socialist Party for the duration of the military training period, and by stressing the principle of taking politics out of the army, he administered to his close party comrades to a certain extent a soothing balm designed to smooth over the fact that a higher officer who, counter to the wishes of the leaders of the army, had apparently committed himself a little too far in party politics, had been put on ice. In this respect it cannot be overlooked that the departure for active duty of Major Foertsch, who at one time was very closely associated with Schleicher, falls in very closely with the principle of taking politics out of the armed forces, particularly, however, as it provides a certain political compensation for the "Reichenauf" case. The leadership of the Reichswehr consistently endeavored, even in the time of the Weimar State, to keep away from party politics and to devote its forces to the internal development of the army from a consciously military point of view. The Greater-Prussian connection of the state and the strict Prussian officers' tradition, as the bearer of which during the Weimar era the Reichswehr had particular reason to consider itself, since political developments, at least in the first years of this era, did not encourage military interests, constituted the ideological...
background for this tactical self-isolation. The development of the army experienced a considerable moral and material stimulation under Brüning, Rapo and Schleicher, through the proclamation of the demand for equality of rights as well as through the methods of gradual rearmament, but the armed forces remained an organization in themselves, to a certain extent a state within a state, the attitude of which was dictated in the first instance by the necessity of strengthening its own machine and by setting up a favorable foreign-political line-up. The attempt of Schleicher to delay the assumption of power by National Socialism through a "social connection" with the labor unions did, to be sure, have a certain political color, but was soon left behind by the course of events.

It may be true that doubts concerning the economic and social-political doctrines of the Nazi party allowed the idea of an active campaign against the "National" counter-revolution to ripen in the brains of certain leading Reichswehr circles, but the leadership of the army showed itself to be strong enough to make out of the new regime an instrument for the consolidation of the armed forces and to influence domestic and foreign policy in directions tolerable for the Reichswehr. The cooperation between the State and the army in Germany rests on an exchange of the political and financial militarization principles of the side of the political circles for the attitude of loyalty toward the political régime on the part of the military circles. It is a compromise: the politicians must create the prerequisites for the recovery of Germany's military strength and must not allow any defects of the economic or financial situation to appear which might weaken the conditions of militarization; the military power, on the contrary, assures the régime of a certain stability which is not to be ignored. Because this compromise is the fulfillment on the part of all conservative German factions, the Reichswehr as well as heavy industry, the great landowners as well as the higher bureaucracy, that the Third Reich and National Socialism are not identical, insofar as a considerable weakening of Nazi party dogma, and particularly of the collective principle, cannot be denied. With the possible exception of the differences between the Reichswehr and Göring, who conducts the rearmament in the aviation field to a certain extent according to his own ideas, there has never been, from the purely military standpoint, any real grounds for a conflict between the Brown House and the Bendlerstrasse, since the Third Reich, in accordance with a broad plan, has placed politics and administration, economics and social policy, science and technology in the service of a systematic rearmament. On the other hand, the practical interests of the general staff and the officers' corps have had the tendency from the very beginning to break down the semi-military and social-revolutionary significance of the Nazi party formations, to hinder a deliberate confusing of military
and party-political spheres on the party's side, and finally to set aside the party's claim to absolutism as far as the Reichswahr is concerned and to retain the "Reichsheer" as a closed homogeneous body. The Reichswahr, furthermore, repudiates every one of the experiments advanced by the radical party circles which might endanger the economic and financial foundation of the rearmament program, and it desires to see the militarisation of the Reich develop in a tolerable foreign-political atmosphere. The Reichswahr can probably oppose excesses in the cultural-political field only insofar as they tend to complicate and disrupt foreign relations, and particularly the economic ties of Germany with the rest of the world. The result of this attitude on the part of the Reichswahr is a weakening of the connection between the political party organisation and the party-political defensive units of National Socialism, a far-reaching closing of the outlets of social revolutionary feeling and, accordingly, a practical loosening of the unity between party and state - on the other hand, however, a certain synthesis between the party and the army from military and foreign-political points of view, and, in logical consequence, a sort of weaving of interests in the inner political sphere, which gives the régime a certain stability.

The increased tension in the domestic situation in the Third Reich, which has arisen in the first instance for economic and social reasons, and the solution of which is being sought through cultural-political action, has created in many circles within and without Germany a "Reichswahr myth" and the tendency to see in the army the factor which will liquidate the Third Reich. This is probably a somewhat hasty conclusion. As long as the internal structure of Germany retains the form of an authoritative military state with a moderate capitalist streak, and as long as the practical application of the Führer principle continues to suit the domestic and foreign-political desires of the Reichswahr, the army can scarcely be interested in taking over, on the strength of an independent policy of ambition, a critical inheritance and trying to defend it through the power of the bayonet. The putting-on-ice of an officer like Reichmann, who had good connections with the party, even though somewhat compensated by the removal of Feuresch, is certainly a symptom for the strong position of the Reichswahr Ministry and a symptom of the tendency to take politics out of the army - a tendency which is required by the introduction of universal compulsory military training and which military circles support by a deliberate exclusion of party doctrines, but it would be unjustified, and consequently even rash, to draw too extensive conclusions from this fact. Not until the internal development in the Third Reich, particularly on the social side, has led to acute danger of a cooperation of
opposition elements within or without the party, or until the situation in foreign affairs has taken an undeniable turn, will the question of the "sphinx of the Reichswehr" take on any other than an academic significance.

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