

"La Question Française" In Russia 1806-1812

Abstract

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a dissertation by

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For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of History  
McGill University March, 1972

This thesis considers the period of the Tilsit Alliance from the point of view of the total French impact in Russia over the period 1806-1812. During these years of Alexander's reign there was in Russia a "Question Française" that encompassed both the external and internal aspects of national life. The expression "Question Française" as used here refers to both the external and internal affairs of Russia. Externally it means the problem of peace, war or alliance with Napoleonic France. Internally it signifies a complex grouping of internal phenomena in Russia at the turn of the century.

The thesis seeks to answer three questions. First, what was the relationship between the external and internal aspects of the "Question Française"? Second, how did the Tilsit Alliance affect this relationship? Third, how did the changed relationship between the external and internal aspects of the "Question Française" affect the outcome of the Alliance?

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submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
and Research in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
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## Introduction

Tsar Alexander I succeeded his father, Paul, in 1801 following a Palace revolt and ruled Russia until 1825. The reign is periodized in two ways, according to whether emphasis is placed upon internal or external affairs. If internal developments are under examination, Alexander's rule is divided into two parts, 1801-1812 and 1813-1825. These correspond respectively to the Tsar's liberal and reactionary periods. If external affairs are scrutinized, the reign is broken into three periods, 1801-1807, 1807-1812 and 1812-1825. In the first of these Alexander's policy began as one of non-alignment and ended with the Third Coalition against France. The second opened with the Tilsit arrangements, which brought a Russian-French Alliance, and closed with the Napoleonic invasion in 1812. The third commenced with the Patriotic War and terminated with the accession of Nicholas I. This thesis discusses the complex position of France in Russia's internal and external affairs during the years 1806-1812.

Both in Russia and in West Europe historians have seen the period leading up to 1812 in terms of a gigantic clash between two men foremost in Europe who, in their own words, could not reign with one another. Napoleon, and perhaps to a lesser extent Alexander, have been viewed as larger than life personalities nominated by history to direct cataclysmic forces. The aura of myth which has grown up about their collision, like every other legend, has originated in the attempt to dramatize a profound historical experience.<sup>1</sup>

The opinions of Russian writers of the Imperial period regarding the Alliance between France and Russia, the causes of the breakdown, and the significance of the 1812 invasion were quite varied. The dominant tendency in these opinions was to regard the Alliance as a personal affair between Europe's most powerful rulers. However, there is substantial disagreement as to what this represented, what lay behind the switch in Russian policy, whether or not Napoleon dominated Alexander, and what was the turning point in the Alliance. There was, in contrast, considerable agreement concerning the year 1812. The events following the Napoleonic invasion were considered a patriotic feat - the defence of the Russian land by the army and an aroused citizenry. 1812 was termed the year of the 'Patriotic War' (Otechestvennaia Voina) and its principle protagonists were seen as heroes who had saved their country from foreign conquest.<sup>2</sup> The Russian writer M.S. Lermontov gave poetic form to this idea which has since been shared by many scholars. In his poem Dva Velikana (Two Giants) Lermontov wrote during 1832:

In his helmet of pure gold  
Did the Russian giant rise  
Waiting for another  
From a far and alien land.

Over the hills and through the valleys  
Rang the story of his fame,  
And to test each others prowess  
Was their common wish.

Martial thunders rumbling, crashing,  
Came the hero three weeks old,  
Insolent, he raised a hand  
To unhelm the enemy.

With a smile a doom foretelling  
Did the Russian answer him:  
Glanced briefly - shook his head -  
And the upstart cried and fell.

And he fell into the ocean  
On an unregarded rock...<sup>3</sup>

Despite this popular and patriotic conception, however, there was very little significant study of Alexander's French policy until late in the nineteenth century. As Lobanov-Rostovsky has shown, Russian historians up to very recent times have indicated little interest in the field of Russia's foreign relations, preferring to concentrate on the internal problems of their country. Russia's role in Europe had been dealt with mainly within the framework of general European histories.<sup>4</sup> Even an historian as prominent as V.O. Kliuchevskii treated the subject of Alexander's foreign affairs in a brief and tangential way.

The conception of Russian-French relations to be found in Kliuchevskii, who led Russian historians during the last quarter of the nineteenth century,<sup>5</sup> was a popular version which stressed the role of the Tsar's personality. In Kliuchevskii's view Alexander's character was not such as to make him a good statesman. The problem with the Emperor began with his education; as Kliuchevskii noted: "For my part, I do not think, as very many do, that Alexander's education was a good one. His education was fussy, but not good."<sup>6</sup> Taking a broad view, the historian saw the period as essentially one of conflict:

Foreign events put Russia in the struggle with the after-effects of the French Revolution [i.e., Napoleon]; the government as a result became conservative in international relations, the protector of legitimacy, and subsequently the champion of the restoration of the old order.<sup>7</sup>

There were two elements of tragedy in the military struggle between Russia and France, one with respect to Russian development and the other regarding Alexander. Concerning Russia, the main effect of these wars and Russia's part in them was that they interrupted internal development:

Such a conservative trend from international relations automatically was carried to internal policies. It was impossible, on the one hand, to support the protection of the West and, on the other hand, to continue the transformation at home.<sup>8</sup>

It was this misfortune which, for Kliuchevskii, characterized the year 1812 and the new epoch:

1812 began a new interruption in the internal thought of this reign. External events for a long time detracted the attention of government and society to foreign affairs. When the burdens of the war years blew over, the government did not return to thoughts of the previous direction.<sup>9</sup>

The tragedy for Alexander was that he was forced by circumstances to become conservative when his personal preferences were in a liberal direction. Kliuchevskii summarized the Tsar's change and the effects upon him of Russian-French relations when he wrote:

Assuming power without seeking it, with chilled emotions and premature fatigue, he directed world affairs during this uneasy reign in our history; he undertook seven campaigns, struggled with Napoleon sometimes as an enemy, sometimes as an ally, burying under his snow the greatest army to have appeared in Europe and, wishing to bring peace to Europe, he saw himself its dictator against his will.<sup>10</sup>

Serious and scholarly research on Russian-French affairs under Alexander dates from the 1890's when the two countries were moving towards a new alliance. From this point to the 1917 revolution several important and lasting contributions were made in the collection of sources; the major biography of Alexander appeared and a number of historians produced diplomatic and political histories of the period. The first significant attempt to study Alexander's relations with France was made by S.S. Tatishchev. He authored a number of diplomatic studies between 1887 and 1893 dealing with the reigns of Alexander I, Nicholas I and Alexander II. His work on

Alexander and Napoleon for the years 1801-1812 was a considerable advancement when it appeared in 1891. He divided the first half of the reign into two periods, 1801-1806 and 1807-1812, on the basis of Alexander's French policy.

In Tatishchev's view there were two main factors contributing to the change in Russian policy in 1807. First, Alexander was dissatisfied with the coalition and its inability to secure a victory. He believed that an alliance with France was the only means to a general European peace. Second, in the early stage of the Tilsit negotiations Alexander and Napoleon developed a strong personal relationship.<sup>11</sup> The Alliance concluded at Tilsit was mutually advantageous for both rulers. For Napoleon Tilsit represented the conclusion of a long cherished plan of a continental alliance to secure the French Empire, to paralyse England, and to prevent the formation of further coalitions. For Alexander it represented an end to philanthropic endeavours and abstract ideology, and the beginning of a sane appreciation of the Empire's real needs - a return to national and traditional policies.<sup>12</sup>

The general idea underlying the union was a division of the world into two parts, France reigning in the West, Russia in the East.<sup>13</sup> However, Napoleon did not live up to this expectation and became increasingly aggressive in the East. During the last years of the Alliance Alexander showed increased resolve and did not hesitate to make every sacrifice to end the insatiable ambitions of his adversary. In the end, Tatishchev told us, the Tsar was compelled to overthrow Napoleon who had forced his cruel aims upon the French and Russian people.<sup>14</sup>

Although Tatishchev's study fell within the patriotic tendency

in Imperial historiography and brought no startling interpretation, it remains one of the classic accounts of the diplomacy of the period. The importance of the work stems in part from the fact that it brought forth much new documentation for the first half of Alexander's reign and contained correspondence between the two Emperors and their aides not found in the official collections such as Napoleon's Correspondance.

The major biography of Alexander, written by N.K. Shilder, appeared beginning in 1897. In it a slightly different scheme of periodization was proposed, owing to the fact that the work was a biography and not a political history. Shilder divided the reign into three periods: 1801-1810, 1810-1816, and 1816-1825. The first phase was marked by oscillations determined by the Tsar's character and his intention to reform. The years 1810-1816 were years of decision when Alexander was taken up entirely with war against France. There was during this time no hesitation or indecision. In the last period Alexander turned his attention from Russia to become involved in the congresses and the maintenance of order in Europe.<sup>15</sup>

The most important aspect of Alexander's relationship with Napoleon was, according to Shilder, the Tsar's affinity for the French ruler: "The Emperor entered the political arena with many sympathies for the chief of the French government, the First Consul Bonaparte."<sup>16</sup> It was this friendship that accounted for the Alliance at Tilsit and endured for some time afterward:

In private conversations, at the mention of his ally, Alexander would say that he felt himself better after each conversation with the Emperor Napoleon, and that an hour of conversation with this great man enriched him more than ten years of life's work.<sup>17</sup>

The factor which led to the breakdown of the Alliance was the

Tsar's relationship with Frederick William of Prussia. In their first meeting, Shilder informed us, the bases were laid for a personal friendship,

a friendship which would finally become valuable for the Prussian king for the defence of his throne; unfortunately, the magnanimous goal of conserving and finally restoring the Prussian power would cost rivers of Russian blood.<sup>18</sup>

The turning point in the relationship between Alexander and Napoleon came at Erfurt in 1808. It was there that Alexander saw his opportunity and seized it. The Tsar had already made up his mind about the future of the Alliance when he visited the Prussian monarchs on his return to Russia.<sup>19</sup>

On the whole, Shilder's study is less a work of historical synthesis than an anecdotal biography. He was concerned primarily with the Emperor's personality, his education, and intellectual development. Notwithstanding this fact, however, Shilder preserved considerable information about the Tsar for subsequent historians and the biography still contains source material unavailable by other means.

The study of Alexander's reign by Grand Duke Nikolai-Mikhailovich became a popular work when it appeared during 1912 although, in general, the Grand Duke considered Shilder's biography "the only work on the subject".<sup>20</sup> Nikolai-Mikhailovich periodized the reign according to external affairs and in place of Shilder's three divisions the Grand Duke proposed five. The years 1801-1807 were considered a time of indecision in which Alexander vacillated between peace and war with France. From 1807 to 1812 Russia was an ally of France, while 1812-1815 were years of struggle between the two Emperors. The final two phases, 1816-22 and 1822-25, were times of congresses and disillusionment respectively.

There was no doubt in the Grand Duke's mind that the Tilsit

agreements were brought on by Russia's military defeat and were an act of necessity: "In the year 1807 Napoleon was at the height of his glory and his power. Everyone trembled before his name; everyone prostrated themselves before him."<sup>21</sup> Nikolai-Mikhailovich shared with other Imperial historians the notion that a personal alliance between Alexander and the Prussian monarchy was the underlying feature of Alexander's diplomacy. Furthermore, he wrote, this found solid backing within the Russian Imperial family:

In the moral influence of the Imperial Mother Maria Feodorovna, Paul's wife and Alexander's mother/ who was attached to everything that was German, as well as the personal desire of Alexander to know a descendant of Frederick the Great and to see the famous Prussian grenadiers.<sup>22</sup>

In the end Alexander's insistence on the removal of French troops from Prussia and his refusal to accept an enlarged Poland meant that Napoleon had to try military means once again. His invasion of Russia led to his doom. However, the Grand Duke noted:

If it is just to attribute this brilliant result to the Russian armies and to the force of endurance of the Russian people, as well as to the harshness of the Russian climate, Alexander must be given the merit for having been the directing spirit and the organiser of the enemy's disaster.<sup>23</sup>

The politico-diplomatic biography of Alexander by his descendant was not a comprehensive study, although it has been widely read in the West. Far more important was the publication of materials for the period under the Grand Duke's direction. Besides the documents appended to his biography of Alexander, Nikolai-Mikhailovich was responsible for documentary collections on several leading figures of the period including Paul Stroganov,<sup>24</sup> the Dolgorukii's,<sup>25</sup> the Grand Duchess Catherine Pavlovna (Alexander's sister),<sup>26</sup> Elizabeth (Alexander's wife),<sup>27</sup> and the Tsar's Adjutants-General.<sup>28</sup>



The largest undertaking was a compilation of the reports of the Russian and French ambassadors for the years 1808-1812.<sup>29</sup> Although this documentation was carefully censored, especially regarding Imperial family relationships, they remain one of the richest fonds of source material for the study of Alexander's reign.

A.A. Kornilov, in a three volume history of the nineteenth century which appeared 1912-18, made one of the few attempts to consider Alexander's reign from both the internal and external points of view. This led him to a more sophisticated periodization than his predecessors:

The reign of Alexander was full of great events, and the progress of Russian life went on rapidly and turbulently under internal shocks, but with marked vacillations....These zigzags are the factional periods or stages into which the reign of Alexander must be divided - I count six such stages.<sup>30</sup>

In Kornilov's scheme the years 1801-1815 were divided into four periods: 1801-1805, 1805-1807, 1808-1811, and 1812-1815. The reform movement dominated the years 1801-1805 but was temporarily interrupted during 1805-1807. In these years Russia was engaged in a war against France where no Russian interests were involved. The period 1808-1811 brought the Alliance with France, a costly Continental Blockade, and renewed interest in reforms. 1812-1815 saw the Patriotic War and an end to all further reforms. There followed between 1816 and 1820 a period of conferences which saw the neglect of internal conditions. Finally, from 1821 to 1825 Russia's government was reactionary and a revolutionary spirit was developing.<sup>31</sup>

The periodization proposed by Kornilov considerably enlarged on the scheme offered by Shilder and also increased by one the phases put forward by Nikolai-Mikhailovich. It remains the most sophisticated and

sound proposal thus far elaborated in Russian historiography. Kornilov shared with other Imperial historians a belief that the Tsar's personality was a key factor in his conduct. Great stress was laid upon his education and early development. Two characteristics of the Emperor particularly stood out. First, his intellectual training was irregular and unsystematic: he never developed a comprehensive awareness of any of his schemes. Second, he had a stubborn personality, a strong will and intuitively tended toward the practical and military side of things.<sup>32</sup> It was Alexander's ability as a diplomat that showed him for his true worth. In his relations with Napoleon the Tsar appeared for the first time in the role of a keen and far-seeing diplomat, and we may presume from Kornilov that diplomacy was Alexander's real sphere of competence, where he was able to cope with the most prominent statesmen in Europe:

From the point of view of the international relations of that time, and considering the actual conditions of the moment, we must admit that Alexander's policy at Tilsit and a year later at Erfurt was very clever.<sup>33</sup>

Notwithstanding the correctness, in Kornilov's view, of Alexander's policy of cooperation with Napoleon, it was not a popular association and in some respects it was even dangerous. Kornilov wrote:

The alliance with Napoleon at Tilsit was intolerable for Russia not only because it conflicted with national consciousness and pride, but also because it destroyed the economic forces and the welfare of the Russian state and people.<sup>34</sup>

Ultimately this made the Alliance unworkable, for when Napoleon saw he could not dominate Alexander diplomatically he tried to do so militarily. The result of course was the Patriotic War as we see from Kornilov's relation of a famous episode in 1812:

At Moscow he Alexander was greeted with an explosion of enthusiasm in society and in the popular masses which surpassed all his expectations. The nobility in Moscow Guberniia alone immediately donated three million rubles, an enormous sum for those times, and offered to provide ten recruits for each one hundred souls, which represented nearly half of the workers in the country able to bear arms. The merchants of Moscow donated ten million rubles.<sup>35</sup>

Having elaborated what Tilsit and French-Russian relations meant for Russia, Kornilov then stated what these affairs meant for Europe. In essence he summarized the dominant attitude of Imperial historiography of the nineteenth century:

Alexander was a determined man in the events which followed. For the entire three years 1812-1815 he was transformed into the 'Agamemnon' of Europe, into the Tsar of Tsars - as was said then. One cannot claim that this mission was important only for Russia.<sup>36</sup>

In the view of Kizevetter, whose study on Alexander and Arakcheev appeared in 1912, the Emperor's background and personality gave him a definite advantage in a diplomatic contest. Long years of apprenticeship between the courts of Catherine and Paul had taught him the art of duplicity and survival in difficult circumstances. According to Kizevetter:

In the field of international diplomatic negotiations these characteristics of Alexander found brilliant application....In the sphere of diplomatic art Alexander felt himself the equal of Napoleon. According to the tale in some historical collections, at Tilsit Alexander unaccountably gave himself up to the charming genius of Napoleon. However, this submission was the best proof of the skills which Alexander played with, for he intentionally accepted his role as Napoleon's young partner.<sup>37</sup>

Following Tilsit, when Alexander returned home, there was tremendous opposition to the new system. Alexander on this occasion exhibited two additional aspects of his character - foresight and stubbornness - and refused to give in. Kizevetter wrote:

At the conclusion of the Tilsit Alliance with Napoleon the opinion of Russian society was united in opposition....Alexander alone, knowing what he was doing, stuck to his path with indestructible persistence. In retrospect his resolution shows his common sense as well.<sup>38</sup>

Alexander had only to bide his time and Napoleon would make the fatal mistake of invading Russia. For all that transpired during the Patriotic War there was a degree of irony for the Tsar himself was not a nationalist.

The spectacle of the enthusiasm of others left him cold and indifferent. It was ironical that in his reign Russia experienced a moment of great ascent of national patriotism animated in the years of the Patriotic War....At Paris, in the view of all Europe, Alexander stepped aside from the role of national Emperor.<sup>39</sup>

Soviet Russian historiography offered a different interpretation in the first years of its development, but later returned basically to the national and patriotic theme. During the initial years M.N. Pokrovskii, who dominated Russian historical writing from 1917 to the mid-1930's<sup>40</sup> took the unusual step for a Russian of suggesting that the deterioration of Russia's relations with France after 1807 was the fault of Russia itself. Pokrovskii's Marxian interpretation sought the causes of war in economic relationships. In Russia of Alexander I, according to Pokrovskii:

A controversy existed between industrial and agrarian capitalism; for the former the Continental Blockade was entirely acceptable but for the latter it meant destruction.<sup>41</sup>

Rejecting the patriotic interpretation, Pokrovskii stated that there was "not the slightest doubt that Russia was ready to attack France as early as December 1810."<sup>42</sup> In another work he elaborated on the role of England in Russian-French relations:

The future of Russian capitalism depended upon an alliance with England, and the Blockade had provoked

an economic crisis in Russia....Russia's rejection of the Blockade, direct or indirect, was bound to force Napoleon into war, whether he wanted it or not.<sup>43</sup>

To account for Russia's actions solely on the basis of an economic system was not enough. People and interests were involved as well, and this element in the early Soviet Russian interpretation was added by S.A. Piontkovskii, a student and follower of Pokrovskii. The younger historian developed the idea that the breakdown of the Russian-French Alliance:

resulted from the Russian government's fulfillment of the demands of those who supplied raw materials for the English market. The war was waged exclusively in the interests of the united bloc of the nobility, in response to the demands of feudal nobility which was in the process of becoming bourgeois.<sup>44</sup>

Continuing Pokrovskii's thesis, the patriotic aspect of Russian society was denied by Piontkovskii as well. "There was no patriotic movement and social unification within Russian society at the time of Napoleon's advance on Moscow."<sup>45</sup>

As the threat of war grew in the USSR during the late 1930's the earlier 'unpatriotic' interpretation came into question.<sup>46</sup> It was rejected in 1938 in a work then published by E.V. Tarle for whom Napoleonic France, not Russia, had been the antagonist. Of all Napoleon's diplomatic contests Tarle believed the struggle against Russia was the "most imperialistic, the one most directly dictated by the interests of the French haute bourgeoisie".<sup>47</sup> In his view the Tilsit Alliance and the Continental System had as their basic aim: "To make Russia economically subject to the interests of the French haute bourgeoisie and to create a permanent threat against Russia in the form of vassal Poland."<sup>48</sup> Tarle's characterization of patriotism in Russian society rejected the early Marxian interpretation. He glorified

the heroism exhibited by the Russian people: "It was not the cold and vast expanse of Russia which defeated Napoleon; it was the resistance of the Russian people which defeated him."<sup>49</sup>

This description of the diplomacy of the period is significant for three reasons. First, this interpretation has dominated Soviet Russian historiography to the present time. Second, in essence it represented a return to the basic patriotic tenet of Imperial Russian historiography. Third, while returning to the earlier Russian theme, it focused on economic questions and regarded the Continental System as the source of the breakdown of the Alliance.

Following Tarle the most important study during the Stalinist period was that of S.B. Okun in 1948. In his survey of the reigns of Paul and Alexander the historian accepted some of the proposals of earlier, Imperial writers, but put forward the idea that the Tilsit period did not represent cooperation on European problems: in essence the Tilsit period was one of diplomatic isolation for Russia. Tilsit, in Okun's view, was a military, financial and diplomatic necessity:

Austerlitz and Friedland did not bring Russia to Tilsit. Its military power was not undermined, however the continuation of the war became impossible. On the European continent the main allies were no longer with us: Austria and Prussia were defeated. The financial position of Russia was so bad that it was not able to continue the war without state subsidies, but England, up to this time faultlessly subsidizing all the coalitions against France, ceased further payments for the continuation of the war.<sup>50</sup>

The significance of Tilsit, as Okun saw it, was that Russia had been isolated on the continent and had been turned into the protector of the eastern interests of France. It was there, in the East, that French and Russian interests clashed:

As far as the Tilsit peace and the resulting diplomatic steps of Napoleon are concerned, they called into being the international isolation of Russia and, at the same time, turned Russia into the obedient protector of French interests in Central Europe. This, however, did not have the desired effect of strengthening the Russian-French Alliance....later the protector of French interests became, in Napoleon's view, the state of Austria. His demagogic pledge to restore Poland and the threat of these affairs for relations with Russia now frequently figured in the statements of Napoleon.<sup>51</sup>

It was the inability of France to control Russia that prevented Napoleon's complete domination of the continent and led him to attack Russia in 1812: "During the invasion of 1812, almost without assistance, Russia destroyed his encirclement of all the powers on the European continent".<sup>52</sup>

Despite the changes which occurred in many aspects of Soviet historiography during the post-Stalin era, there was no revision of the patriotic interpretation. Russia under Alexander was still regarded as a feudal-peasant state (feudalno-krepostnicheskoe gosudarstvo) in the process of changing to a bourgeois state and the various aspects of national and international life reflected that 'fact'. There have been, nevertheless, some noteworthy studies in recent years on various aspects of the reign of Alexander.

Among the first to appear in the post-Stalin period was a book by A.B. Predtechenskii on the social and political history of Russia in Alexander's time. He used the same general approach to the study of the 'feudal-peasant order', but did not dwell on the patriotic aspect. Predtechenskii employed the simple division of Alexander's reign into two parts by the year 1815. During the latter period Alexander was "overcome by mysticism and passed the power into the hands of Arakcheev."<sup>53</sup> While most of the significant features of 'progressive' economic and political

thought of the period 1806-1812 were discussed, no attempt was made to relate these to Russia's affairs with France. Russian-French relations, the Blockade and the invasion appear only tangentially, and no departure was made from the accepted interpretation. In a passage that introduced a discussion of Speransky's projects from 1808 to 1812 Predtechenskii wrote:

To many the defeat of Russia and its commitment to an 'alliance' with France threatened severe economic and political consequences. This part of the nobility, which was economically tied to western Europe, had reasons to fear the consequences of Russia's joining with the Continental Blockade.<sup>54</sup>

Far more significant was the 1962 study of the Patriotic War by the military historian L.G. Beskrovnyi. The essential features of the patriotic interpretation - Napoleon's aggression and the defence of the fatherland - again came forward; the central Marxian theme - economics - also appears. However, Beskrovnyi added new dimensions and explanations as well. The author described the effects of the Blockade on Russia but pointed out the consequences of Russia's clandestine trade with the United States and the effects this had on Napoleon. The historian began by describing Napoleon's views in 1807: "At the conclusion of the Tilsit peace in 1807 Napoleon was able to say that now he was near to the world state. In his path stood only Russia and England. The path to victory over England lay through Russia."<sup>55</sup> But Russia was not the willing victim.

Russia allowed sea trade not only independently from England, but in some degree against French interests, with the United States....The international situation, existing after the Tilsit peace, demanded an intensification of trade relations with the United States; with which Russia had good relations since the time of the recognition of American independence."<sup>56</sup>

It was the relations between Russia and the United States which caused the



rupture between Napoleon and Alexander: "This seriously disturbed Napoleon, who saw in the development of trade relations between Russia and America the circumvention of the terms of the Continental Blockade."<sup>57</sup>

The most definitive Marxian analysis of the Napoleonic economic system as it applied to Russia appeared in 1966 and was written by M.F. Zlotnikov. Although no new interpretation was offered, valuable statistics were presented for the various Russian regions. Two points are made in the work. First, the effects of the blockade were not uniform: in general, trade in the Baltic was much more seriously affected than trade from Black Sea ports.<sup>58</sup> Second, if one is to judge Alexander's adherence to the Napoleonic system in terms of the confiscation of vessels and goods outlawed by Napoleon, then the high point of the Alliance was reached in 1809.<sup>59</sup>

The most recent analysis specifically relating to the diplomacy of the period was presented by V.G. Sirotkin in 1966. The work is entirely lacking in the sophistication found in Beskrovnyi and Zlotnikov. The theme of the study is that the politics of both Russia and France represented predatory imperialism:

The essence of these relations was the clash of the aggressive aspirations of France and Russia, their struggle for new territorial acquisitions and spheres of influence in Europe, in the Near East and Middle East.<sup>60</sup>

With monumental historical hindsight Sirotkin advanced the even more fanciful notion that:

The Tilsit Alliance was a timely compromise. Napoleon untied his hands for new seizures [Spain and Portugal], Alexander I gained a breathing space for the solution of internal political problems and preparation for the War of 1812.<sup>61</sup>

The discussion of the Tilsit period in the ongoing history of the USSR from ancient times sums up the Soviet interpretation. A.V. Fadeev stated that:

For Russia the very heavy terms of the Tilsit Peace in 1807 were the joining in alliance with France and adherence to the Napoleonic proclamations of the Continental Blockade of the British Isles. This not only involved Russia in aggressive Napoleonic policies and restricted the independence of the Russian government in international affairs, but inflicted as well a painful blow on the economic interests of Russian landowners and merchants participating in trade with England.<sup>62</sup>

The break between the two Empires came with the introduction of new tariffs in Russia on 1 January 1811:

Alexander and his ministers prepared a New Year's gift for Bonaparte - a higher customs tariff on the imports from France of wine, silk and velvet. It was Napoleon's turn to protest, but his protest as well was a diversion. By this time none of the political figures had any doubts that a great new war was inevitable in Europe.<sup>63</sup>

Parallel to the development of Soviet historical writing there has continued in the West the Imperial and patriotic theme in Russian historiography. Numerous Russian émigré scholars in the years after 1917 have produced works covering the reign of Alexander. In general these studies add little to our knowledge of the period, partly because their authors had only restricted access to archival sources. They have, nevertheless, maintained the emphasis upon personalities, as opposed to economics, and many of these books became popular.

G.I. Tchoulkov's study of Paul and Alexander, which was published in 1928, repeated the idea that Tilsit represented a personal Alliance between the two Emperor's for the benefit of humanity (*bonheur de l'humanité*).<sup>64</sup> In this version Napoleon was the aggressor: "Napoléon ne renonça jamais à l'idée de l'empire du monde."<sup>65</sup> Alexander was willing to accept the Tilsit treaties for pragmatic reasons: "Il lui fallait gagner du temps à n'importe quel prix."<sup>66</sup> Attention was paid to the effects of the Napoleonic

blockade and the French attempt to dominate Russia economically. It was the Russian people who defeated Napoleon.<sup>67</sup> The same view of the French Emperor emerged in the 1930 history by V.V. Funk and B. Nazarevski:

"De son côté, Napoléon Ier n'aspirait qu'à devenir maître de l'univers."<sup>68</sup>

Among the most widely read works of émigré historians was a history edited by P. Miliukov in 1932. In the section devoted to Alexander's foreign policy, written by B. Mirkin-Guetsevitch, nothing original was offered. The turning point in the relationship came, we were informed, when Russia refused to cooperate with Napoleon against Austria: "After the 1809 war Napoleon could entertain no further doubts as to the worthlessness of the Russian alliance."<sup>69</sup> The Continental Blockade was the final issue that divided the rulers:

In order to supervise the application of the blockade, Napoleon annexed to France the possessions of the Duke von Oldenburg, Alexander's brother-in-law, and there was an immediate and sharp protest. War was not imminent.<sup>70</sup>

In N.V. Brian-Chaninov's popular biography of Alexander, which arrived in 1934, the patriotic interpretation emerged particularly clearly. Although Alexander was influenced by Napoleon at Tilsit, Brian-Chaninov believed it was the French Emperor who was duped.<sup>71</sup> Erfurt marked the high point of the Alliance and also saw its decline. At this conference, the historian told us, Alexander was a much stronger ruler than at Tilsit.<sup>72</sup> The central point of contention was the problem of Turkey. Napoleon's struggle for control of the East was thwarted by the Tsar and the French ruler was forced to conquer Russia if he could. This led to the aggressive invasion of 1812 and the Patriotic War:

Les faits militaires qui ont illustré la retraite de Russie peuvent être assimilés à une guerre populaire.

car ce furent surtout les formations des 'partisans'  
(francs-tireurs) et des bandes de paysans qui  
l'alimentent.<sup>73</sup>

A.A. Lobanov-Rostovsky, in a survey of Russia's relations with Europe that appeared in 1947, felt that Tilsit represented a timely compromise for both Emperors. Napoleon believed an alliance with Alexander would be useful against England, while the Tsar saw it as a means to secure European peace.<sup>74</sup> The causes of the breakdown of the system were evident at Tilsit already; they were to be found in Napoleon's grand designs and the unsettled questions of the Alliance:

Napoleon's policy of building up a chain of states under his control, forming a belt across Germany to connect with a Poland re-created from the territories taken from Prussia, would mean the strengthening of Poland and a possible future menace to Russia. Here were to be found seeds of future conflict.<sup>75</sup>

In a biography of Alexander written two years later L. Strakhovsky explained why the contest between the two Emperor's became a personal conflict:

Although apparently different in character, Alexander and Napoleon shared a mutual mistrust of men....As a result of this attitude their struggle held more the aspects of a personal duel than a fight between two nations, between two empires.<sup>76</sup>

The heaviest obligation imposed upon Russia as a consequence of Tilsit was the Continental System, directed against England. This was a severe blow to Russian trade since England was one of Russia's best customers. However, Strakhovsky pointed out:

Russia was compensated somewhat for the loss of the British market by gaining that of the United States when two years after Tilsit she signed a commercial treaty with the young overseas republic.<sup>77</sup>

The problem of Turkey between Russia and France formed the central

thread in a 1954 study by B. Mouravieff. According to him Alexander compromised himself at Tilsit with regard to Turkish affairs. Basing himself on the fact that the first two articles of the secret treaty ceded Cattaro and the Seven Islands to France,<sup>78</sup> Mouravieff developed the thesis that Turkish affairs were central to Russian policy.<sup>79</sup> The Alliance between Napoleon and Alexander was a personal one and the turning point came at Erfurt over Turkey, where the French unwillingness to grant concessions to Russia left the question unresolved. This eventually led to Napoleon's defeat in the great Patriotic War.<sup>80</sup>

In a later book the same author advanced a slightly different interpretation. In his 1962 study of the Russian monarchy Mouravieff returned to another common thread in Imperial historical writing when he proposed that Russian politics of the period were based on a secret family alliance with Prussia. This alliance, in Mouravieff's view, dominated Alexander's relationship with the French ruler.<sup>81</sup> In writing this the author repeated the idea found earlier, in the biography by Nikolai-Mikhailovich for example, but at the same time he was advancing one notion among many to be seen in French historiography. This thought could be found in Napoleon's personal explanations of Russian diplomacy.<sup>82</sup>

E.M. Almedingen's recent study on Alexander put forth the idea, shared by a number of the Tsar's apologists, that he was in perfect control of the situation at Tilsit:

[Tilsit] was a gigantic private gamble of his own - to gain a little breathing space....He came to that meeting, calmly determined to stave off the approaching menace to his own frontiers, to help in so far as it was possible his dispossessed ally of Prussia, to take his own measure of Napoleon, and then, a little time gained, to return to Russia where matters of great importance were waiting him.<sup>83</sup>

In addition to the writings of Imperial, Soviet and émigré Russian historians, there has been considerable interest in Russian-French relations on the part of French scholars. As might be expected, French writers have thoroughly researched and written about Napoleon's foreign policy, but with few exceptions the period of the Tilsit Alliance has been treated as an integral part of overall French external affairs. In France of the restoration period and for some time thereafter the interpretation of the relationship between the two Emperors was more or less 'black and white'. The conception prevailed that Napoleon was the evil demagogue and Alexander the innocent victim.<sup>84</sup> In France the scholarly study of Napoleon's relations with Alexander, and especially that which has influenced modern writing on the subject, began as it did in Russia during the 1880's and 1890's.

The most significant study of the problem appeared in 1891 when A. Vandal published the first of his three volumes on Napoleon and Alexander during the years of the Tilsit Alliance. It became the standard interpretation of Franco-Russian affairs for the period 1807-1812 and it remains the most detailed description of these relations. Many still consider Vandal's history to be the classic treatment of the subject.<sup>85</sup> Nevertheless, on the opening page of the first volume the Napoleonic myth was revived and the bias in Vandal's work became apparent:

Pendant toute la durée de son règne, Napoléon poursuivit au dehors un but invariable: assurer par une paix sérieuse avec l'Angleterre la fixité de son oeuvre, la grandeur française et le repos du monde.<sup>86</sup>

According to Vandal the French Emperor conceived the Alliance with Alexander as a means to an end: England was the persistent problem for

France and Napoleon hoped to use Russia against his chief enemy. It was England, Vandal told us, that prevented world peace, that financed European nations against France, and that prevented the full realization of "la grandeur française". These were the prevailing circumstances in 1807:

Napoleon avait tout conquis, sauf la paix. Derrière chaque ennemi vaincu, il retrouvait l'Angleterre en armes, préparant contre lui de nouvelles coalitions. Pour arracher la paix à l'Angleterre et la donner au monde, il sentait le besoin de gagner une amie sûre qui lui assurerait l'obéissance du continent, tandis qu'il appliquerait tous ses moyens à la lutte sur les mers.<sup>87</sup>

In Vandal's mind the Alliance existed in the proper sense for only a short time and carried within it the seeds of its own demise:

L'alliance portait en soi un germe de mort, le principe de sa destruction, parce que c'était une alliance pour la guerre et la conquête, une association spoliatrice et dévorante, et parce que ces pactes ne se concluent jamais sans arrière-pensées respectives.<sup>88</sup>

Blame for the failure of the Alliance was to be laid against both France and Russia, the latter far more than the former. As for France, "nos concessions, magnifiques, mais tardives, ne suffisaient plus à fixer la confiance et à cimenter l'union."<sup>89</sup> But if Napoleon could be charged with this miscalculation, Russia could be charged with even more:

L'alliance se fût prolongée peut-être, si les craintes vagues de cette puissance, moins directement apprimée que les autres, ne se fussent concentrées sur un objet précis, s'il n'y eût eu, dans le contract qui s'établissait entre les deux empires à travers l'Allemagne envahie, un point sensible et douloureux. Ce fut le grand-duché de Varsovie. La campagne de 1809 contre l'Autriche eut pour conséquence l'extension du duché, et ce progrès, faisant craindre à la Russie une complète restauration de la Pologne, la souleva contre un péril moins réel qu'imaginaire.<sup>90</sup>

The inability of France and Russia to come to terms over the

Prussian and Polish questions made the Alliance unworkable. This failure was a tragedy, both for Europe and for Napoleon personally, as Vandal wrote:

Se l'accord essayé à Tilsit se fût consolidé et perpétué, il est probable que l'Angleterre eût succombé, que la France et l'Europe se fussent assises dans une forme nouvelle: la rupture avec la Russie ranima la coalition expirante, entraîna Napoléon à de mortelles entreprises et la perdit.<sup>91</sup>

The conception of the Napoleonic design found in Vandal's history was not new. It was shared by nearly all of Napoleon's apologists and harked back to Napoleon's own propaganda.<sup>92</sup> Despite this, however, the study continues to have some value. It is a thorough, if uncritical, work based on original archival research and it possesses much of the detail not found elsewhere.

A different and more controversial interpretation of Napoleon's diplomatic plans was put forward by E. Bourgeois in his 'manual' of foreign affairs in 1896. Bourgeois saw Napoleon as a man possessed by one overriding diplomatic thought: Empires could only be made in the East. The eastern question became for the French Emperor the central feature of his external policy. At Tilsit he hoped to gain Russia's support in carving out a new French Empire from Turkish territory.<sup>93</sup> England also emerged in this conception, for Napoleon sought the Alliance with Russia as a means to carry the struggle to England by way of an attack on Egypt and India.<sup>94</sup>

According to Bourgeois it was the eastern question which caused the rupture between the two Emperors. Napoleon's war against Austria in 1809 was undertaken to consolidate the French hold on the Mediterranean and to prepare for the Empire of the East. Alexander's refusal to aid Napoleon in this task caused the split.<sup>95</sup> This made the invasion of 1812 inevitable, as Bourgeois saw it, for Russia's intransigence was now the stumbling block



to the realization of Napoleon's life dream: control of the Balkans, Constantinople and Asia.<sup>96</sup>

The Napoleonic view as elaborated by Vandal and the 'eastern' interpretation of Bourgeois were both rejected by A. Sorel in his classic study of Europe and the French Revolution. Although Sorel began his work in the 1880's, the second part of the history - four volumes dealing with foreign relations - appeared in short intervals during 1903 and 1904.<sup>97</sup> Sorel proposed the idea that Napoleonic policy was made for raison d'état: Napoleon was the inevitable product of circumstances determined by the Revolutionary government which preceeded him. The only peace possible was one where England was subjugated and France was supreme in Europe.<sup>98</sup>

Sorel believed that Napoleon and Alexander were part of a much larger phenomenon. He saw the Tilsit Alliance as a temporary aberration in relations which were historically unfriendly. Both Emperor's, in his view, were insincere in 1807:

L'alliance de Tilsit n'a point été une époque, encore moins un arrêt et un détour de cette histoire; elle n'a été qu'un intermède. Sous le couvert de cette feinte unison, Napoléon et Alexandre ont continué de poursuivre l'objet qu'ils poursuivaient auparavant, qui les avait mis en guerre en 1805, qui les y remit en 1812.<sup>99</sup>

Although he recognized the importance of the Polish question, Sorel considered that the main disagreement between the two Emperor's was the Continental Blockade, "la raison d'être d'alliance....Le système de Tilsit croule par sa cause même, le blocus. Napoléon a voulu le pousser à terme, Alexandre la détourner."<sup>100</sup> If the historian, in general, could explain Napoleon's actions in terms of a larger, deterministic 'necessity', he nevertheless was sharply critical of Napoleon's attitude toward non-French

peoples. In Sorel's view Napoleon failed to recognize that there were Spaniards in Spain, Germans in Germany, and Russians in Russia.<sup>101</sup> This was Napoleon's fatal mistake when he invaded Russia in 1812:

Cependant le salut de la Russie s'opère; mais, phénomène étrange, ni la cour, ni le gouvernement, ni l'empereur, ni les généraux, ni les armées n'en sont le véritable instrument. La Russie est sauvée par le peuple russe.<sup>102</sup>

Subsequent to the studies of Vandal, Bourgeois and Sorel, all of which have had a lasting impact, there appeared a number of less important works. Although these histories have not in any way resolved the lack of agreement among the preceding writers, they have served to popularize the notion of Alexander as the 'enigmatic' or 'mystical' Tsar. In 1937 M. Paléologue returned to the idea that at Tilsit Alexander had been "Séduit par Napoleon....Il vit dans un rêve, dans une fiction romanesque et théâtrale."<sup>103</sup> This, however, did not last very long: "la méfiance a dissolu peu à peu les radieuses vapeurs de Tilsit."<sup>104</sup> Within a short time Alexander began to practice a policy of duplicity and this put Napoleon, in Paléologue's view, as a disadvantage that led to his downfall:

Son atavisme latin, son esprit de logique et de simplicité, son irréductible incompréhension des âmes étrangères, lui font commettre une énorme erreur sur la psychologie d'Alexandre.<sup>105</sup>

In a survey of Russian diplomatic history that appeared in 1945 C. de Grunwald suggested that the Tilsit treaties were an opportunistic act on Russia's part for they "semblaient sauvegarder dans une large mesure les intérêts les plus essentiels de l'empire des tsars."<sup>106</sup> In a biography of Alexander the same author elaborated further on this idea:

Alexandre savait pertinemment que Napoléon avait besoin de lui....Tant que la Russie résistait, la situation française en Europe central restait précaire.

Tant que la Russie refusait sa collaboration,  
le blocus continental décrété contre l'Angleterre  
restait lettre morte.<sup>107</sup>

The exigencies of Alexander's policy after 1807 may never be understood, according to de Grunwald, because of the Tsar's character: "La vie d'Alexandre Ier de Russie pose certaines énigmes que seul un grand psychologue et romancier serait peut-être capable de résoudre entièrement."<sup>108</sup> This did not mean that the significance of the events in these years could not be understood. Quite to the contrary, in a manner recalling Sorel de Grunwald wrote:

En vérité, le destin des peuples ne se décide pas sur les champs de bataille ou sur les barricades, mais au cours des longues périodes de gestation où s'accumulent les forces explosives destinées à se manifester au cours d'événements spectaculaires.<sup>109</sup>

The most recent French study of Russia under Alexander, written by H. Valloton in 1966, once again portrayed Alexander as an admirer of Napoleon, but with some reservation: "il [Alexandre] n'éprouvait pas une sympathie totale et gardait un secret ressentiment de ses défaites."<sup>110</sup> Valloton placed great stress upon the Continental Blockade as the central feature of the Alliance and insisted on seeing a connection between Napoleon's seizure of Oldenburg and the tariff of 1811:

Napoléon ayant décrété la réunion d'Oldenburg à l'Empire française, Alexandre put la défense de son beau-frère et reposta en élevant les droits sur les marchandises importées de France.<sup>111</sup>

The composite picture of the Tilsit period to emerge from Russian and French historians shows a number of different interpretations and leaves several unresolved questions as far as Russia is concerned. First, the origins of the Tilsit Alliance have been seen as a shrewd diplomatic gesture by Alexander, as a timely compromise, or as a military necessity. Second,

the relationship between Alexander and Napoleon has been variously interpreted as the Tsar's submission to the designs of the French Emperor, as an equal partnership, or as one where Napoleon was duped. Third, the central feature of Russian-French relations has been differently regarded as the Emperors' mutual visions of a peaceful Europe, as a temporary collusion between two predatory imperialistic social systems, or as a pragmatic, power-political accommodation. Fourth, the main contributing factor in the deterioration of relations has been viewed as the Continental Blockade, Napoleon's aggressiveness, a secret alliance between the Russian and Prussian royal families, different views of the Turkish problem, Russian fears of a restored Poland, Alexander's yielding to a feudal nobility, or English intrigues. Fifth, the turning point in the Tilsit system has been defined as 1807 (i.e., it never came into existence), 1808 (the Erfurt conference and Turkish affairs), 1809 (the war with Austria and the Polish problem), 1810 (the French alliance with Austria and the seizure of the Duchy of Oldenburg), or 1811 (the Russian tariff law). There is more or less general agreement that Napoleon's invasion in 1812 brought forth a burst of patriotic enthusiasm in defence of the Fatherland.

It is unlikely that a resolution of these different interpretations or a better understanding of Russian aims can be achieved by further consideration of the external and power-political aspects of Russian-French affairs. In place of the traditional approach to the study of Russia's French policy this thesis considers the period of the Tilsit Alliance from the point of view of the total problem of French impact in Russia during the period 1806-1812. Seen in this way, there was in Russia under Alexander a "Question Française" that encompassed both the external and internal aspects

of Russian national life. The expression "Question Française" as used here refers to both the external and the internal affairs of Russia. Externally it means the problem for Russia of peace, war, or alliance with Napoleonic France. Internally it signifies a complex grouping of phenomena in Russia at the turn of the century which includes the "prépondérance française" in cultural life, the intellectual awakening of the country, the search for national identity, the internal reform movement, the role of the Church in national life and the religious revival of the times.

This thesis seeks to answer three questions. First, what was the relationship between the internal and external aspects of the "Question Française"? Second, what was the effect upon this relationship of the change from a policy of war to a policy of peace and alliance in 1807? Third, how did the changed relationship between the external and internal aspects of the "Question Française" affect the outcome of the Alliance?

When Alexander came to the throne in 1801 his general attitude toward European affairs was one of non-involvement. In his conception of state priorities during this period foreign relations occupied a position secondary to internal affairs. Externally and internally there were, however, both long term and immediate factors that militated against peace with France. Because of the connection between the two aspects of the "Question Française" the war which broke out against France in 1805 was more than a conflict for political or military gain.

The arrangements reached at Tilsit between Alexander and Napoleon brought peace and alliance between the two Empires. On the formal, diplomatic level this meant that the relationship between the two sides of the "Question Française" had changed. But the very act of transition from

hostility to cooperation with France itself had a profound impact on the internal "Question Française". This made the policy of peaceful coexistence between Russia and Napoleonic France even more difficult to maintain in 1807 than it had been in 1801.

During the years 1807-1812 the continuation of the same long term factors that existed earlier, and the presence of new short term elements as well, intensified this state of affairs. Alexander's decisions after Tilsit with respect to internal matters also contributed to this development. Although the Tsar took many important steps to solve various problems, and despite the fact that he sometimes acted to achieve different ends, the net effect of his actions was to add further impetus to the movement in progress. Together with this situation went European diplomatic events, in some instances not specifically related to Russia, which were beyond Russian control and which also influenced the "Question Française". When the Alliance broke down and Napoleon invaded Russia in 1812 the manner in which Russia responded was partly determined by the way in which the "Question Française" had developed since 1807.

An analysis of the relationship between Russia's external and internal policies must depend for the most part on Russian sources. This presents a research problem of two different magnitudes. On the one hand, Russian scholars have concentrated on the internal history of their country and the bibliography for this aspect of the study is not only rich but imposing. On the other hand, owing to the fact that Russia was an autocracy in the nineteenth century and a socialist state in the twentieth, there has been very little work done on individual statesmen. Biographies of even major personalities represent a conspicuous absence in the work of both

Imperial and Soviet historians. To these general problems must be added a specific shortcoming in the sources of the period. In the aftermath of the Decembrist Revolt, which followed Alexander's death in 1825, Tsar Nicholas destroyed many of the critically important documents in Alexander's archives. It is known, for example, that among these papers were journals of both Maria Feodorovna and Elizabeth.<sup>112</sup> To compensate for these losses, and to provide a continuous background for internal developments of the period, this thesis brings forward materials from other European archives.

The primary sources used in the study encompass a wide range of materials. Among the official printed sources are the main collections of Russian laws (Polnoe sobranie zakonov, Svod voennykh postanovlenii, Sbornik postanovlenii po ministerstvu narodnogo prosveshcheniia). To these can be added several documentary collections relating to the various government bodies, especially the War, Finance, and Foreign Affairs Ministries, but also the Council of Ministers and the Governing Council. A number of official publications date from the period: Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnago Prosveshcheniia, Severnaia Pochta, Artilleriiskii zhurnal, Voennyi Zhurnal. As well, there have been several collections of materials relating to military and external affairs; among the former the Voennyi Sbornik is a basic source; among the latter the compilations of Martens, Nikolai-Mikhailovich and the Imperial Russian Historical Society are essential.

The study of various individuals is made possible through published family archives, of which those of the Vorontsovs, Mordvinovs and Viazemskis are particularly valuable. To these can be added the special collections on the Stroganovs and Dolgorukys prepared by Grand Duke Nikolai-Mikhailovich.

The period is particularly rich in contemporary writings. Among the participants of various countries these include numerous autobiographies, memoirs, and collections of published correspondence. Dubrovin's special collections of the correspondence of contemporaries are also useful. Even more valuable in this regard is the ongoing Vneshniaia politika Rossii XIX i nachala XX veka. The writings of various political and literary figures also appear in many collected works, and for the main figures - Alexander, Napoleon, and their aides - there is Napoleon's Correspondance, Tatishchev's collection of the writing between the two Emperor's, and the published correspondence of the diplomatic representatives for 1808-1812.

A significant feature of Russian sources for the early nineteenth century are the rich compilations to be found in serial publications. It is essential to utilize a number of these collections; for example, Sbornik Imperatorskogo Russkogo Istoricheskogo Obshchestva (Collection of the Imperial Russian Historical Society), Russkaia Starina (Russian Antiquities), Istoricheskii Vestnik (Historical Messenger), and Russkii Vestnik (Russian Messenger) to name only a few.

Among the traveler's accounts of the period use is made of works by Prussian, Austrian, Polish, French, Swedish, English and American writers. Several accounts by Russian contemporaries not engaged in the main events add to the picture of society at that time. A number of interpretative studies contain source materials not published elsewhere: for instance, Shilder's Aleksandr I, Korf's Zhizn Graf Speranskogo, Schiemann's Geschichte Russlands unter Kaiser Nikolaus I, and Vandal's Napoleon et Alexandre I each contain important appendices of documents.

Three types of unpublished archival material are used in the



present study - English, French and Prussian. In all cases these archives have been approached from the point of view of what they can tell us of domestic conditions in Russia, court politics, and for observations connecting internal and external affairs. The British Museum Lieven Papers are valuable for their letters between Count Kh.A. Lieven, General A.A. Arakcheev and Prince A.A. Dolgoruky over the period 1806-1812. All three were prominent figures in military, diplomatic and court affairs, and all were leaders of the anti-French opposition. The French national archives series Mémoires et Documents: fonds divers - la Russie contains correspondence, particularly on commercial matters, between Caulaincourt (the French ambassador), Champagny (the French Foreign Minister), Lesseps (the French Chargé d'Affaires), and Rumiantsev (the Russian Foreign Minister). In addition the fonds have considerable statistical information on trade and commerce, Russian shipping, size of military forces and recruitment practices.

Foremost among the archives utilized in this study are the despatches and correspondence of Prussian diplomatic personnel from St. Petersburg. These rarely used materials cover the entire period 1806-1812 and are the only major non-Russian source enjoying that distinction. The English records are incomplete for 1807-1812 because of the war with Russia. Similarly, there are no French reports for the years 1805-1807. The Austrians were in disgrace after 1808 and the Swedish reporting was non-existent from 1808 to 1810 owing to the Finnish struggle.<sup>113</sup> This thesis makes use of the complete Russian correspondence of the Prussian representatives for the period as found in the Deutsche Zentralarchiv's Saint Pétersbourg Dépêches. These fonds contain the correspondence of Graf von Goltz (1802-1807),

Graf von Lehndorff (1807-1808), Baron von Schladen (1808-1811), and Jouffroy (1811-1812).

A few technical matters must be stated. Wherever feasible all materials that appeared originally in French have been quoted in the original. All sources in the Russian and German languages have been translated into English. Without exception the archival sources in the French language have been quoted in French. The transliteration of the cyrillic alphabet is rendered according to a modified version of the Library of Congress system. Diacritical marks will be omitted. In most instances Russian names have been transliterated literally. However, where there are close English equivalents these are used; for instance, Alexander (not Aleksandr) and Catherine (not Ekaterina). When a particular spelling has come into common usage this form has been retained; for example, Czartorysky (not Chartoryzhkii) and Dolgoruky (not Dolgorukii). Finally, in Russia the Julian calendar was in use throughout the period and these dates have been advanced 12 days to correspond with the Gregorian calendar used in the West.

## Introduction

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- <sup>3</sup> M.F. Lermontov, Sobranie sochinenii, I, Moscow, 1958, p. 279; E.M. Almedingen, The Emperor Alexander I, New York, 1964, p. 122.
- <sup>4</sup> A.A. Lobanov-Rostovsky, Russia and Europe, 1789-1825, Durham N.C., 1947, p. v.
- <sup>5</sup> R.I. Kireeva, V.O. Kliuchevskii kak istorik russkoi istoricheskoi nauki, Moscow, 1960, pp. 3-29.
- <sup>6</sup> V.O. Kliuchevskii, Sochineniia, V. Moscow, 1958 (Kurs istorii, V), pp. 204, 209-11. An unreliable English translation exists: A History of Russia, C.J. Hogarth, trans., 5 Vols., New York, 1960. All quotations are from the Russian edition.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid., V. p. 227.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 226.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 445.
- <sup>11</sup> S. Tatistcheff, Alexandre Ier et Napoléon, d'après leur correspondance inédite 1801-1812, Paris, 1891, pp. 149-52, 157-58.

- 12 Ibid., p. 181.
- 13 Ibid., pp. 303-5.
- 14 Ibid., pp. 612-13.
- 15 N.K. Schilder, Imperator Aleksandr Pervyi, ego zhizn i tsarstvovanie 4 Vols., St. P., 1897-1898.
- 16 Ibid., II, p. 3.
- 17 Ibid., II, p. 234.
- 18 Ibid., II, p. 87.
- 19 Ibid., II, pp. 235-36.
- 20 Grand Duke Nikolai-Mikhailovich, Imperator Aleksandr I, Opyt istoricheskogo issledovaniia, 2 Vols., St. P., 1912, I, p. 7. A French version also exists, Le Tsar Alexandre Ier, Baron N. Wrangel, trans., Paris, 1931. The Russian version contains valuable documentary annexes lacking in the French edition.
- 21 Ibid., I, p. 89, 67.
- 22 Ibid., I, p. 37.
- 23 Ibid., I, p. 134.
- 24 Grand Duke Nikolai Mikhailovich, Graf Pavel Aleksandrovich Stroganov 1774-1817, 3 Vols., St. P., 1903. Stroganov was an Anglophile and a highly active figure from one of Russia's most important families. A member of the Tsar's intimate Unofficial Committee, Stroganov played an intermittent role until his death in 1817.
- 25 Grand Duke Nikolai Mikhailovich, Kniazia Dolgorukie; spodvizhniki Imperatora Aleksandra I v pervye gody ego tsarstvovanie, St. P., 1901. The Dolgoruky's - Aleksei, Nikolai and Sergei - were leading figures in the military and at court. They played a prominent part in the consolidation of power after the assassination of Paul and were active generals in the wars with Napoleon.

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28 Grand Duke Nikolai Mikhailovich, General-Adjutanty Imperatora Aleksandra I, St. P., 1913. The work contains a biographical sketch of all Alexander's Adjutants.

29 Grand Duke Nikolai Mikhailovich, Diplomaticheskie snosheniia Rossii i Frantsii po doneseniiam poslov Imperatorov Aleksandra i Napoleona 1808-1812, 7 Vols., St. P., 1905-14. This represents the most comprehensive collection of reports for the period of the Alliance, although much of the correspondence can now be found in the ongoing Vneshniaia politika Rossii XIX i nachala XX veka - dokumenty rossiiskogo ministerstva imostrannykh del, Series I, 7 Vols., Moscow, 1961-70.

30 A.A. Kornilov, Kurs istorii Rossii XIX veka, 3 Vols., Moscow, 1912-18, I, p. 76; The work has been translated as Modern Russian History, G.T. Robinson, trans., New York, 1924. All quotations are from the Russian edition.

31 Ibid., pp. 76-77.

32 Ibid., pp. 85-88.

33 Ibid., p. 153.

34 Ibid., p. 178.

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., pp. 135, 138; G. Alexinsky, Russia and Europe, London, 1917, pp. 87-88, also popularized the role of the Blockade in Russian-French relations.

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<sup>69</sup> P. Miliukov, Ch. Seignobos and L. Eisenmann, eds., Histoire de Russie, 3 Vols., Paris, 1932. The work had been translated as History of Russia, C.L. Markmann, trans., 3 Vols., New York, 1968. All quotations are from the English version: II, p. 208.

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<sup>71</sup> N.V. Brian-Chaninov, Alexandre Ier, Paris, 1934, p. 147.

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 222.

<sup>74</sup> A. Lobanov-Rostovsky, Russia and Europe, 1789-1825, Durham, N.C., 1947, pp. 152-55.

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<sup>76</sup> L. Strakhovsky, Alexander I of Russia: The Man Who Defeated Napoleon, London, 1949, p. 63.

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## Chapter I

### 1806: The Reform Movement, Education, Press and Literature

From the beginning of Alexander's reign there were two movements in progress. The first of these was the reform movement led by a circle of young advisors close to the Emperor which sought to change Russia along West European lines, especially French ones. The other was a more loosely-knit national movement, evident in government, court, commercial, educational and literary circles, which supported a greater emphasis on things Russian and sought to decrease the French influence in Russia. Six years later, during the spring and summer of 1807, Alexander was at war with Napoleonic France. The reform movement had considerably abated and the national movement had considerably grown. In his struggle with Napoleonic France the Emperor of Russia had the emotional support of his entire nation. In large measure the growth of the national movement in the pre-Tilsit period had been at the expense of the reform movement.

The accession of Alexander in 1801 was greeted with jubilation in court, bureaucratic, military and intellectual circles. The German contemporary historian, Professor A.L. von Schlözer, who had spent several years in Russia and attracted many Russian students to Göttingen, hailed the nineteenth century as "the Alexandrian century".<sup>1</sup> To the vast majority of those who acclaimed the young Emperor, the forcible removal of Paul in March meant liberation from an arbitrary and tyrannical regime and the restoration of their privileges. To a small group of educated Russians familiar with

western Europe the new reign brought the promise of far reaching constitutional and social reforms.<sup>2</sup>

Alexander's elevation to power carried with it the implication of fundamental changes. This was based on his reputed liberalism and his choice of advisors. From the opening of his reign an Unofficial Committee (Neglasnyi Komitet) of N.N. Novosiltsev, P.A. Stroganov, Adam Czartorysky and V.P. Kochubei, all personal friends of the young Tsar, formed the nucleus of a liberal party at court. The Committee was convened in May 1801 and charged to draw up a report on home conditions which would serve as a base for discussions. Specifically, the Committee was to learn the state of the country, map out a picture of foreign commitments, sketch an outline for urgent administrative reforms, and arrive at a policy for a constitution which would be acceptable to the whole nation.<sup>3</sup>

The expectation of reform was fostered by the enlightened character of their early measures: repeal of vexatious restrictions enacted by Paul, liberalisation of trade (removal of the prohibition against English goods),<sup>4</sup> provision for a broad and comprehensive amnesty and partial mitigation of the harshness of penal procedure,<sup>5</sup> abolition of the security police, and confirmation of the privileges of the dvoriane (landed nobility) as defined in the Charter of the Nobility.<sup>6</sup> The latter verification in particular gave satisfaction to the nobility and the hope was held out by Alexander of a return to the principles of his grandmother, Catherine II. At the very beginning of his reign he said:

We accept the obligation to rule the people entrusted to us by God, according to the laws and spirit of Our August Grandmother, Empress Catherine the Great, whose memory will be eternally dear to us and the entire fatherland.<sup>7</sup>

Among the most important accomplishments of the young reformers were the reorganisation of the central administrative apparatus and the introduction of the Ministries in 1802. The eight new Ministries were Foreign Affairs, War, Navy, Finance, Internal Affairs, Justice, Commerce, and Public Instruction. The first three had existed as Colleges, the next three in embryonic form under the Procurator-General's authority. Public Instruction appeared for the first time in the form of a central agency.<sup>8</sup> At the head of the Ministries was a Committee of Ministers, established at the same time. It was actually this committee that considered current political matters of the highest level. There was no other body of comparable importance.<sup>9</sup>

It was hoped that the Ministries, and especially their guiding Committee, would accomplish two things: first, establish a central base for further reforms and, second, provide the much needed continuity of policy. Graf August von der Goltz, the Prussian Ambassador to Russia since 1802, leaves no doubt that one of the reasons for instituting the Ministries and placing the Unofficial Committee members in high offices was to create a bulwark against the conservative and aristocratic parties.<sup>10</sup> More importantly, the reformers themselves believed the Ministers should form a united team of like-minded men. In a letter to Count S.R. Vorontsov on 12 May 1801 Kochubei explained the situation which the Unofficial Committee hoped to rectify:

Les gens qui occupent les premières places font, si je peux m'exprimer ainsi, autant de puissances séparées. Chacune travaille d'après sa tête et ses vues, et il n'y a aucun ensemble. De là un décousu dans les différentes branches de l'administration: de là beaucoup d'abus continuent de se perpétuer.<sup>11</sup>

The importance of the introduction of the Ministries in 1802 and the subsequent changes in the central administration can not be stressed too

strongly. The traditional view had been that government existed only for the purpose of providing the financial and military means for the preservation of the security and expansion of the state. Hence, administration only meant the maintenance of military strength and the collection of taxes for that purpose. The changes of 1802 onwards were real innovations insofar as they elevated the concern for the nation's economic and cultural prosperity, security, and progress to the status of a major governmental responsibility.<sup>12</sup>

No clearer indication of the Emperor's intention to use the bureaucracy for change can be found than his appointment of the Unofficial Committee members to positions in the central government. Novosiltsev became Assistant Minister of Justice 1802-1808, Curator of the St. Petersburg Educational District 1803-1807, and at the same time President of the Imperial Academy of Sciences 1803-1810.<sup>13</sup> Kochubei was appointed Minister of Internal Affairs 1802-1807 and Stroganov became the Assistant Minister of Internal Affairs 1802-1808.<sup>14</sup> Czartorysky held the office of Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs 1802-1804, assumed the Presidency of the Ministry 1804-1806, and was Curator of the Vilna Educational District 1803-1823.<sup>15</sup>

The presence of the young reformers in these positions suggests a unity of direction that in fact never developed. The authority of four leaders in the central agencies was not enough to ensure unity and control of an expanding bureaucracy. Kochubei gave ample evidence of the failure when he wrote in January 1803:

Il n'y a aucun ensemble. Les ministres se détestent et se chicanent, et cet accord si nécessaire dans une administration n'a pas existé un seul instant.<sup>16</sup>

In December the Unofficial Committee, its preliminary work finished, was dissolved. The future impact of its members would be felt through their various official positions.

In considering the offices which the members of the Committee assumed, it is important to note that contacts between the Committee and the central administration occurred only in four areas - education, justice, internal and foreign affairs. Furthermore, in only two of these - internal and foreign affairs - did members of the Committee rise to the top level, and in both cases (Kochubei and Czartorysky) their influence ended in 1807, shortly after Tilsit. In the other areas - justice and education - the members served under rather more conservative leaders and likewise they (Novosiltsev and Stroganov) left their posts in 1808, shortly after the signing of the Franco-Russian Alliance.

While it is evident that the reforming influence of the Unofficial Committee had terminated when the Tilsit Alliance came into effect, their influence, and the reform movement in general had already been on the decline for some time. The Committee itself was neither as young nor as radical as many contemporaries and later historians believed. The Tsar in 1803, at 25 years of age, was younger than any member of the Committee. At that time Stroganov was 30, Czartorysky was 33, Kochubei was 35 and Novosiltsev was 42. Furthermore, they compared favourably with their counterparts in military affairs where promotion took much longer: in 1803 Chichagov, Minister of the Navy, was 36; Generals Bagration and Barclay de Tolly were 38 and 42 respectively; S.K. Viazmitinov, Minister of War, was 54.<sup>17</sup>

It would also be incorrect to assume that the Committee was homogeneous in outlook. On certain basic questions the members were divided and this hindered reform from the beginning. Kochubei and Novosiltsev, for instance, urged a cautious approach towards the abolition of serfdom,<sup>18</sup>



~~while~~ Stroganov and Czartorysky argued in favour of the retention of serfdom until a later date.<sup>19</sup> In the minds of the nobility, however, the Committee was young and radical. The first laws and decrees, which dealt mainly with Paul's reign, were warmly greeted. But support for the reformers soon disappeared and when they began to consider substantive issues opposition rose.<sup>20</sup>

Alexander had vowed not to increase the number of serfs in the Empire and that, together with the law of 1804 prohibiting the sale of serfs without the land, deepened the discontent in the conservative ranks.<sup>21</sup> The Unofficial Committee within a short time was blamed for the Emperor's dangerous proneness to liberal principles and by the time the Committee was disbanded discontent and dislike for the reformers and things French were openly voiced.<sup>22</sup> Stroganov had been brought up by a French tutor, the well known mathematician and revolutionary Gilbert Romme, in whose company he had frequented the Jacobin clubs of Paris.<sup>23</sup> Derzhavin, the widely read leader of the conservative literati, publicly called the members of the Committee "that Jacobin gang".<sup>24</sup> Alexander gave in to the opposition and, despite his intention to send no further peasants into serfdom, he continued the practices of Catherine and Paul. During his reign 259 gifts of land amounting to 731,482 desiatin (1.975 million acres / desiatin = 2.7 acres) were given to private individuals, together with the peasants on the land.<sup>25</sup>

The weight of the Unofficial Committee and the reforming influence in general were more than balanced by Alexander's main government appointments, almost all of whom were more resistant to change than was the Committee. There were three main reasons for these nominations: political exigency, lack of experienced and dependable officials, and Alexander's respect for

established governmental practices. Although the members of the Committee maintained good relations with some of the elder statesmen, the fact remains that from the very start of the reign political potential for reform was severely restricted.<sup>26</sup>

The appointment of some leaders was designed to placate the more reactionary and more anti-French elements. Derzhavin, an elderly Francophobe writer and outspoken reactionary, became Minister of Justice. Alexander Vorontsov, who "dreamed not of republics or popular rights, but of the rights, privileges, and economic protection of the Russian upper classes",<sup>27</sup> became Foreign Minister. Count Zavadovskii, a courtier of advanced age with a fondness for German culture, became Minister of Education.<sup>28</sup> Other appointments were necessary to provide continuity in key areas. Viazmitinov, for example, retained control over military affairs and Mordvinov remained at the head of naval affairs. The effect of these new elevations to high office and of the continuations was that they diluted the reforming influence of the Unofficial Committee in the Committee of Ministers.

Similarly, the reformers found themselves outnumbered to an even greater degree in the Permanent Council (Nepremennyi Sovet) established on 5 April 1801. All ministers were ex officio members of the Council, but the majority of the membership was made up of the highest court dignitaries. The Council was divided into four sections: foreign and commercial, military and naval, civil and spiritual, state economy. Intended as an advisory body, it functioned primarily as the highest court in the country.<sup>29</sup>

While policy undoubtedly played a part in making the Emperor turn to veteran statesmen of the reigns of Catherine and Paul, the scarcity of reliable talent was equally important.<sup>30</sup> Alexander himself gave sufficient

evidence of this in 1802, at a meeting of the Unofficial Committee, when he accepted the proposals to institute the ministries and to establish the Committee of Ministers. In doing so he foresaw the problems posed by the lack of available talent and said, "mais trouvez-moi des gens."<sup>31</sup>

If the exigencies of policy and the scarcity of talent may be said to have imposed themselves upon Alexander, the same cannot be said for his method of government. The Emperor respected the tradition established in the bureaucracy of elevating members up through the ranks. In the course of so doing he elevated many persons who had come into their own under Catherine and Paul. Zavadovskii, Chichagov, Mordvinov, Viazmitinov and many others, some of them in the most important positions, came to prominence under Alexander this way. So well established was this principle of government in Alexander's time that even during the height of influence of the members of the Unofficial Committee bureaucrats of longer standing were raised to leading positions ahead of members of the Committee. For example, P.V. Lopukhin, an experienced official under both Catherine and Paul, was appointed Minister of Justice in 1803, while Novosiltsev remained as the Assistant Minister - a position he held only since 1802.<sup>32</sup>

The expanding bureaucracy under Alexander represented a constant problem for the reformers and the restructuring of the central agencies undertaken in 1802 was only partly successful. The creation of the Ministries had allowed for better use of the existing administrative machinery but gave rise to additional problems for there were now eight central administrations to control and to direct. As well, the founding of additional government organs provoked opposition to further reforms. Even some of the more progressive nobility opposed the establishment of so many new ministries.

Alexander Vorontsov's reaction to these developments was typical of many leaders of the nobility. He wrote to Kochubei and Czartorysky in 1803 that the effect of expanding the central agencies would be the creation of "too many despots".<sup>33</sup>

Nevertheless, the expansion of the bureaucracy continued and its inefficiencies all too frequently presented themselves. Among Russian contemporaries N.M. Karamzin particularly stands out for his perception of the problem as presented in his Zapiska o drevnei i novoi Rossii (Memorandum on Ancient and Modern Russia). As Karamzin pointed out, "Ministerial bureaus have replaced colleges...we came to see insignificant officials, such as directors, filing clerks, desk hands who, shielded by the minister, operated with utter impunity."<sup>34</sup> To him it was evident that the bureaucracy was full of "the rapacious greed of minor officials",<sup>35</sup> and he believed the solution to the problem was that

the attainment of certain ranks should be made unconditionally dependent on the candidate being a gentleman, a practice we have failed to observe from the time of Peter the Great.<sup>36</sup>

The effect of bureaucratic expansion, as Karamzin indicated, was that "the gentry feel offended when they find the steps of the throne occupied by men of low birth."<sup>37</sup> In order to make the government more efficient and to regain the support of the gentry the Emperor should, in Karamzin's view, make efforts to bring the privileged classes back into the government. A positive advantage to the monarchy was the fact that the gentry, having inherited wealth, could manage even in the higher posts without financial assistance from the treasury.<sup>38</sup> Even more importantly:

The mind and heart [of the gentry] are furnished by nature, but they are formed by upbringing. A gentleman, favoured by fortune, is accustomed from birth to feel

self-respect, to love the fatherland and the sovereign for the advantages of his birth-right, and to be powerfully attracted to distinctions which his ancestors have earned and he himself will earn by his own accomplishments.<sup>39</sup>

In his concluding remarks Karamzin rather succinctly summed up the conservative political philosophy of the dvorians:

The gentry and the clergy, the Senate and the Synod as repositories of laws, over all - the sovereign, the only legislator, the autocratic source of authority - this is the foundation of the Russian monarchy, which the principles followed by the rulers can either strengthen or weaken.<sup>40</sup>

There can be no doubt that conservative concern, voiced by Karamzin, was founded in fact. In the course of the preceding century the dictatorial absolutism of Peter the Great had been transformed by degrees into an organised bureaucracy.<sup>41</sup> The number of non-nobles in the central government had risen sharply towards the close of the eighteenth century because the gentry tended to avoid the civil service, despite the preferential treatment that was accorded to them, particularly in matters of promotion.<sup>42</sup> The gentry preferred to serve in the army, not to speak of the diplomatic corps and the court, which were highly desirable but open only to the rich. For all but the highest posts, the government had no choice but to draw the bulk of its civil service from the non-privileged classes, especially the clergy and the burghers.<sup>43</sup>

Recent research has shown that almost all of the non-noble officials who entered the central agencies at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century were sons of meschane, members of the urban lower class.<sup>44</sup> In the same period, 1780-1810, the pattern of predominantly civil careers was established and when Karamzin's Memorandum was written the Russian civil administration was in the hands of

men who had spent their working lives in that occupation. By then 80-90% of all the officials, representing all ranks, had spent their entire working life in the civil service.<sup>45</sup>

It is difficult to state exactly the size of the bureaucracy with any degree of accuracy, but some observers suggest that it was larger than most of its West European counterparts.<sup>46</sup> Georg Reinbeck, a Prussian who travelled extensively in Russia during 1805, speculated: "It would be very interesting to learn the number of persons actually employed in the different departments: I should imagine they would exceed every calculation."<sup>47</sup> One of the characteristics of the bureaucracy and the ministerial system, as Karamzin pointed out at the time, was that it led to lethargy.<sup>48</sup> Other contemporaries noted that it was not at all certain that the bureaucracy would support the new policies of Alexander. Reinbeck wrote:

Not less than nine-tenths of the persons actually employed in the departments would set their faces against the new system and aim at its destruction.<sup>49</sup>

Besides the lethargy, the outstanding characteristic of the bureaucracy was its corruption. There are few points regarding Russia at this time that foreigners are as clearly agreed upon. Robert Lyall, an Englishman who travelled widely in Russia during the pre-Tilsit period, characterized Russia as a country "with an incapacitating spirit of corruption in every branch of administration."<sup>50</sup> It was not only in the central bureaucracy that one could find corruption, or even the worst aspects of it. As Mirsky has shown, in the non-noble provinces of the North and East the administration was notoriously more corrupt. In the port cities especially the merchants wealth allowed them to make use of the administration for their profit. It was widely accepted usage for the administrators to

receive fixed payments from the merchants, who readily accepted an arrangement that guaranteed them from superfluous intervention.<sup>51</sup> After the Tilsit Alliance this state of affairs would provide one of the avenues through which the merchants and upper classes worked against France.

When Alexander joined the Third Coalition in 1805 and went to war with Napoleon the reforms in the central administration and bureaucracy, which the Unofficial Committee had so strongly stressed, had not accomplished what had been expected. To a large degree the bureaucracy, now expanded in size, operated much as it had previously. It remains to be seen if the gradual slowing down of the reform movement in this regard was matched by similar developments in other areas.

It has been common practice among historians to consider the period 1801-1806 as Alexander's liberal period and to lay great stress not only upon his changes in the central agencies but also upon the extension of toleration to various groups, the relaxation of restrictions imposed during the reigns of Catherine II and Paul, and upon intellectual development. Three examples frequently cited to show the enlightened attitude of the government in these years are the Jews, the Freemasons, and the growth of national education.

By statute on 9 December 1804 the Jewish Pale, which had been elaborated during the reign of Catherine, was extended to include the Caucasus and the province of Astrakhan. No settlement by Jews was allowed outside this area.<sup>52</sup> Within the Pale the Jews were to enjoy the protection of the law on the same basis as the other subjects of the Crown. They were divided into four categories: farmers, manufacturers, artisans, merchants and burghers. At the same time, however, Jews were barred from leasing

agricultural land, from keeping inns and distilling or selling intoxicating beverages. That is to say, the very trades in which many of them were engaged were no longer allowed. The practical consequence of the law was the mass eviction of Jews residing in rural districts but not engaged in farming.<sup>53</sup>

In a similar way, the extension of toleration to the Freemasons was not the liberal and progressive gesture that it is often considered to be. We must remember that the Russian Freemasons were not, properly speaking, free thinkers, either in religion or in philosophy. They inclined rather to regard Voltaire with horror, and in political views many were conservative. P.V. Lopukhin, for example, was not merely hostile to the Revolution, but was opposed to the French and to French civilisation in general, and favoured the maintenance of serfdom.<sup>54</sup> There was another direction in which the masonic lodges effected Russian life, namely by paving the way for the development of political secret societies. It was concern over this aspect of Freemasonry which led Alexander to close the leading Masonic journal, Sionskii Vestnik (Herald of Zion), in 1806.<sup>55</sup>

The Tsar's attitude on such questions on the eve of the Tilsit Alliance was made evident in his resurrection of the secret police and the role which Lopukhin played there. In 1805 the army was placed on war-time regulations and Alexander ordered the formation of a Special Committee which in some ways revived the Secret Expedition (Tainaia ekspeditsia), or secret police, which he had abolished in 1801. The Minister of Internal Affairs (Kochubei, with Stroganov as his Assistant Minister) was given broad powers to deal with cases of public order and security, and was to encourage the creation of local police organisations.<sup>56</sup>



Originally a provisional institution, the Special Committee was reorganised on a permanent basis in January 1807. Renamed "The Committee of Public Safety of 13 January 1807", it would function until 1829. It was composed of P.V. Lopukhin, who had replaced Derzhavin as Minister of Justice, Novosiltsev, his Assistant Minister, and Privy Councilor A.S. Makarov. The main leader was Makarov, an ardent anti-French spokesman who had been the head of Catherine's security policy and director of Paul's secret police as well.<sup>57</sup> When necessary the Minister of the Interior (Kochubei) and the military commander of St. Petersburg (S.K. Viazmitinov) would also appear.

This Committee proved a worthy successor to the security forces of Catherine and the secret police of Paul. Its purpose was to watch over suspect persons and societies, especially Freemasonic and other secret organisations, and to try cases of suspicion of treason and espionage brought forward by provincial police chiefs.<sup>58</sup> The detection of subversive activities was prosecuted with even greater zeal by the 'Special Chancellery', created within the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 1802, and which later was superceded by the III Section of His Majesty's Own Chancellery.<sup>59</sup>

The Prussian ambassador, Goltz, on several instances remarked about the police and their efficiency. At the end of 1806, for example, when the French occupied Warsaw, considerable unrest developed in St. Petersburg and special efforts were needed to quiet public opinion. Goltz wrote that "La police est à cet égard d'une vigilance exemplaire."<sup>60</sup>

Even more clearly than the relaxation of restrictions against the Jews and Freemasons, neither of which led to a fundamental improvement of their condition, the reformer's attitude toward national education indicates what they hoped to achieve. From the very beginning of Alexander's rule

educational reform occupied a high place among the leading priorities. Public instruction was regarded as an essential instrument of reform and rule and a good indication of the value placed on it is seen in the fact that two members of the Unofficial Committee assumed high positions in the school system. Novosiltsev became Curator of the St. Petersburg educational District and President of the Imperial Academy of Sciences. Czartorysky was named Curator of the Vilna Educational District and held the post for twenty years. Before the reforms would commence, however, the advisors of Alexander first had to contend with the bleak situation which they inherited.

During the reaction which clouded the last years of Catherine's reign there was a very perceptible slackening of educational activity which, under Paul, was carried to even darker extremes. Educational activities of all kinds were repressed and school activity not only ceased to progress, but fell backward. Under Paul the number of state schools declined in the last two years of his reign from 316 to 284. The training of Russian educators in Europe also came to an end, as students were recalled from Glasgow, Oxford, Paris, Strasbourg, Göttingen, Jena and Leipzig.<sup>61</sup> The importation of educational literature of all sorts was prohibited.<sup>62</sup>

Under Alexander the first moves made in education were in keeping with the initial changes elsewhere and were intended to remedy the worse abuses of his predecessors. Schools were reopened, imprisoned pedagogues were set free, students were once again allowed to travel in Europe, the ban on the importation of educational literature was lifted, and educational reform was handed to the Unofficial Committee for consideration.<sup>63</sup>

Like many of their contemporaries, the young friends of Alexander's intimate circle were inspired by the esprit de système of enlightened

continental absolutism of the organiser of the revolution - Napoleon Bonaparte.<sup>64</sup> The central bureaucracy for education and the national school system are generally considered to date from the Unofficial Committee's initiations and plans. That the two appeared together was no accident, but an essential part of the design, for the admirers of Napoleon placed great value on education as part of the general reorganisation of the state.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, as Karpovich and others have shown, not only the Committee but many other responsible men in government believed that the widest possible spread of education was a virtual necessity.<sup>66</sup>

Early in the new reign Count Paul Stroganov had indicated the connection between state reform, the gentry and education when he said to Alexander:

In our country the nobility is composed of a horde of people who became gentlemen through service, who received no education....It is the most ignorant class, the most debauched and the stuffiest.<sup>67</sup>

Stroganov, one of the early leading political figures, was not alone in his attitude that the gentry was in need of educational stimulation. The same opinion was held by two of the most important literary figures of the day, Karamzin and Krylov.

The gentry in fact were the key to reform or, more precisely, stimulating the gentry to take advantage of education was a main problem for the reformers. They had been as lax about education as they had about assuming duties in the bureaucracy and, from the career point of view, they perhaps had reasons for this. Most Russian parents of the period tried to expedite as much as possible the entry of their sons into the public service, in order that their subsequent careers might not be adversely affected.<sup>68</sup> Until after the Tilsit Alliance, when a university diploma

or its equivalent would be made necessary for admission to public service, a university course seemed to be more of a hindrance than a help to success in life. When the nobility did send their children to the gymnasia it frequently happened that they removed them at the age of fourteen, in order that they might commence their career in government service as early as possible.<sup>69</sup>

For the reformers in the Unofficial Committee education thus assumed an important and multi-fold purpose. It was deemed the necessary prerequisite to other reforms because it was to serve as the avenue for upward mobility of the lower classes and this, together with an improvement in the educational level of the privileged classes, would provide a wider and more responsive base for further reforms.<sup>70</sup>

The pedagogical views brought to the reform movement represented the latest French thought in education. Several members of the Unofficial Committee had lived in Paris after the fall of the Bastille and were partisans of the republican approach to education. The tutor of Count Stroganov, Gilbert Romme, had helped the Marquis de Condorcet draft the school bill presented to the National Assembly in 1792.<sup>71</sup> The Committee adopted two basic French principles: the concept of a 'unified school' (*i.e.*, école unique), one all-embracing system of state schools, cross-connected for ease of transfer, open to all citizens without restriction; and the 'democratic ladder', the arrangement of all levels of instruction in an unbroken series, with advancement from lower to secondary to higher stages, based on academic performance rather than the ability to pay.<sup>72</sup>

A promising start was made in the field of national education, particularly in connection with higher and secondary schools, with the

establishment of the Ministry of Public Instruction, the first institution of its kind in Russian history.<sup>73</sup> The inaugural Minister was Count Zavodovskii, who had been President of the superseded Commission established by Catherine II.<sup>74</sup> A much more important share of the actual administration of the new regime belonged to his assistant (tovarishch) M.N. Muravev, a man of considerable learning, who had been one of the young Emperor's tutors and who in 1802 became Curator of the Moscow Educational circuit.<sup>75</sup> The functions assigned to the new ministry included supreme control over all educational matters, except such as were specifically given over to other jurisdictions. The exceptions were military, naval and cadet schools, which were placed under the Ministry of War and the Naval Ministry, the Synod schools, and certain women's institutions which were under the direction of the Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna.<sup>76</sup> All other institutions were under the Ministry of Public Instruction, as was the control of all public libraries and museums, all public and private printing presses, and censorship duties over all printed matter.<sup>77</sup> The concept of école unique was mirrored, therefore, in the Ministry and its relationship to, as well as its influence upon, other areas of intellectual activity are obvious. The policies of the Ministry not only reflected the attitude of the government towards education but towards the even broader areas of culture and literature. Some observers have gone so far as to suggest that "the educational system of Alexander I formed, in fact, a kind of enclave of autonomy within an autocratic state."<sup>78</sup> However, as we shall see later, this evaluation is more illusion than reality, for the Ministry of Public Instruction was a closely guarded instrument of central policy.

Continuity between Alexander's educational establishment and

those of his predecessors is clearly shown in the choice of Zavadovskii as the first Minister. Alexander's cautious recruitment of key personnel is again evident in the selection of his trusted tutor Muravev. But these are not the only points of continuity and caution. The conservative and anti-French Maria Feodorovna also provided continuity in her role as director of women's institutions. They had also been administered by her during the reign of Paul. They were founded and maintained partly by contributions from private persons or societies, and to a certain extent also by grants from the Imperial Treasury; but they owed their existence also in large measure to her own generosity and personal interest in the education of girls. The total amount actually given and bequeathed by her for their support considerably exceeded two million rubles. Her aim was the conservative one of giving the daughters of poor nobles such an education as would fit them for posts as private governesses and the like.<sup>79</sup>

When, on 24 January 1803 the provisional rules for national enlightenment appeared, they were a compromise between the 'German party' of the old school administration, centered mostly in Moscow, and the 'French party' of the Committee in the capital. There was, however, no misconstruing the intention of the government, or of the importance attached to education: "National enlightenment in the Russian Empire is a special function of the state."<sup>80</sup>

Charters for the main schools began to appear in 1804 and the foundations were laid for university life in the capital cities.<sup>81</sup> The legislators coordinated not only the academic structure of the schools but also their management. The self-governing universities were at the apex of the administrative hierarchy. The institutions of higher learning supervised

the provincial schools, which in turn were responsible for the district establishments. A recent authority on the comparative history of education has observed that the system of 1804 "was the first democratic école unique in Europe."<sup>82</sup>

Count Zavodovskii, however, had worked closely with the German scholars of the Academy of Sciences and the aging courtier imbued the new department with a liking for German academic models and invited the initiative of the local gentry. This led to a conflict between the Ministry and the Unofficial Committee. The latter became impatient with Zavodovskii and expressed hostility toward the 'German' emphasis on academic refinement at the expense of 'French' concern for social breadth.<sup>83</sup> Kochubei revealed his beliefs in conversation with M.M. Speransky:

We do not need universities, especially universities on the German model, when there is no one to study at them, but primary and secondary schools....The French system of lycées is the best that Russia can adopt.<sup>84</sup>

It is important to investigate the application of the second principle, that of equality. The Statute of 1804 established equality of educational opportunity for all classes. In the University statutes no allusion is made to the social position, and the only qualification is the academic standard.<sup>85</sup> All state students after finishing the course were obliged to serve not less than six years in Government Departments. In the case of immoral conduct they were taken into the army.<sup>86</sup> The responsibility of the state for providing education is clear, but it was also apparent that those who received such an education were to serve the state in return.

The quality of the pedagogical personnel in the universities was

high in 1804, chiefly owing to the invitation of about sixty foreign professors. Some difficulty resulted from the fact that academics appointed in the first place to the chairs at the new universities were for the most part foreigners ignorant of the Russian language. They had to lecture in Latin, French or German; only half of them lectured in Russian.<sup>87</sup> However, this situation did not last long because of the interference of the central bureaucracy in the running of the universities, which were supposed to be autonomous. This struggle between curators and councils is the more curious as one of the main objects of fixing the residence of the curators in the capital, and not in the university towns, was to prevent any undue interference on their part with the autonomy of the universities. The results of this conflict were deplorable. Many of the professors left in disgust and their places were taken by less distinguished, but more amenable and generally more conservative Russian successors.<sup>88</sup>

Karamzin wrote in 1803 that "The main effect of the new act will be the establishment of village schools".<sup>89</sup> Indeed, if the second principle - equality - was to be implemented at all then this was essential. However, the whole cost of establishing universities and gymnasia was so high that the work of primary education was commended to the public spirit and generosity of individuals, clerical and lay, and local authorities. The progress of education at the lower levels hence depended directly on the degree to which the gentry were willing to aid in its development.<sup>90</sup> Karamzin addressed a special appeal to the nobility to throw themselves heartily into the work of providing popular schools and administering them. Recollections of the French Revolution were fresh in his mind: "the nobility had never fallen where it did not hesitate to make sacrifices for the



commonweal."<sup>91</sup> Count Zavadovskii himself realized the necessity of stimulating the gentry to take advantage of education and even sent his own sons to a gymnasium in order "to raise general educational institutions in the public eye."<sup>92</sup> But as long as promotion in rank in the civil service was not dependent upon education, the nobility did not seem interested.

In those schools where privileged children attended together with those of non-nobles a strong rancor soon developed. Special dormitories had to be erected for the children of the rich.<sup>93</sup> When it became clear after the first few years of reforms that the peasantry would not be liberated, state instruction for the peasantry was effectively discarded in favour of private, gentry, communal and ecclesiastical enterprise. As Alston has recently pointed out, "this meant its effective abandonment."<sup>94</sup> Comprehensive as they appeared, the arrangements of 1803 and 1804 represented a substantial retreat from the initial vision. The academies for young officers, the private pensions for noblemen, the seminaries for priests, and the institutions for young ladies continued to develop separately. Educational reform, as with changes in the central administration and elsewhere, had not achieved the intended results by the time Alexander went to war against France.

The reform movement which developed at the beginning of the nineteenth century went together with a national movement which had begun already in the second half of the eighteenth century. The decline of the reform movement in the period preceeding the signing of the Tilsit Alliance was largely a consequence of the developing opposition to reform influences from western Europe, especially from France, which seemed to guide the advisors of the Emperor. This opposition stood at the heart of the rising

national movement which, while evident in nearly all aspects of national life, was most noticeable in the development of the Russian press and literature. Paradoxically, the government supported the national movement as well.

The Russian press and literature had an importance for the young reformers as great as that placed on education, and partly for the same reasons: the desire to reform made essential an enlightened public. Through literature in all its forms such reforms could be explained and supported. Great stress was laid, especially by Alexander, upon the press and literature as instruments of government. Three members of the Unofficial Committee, through their positions in the Ministries of Justice and Interior (Novosiltsev, Stroganov and Kochubei)<sup>95</sup> were, during the pre-Tilsit period, in positions which directly affected what was published in the Empire. There are several indications that Alexander was fully appreciative of its political value. This is made clear in the many recurring instances in his correspondence with his family:<sup>96</sup> it is also evident from his "Instructions to Novosiltsev" and other documents from the period of the Third Coalition.<sup>97</sup>

The "Instructions", given to his young friend and advisor in November 1804, is one of the few extended documents that Alexander personally authored. It opens with a passage recognizing the power of public opinion and propaganda:

The most effectual weapon which France now wields... is her ability to persuade public opinion that her cause is that of the liberty and prosperity of all nations.<sup>98</sup>

Similarly, but in a more general way, an article in the St. Petersburg Convention of 11 April 1805, between Russia and England, stipulated that the contracting parties were not to influence the public opinion of France

or of any other country occupied by the allied armies in the event that they were to be successful against Napoleon.<sup>99</sup>

No better indication of the reformers' belief in the importance of the press can be found than in sponsorship of official publications. Speransky, then an important but secondary figure in the Ministry of the Interior, understood the immediate benefit and value the government could derive from an officially sponsored publication in the service of the new transformation and reforms and he did much to establish the Sankt Peterburgskii Zhurnal, the first regular journal to be issued by the government.<sup>100</sup> It presented official decrees as well as articles and translations dealing with political and economic theory.<sup>101</sup>

In part, the appearance of this journal was intended to provide the public with 'reliable' information, the lack of which was a characteristic of life in Russian capital cities of the early nineteenth century. Goltz and other foreign observers repeatedly decried the lack of news, and regularly depended on "gazettes" from abroad as the only source of dependable news.<sup>102</sup> At times when communications broke down because of war or official policy they, and all the Russian reading public, were faced with "une stagnation totale de renseignements et de nouvelles."<sup>103</sup>

The consequence of this lack of information was that the cities became hotbeds of rumour and gossip which could lead to uninformed criticism of government policy or actions. As Goltz noted in 1806: "Dans un pays où les fausses nouvelles ne sont malheureusement que trop fréquentes, il est très important, pour rectifier les avis et les opinions."<sup>104</sup> Thus, the appearance of the Sankt Peterburgskii Zhurnal had as its aim also the rectification of this situation. Lehndorff, who replaced Goltz as the

Prussian representative in St. Petersburg in 1807, supports his predecessor's idea behind the policy of the Russian government when he writes: "Le but principal de ce journal est de refuter les jugements iniques, de rectifier les faits controuvés et de combattre les raisonnements insidieux."<sup>105</sup> The publication was regarded as an important indicator of Government thinking and much emphasized by foreign observers of the period. It became regular practice for both the Prussian and French observers to send copies back to their respective governments.<sup>106</sup>

In one respect Alexander had inherited from Paul a very bad situation regarding the press and literature. In 1797, Paul's first complete year of rule, the number of regular periodicals published in Russia declined to 5 (from 16 in 1789) and the number of books printed during the year fell to 240 (from 572 in 1788).<sup>107</sup> Not only was publishing disrupted, but some of Russia's best known publicists and authors, Novikov, Krylov and Radishchev among them, were either in exile, sometimes self imposed, or in prison. In keeping with the general trend towards 'opening up' in the early years of his reign, Alexander's first steps were to release such men and in some instances to offer appointments to government service.<sup>108</sup>

In another respect, however, there were encouraging signs from the earlier reigns. Despite the reaction after 1789 there now existed in Russia the instruments necessary to stimulate and sponsor the writer's art: private printing presses, schools, academies, university centers, scholarships, theatres and, formed by newspapers and magazines, an emerging public opinion. Catherine's own initiative in convening an elected Committee of the Deputies at the beginning of her reign, and the effect of the French Revolution at the end, gave rise to some purely political literature. Prince M.M. Shcherbatov's On the Decline of Morals, Boltin's Notes (1788),

Radischev's Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow (1790) and Krylov's early fables all can be cited as examples of political literature towards the close of the century.<sup>109</sup> Goltz, who had been in St. Petersburg since 1802, was in a good position to judge both the newness and the extent of this developing ability for self expression:

L'opinion du public ose pour la première fois se prononcer en Russie. Autrefois personne ne se permettait de critiquer les opérations du gouvernement; aujourd'hui tout le monde raisonne et peut-être nulle part permet-on de porter des jugements plus téméraires....Les frondeurs attaquent ouvertement la réputation des Ministres.<sup>110</sup>

There was thus a link between the Enlightenment and Russian public awareness. Although Russians were unable to attack the Emperor personally, they levelled their criticisms at his advisors.

This awakening of the Russian public was one consequence of the spread of the Enlightenment in the latter half of the 18th century. Some idea of the impact of the Enlightenment in Russia, and the general intellectual progress which accompanied it, is given by the statement of Karamzin that in 1777 there were only two bookshops in Moscow, doing a business of less than 10,000 rubles a year; in 1802 there were twenty such shops, representing a trade of 200,000 rubles a year.<sup>111</sup> Some further statistics are given by Miliukov, who tells us that of 9,513 books known to have been published in Russia during the eighteenth century 8,595 (90% +) appeared during the latter half of the century, and 6,585 (69% +) in the years 1775-1800.<sup>112</sup>

A second consequence of the diffusion of the Enlightenment in Russia was that the leading classes in society adopted foreign fashions, tastes and speech. For Russians, as well as for most Europeans, this meant the acceptance of French fashions and the French language. It led

to what may be called a prépondérance française in Russian cultural life.

Some idea of the atmosphere in Russia at this time is provided in the memoirs of the German historian and contemporary Schlözer:

Pétersbourg est un petit monde en miniature. Heureux le jeune homme qui voyageant pour s'instruire, commence par là son apprentissage! Je suis venu, j'ai vu, et j'ai été frappé d'admiration. Je ne sortais pourtant point d'un village. Si le destin m'eut entraîné, selon mes vœux, à Constantinople, Alep ou Pékin, j'y aurais trouvé plus de merveilles qui m'eussent étonné au premier coup-d'oeil, mais non tout ce qui peut instruire, tout ce qui peut développer l'esprit, comme à Pétersbourg. Beaucoup de choses belles ailleurs, mais petites, sont ici colossales, gigantesques; le luxe asiatique jusqu'à prodigalité, uni au goût européen le plus délicat.<sup>113</sup>

This concept of Russian society, a court image of St. Petersburg with its European façade and its Asiatic sous-courant, was held by most West Europeans, especially the French, throughout Alexander's reign and for some time thereafter.

In the meantime there were profound changes underway. The prépondérance française, among the higher and educated classes, and the cosmopolitanism which accompanied it, had already been reached with the French Revolution. The policies of Catherine and Paul in the 1790's put an abrupt end to the Francophilia of the Russian nobility. The more conservative and applicable principles of the philosophers in England and Germany were enthusiastically received.<sup>114</sup> The spiritual revival in England also affected Russians, and closer ideological and cultural relations with England and Prussia were fostered by the development of economic ties.<sup>115</sup> England's contribution to the theory and practice of an active and modern economic system made an additional appeal to the Russian élite and Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations became a handbook of official economic thought for the reformers.<sup>116</sup>

There were two overlapping intellectual tendencies in Russia during the period from the Revolution to 1815 - sentimentalism and pre-romanticism - and both of them contributed to the move away from the French influence. From the 1790's onwards Russian aristocratic society, reacting to the challenge of the Revolution, began to appeal to national traditions. The result was a national cultural movement and a tremendous upsurge in patriotic essays, plays and histories. The leaders of the movement were perfectly aware that if the national movement, based on a historical and cultural individuality, were to be successful, it had to overcome the cosmopolitanism and Francophilia of the Enlightenment.<sup>117</sup> It was precisely this phenomenon which was transpiring in the late eighteenth century, especially among the literati.

Karamzin introduced sentimentalism, under the influence of Masonic thinking, and this led to a greater appreciation of romanticism and to the gradual acceptance of Schlegel, Kant, Schelling and Herder. Karamzin's first writings in Moskovskii Zhurnal in 1791-92 mark the beginning of the new movement.<sup>118</sup> Equally important for the growth of sentimentalism was the work of V.A. Zhukovskii, who was instrumental in popularizing the new trend. Even more than Karamzin, Zhukovskii admired the works of the German philosophers and his religious-esthetic idealism was identical with the German romantics.<sup>119</sup> Zhukovskii joined the popular crusade against France in 1806 with his Chant of the Bard on the Tomb of the Victorious Slavs, making allusion to Napoleon, "that ferocious giant", and praising the exploits of the dead Slavs whose brothers were urged to take arms and seek vengeance.<sup>120</sup>

F.F. Vigel, a contemporary Freemason and official in the

Department of Spiritual Affairs for Foreign Faiths, who himself reacted with skepticism to the new literary style from Germany, nevertheless wrote of its existence in Russia at that time. For him the changing forms of literature were, like Paris fashions, a matter of taste, the quality of which could not be "determined with mathematical accuracy."<sup>121</sup>

Miliukov and others have shown that pre-romantic thought had already appeared in the 1790's in Herder's influence on Radishchev,<sup>122</sup> and the Martinists had published several works by Saint-Martin, Hemsterhuis, Hamann, J. Boehm and others.<sup>123</sup> However, the most completely formulated romanticism to reach Russia in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the romanticism to which Vigel and many other Russians reacted, came from Germany, where the younger Friedrich Schlegel, perhaps more than any other person, had defined its essence and characteristics.<sup>124</sup> Equally important was the work of the Kantian I.F. Buhle, both a philosopher and an historian, who arrived in Russia in 1804. Between 1796 and 1805 he published two histories of philosophy, both of which were translated into French and readily available to Russian students who knew little German.<sup>125</sup>

By then there was a considerable German influence developing at the universities. At Kharkov there were a number of proponents of German idealistic philosophy, in particular Schellingism which reached Russia through D.M. Vellanskii, his student.<sup>126</sup> Vellanskii published works in 1805 and 1807 respectively showing a strong romantic influence.<sup>127</sup> At Moscow University romantic philosophy penetrated as well through the teaching of philosophy which began in a systematic fashion during this period in courses given by M. Popovskii and A. Briantsev.<sup>128</sup> The emergence of early romantic thought, and its attendant affect on the growth of individual



and national self-consciousness, led to a growing concern on the part of Russians for things Russian. This sometimes led to a reaction against European, and especially French, influences. It was this phenomenon which gripped the Russian literati of the time.

In addition to the romantic influence, Russian national awareness also developed as a consequence of efforts made towards the compilation of Russian folklore. Among the more notable were the works of M.D. Chulkov (1743-92), V.A. Levshin (1746-1826), V.F. Trutovskii (1740-1810) and I.B. Prach (1743-1818), all of whom published between 1770 and 1795. There were, as well, notable contributions made by men not primarily devoted to folkloristic work, such as V.N. Tatishchev, M.V. Lomonosov, I.N. Boltin and A.N. Radishchev.<sup>129</sup> Alexander's reign opened auspiciously for Russian folklore with the publication of K. Danilov's collection of old Russian verse in 1804, as a result of which folkloristic activity was greatly intensified.<sup>130</sup>

Besides these individuals there were several important societies which provided not only the incentive to folkloristic study but also very frequently the means and personnel for the collection, study and publication of folklore. The first of these societies to be established in the nineteenth century was the Free Society of the Lovers of Literature, Science and Arts (Volnoe obshchestvo liubitelei slovesnosti, nauk i khudozhestv). This society was founded in 1801 and lasted until 1825, undergoing during its existence numerous changes in membership and orientation. Also founded in 1801, but shorter lived, was the Friendly Literary Society (Druzheskoe literaturnoe obshchestvo).<sup>131</sup> The primary interest of both of these societies was in the field of literature, but in the person of A.Kh. Vostokov,

an academician and a member of the Free Society, philology also made noteworthy gains.<sup>132</sup>

While it is true that to some degree the "Russian writer still wore the livery of a foreign potentate",<sup>133</sup> it is equally true that the first steps had already been taken to throw off the foreign stigma. Derzhavin (1743-1816) in particular had effected a break with the French classicism which had straightjacketed Russian writers of the eighteenth century.<sup>134</sup> The elderly dean of Russia's conservative and chauvinist literati, who became Alexander's first Minister of Justice, grew increasingly conservative in his opposition to the French influence and in particular to the Unofficial Committee ("that Jacobin gang").

That the first attempt to reduce the French influence in Russia should be made by a nobleman and a conservative was no accident, but part of a general pattern then developing. There had been tremendous progress made toward the close of the eighteenth century and by 1800 there was a genuine concern for art, culture and learning, on an almost professional level, which had taken root among members of the service nobility (sluzhenyi liudi). A.F. Bestuzhev (1761-1800), I.P. Pnin (1733-1805), and V.F. Malinovskii (1765-1814), a diplomat and director of the lycée at Tsarskoe Selo, can all be cited as examples.<sup>135</sup> In government offices, at military academies, at the universities and in preparatory schools, all who aspired to any degree of fame sought it in the writing of verse. Poetry was printed or circulated in manuscript form to be read and ardently discussed in literary societies and innumerable reading clubs. In St. Petersburg and Moscow weekly and monthly reviews mushroomed to accomodate the overflow of new literary works, translations and criticism.<sup>136</sup>

There were many effects of this intellectual awakening in Russia. It led to a search for Russian self-consciousness towards the close of Catherine's reign which, although it was forced into abeyance under Paul, came clearly to the surface again under Alexander.<sup>137</sup> Journals, reviews, newspapers and society publications proliferated. They soon gave rise to more definite and opposing views, and were really the basis for the emergence of public opinion in Russia.<sup>138</sup> Literature, and particularly poetry, became the handmaiden of politics, subservience to government wishes being particularly marked in the writing of Russia's most talented eighteenth century poets, Lomonosov, who died in 1765, and Derzhavin who later rose to political prominence.<sup>139</sup> Indeed, the very existence of these magazines which had been cultivated with the direct cooperation of the government, is strongly indicative of the national interest in political thought.<sup>140</sup>

Alexander continued this policy of government support from the very beginning of his reign. Shortly after he came to power and learned that affairs in the book trade were bad the Emperor decided to make personal grants out of his own purse, thus enabling Karamzin and a number of others to continue their work. During 1802 nearly 200,000 rubles were spent on grants and pensions to the impecunious literati.<sup>141</sup> Between 1803 and 1806 a further 120,000 rubles were provided for the publication of the works of Adam Smith, Bentham, Beccaria and others.<sup>142</sup>

In no instance is the connection between government support, the literati and the rising national consciousness more obvious than in official efforts to establish the study of history in Russia. In 1803 Karamzin was appointed official State Historian and given a substantial subsidy.<sup>143</sup>

He was the first person to hold such a position in Russia. Schlözer made such an impression on Alexander with his study of Nestor that in 1804 the Emperor ordered the formation of a society for the advancement of historical knowledge. The honor of sponsoring the society was bestowed upon the University of Moscow, and so in 1804 there was founded the first Russian historical organisation, the Moscow Society of History and Russian Antiquities (Obshchestva istorii i drevnostei rossiiskikh pri imperatorskom Moskovskom universitete).<sup>144</sup> The society existed for 125 years and in its origins included such men as Schlözer, Karamzin, Musin-Pushkin, Kalaidovich, Bantysh-Kamenskii; its membership was limited and the election of its presiding officer needed to be approved by the Minister of Education.<sup>145</sup>

The reasons for government support were clear, but it must also be said that, while the situation had improved greatly over what it had been in the eighteenth century, authors nevertheless found it difficult to live solely by their writing. The standard practice was for the literati to combine their writing with another career, usually in government service. As Lindstrom and others have pointed out,

Since writing was not yet lucrative, nor even considered a profession, most educated Russians with a bent for writing served their country first of all, as officials, diplomats and officers.<sup>146</sup>

Rigorous censorship practices assured further support of the government by the press and literary people, the correctness of imported works, and their interpretation or translation. Under Alexander the practice of government censorship, while not as onerous as it had been during the latter years of Catherine and especially under Paul, was nevertheless expanded even more widely. The situation inherited by the Tsar was such

that the powers of censorship, and all matters relating to the publication of books and periodicals, were left to the discretion of administrative officials.<sup>147</sup> In keeping with the general policy of relaxation of restrictions, the young reformers repealed many of the earlier censorship provisions. In the early years of Alexander's reign the main concern was the protection of authors and publishers from administrative arbitrariness, not censorship as such.<sup>148</sup>

There was no firm indication of Alexander's intentions until the Russian censorship law of 9 July 1804. When the new regulations did appear, a retreat from the earlier policies of reform was evident, as it had been in so many other areas. The law was modeled on that of Denmark and required preliminary examination by officials of the Ministry of Public Instruction of all manuscripts submitted for publication. With the revival in January 1807 of the Special Committee (secret police) as a permanent institution, that agency began to interfere with censorship.<sup>149</sup> The government's true attitude in this regard was made clear when, by an Imperial order in 1805 a significant deletion was made from the official Russian edition of Jeremy Bentham's treatise on civil and penal law, of a passage containing a vigorous indictment of censorship.<sup>150</sup>

There is thus a two-fold connection between government policy and the problem of the press and literature. The press and literature were used by the government as instruments of policy and were tightly controlled by it. The literati themselves, most of whom owed their livelihood to government support, as a whole reciprocated this support through their growing pro-Russian orientations, some of which was militantly anti-French. Despite this general situation, however, there were divergences within the

press and literature and it is of central importance to see, with regard to the "Question Française", which groups received the support of the government and the reading public.

It is not possible, as some have contended, to analyze the press and literature of the pre-Tilsit era through a consideration of "literary schools."<sup>151</sup> Literary opinion was still in a state of flux, so much so that it was not uncommon for the authors to shift their allegiance from one movement to another. As Raeff has pointed out, "It was not unusual for an individual to belong to several groups or circles either simultaneously or in succession."<sup>152</sup> It is more accurate to say that there were essentially three movements in Russia at this time.

First, A.S. Shishkov (1754-1841), a man who began his career in the navy, and Derzhavin (1743-1816), who became a government official, led a group of writers who particularly insisted on the necessity of safeguarding the Russian language and society against pernicious foreign influences - mostly French.<sup>153</sup> They were ultra-reactionary and their answer to the "Question Française" was to extol the imaginary glories of Russian eighteenth century literature.

Second, there was a group led by N.M. Karamzin (1766-1826), an Anglophile, which combined a spirited defence of a simplified and 'westernized' literary language with a rigid political conservatism.<sup>154</sup> These literati, as did the first, sought to end the French influence by returning to Russian norms of an earlier day.

Third, there was a group, smaller and more informal than the first two, composed of younger men whose views tended towards liberal-romanticism and political radicalism. These younger writers were

associated with the Free Society of the Lovers of Literature, Science and Art (Volnoe obshchestvo liubitelei slovesnosti, nauk i khudozhestv).

The society was founded by V.V. Popugaev (1779-1816), but Pnin (1773-1805) was the dominant intellectual figure until his death. The periodical had three periods: 1802-1806, 1807-1815 and 1816-1820,<sup>155</sup> of which only the first two are important for present purposes.

Folklore, or more precisely folk language, became the center of the controversy between Shishkov's Beseda liubitelei russkago slova (Gathering of the Lovers of the Russian Word), founded in 1811,<sup>156</sup> and the Arzamas society, but the conflict had already broken out some years earlier, in what is usually referred to as the struggle between the Shishkovists and the Karamzinists.<sup>157</sup>

The polemic about the old and the new literary style began in 1803 and revolved around Shishkov's thesis that Church Slavonic should be the source and inspiration for the enrichment of the Russian language. At the root of his argument was an intense dislike for the French language, which he regarded as a demoralizing and anti-religious influence. Shishkov's views on language and literature were affected by his ideological positions for, as did most of the nobility, he detested and feared the French Revolution. He denied the necessity of enriching the Russian language through loan words and insisted that Russia return to her Greco-Slavonic heritage:

The traces of the language and spirit of the infamous French Revolution, hitherto unknown among us, had begun to appear, and spread rapidly in our books; contempt for their faith had begun to show itself in contempt for Church Slavonic....Up to Lomonosov's time we had stuck to our sacred songs, our holy writings, reflections on God's greatness, Christian duties and belief, which taught us a peaceful, quiet life, not the corrupt morals whose fruits France is now tasting.<sup>158</sup>

In 1806, as Napoleon's armies gained victories over Austria, Prussia, Saxony and Russia, Shishkov's bitterness mounted:

If Europe now drinks a cup of bitterness, this is perhaps because before being conquered by French armies, they had already been so by the French language.<sup>159</sup>

A contemporary described Shishkov as "our first slavianofil."<sup>160</sup> Although the word had not yet assumed the character one normally associates with it in the study of nineteenth century Russia, the fact remains that it was in use during the first decade of the nineteenth century. The poet K.N. Batiushkov, for example, used it on several occasions in reference to Shishkov, and others used it as well.<sup>161</sup> Some time later, in his reminiscences of Shishkov, S.T. Aksakov (1791-1859) noted that the term as used in the 1850's did not state the case for the situation at the beginning of the century. Aksakov defined slavianofilstvo for the earlier period as a:

Russian orientation...which reacted against the introduction of foreign, or better, French, words and manners of speech by our writers, against preference of everything foreign over our own, against the general use of the French language in public conversation.<sup>162</sup>

Aksakov identified Shishkov as the leader of this anti-French, pro-Russian movement which attempted to solve the "Question Française" by returning to Russian culture of a previous era.

The reaction to France and to things French before the Tilsit Alliance was not peculiar to Shishkov and the ultra-conservative literati, for it is also true of Karamzin and the 'Westernizers' who followed him. Karamzin's view concerning his role as a writer was perfectly clear:

"The task of literature was not only to consolidate Russia's eminence in the eyes of Europe but also to inspire pride in Russians."<sup>163</sup> Karamzin



gives abundant evidence of his patriotism as well:

It is nearer and dearer for Russian talent to praise what is Russian in this happy time, when the monarch and Providence itself call us to true glory. Russians must be taught to respect what is their own.<sup>164</sup>

He was even more specific when he wrote:

Our misfortune is that we all wish to speak French and do not think of perfecting our own language: it is not surprising that we are thus unable to express in it certain subtleties in conversation.<sup>165</sup>

On the eve of the Tilsit Alliance Shishkov and Karamzin were no longer at the center of the linguistic controversy, both of them having moved on to other tasks. Shishkov was at the time closely connected with the conservative Derzhavin in the publication of Drug Prosveshcheniia, which appeared between 1804 and 1806.<sup>166</sup> Karamzin had been appointed by Alexander to the position of official historian and his journal, Vestnik Evropy, was given into new editorship under V. Zhukovskii, the son of a wealthy landowner.<sup>167</sup> But the effect of the controversy was important for future Russian-French relations because it had provoked a deepening awareness of Russia and things Russian and contributed to the upsurge of patriotism then underway as a consequence of the Third Coalition and the wars with France.

At the same time, the radical and more cosmopolitan tendency within the literary movement, associated with the Free Society of the Lovers of Russian Literature, Science and Art, was on the decline. The society, which combined cultural, scholarly and social concerns, underwent numerous changes in membership and orientation. In its first period, 1802-1806, there had been great intellectual activity and political engagement, when radical founding members played a decisive role. In its second period,

from 1807-1816, it underwent a reorientation. Membership had been drastically reduced by the time of the Tilsit Alliance owing to the wars with Napoleon and the unpopular attitude of some of its leaders.<sup>168</sup>

This change in the society is symptomatic of the degree to which the Russian literati, and the press in general, had swung towards a greater Russian orientation. Even more evident on the eve of the Alliance with France was the distinct trend toward patriotism among the Russian conservatives. The 'occidental' Karamzin, who still systematically and critically reviewed books from western Europe in Vestnik Evropy, was also reviewing Russian works and in an increasingly favourable way. Karamzin's review of the work of I. Bogdanovich can be taken as an example. As late as 1800 G.P. Kamenev had heard Karamzin criticizing Bogdanovich's work, especially some of his translations from Voltaire, but by 1803 he was already writing, concerning the same work: "Bogdanovich translated so successfully that many lines match the beauty and strength of the French."<sup>169</sup> As Cross has pointed out:

This was a conscious and direct attempt to push national authors....Karamzin was obviously at the same time serving his basic thesis in the 'Messenger' - applaud, rather than condemn, things Russian.<sup>170</sup>

The degree to which the psychological atmosphere had changed in Russia on the eve of Tilsit is nowhere more clearly shown, with reference to the literary atmosphere of the day, than in the career of Ivan Krylov (1769-1844), the son of an army officer who rose through the ranks. Under Catherine, Krylov had been the editor of Spectator and St. Petersburg Mercury but he was obliged to cease his work in 1793 following some savagely satirical anti-French writing.<sup>171</sup> Krylov left the capital for 12 years, but returned in 1805 when the times and public mood

were more favourable. He again took up the criticizing of French fashions, which by then was quite in vogue, and became a familiar sight at court and in the salons of St. Petersburg. He soon developed into one of those rare Russians who enjoyed great literary fame during his lifetime.<sup>172</sup>

The reception given by the Russian public to the works of V.A. Ozerov, an outstanding dramatic author of the period, also demonstrates the new attitude. Ozerov wrote several tragedies between 1804 and 1809, but the climax of his success was reached with Dmitrii of the Don. The play was first acted within a few days of the battle of Preussisch-Eylau (8 February 1807). Dmitrii was bathed in fashionable sentimentalism and its patriotic tirades were received with overwhelming enthusiasm.<sup>173</sup>

The changed atmosphere brought on by the transition from cosmopolitan Enlightenment to a greater national self-interest and patriotism was fully apparent to non-Russian contemporaries living in Russia at that time. Martha and Catherine Wilmot, who travelled widely in Russia from 1803 to 1808, were personal friends of Princess Dashkova and acquainted with many prominent personalities at court. Through her influence and companionship they met everyone of note in the Empire and were brought into close contact with most of the court entourage and political celebrities of the day. They were received at the court of the Emperor and Empress, and were not only the guests of the great personages of the court, but were also in the society of the rich merchant classes, which gave them further insight into Russian life of the day.<sup>174</sup> The Wilmot sisters were thus in a unique position to witness the transition then underway and the observation made by Martha to her father in December 1806 is illuminating:

at length a spirit of patriotism begins to penetrate  
the cloud which has kept it from observation hitherto....

Patriotic sentiments are most loudly applauded in the theatre, and individual instances of it are no longer rare.<sup>175</sup>

Von Goltz, the Prussian representative at St. Petersburg, witnessed the tremendous upsurge of patriotism that accompanied the war against France. He observed from St. Petersburg at the end of 1806 and the beginning of 1807, when feelings against his own country were running high:

En effet la Russie n'a jamais fait de plus grands efforts et il faut laisser cette justice à la nation, qu'il s'y prête avec un patriotisme vraiment respectable.<sup>176</sup>

This rising national mood against France was but one aspect of the solution to the "Question Française" which was in the process of being elaborated by leaders in various parts of Russia's national life. It went together with a noticeable decline of the reform movement, but there was as yet no focal point around which various opponents of the French influence could rally. Those who opposed the Unofficial Committee and the French influence in the reform movement acted more or less independently from those who sought to expunge the French influence from Russian cultural life.

## Chapter I

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131 Two other smaller, less important societies with similar names should also be noted: The Free Society of the Lovers of Russian Literature /Volnoe obshchestvo liubitelei rossiiskoi slovesnosti/ and the Friendly Learned Society /Drugheskoe uchenoe obshchestvo/; On all four see Mordovchenko, op. cit., pp. 19, 26, 65-66, 114-119, 133, 185-86, 262-65, 298, 327-28, 382; Azadovskii, op. cit., pp. 149-55.

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- 149 Shternberg's book in defence of peasant rights was prohibited in 1803 and Pnin's book Opyt o prosveshchenii otnositelno k Rossii, a work directed against peasant law, was censored in 1804: Semevskii, Krestionskii Vopros, pp. 87-89.
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<sup>151</sup> The polarization of trends into "national" and "European" schools plays a prominent part in both English and French historiography. It stems from treating the period as essentially a contest between Napoleon and Alexander, rather than taking into consideration national developments. It can be found in the works of Vandal, Rambaud, Sorel, and many others.

<sup>152</sup> M. Raeff, "Filling the Gap", op. cit., p. 412.

<sup>153</sup> V.N. Bochkarev, "Konservatory i nationalisty v Rossii v nachale XIX veka", Otechestvennaia voina i russkoe obshchestvo, II, Moscow, 1911, p. 70.

<sup>154</sup> R. Pipes, "Karamzin's Conception of the Monarchy", Harvard Slavic Studies, Vol. 4 (1957), p. 41.

<sup>155</sup> M.K. Azadovskii, op. cit., pp. 149-55; P.K. Christoff, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>156</sup> The full name of the Beseda is variously given as Beseda liubitelei russkago slova or Beseda liubitelei rossiiskago slova or Beseda liubitelei rossiiskoi slovesnosti and its date of founding as 1810 or 1811: B. Orlov, ed., Epigramma i satira, Iz istorii literaturnoi borby XIX veka, I, Leningrad, 1931, p. ix; Ents.Slov, 6, p. 628: 78, p. 613.

<sup>157</sup> R. Pipes, "Karamzin's Conception of the Monarchy", pp. 35-58.

<sup>158</sup> Brueckner, A Literary History of Russia, London, 1908, pp. 143-44.

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## Chapter II

### 1806: The Military, the Church and Wars of the Third Coalition

The rising tide of patriotism which swept over Russia during the period of the Third Coalition (1805-1807) was a consequence of three things - Russia's developing self-awareness, the impassioned anti-Napoleonic attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church, and the war itself. This national feeling affected all Russians, but it somewhat obscured the substantial uncertainty that existed in some circles. Although the fever against France was running high, many were frank in their denunciation of the war. The older generation, accustomed to Catherine's campaigns of conquest, were bewildered at the inability of the Russian and allied armies to defeat Napoleon. Public opinion was equally puzzled by Alexander's foreign policy. The negative results of Novosiltsev's mission to England in 1804 still rankled; the growing intimacy with Prussia promised little advantage. Alliances with Austria and Sweden increased the general anxiety over Russia's involvement in European problems.

The growing military establishment, which remained consistently anti-French throughout the period, was a particular source of dissatisfaction under Alexander. From the beginning of his reign the Emperor had taken steps to insure the loyalty of the armed forces, especially the guards, and among the central institutions the military came to occupy first place. There were a number of reasons for this, beginning with the manner in which Alexander came to the throne.

The assassination of Paul in March 1801 was simultaneously representative of two things: a coup of the guards regiments and a revolt of the nobility, since it was the sons of the nobility which actually constituted the guards. Historians who have studied Paul's attitude towards the military are in general agreement that many of his innovations were of lasting value. However, they have also shown that the reforms disturbed the complacency of the officer corps, which had grown accustomed to the indulgent paternalism of the era of Catherine.<sup>1</sup>

The officers of the guards particularly resented the intrusion of Paul's personal Gatchina battalions and the discipline ruthlessly applied to every soldier. The aristocratic regiments were purged of officers whose connection with the service was only nominal, a common practice at the time, and almost overnight the holding of a commission in the guards, which was traditionally regarded as a sinecure and the necessary preliminary to a comfortable career, became an exacting full-time occupation. Moreover, because of the Tsar's personality, such a career was fraught with considerable danger, since nothing was more likely to provoke the wrath of the Emperor and bring severe penalties than an infringement of army regulations.<sup>2</sup>

It was these dissatisfied noble guards and officers who, together with a few key officials, actually staged the coup in the anticipation that Catherine's grandson would be more amenable to them.<sup>3</sup> It was important, for future relations between the military and the Emperor, that the coup be accomplished with the knowledge, if not the implicit acceptance, of the future Alexander I. There can be no doubt as to Alexander's knowledge of the intention to overthrow his father. Indeed, it is known that Catherine had approached Alexander concerning his replacement of Paul as heir to the

throne. A letter from Alexander to Catherine in September 1796 leaves no doubt that he was aware of her design and that it had his approval.<sup>4</sup> The Empress' sudden and unexpected death on 6 November 1796 prevented such a plan from coming into effect but the movement continued. In a letter to LaHarpe in September 1797, carried by Novosiltsev, Alexander revealed that his father's reign was not going well and that he knew of the assassination plots.<sup>5</sup>

There were thus two aspects in Alexander's early attitude toward the military; first, to it he owed his position as Tsar and, second, he was aware of the need for both immediate and long-term reforms. His first move was to reinstate some 12,000 army officers and civil officials whom Paul had disgraced, most of whom were interned in the Peter and Paul Fortress.<sup>6</sup> This, however, was merely a gesture: there remained the much more important question of remedying the worst aspects of Paul's rule, while continuing the reforms which he started.

Peacetime service was still regulated by the antiquated army regulations of 1716 which remained in force, with but minor modifications, until 1839. New regulations governing the status of the army in war time would be issued only in 1812.<sup>7</sup> The pay of infantry privates was at subsistence levels and their condition was frequently made worse by the notoriously corrupt Commissariat Department. Discipline, which was regulated according to the Prussian military code adopted by Paul, was harsh and often ruthless.<sup>8</sup> As many historians have pointed out, incessant drilling and harsh discipline were almost as much of an obsession with Alexander and his three brothers - Constantine, Nicholas and Michael - as they had been with their father.<sup>9</sup>

The military grew from about 350,000 in 1800 to more than 500,000

by 1807<sup>10</sup> and it accounted for approximately 50% of the state budget.<sup>11</sup> Equally important, however, was the reform and growth of the military administration, which went along with the reform of the entire central administration in the early years of Alexander's reign.

The core of the Russian military establishment under Alexander was the Ministry of Land Fighting Forces (Ministerstvo voenno-sukhoputnykh sil) established in 1802, which was renamed the Ministry of War (Ministerstvo voennykh del) in 1815. Among contemporaries both were referred to as the War Ministry. When compared to its predecessor, the Imperial War College, the Ministry was a greatly expanded institution, both in size and in the scope of its activities. The Ministry increasingly absorbed within itself functions previously held by other Colleges and Departments, and developed a tendency towards a type of institutional autarchy.<sup>12</sup>

To focus on the War Ministry alone, however, would exclude much of what is properly speaking the military establishment. Also existing at the ministerial level were the Marine and Police Ministries, both of which were related in some of their responsibilities to the Ministry of War. Similarly, although they were not called ministries, but existing at the same administrative level, were the General Staff "E.I.V." ("of his Imperial Majesty"; i.e., the Emperor's personal staff), the staffs of the Fieldmaster General and the Inspector General. Thus, although the military establishment was centered in the Ministry of War, its influence and even some of its functions spread throughout much of the central administration - and into the lower and higher levels of administration as well.<sup>13</sup>

Below the level of central authority and somewhat outside the

realm of purely military matters were several areas in which the influence of the military was prominent and expanding. It played a commanding role in government leadership and in education because it supplied personnel for all the other administrations and because of its influence in censorship procedures. Technical development in particular was dominated by the military and there was a general increase in the amount set aside for military technical development.<sup>14</sup> Spiritual and medical affairs related to the armed forces came under control of the War Ministry in this period, and in the construction of roads, bridges, harbours and villages the military establishment was deeply involved.

Even at the highest state levels there were bodies in which the military had influence and where it played an important and sometimes dominant role. Operative over the entire period, and connecting the central ministries with the sovereign, were a number of quasi-legislative, executive and judicial bodies such as the E.I.V. Chancellery, the E.I.V. Cabinet and the Permanent Council. The Committee of Ministers and State Council, on the other hand, although they did not exist for the entire period, also had military representation in them.

In all that concerns the military, the first period of Alexander's reign was marked by tremendous activity. The overall tendency before the wars of the Third Coalition was towards an increase in size and, on the whole, a greater leadership role in society. Expansion and change were the hallmarks of the period and at the center of these activities stood the Ministry of War.

In June 1801, shortly after his elevation to the throne, Alexander created a military commission which, together with the Imperial War College,



was transformed into a Ministry in 1802. The old collegial form of administration remained basically intact and its former head, Count S.K. Viazmitinov, became the new Minister.<sup>15</sup> The trend which had developed under Paul of appointing inspectors to the various branches of the service was expanded to include new departments. When the Fortifications and Artillery Section of the old War College was taken into the new Ministry for example, the Engineer-General was replaced by an Inspector for Engineering Affairs.<sup>16</sup> In the spring of 1803, dissatisfied with the progress of the Ministry of War, the Emperor recalled General A.A. Arakcheev from Gruzino and made this anti-French leader from Paul's court the new Inspector General of Artillery.<sup>17</sup> In other areas additional innovations were made. With the naming of a General Staff Doctor of the Army in 1805, army medical affairs were separated for the first time from the civilian medical administration.<sup>18</sup>

The military had also consolidated its control over military educational establishments. The military schools for mathematics, artillery and nautical studies which had existed since the reign of Peter I, were gradually augmented by engineering schools throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>19</sup> By 1801 the private cadet school of General Zorich, which became a Cadet Corps in 1799, had absorbed several noblemen's cadet schools and a military orphanage.<sup>20</sup> Despite this growth there was no common administrative body to supervise the military educational establishments before Alexander's time. One emerged only in 1805 when the Tsar appointed his brother Constantine as Chief of Military Educational Institutions and set up a national council for military schools.<sup>21</sup> Spiritual affairs related to the military were freed from the inspection of the Holy Synod in 1800 when the military priests were joined together under a High Chaplain (ober-polevoi sviashchennik) for the Army and Fleet.<sup>22</sup>

Related to the Ministry of War, which controlled all of the affairs pertaining to the army in addition to overall military responsibilities, was the Ministry of Naval Forces, later named the Ministry of Marine. The first step Alexander took to reorganise the navy was the creation in 1802 of a Committee for the Improvement of the Fleet (Komitet dlia privedeniia flota v luchshee sostoianie). Admiral Chichagov assumed the head of the Committee which lasted until 1805.<sup>23</sup> In the meantime the old Admiralty College was replaced by the Ministry of Naval Forces (Ministerstvo voenno-morskikh sil) and N.S. Mordvinov, who had been Vice-President of the College, became the new Naval Minister.<sup>24</sup> Mordvinov was a prominent Anglophile, who had an English wife and was regarded as a progressive but anti-French minister.<sup>25</sup>

The Admiralty administration remained intact for the first few years of Alexander's reign but gradually underwent a transformation. A War Chancellery for the Fleet was organised in 1802 and in 1805 a General Staff Doctor for the Fleet was appointed who assumed the direction of a separate Medical Expedition (Voenno-meditsinskaia ekspeditsiia) within the Ministry.<sup>26</sup> The Marine Ministry was similar to the War Ministry in that its predecessor, in the course of the preceeding century, had taken over numerous special facilities which had functions related to naval affairs. These included educational organisations such as cadet schools, cartography and navigation schools, located mainly at St. Petersburg, Kronstadt and Moscow, which all became part of the new Ministry as well.<sup>27</sup> The expansionist trend continued throughout the period 1806-1812.

Above the level of central and lower administrations, where the influence of the armed forces was rapidly spreading, there were other bodies in which their representatives also played an important and expanding

executive, legislative and political role. The most important of these was the Committee of Ministers, a separate board created when the Ministries came into existence in 1802.<sup>28</sup> The military establishment was represented in the Committee by the Minister of War, the Chief of the Naval Staff, the Chief of the Army High Staff and the Chief of Section III of the E.I.V. Chancellery, who directed the Gendarmes. Between 1802 and 1812 the assistants to these leaders also attended the Committee meetings.<sup>29</sup>

There was in addition a high council of state at this time. The old council of Catherine II (Sovet pri vysochaishem dvore) was dissolved by Alexander in 1801 and a new Permanent Council (Nepremennyi Sovet) was introduced in its place. This body assumed duties as the highest consultative organ. Four sections were created within the new council, of which the third was for Military and Naval Affairs.<sup>30</sup>

Besides the growth of the military establishment in the pre-Tilsit period, the most distinguishing characteristic among armed forces personnel was their almost universal dislike of the French and the French influence in Russia. The military had an unwarranted contempt for the French, based on Suvorov's victories over them in 1799: they believed Joubert was as good as Napoleon and Joubert had been beaten by Suvorov.<sup>31</sup> Undoubtedly the thought of Suvorov's victories had an impact on Alexander as well. As Manceron has remarked, concerning Alexander's attitude in 1805:

The strange escapade of Suvorov in 1799, who conquered northern Italy but was beaten by Massena at Zurich, and retreated in as formidable manner as he had come, was still on his mind. They were convinced, at St. Petersburg, that the Russian army had only to appear in full force in order to efface that dubious beginning, or rather to confirm its impressive aspects.<sup>32</sup>

The dislike of the French by the military went far beyond purely military reasons, however, for many of the leaders in the army and navy felt that French influence on Russian life as a whole had gone too far. Strange has shown that leading military figures had been opposed to the French influence since the Revolution. For example, Fieldmarshall A.A. Prozorovskii and General F.V. Rostopchin, both of whom were high ranking military officials between 1789-1815, were concerned about the possible impact of the Revolution in Russia.<sup>33</sup> Rostopchin wrote the powerful and influential Count Simon Vorontsov on 23 August 1803:

Notre jeunesse est pire que la française; on n'obéit et on ne craint personne. Il faut convenir que pour être habillés à l'européenne, nous sommes encore bien loin d'être civilisés. Le pire est que nous avons cessé d'être Russes et que nous avons acheté la connaissance des langues étrangères au prix des moeurs de nos ancêtres.<sup>34</sup>

Kizevetter later wrote of Rostopchin that he was "inspired by the fanatical idea of the independent citizen professing a doctrine of political slavery" and that he had combined in his character, "the ideology of a slave with the temperament of a mutineer".<sup>35</sup>

Whatever his excesses, it is clear that Rostopchin's Russianism was real and his influence on his contemporaries was tangible. He and others like him could be considered chauvinists. There were many more whose sense of patriotism was as strong, but whose expression of the same was more moderate. These were nationalists, and one of them, General Rumiantsev, wrote in 1805:

I am to be pitied, for I have a few about me who have any sound educations or fixed principles; my grandmother's court vitiated the whole education of the empire, confining it to the acquisition of the French language, French frivolities and vices....<sup>36</sup> I have little, therefore, on which I can rely firmly.

Some of the main problems of the military were in evidence even before its major battles of the Third Coalition. The army had been held in battlefield readiness since 1805 but it lacked a supreme commander. There were many young generals - Bagration, Miloradovich, Barclay de Tolly, Bennigsen and Bukhshoevden. There were also older Generals - Kutuzov, Fieldmarshalls Kamenskii and Prozorovskii, both of whom had won fame in Catherine's Turkish campaigns and were retired. Kamenskii got the post but soon gave it up to Bennigsen.<sup>37</sup>

The personality conflicts and division of supreme command among the military during the wars of the Third Coalition were its main weakness. Duplication of orders, lack of central decisions and conflicts between leading generals all played a part in the developing animosity between Alexander and Kutuzov, and contributed to the total confusion that reigned amongst the allies at the highest levels.<sup>38</sup> To make matters worse the Prussians were agitating to have Bennigsen removed as General-in-Chief,<sup>39</sup> and Empress Louise openly asked Alexander to assume the head of the army.<sup>40</sup> General Savary, who spent the three days before Austerlitz with Alexander, gives an indication of the situation at that time:

Presumption, impudence and inconsideration were reigning in the decisions of the military cabinet as they were in the political cabinet. An army thus conducted could not but commit errors. The Emperor's Napoleon's plan was, from this time on, to wait for mistakes, and to select the moment to profit by them.<sup>41</sup>

Napoleon had his chance on 2 December. The result was a stunning French victory and the loss of 20,000 Russians.<sup>42</sup>

The problems of the Russian military at Austerlitz, however, were only part of the overall decay of the Russian forces. Others would become

evident during the crucial contests with France in 1807: at Eylau on 8 February and at Friedland on 14 June. The inconclusive battle at Preussisch-Eylau, where a further 15,000 were lost,<sup>43</sup> pointed out the inability of the army to move quickly and the continuing controversies between leading generals.<sup>44</sup> The discord among the leading generals by the beginning of 1807 was general knowledge. As Goltz noted in January, it had a negative effect on the forces:

La mésintelligence qui regne parmi les commandeurs de l'armée et leur peu de talent de profiter d'un premier avantage remporté, ne peuvent pas suffisamment soutenir l'espoir et la confiance.<sup>45</sup>

The loss of a further 20,000 at Friedland witnessed Russia's third military casualty in 18 months and saw the breakdown of much of the army infrastructure, especially in the supply divisions, where inefficiency reached scandalous proportions because of incompetence and corruption among military bureaucrats.<sup>46</sup> This failure, together with the inability of Russia's generals to secure a victory against Napoleon, were the immediate military factors behind Alexander's willingness to accept peace in 1807. Likewise, the remedy of this situation became the Emperor's first task when he returned to Russia after the Tilsit meetings.

The military establishment in Russia, with all its anti-French prejudices, with all its inefficiencies and shortcomings, remained for Alexander the prime pillar of his rule. Under the twin influences of rehabilitation and reform, the latter already begun by Paul, the military under Alexander was rapidly becoming the first institution of state. But the armed forces were not the only support for the crown, only slightly less important was the Russian Orthodox Church.

The Church in the course of the eighteenth century had played

a role in the expansion of the empire and, as Zenkovskii has shown, it continued to provide the state with moral sanctification for its activities.<sup>47</sup> By the end of the century it had long since been subjugated to the state and the highest Church body, the Holy Synod, more or less functioned as one department of the central government.<sup>48</sup> At the same time, and in part as a reaction to the subordinate role of the official Church, the second half of the eighteenth century witnessed a remarkable revival of religious life and thought, both monastic and secular.<sup>49</sup> The priesthood still exercised considerable influence over the Russian people: it represented the only moral and social discipline of a non-coercive kind felt by the Russian peasants.<sup>50</sup>

In return for Church support of the government in the pre-Tilsit period, it received the government's support against the dissidents in the Church. The raskolniki, who had been well-treated under Paul, fared badly under Alexander.<sup>51</sup> Early in 1807, when the war was going badly for Russia, the following orders were published by the Governor-General of Siberia:

The Dukhobors, fit for disturbing the general order and calm - but not fit for distribution in work - must return to military service in the garrison regiments dispersed throughout the Siberian Gubernia.<sup>52</sup>

For understanding Russia's policy toward France of special value are Church activities in spreading popular education, in indoctrinating the soldiers, and in contributing substantially to the growth of patriotism and an anti-French attitude at the beginning of the nineteenth century. When the government reformers in the first years of Alexander's reign decided to reform the educational activities of the Empire, it was the Church, above all the clergy, which made a great effort in spreading education at the lower

levels. In the period before Tilsit they showed real activity in the work of establishing schools. For instance, in the government of Novgorod the priests opened as many as 110 village schools in 1806. In the absence of other teachers they frequently took upon themselves the entire charge of the school without fee or reward, and even gave up the use of their own dwellings for the purpose.<sup>53</sup>

However considerable the Church contribution to general education, its instructional role in the military had a more lasting impact and is of greater significance for the study of Russia's developing attitude toward France. Throughout the period, and despite the fact that regimental schools existed, a persistent problem was illiteracy. The Russian armed forces were made up largely of uneducated peasants, and the Church was found to be the ideal instrument for indoctrination purposes.<sup>54</sup> For the most part regular soldiers had to be taught orally and the priests, either during services or in more general gatherings, were an effective vehicle for instruction. In this way the soldier could not only be instructed in religious matters, itself an important aspect of control,<sup>55</sup> but also in the more practical affairs such as military rules and regulations, subordination to superior officers, and the care of arms and equipment.<sup>56</sup>

When the regimental schools were established religious instruction dominated the curriculum and as an entrance requirement into any army progymnasium the soldier was required to memorize long passages from religious works.<sup>57</sup> Religious instruction was not, however, solely a matter for the peasant soldiers. In the officer's schools the emphasis was even stronger.<sup>58</sup>

A second purpose of the Church was to create uniformity within the



Imperial Russian army, which included in its ranks not only Orthodox, but lesser numbers of Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Moslems. Pressure to convert was exerted upon all the non-Orthodox elements in the services and promotion came more easily to soldiers who converted to Orthodoxy than to those who retained other religious affiliations.<sup>59</sup>

So important had the Church become for the armed forces, that steps were taken at the beginning of the century to remove the military priests from control by the Synod and to incorporate them within the growing military establishment. High Priests for the Army and Navy were created for the administration of religious affairs and placed under the newly formed Ministry of War.<sup>60</sup>

The activities of the Church in the military served to inculcate in the Russian soldier the idea that regardless of the enemy, or the political motives of the ruler, he was fighting for "Orthodox Faith, Fatherland and Freedom."<sup>61</sup> Observers who were in a position to view the affects of this upbringing attest to its effectiveness. General Robert Wilson, a British volunteer with the allied forces during the wars of the Third Coalition, remarked:

The Russian, nurtured from earliest infancy to consider Russia as the supreme nation in the world, always regards himself as an important component of the irresistible mass....Amidst the Russian qualities, the love of country is also prominent, and inseparable from the Russian soldier.<sup>62</sup>

The Church turned Russian patriotism during the pre-Tilsit period against France as part of a conscious effort to destroy Napoleon and the influences of the French Enlightenment which he represented. The highwater mark of Russia's Francophilia had been reached during the reign of Catherine with the French Revolution. Among the first to react against the rational

and Enlightenment influence had been the Church leaders.<sup>63</sup> In some ecclesiastic circles war against Napoleonic France was viewed as a religious mission. The un-Christian Napoleon, who represented the decline of Faith, was regarded as a divine test for devout Orthodox. The French influence in Russia was seen as a drift from Orthodoxy, a drift which could only be overcome by destroying Napoleon.<sup>64</sup>

The religious leaders reacting to the Revolution had been encouraged by Paul who sought to enlist religion, especially mystical religion, in the counter-Revolutionary cause. He assumed the title Head of the Church at his coronation and became an enthusiastic patron of both higher order Freemasonry and the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>65</sup>

By the beginning of Alexander's reign the position of the Church was clearly defined with regard to the French Revolution, its influence in Russia, and its step-child, Napoleon Bonaparte. In the view of the Church it was the critical reasoning of the Enlightenment that had prepared the way for the Revolution, given rise to Napoleon and sent the revolutionary armies against other nations. It was Orthodox Christian purity which had saved Russia from being conquered by Napoleon as other nations had been conquered. If Russia were to survive she must reject the principles of the Enlightenment and French Revolution and destroy Napoleon who had become the enemy of mankind.<sup>66</sup>

The Church continued to develop its anti-Napoleonic stand during the wars of the Third Coalition and published a Manifesto of extraordinary invective which was ordered to be read in every parish of the Empire.<sup>67</sup> In it the Church attitude toward Napoleon was made crystal clear. He was classed as the "chief enemy of mankind", a man who through his marriages

and mistresses showed that he worshipped idols and whores. In an attempt to incite the population against Napoleon the Church played on the religious taboos of the Orthodox:

He has summoned the Synagogue and has established the Sanhedrin in Paris....Now he is contemplating the reunion of all the Jews in the world...to use them for the destruction of God's church....There is yet an even more dreadful crime, surpassing all the others in wickedness, to be laid at his door: he intends to proclaim himself the Messiah.<sup>68</sup>

This extraordinary personal attack should be understood in the context of the Russian mentality, in which Judaism - the betrayal of Christ - stood for the greatest crime known to mankind.<sup>69</sup> The nation, however, had to be psychologically moved to anger against Napoleon and his successful armies, and the Manifesto was thus devised as the surest way of linking Napoleon to the most detested images in the Russian mind. Its effect, as Almedingen has correctly pointed out, was that it brought the population to the proper psychological pitch: "Not 1812, but 1806 saw the first effort to rouse the national consciousness to the immediacy of a peril outside the gates."<sup>70</sup>

The influence of the military and the Church in the pre-Tilsit period complemented the national movement in its struggle to find a solution to the "Question Française" in Russia. This was to be expected, since it was the nobility (especially the sluzhenyi liudi) who not only provided the leadership of both the armed forces and the literary movement, but led the reaction to the reform movement as well. The influence of the Church was growing because of a general religious revival and it maintained the most militant and elaborate opposition to the unholy trinity: Enlightenment, Revolution and Napoleon.

If the population at large, the military and the Church were ready to support the idea of a war against France, the same could not be said initially for the leaders in government. For them, the concern in the opening years of Alexander's reign was for peace and the normalization of relations with France. This, it was hoped, would provide the opportunity for internal reform. At first it was not clear to Alexander and his advisors how the external situation could be arranged, for they had inherited a complex and unstable foreign policy from Catherine and Paul.

Under Catherine II Russian foreign policy had been aimed at securing an alliance of the northern powers (Russia, Prussia, Britain and the Scandinavian states). The main diplomatic efforts were directed towards Poland and Turkey and in both cases enjoyed considerable success. The partitions of Poland in 1772, 1792 and 1798 had given Russia substantial new territory along its western frontiers and the Baltic coast. These acquisitions were matched by gains at Turkey's expense - annexation of the Crimea and territorial extensions along the Black Sea coast. By the end of the century Russia had expanded to the two seas and held the shores of the Baltic from the mouth of the Niemen to the port of Viborg, and the Black Sea from the mouth of the Dniester to the Sea of Azov.<sup>71</sup>

With the two main European powers - England and France - Russia enjoyed mixed relations. The British attitude toward neutral shipping was a recurring cause of concern in Russian-British relations and had led to Russia's Declaration of Armed Neutrality in 1780, in which she was joined by Sweden, Denmark and Prussia.<sup>72</sup> On the whole, nevertheless, Russian affairs with England were friendly and were fostered by a flourishing trade between the two countries, regulated by the Commercial Treaty of 1766.<sup>73</sup>

In contrast, relations with France were mainly unfriendly, owing to French support of Turkey and Poland, but to the French Revolution as well. Between 1791 and 1807 there were three coalitions against revolutionary and Napoleonic France. Russia took part in all of them - in different ways, to varying degrees and with changing motives. In general, Russia's role increased with each coalition.<sup>74</sup>

The intervention of Russia in Polish affairs during 1792 was ostensibly a move against the ideas of the French Revolution. When Austria and Prussia formed the First Coalition (1792-1797) and declared war on France in March 1792, Catherine's armies moved into Poland to combat 'Polish Jacobinism'. At the time of her death in 1796 she was gathering an expeditionary force for the Rhine, to assist the Austrians against France.<sup>75</sup> Catherine left a legacy of opposition to the French Revolution to her successor Paul, who detested the Revolution as well, not because he sympathized with the old regime, but because the revolutionaries had laid sacrilegious hands on the monarchy. In 1796, less than two years after he came to power, Paul joined the enemies of France and played a leading part in the Second Coalition (1798-1802).<sup>76</sup>

In the meantime, relations with England deteriorated. British withdrawal from a joint Russian-English campaign in Holland during 1799 seemed to the Russians like desertion. British occupation of Malta in 1800, a sensible part of allied Mediterranean strategy, infuriated Paul, who was Grand Master of the Order of Malta.<sup>77</sup> British treatment of neutral shipping also harmed Russian interests. In October Paul imposed an embargo on British shipping and in December, returning to the policies of Catherine II, he joined Prussia, Sweden and Denmark in the second Armed Neutrality League.

In January 1801 he ordered a Cossack army to march from Orenburg and attempt an invasion of British India.<sup>78</sup>

This placed Russia in a unique position. It was still at war with France, though Napoleon was trying to make Russia his ally; it was in a state of undeclared war with England, who was ostensibly an ally. The inconsistency of Paul's foreign policy was one factor leading to his assassination in March 1801. For a time Alexander and his advisors tried to reach an understanding with Napoleon while, at the same time, withdrawing from the abortive mission against England in India. Their prime motive was stability and this first necessitated some normalization of relations with England.

Against much opposition, which included the protests of Maria Feodorovna, Alexander in April recalled Nikita Panin, Catherine's Foreign Minister, - to the pleasure of England and Austria and the discomfort of France.<sup>79</sup> He was a Vice-Chancellor and stood for closer rapprochement between Russia and Great Britain, as did some of the Unofficial Committee, notably Czartorysky and Stroganov.<sup>80</sup> Although Alexander did not share their enthusiasm, the embargo on British imports was lifted in May and sequestered British merchant vessels freed. A trade convention was signed by Panin and Lord St. Helens, and in June a British-Russian Convention on international law was signed regarding the freedom of the seas and neutrals. It marked the abandonment of Armed Neutrality by Russia.<sup>81</sup>

The French reaction to the rapprochement between England and Russia was one of surprise. This was perhaps understandable, for Alexander within weeks of assuming power had ended the League of Neutrals, the blockade of England, and Bonaparte's hopes for the conquest of India.<sup>82</sup> The French,

who were prone to seeing the English hand in all their misfortunes, believed that Britain had been involved in the overthrow of Paul. The Moniteur, in a now famous statement, made the charge publicly:

Paul I died on the night of the 25th. The  
British squadron passed the Sund on the 31st.  
History will teach us the connection between  
these two events.<sup>83</sup>

French fears that England had regained her former position were unfounded. Alexander's emphasis was primarily upon internal affairs and this required the pacification and normalization of relations with France as well as England - even if this was more difficult to achieve.<sup>84</sup> As a preliminary to more substantial negotiations, and as a first step toward the normalization of affairs with France, a Treaty of Friendship was signed on 11 October 1801. The realization of peace between England and France on 1 October further contributed to the general climate of pacification.<sup>85</sup>

Despite these opening diplomatic gestures, the period 1801-1805 was marked by a steady deterioration of affairs between England and France, as well as between Russia and France. This was coupled with a rapprochement between Russia and England, resulting in the formation of the Third Coalition against France (1805-1807).

Although Britain and France had extended the peace of 1801 by the Treaty of Amiens, on 27 March 1802, their relations had gone steadily downhill. The British did not evacuate Malta as promised and Napoleon refused to remove the restrictions on English goods. War again broke out between the two powers on 18 May 1803.<sup>86</sup> Similarly, Napoleon's actions served to alienate the Russians. He became First Consul for life in August 1802 and this alarmed the French royalist émigrés and their aristocratic friends in Russia; the Russian ambassador, Count Markov, remained manifestly

pro-English and was dismissed by Napoleon in November 1803; the execution of the Duke d'Enghien on 21 March 1804 aroused the indignation of the Russian court which went into official mourning; Napoleon was proclaimed Emperor of the French on 18 May 1804.<sup>87</sup>

Equally important was the growing diplomatic friendship between Russia and England. Novosiltsev, a close advisor of the Emperor and a member of the Unofficial Committee, was sent on a secret mission to London. His task was to present an elaborate proposal for the formation of an Anglo-Russian league, with the object of destroying the hegemony of Napoleonic France and establishing a new European order. The plan, outlined in the "Instructions to Novosiltsev" of 4 September 1804, specifically stated that Russia and England were fighting the French government, and not the French people.<sup>88</sup>

The "Instructions" is an extremely important document, for it reveals the political philosophy of Alexander, which through the years and notwithstanding the evolution of the Tsar's character, remained constant.<sup>89</sup> The instructions made no definite territorial demands and merely spoke of "certain advantages" to which Russia and England would be entitled at the end of a successful war. Russian territorial claims were listed in a secret memorandum dated 1804 and written, presumably, by Czartorysky.<sup>90</sup>

England accepted the overture, but only in broad terms and an Anglo-Russian treaty was signed on 11 April 1805, whereby the two governments agreed to form a European league for the liberation from French domination of North Germany, Holland, Switzerland and Italy. Britain did not accept to send a land force to the continent, which was a great disappointment to Russia,<sup>91</sup> but agreed to pay an annual subsidy of 1.25 million pounds for



every 100,000 men contributed by the continental powers, provided the number was not less than 400,000.<sup>92</sup> The first step in the formation of the Third Coalition had been taken and Russia immediately began making diplomatic preparations for the impending war. A Treaty of Alliance was signed with Sweden in January 1805 and this was followed by an agreement with Austria which, after some hesitation, signed a defensive treaty against France in August. Prussia maintained a position of neutrality despite considerable Russian efforts to involve it in the struggle against Napoleon.<sup>93</sup>

The wars of the Third Coalition began in September 1805 when Napoleon marched his invasion troops from the Channel coast and commenced hostilities against Austria. The campaign was short, as Napoleon defeated General Mack and the Austrian forces at Ulm on 19 October.<sup>94</sup> Shortly after this, on 3 November, Russia and Prussia signed a convention pledging not to sign a peace that departed from the Anglo-Russian Treaty.<sup>95</sup>

In the meantime, Napoleon occupied Vienna on 13 November and less than a month later, on 2 December, the remaining Austrian-Russian forces were defeated at Austerlitz.<sup>96</sup> The impact of the loss upon Russian society was noticed by the Prussian ambassador, Graf August von Goltz, when he wrote from St. Petersburg on 21 December: "La nouvelle de la bataille perdue que nous avons depuis trois jours a causé une consternation générale."<sup>97</sup>

Although the Russian public was upset over the loss, they did not despair or lose faith in the army; rather, they shifted the blame for the defeat to Austria:

L'armée Russe s'est couverte de gloire, et mieux soutenue elle serait sans doute restée maître du champ de bataille, mais toutes les circonstances accusait l'armée Autrichienne d'avoir mis bas les armes, et d'avoir volontairement sacrifié les Russes, qui dans leur bonne foi ont été la victime de leur courage.<sup>98</sup>

Russian suspicions were confirmed on 26 December when Emperor Francis abandoned the struggle and signed the Treaty of Pressburg.<sup>99</sup>

Without committing his forces, and despite the convention of 3 November, Frederick William hastened to make peace as well and on 15 December signed a Treaty of Alliance with France.<sup>100</sup> This was superseded by the Treaty of Paris in February 1806, by which Prussia annexed Hanover and closed her ports to English commerce.<sup>101</sup>

The effect on Russia of the Prussian-French Alliance was immediate and caused a distinct cooling of relations. Goltz gave ample evidence of this feeling in April 1806:

Nos relations avec la Russie se trouveraient singulièrement altérées par la nature de celles que les circonstances du moment. Vous êtes obligé, Sire, de contracter avec la France.<sup>102</sup>

The reasons for Russia's disappointment were many, but undoubtedly the Prussian adherence to the Continental System, and especially the closing of Prussian ports to British goods,<sup>103</sup> was of prime importance; as was the concern over Prussia's future relations with Russia's ally - Great Britain. The Prussian ambassador wrote from St. Petersburg in April 1806:

Cependant il ne faut pas passer sous silence que la correspondance particulière des marchands d'ici, accrédite de bruits si extraordinaires sur le danger et la probabilité d'une rupture entre la Prusse et l'Angleterre....L'opinion publique est en effet excessivement prononcée.<sup>104</sup>

Russia now found herself alone on the continent and, as the situation had become extremely serious, the Emperor called together a council of the highest dignitaries in the realm to discuss the issue of war and peace.<sup>105</sup> A continuation of the war was decided upon, but the effect of opening the issue to political debate was to create deep fissures

among the senior members of the government and the court, fissures which continued to widen.<sup>106</sup> The result was, to use Goltz' phrase, "une révolution ministérielle", the forced resignation in June of Czartorysky, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and his replacement by Baron Budberg.<sup>107</sup>

The two persons most affected by the political changes of 1806 were Czartorysky and Novosiltsev, both of whom believed strongly in an alliance with England to overthrow Napoleon. Opposed to them were two groups which, to use Goltz' characterization, were known as "le parti Russe moderne" and "l'ancienne cour" respectively. The first was led by Kochubei, Stroganov and Budberg who, while they argued in favor of continued war, did so on pro-Prussian grounds. The "ancienne cour" on the other hand, made up of the Imperial Mother, the Kurakins, the Rumiantsevs, the Vorontsovs, "et tous autres seigneurs qui sous le règne passé ont joué un si grand rôle", argued for a withdrawal from European affairs.<sup>108</sup>

There are a number of important observations to be made about the shift towards a more pro-Russian stand. First, as Goltz noted, "ce changement, en suivant l'impulsion la plus naturelle suivant du système de l'ancienne cour, ne saurait mener qu'à la destruction de l'influence anglaise." This stemmed from the fact that both opposition groups - the younger group which wanted to continue with Prussia against France, and the older group which wanted peace and isolation - believed that Russian interests could best be served by some means other than an English alliance.<sup>109</sup>

Second, in choosing Budberg as Foreign Minister, Alexander was opting for the middle course - to continue the war based on an alliance with Prussia. This policy was founded on the expectation that Prussia would change her position and renew the war against France. The appointment

of Budberg, therefore, was something of a tentative policy and, as Goltz already suspected, the new situation might not last long: "Le Baron de Budberg ne me paroît pas l'homme qui pourra se soutenir longtemps à la gouvernance des affaires."<sup>110</sup>

Third, the groundwork had already been laid in June 1806, a full year before the Tilsit agreements, for a more profound shift if the alliance with Prussia was not fruitful. The third party, made up of Rumiantsev and the other "seigneurs" of Paul's reign, had already made some gains and they stood for peace, isolation and decreased English influence. Rumiantsev, a nationalist and outstanding patron of the arts, had been Paul's Minister of Appanages (1798-1800) and became Alexander's first Minister of Commerce (1802-1810).<sup>111</sup> More than this, however, could not be seen in the summer of 1806.

For the time being Budberg and the 'war party' were aided by Prussia's changing attitude. Adherence to the Continental System, brought about by the Treaty of Paris, had led to the blockade of Prussian ports by the English fleet, the seizure of Prussian ships then in British harbours, and the declaration of war against Prussia by England and Sweden. Napoleon's creation of a Confederation of the Rhine in July, without reference to Prussia or Austria, further dampened Prussian-French relations and Frederick William turned to Alexander.<sup>112</sup>

Having decided to continue the war, Russia made every effort to provide the necessary forces. The first step, taken in June, was "un nouveau recrutement qui portera le total de l'armée à 500/m. hommes et faciliter une grande augmentation de troupes sur les frontières."<sup>113</sup> Martha Wilmot wrote to her father in the fall of 1806:

We are just as full of preparations against him /General Bonaparte/ here as we were in England, and more ridiculous stories, if possible, are fabricated. Certain it is however that the Government is quite alive upon the subject.<sup>114</sup>

Russian spirits were raised when the military Alliance was signed between Russia and Prussia on 26 September.<sup>115</sup> The Prussian ambassador wrote from the capital:

Je suis sur que le même esprit de patriotisme, de dignité, de concorde et de résignation aux sacrifices exigés par l'urgence des circonstances, anime également l'armée.<sup>116</sup>

Despite all the effort, however, the situation changed drastically within a month. Following the signing of the Alliance, Prussia sent an ultimatum to Napoleon ordering the evacuation of German territory. The French replied with war and on 14 October dealt the Prussians and Saxons a stunning double defeat at Jena and Auerstadt.<sup>117</sup>

For the Russian public the negative impact of these allied defeats was further deepened when Russia, largely because of the intrigues of General Sebastiani, French Envoy in Constantinople, became embroiled in a war with Turkey in the Principalities. As the French armies marched toward Berlin, domestic opposition to Alexander and the government rose. Goltz wrote from St. Petersburg on 6 November that the recent events "commençait déjà à blesser personnellement Sa Majesté l'Empereur, et à faire un très mauvais effet sur le Ministère et le public."<sup>118</sup>

Eleven days later the French army entered Berlin, and it was from there that Napoleon issued his celebrated decrees of 21 November proclaiming the blockade of the British Isles.<sup>119</sup> These events, plus the knowledge that Napoleon was marching towards Warsaw, caused an even more serious situation for the Emperor. From the Russian capital on 1 December Goltz

described the situation: "Dans ce moment çï, ce Souverain sent vivement toutes les conséquences sinistres qui en résultent pour lui-même."<sup>120</sup>

When shortly after it was discovered that French agents were at work in Russia the government was forced to take extraordinary measures. On 28 November the Governing Senate issued an Imperial edict which opened in the following manner:

Information that we have received concerning the conduct of several individuals, French subjects, who are established in Russia, and protected by our laws, have abused that protection, gives us sufficient motives for taking in their regard the most severe measures.<sup>121</sup>

Under the stipulations of the edict all French citizens and citizens from countries under French control were declared suspect; they were forced to register as aliens and to show reasons for residence in Russia. Those who could not do so were forced to leave the country. All consuls, vice-consuls and agents of French commerce were given 10 days to depart; no goods under the French flag or from countries controlled by France were allowed into the country and no Russian goods could be carried on French vessels. All governors and governesses employed by Russian families were made the responsibility of their employers who in turn were forced to sign a certificate guaranteeing their behaviour. All officers of the former royal French army and all émigré nobles were to apply for a certificate of good conduct from their local military governor. Equally as important were the measures taken against French teachers:

Professors and other scholars of different types who, in private schools or other diverse public establishments, exercise the functions of instructors, are required to obtain permission from the police in order to remain in Russia.<sup>122</sup>

Special centers for registration and certification were set up

at the city halls of the two capitals and

The police are required to provide the commission with an exact list of all foreigners residing in the two capitals, French subjects, or subjects from a country under French control.<sup>123</sup>

It is difficult to estimate the impact of these measures or the effect they had on the consciousness of individual Russians. Certainly it made the French suspect in the eyes of Russians and doubtlessly hastened the movement away from the French influence. Perhaps the most important feature of the decree was that it allowed the police to compile lists of all Frenchmen in Russia. Later there were numerous instances of this para-military and anti-French organisation harassing French citizens.<sup>124</sup>

Undoubtedly one consideration of the government in taking this measure was to forestall any attempt by the French to capitalize on the growing malaise in Russia. Nearly all of the Russian landed gentry were disturbed over the conscription for the wars of the Third Coalition and their discontent was known. Alexander's generals were not happy with the war, including Miloradovich and Bagration, but especially Kutuzov, who was Supreme Commander but had no supreme command.<sup>125</sup> The war with Persia, which began in 1804, seemed unnecessary.<sup>126</sup> A new dispute with Turkey which led to the Russian occupation of Moldavia and Wallachia, added to the burdens of taxation, and the involvement in European problems was taken to be a dangerous deviation full of such brilliant hopes in 1801.<sup>127</sup> Alexander himself understood the main reason for the negative attitude of most Russians:

Observez bien que tout ce monde était accoutumé sous Catherine, dans les guerres de Potemkine, à se battre uniquement pour dépouiller les vaincus. Nous sommes un peu Asiatiques de ce côté-là: aujourd'hui c'est autre chose et l'on se plaint.<sup>128</sup>

By then the Russian public had also lost faith in any help from its allies and failed to see the benefit to be derived from continuing the struggle.<sup>129</sup> The Prussian ambassador himself provided the reason:

Il n'y avait pendant quelque temps que la fausse opinion qu'on avait de cette guerre qui faissait quelque fort à ce sentiment. Il la regardait comme une guerre purement entrepris pour la défense de la Prusse.<sup>130</sup>

The first major encounter between the French and Russian forces took place with the inconclusive battle of Preussisch-Eylau on 8 February 1807. The news received initially in the capital seemed to indicate that the Russian troops had scored a great success and the St. Petersburg publications were full of patriotic stories about the Russian army.<sup>131</sup> But this was more illusion than reality, for the forces under Bennigsen had withdrawn and peace negotiations were opened between France and Prussia. With great difficulty Russia managed to keep Prussia in the war. On 26 April the Convention of Bartenstein was signed, by which Russia and Prussia pledged to continue until France was defeated.<sup>132</sup>

In the meantime, the allies were not able to bring England into the Alliance, mainly because of developing Russian-British animosity. Two things undoubtedly stood at the base of this inability to cooperate between England and Russia. On the part of England the idea of Russia as a 'natural ally' was becoming increasingly less popular and less attractive. Russia's participation in the Armed Neutrality, the destruction of Poland, the Russian unwillingness to join England in the first six years of struggle against France, and Paul's alliance with France all cast their shadows on English-French relations. Above all else, England was financing the war and the Third Coalition had failed to secure a victory.<sup>133</sup>



On the Russian side, government leaders were alarmed at English expansion in the East. Even the Anglophile Prince Michael Vorontsov was concerned about the possible growth of British influence in China, and when Lord Macartney's mission was sent to Peking in 1792-1793, he had urged the government to send a counter-embassy.<sup>134</sup> At the same time Russia returned to protectionism, after more than a quarter of a century of liberal tariffs. This new policy, which began under Catherine and was implemented by Paul I in the high tariff of 1797, had three main purposes: to increase state revenue, to restore a favourable balance of trade, and to protect Russian industry.<sup>135</sup>

As Britain and Russia were forced into ineffective cooperation, their feelings of rivalry gave rise to new sources of suspicion that served to divide them. Toward the end of the Third Coalition, for example, Goltz was convinced that the Russians were becoming economic nationalists and that this would work to the detriment of England.<sup>136</sup> Throughout the latter part of 1806 the nationalistic Minister of Commerce, Count Rumiantsev, had been working on a new regulation for foreign commerce in Russia, the primary objective of which was to curb the English commercial interests and to stimulate Russian development. As Goltz noticed at the beginning of 1807:

L'ancien traité est exclusivement favorable au commerce des Anglais; le comte de Rumiantsev et tout le département du commerce Russe en est convaincu, et désire d'obtenir des modifications convenables...<sup>137</sup>  
où la balance était en faveur du Marchand Russe.

Rumiantsev's new trade policy emerged with a Ukase promulgated on 1 January 1807 which placed severe restrictions upon foreign merchants and investors in Russia. The commercial law of 1 January, which was not to come into effect until June, required all foreign traders to register

with a Russian guild, pay taxes in advance on their capital, open their accounts for inspection and cease trading directly on raw materials.<sup>138</sup>

Goltz summarized the intentions of the government of Russia when he wrote:

Cette ordonnance paroît avoir pour but d'assurer exclusivement au marchand Russe les plus grands avantages du commerce et de remener en général celui-ci au point où il se trouvait du temps de l'Impératrice Catherine; et si elle paroît porter préjudice aux Etrangers établis dans cette ville, elle ne doit pas moins servir d'encouragement à l'industrie et à l'esprit spéculatif de la nation.<sup>139</sup>

In large measure, the future of Russian-English relations depended upon the English themselves: "la manière dont l'Angleterre s'y prendra, décidera de son influence future sur les opinions du cabinet et du Conseil de l'Empereur."<sup>140</sup> The British government protested against the new measures and English merchants refused to register in the guilds as required. The English insisted on several concessions, including the right to own property, to trade in bulk, and to have the same rights as Russians in the interior of the country.<sup>141</sup> Relations with England cooled and in March 1807 Sir Charles Stuart, the English attaché in St. Petersburg, left Russia for consultations in England. Lehndorff, who had replaced Goltz earlier in the year, remarked: "Il est certain que le départ de Sieur Stuart se rapporte au refus de renouvellement du Traité de commerce."<sup>142</sup>

For these reasons the allies were not able to bring Britain into the struggle in time for its aid to be effective and on 14 June Bennigsen's unsupported forces were decisively beaten by Napoleon at Friedland. The Franco-Russian armistice was signed at Tilsit on 21 June and Alexander met with Napoleon for two weeks beginning 24 June. When news of the Friedland disaster reached St. Petersburg the result was consternation.<sup>143</sup> Lehndorff wrote on 26 June:

Ce public qui de petits désastres peuvent déjà calmer, perd entièrement la tête lorsque de grands malheurs la muraient. Telle est la disposition actuelle des esprits.<sup>144</sup>

By then the news of what had transpired at Tilsit between Alexander and Napoleon was still not known.

Undoubtedly the collapse of the Russian armies made peace the necessity of the hour in 1807.<sup>145</sup> Indeed, even before the contest at Friedland virtually all the Russian military leaders were calling for a truce. Among the generals only Barclay de Tolly spoke of the possibility of continuing the war and of retiring to fight the enemy in the interior. A few days before the battle many of Alexander's key advisors, themselves urging peace, claimed that Budberg, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, was the only one to persist in the opinion of continuing the war.<sup>146</sup> The correspondence between A.B. Kurakin, an Aide-de-Camp of Alexander, and the Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna, reveals that supplies were critically short and "nous manquerons d'argent".<sup>147</sup> Budberg argued that the army had not yet been defeated, that a large reserve army remained, that Russia could count on the support of the Polish provinces, and that the Emperor could count on the nation.<sup>148</sup> Kurakin and the generals could not persuade the Foreign Minister to accept their arguments in favour of negotiations and the Tsar decided to commit his troops once again.

Friedland on 14 June ended whatever chance there might have been for continuing the struggle against Napoleonic France. Constantine and the senior officers joined Bennigsen on the 15th and called for peace negotiations. Bennigsen wrote a letter to Alexander, carried to the Emperor by the Grand Duke, calling for a cessation of hostilities,<sup>149</sup> and the following day Alexander gave his Commander-in-Chief permission to call for an armistice:

J'étais lin de m'attendre, mon général, après vous avoir confié une aussi belle armée et qui a donné tant et tant de preuves de son courage, aux nouvelles que je viens de recevoir de vous. Si vous n'avez pas d'autres moyens de sortir de l'embarras dans lequel vous vous trouvez que de traiter d'un armistice, je vous permets de le faire.<sup>150</sup>

Alexander's contemporaries support the idea that the Emperor had no choice but to accept an armistice. Vigel, for instance, understood the situation of the Russian forces at the time and recognized that there was no other recourse. He succinctly summarized the alternatives:

All that a man who was not born to be a great general could do was done by Alexander. What could he do when he saw the innumerable armies of the enemy facing his own defeated troops with only one fresh and intact division - that of Prince Lobanov-Rostovskii - and the all-dreaded Napoleon standing on the very border of the Russian state? What would these Russians have said if he had permitted Napoleon to cross that border?<sup>151</sup>

Sir Robert Ker Porter, who was an official at the Russian court in 1807, looked upon peace as a necessity for Russia because it had no allies left:

The necessity which compelled the Emperor Alexander to make that Treaty /Tilsit/, there is little doubt originated in the nonfulfillment of promises made by powers in Alliance with him, to give their support to a warfare which involved not more the safety of Russia than that of all the civilized world.<sup>152</sup>

The period from 1805 to 1807 witnessed Russian military conflict with France and the coincidence of different aspects of the "Question Française". The Russian struggle for national identity and the wars against Napoleon had been complementary phenomena. Government advisors, who had taken an anti-French diplomatic position, were supported by a national movement, the leaders of which sought to reduce French influence in various spheres of national life. Despite their similarity of purpose,

the best efforts of inadequate Russian forces had not been enough to secure a victory over Napoleon's armies and by 1807 practically all the Russian leadership called for an armistice. However necessary peace undoubtedly was in the minds of most Russians, they were not prepared for what followed.

## Chapter II

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<sup>92</sup> Martens, Sobranie traktov, XI, pp. 433-61; M.N. Pokrovskii, Diplomatia i voiny, op. cit., pp. 10-11; N.J. Silberling, "Financial and Monetary Policy of Great Britain During the Napoleonic Wars", Quarterly Journal of Economics, XXXVIII (1923/24), p. 227.

<sup>93</sup> Martens, Sobranie traktov, II, pp. 406-20; A. Wahl, Geschichte des Europäischen Staatensystems, Munich, 1967, pp. 145-49.

<sup>94</sup> D. Chandler, op. cit., pp. 400-402.

<sup>95</sup> Martens, Sobranie traktov, IV, pp. 316-19.

<sup>96</sup> Shilder, Aleksandr Pervyi, II, p. 124.

<sup>97</sup> DZA-PbD, Goltz, 21 December 1805, no. 1 (1806).

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., Goltz, 24 December 1805, no. 2 (1806).

<sup>99</sup> Conventions de l'Autriche, depuis 1763 jusqu'a nos jours, H. Neumann, comp. II, Paris, 1913, pp. 16-19.

<sup>100</sup> Receuil des traités de la France, G. de Clerq, comp., IV, Paris, 1901, pp. 84-85.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., pp. 107-110.

<sup>102</sup> DZA-PbD, Goltz, 11 April 1806, no. 16.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., Goltz, 6 May 1806, no. 23; 22 May 1806, no. 28; 6 June 1806, no. 31.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., Goltz, 25 April 1806, no. 22. Further evidence of the growing discomfort in the capital is found in his despatch of 21 June 1806, no. 34.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., Goltz, 3 January 1806, no. 7; 7 February 1806, no. 9.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., Goltz, 21 April 1806, no. 21; 17 July 1806, no. 39; M. Kukiel, Czartoryski and European Unity, 1770-1861, Princeton, 1955, pp. 74-77.

<sup>107</sup> DZA-PbD, Goltz, 26 June 1806, no. 35; M. Kukiel, op. cit., pp. 75-77; P.K. Grimsted, The Foreign Ministers of Alexander I, Berkeley, 1969, pp. 146-50.

<sup>108</sup> DZA-PbD, Goltz, 26 June 1806, no. 35. The Chevalier de Bray conducted an extensive interview with the Duchess of Courland, who was in the Russian capital during the summer of 1806, and the Duchess detailed Maria Feodorovna's support for Budberg against Czartoryski. The information is contained in the following report, "Mémoire particulier et secret sur la cour de Russie, par le Chavalier de Bray, Berlin, décembre 1807", AF-MDR, Vol. XXXII, no. 16.

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<sup>110</sup> DZA-PbD, Goltz, 26 June 1806, no. 35.

<sup>111</sup> E. Amburger, op. cit., pp. 107, 225.

<sup>112</sup> H. Seton-Watson, op. cit., p. 92; V. Gitermann, op. cit., III, p. 336.

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<sup>114</sup> The Russian Journals of Martha and Catherine Wilmot, p. 275.

<sup>115</sup> Martens, Sobranie traktev, XI, pp. 62-66; N.S. Kniapina, Vneshniaia politika Rossii pervoi poloviny XIX veka, Moscow, 1963, pp. 32-33.

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### Chapter III

#### 1807: The Tilsit Agreements and the Non-Official Russian Attitude

When Alexander met Napoleon at Tilsit there were external and internal factors at work which affected both the Tilsit agreements as well as the attitude of Russians toward them. Externally there had been a considerable deterioration of relations with England, both for political and for economic reasons. Together with this went a developing pro-Russian orientation in matters of foreign policy within the circles of leadership. This was expressed in the growing belief that Russia's involvement in European problems had been undertaken for the benefit of other countries, and to the detriment of Russia itself. Internally Russian society at the time of Tilsit was in the throes of a profound national movement which the government both condoned and supported. The internal movement was characterized by its increasingly pro-Russian orientations and was expressed in a rejection of the French influence in national life.

Prior to 1807 Russian government policies had fostered, simultaneously, pro-Russian and anti-French sentiments both externally and internally. The agreements signed at Tilsit between Alexander and Napoleon changed the character of the external aspect of the "Question Française" from a negative, military one to a positive, diplomatic one. These agreements did not, however, change the nature of the internal part of the "Question Française". Indeed, the effect of the arrangements at Tilsit was an intensification of the national response to the internal aspect. From this point to 1812 the

history of Russia and the success of the Russian diplomatic policy toward France depended upon the reciprocal influence of the two sides of the "Question Française" coin. The Russian government, in deciding to continue the reform movement after Tilsit, and by supporting the further growth of the national movement, followed policies which worked against its desire for peace with France.

When Alexander decided, between 21 and 24 June, to extend the armistice talks to include personal discussions with Napoleon, both he and his advisors held a cool attitude toward Napoleon's chief enemy - England. Politically, the British unwillingness to send land forces to aid the Third Coalition, plus the lack of effective aid during the last decisive battles, had produced the belief among Russians that they were carrying the burden on England's behalf. Economically, the refusal of the British government and merchants to accept the terms of Russia's new trade policy seemed to the Russians to be an arrogant affront to a reliable ally.<sup>1</sup>

The first step in the shift away from England had already been taken in 1806 when Czartorysky and those favouring an alliance with England against France were replaced by Budberg and those who supported the idea of an alliance with Prussia against France. From 1806 until the Tilsit agreements Budberg's party was being challenged by a third group, led by the Minister of Commerce, Count Rumiantsev, who believed in no alliance with either England or Prussia. Alexander's correspondence with his sister in 1807 supports the belief that the Emperor had changed his mind about the political value of an alliance with England and that Alexander was moving towards Rumiantsev's position. In a letter to Catherine Alexander discussed Russian affairs with England and stated: "le temps des erreurs est passé."<sup>2</sup>

The Russians did not know that when the French armies defeated them at Friedland Napoleon had for some time been thinking of an alliance.<sup>3</sup> The French Emperor had written to Talleyrand on 14 March 1807:

Je suis d'opinion qu'une alliance avec la Russie serait très avantageuse, si ce n'était une chose fantasque, et qu'il y'eût quelque fond à faire sur cette cour.

This set of circumstances, Russia's dissillusionment with England and Napoleon's desire for an accomodation with Russia, serves to explain the frequently quoted first exchange between the two Emperor's when they met on the raft in the Nieman. Alexander reportedly said to Napoleon, "Sire, I hate the British as much as you do", and the French ruler is said to have replied, "In that case peace is made."<sup>5</sup>

In addition to a Peace Treaty, which was signed on 7 July, the two sovereigns also signed a separate convention containing secret articles belonging to the Peace Treaty, as well as a separate and Secret Treaty of Alliance. All the documents were ratified on 9 July. Under the terms of the Peace Treaty the French agreed to evacuate Prussia and to retrocede all captured Prussian territory. Alexander recognized the Grand Duchy of Warsaw (which included the Polish provinces ceded to Prussia by the First Polish Partition), and Napoleon's rearrangements in western and central Europe (including the Confederation of the Rhine). Both powers promised to resume commercial relations and to exchange ambassadors.<sup>6</sup> Implicit in the signing of the Peace Treaty was Russia's recognition of Napoleon as the "Emperor of the French", a concession it had previously refused.<sup>7</sup>

Together with the treaties went an attempt to place the two countries on a path of mutual friendship. Special efforts were made to create an atmosphere of cordiality between the troops. Following the

signing of the treaties on 7 June and their ratification on the 9th, there was an exchange of decorations which it was hoped would serve as a symbol of reconciliation for both the armies and the peoples. In a deliberately staged gesture Napoleon presented a Légion d'honneur, which he purposely had loosely attached to his own uniform, to an old soldier in the Russian Imperial Guards.<sup>8</sup> Alexander later sent Napoleon the military Cross of St. George to be given to the bravest soldier in the French army.<sup>9</sup>

Despite these gestures, however, attitudes outside the Imperial circle remained hostile toward France. One cannot accept the idea, given by Vandal for instance, that "entre Français et Russes, la cordialité s'était vite établie."<sup>10</sup> The priests and the soldiers, both of whom had been conditioned to looking upon France as the enemy, did not respond favourably to the new policy of official friendship. Although the military priests at Tilsit had been ordered to discontinue circulation of the violently anti-Napoleonic Church Manifesto, they began to distribute copies after the negotiations, thereby retaining the negative image in the soldiers minds.<sup>11</sup> Within the military hierarchy the response was equally marked.

The army was particularly resentful in 1807 and its amour-propre was hurt by the tacit assumption of French military superiority when Alexander closed hostilities. Many of the generals believed that the Russian army had been defeated only because of the lack of support from its allies, especially Prussia.<sup>12</sup> Bennigsen himself did not want to mix with the French and delegated instead the commander of his advance forces, Prince Bagration.<sup>13</sup> The belief that the Grand Duke Constantine struck up an immediate friendship with Generals Murat, Berthier and Grouchy<sup>14</sup> is not supported by Karnovich, the

Grand Duke's biographer.<sup>15</sup> Even on the lower levels of command there remained considerable hostility towards the French. General M.I. Platov, Hetman of the Don Cossacks, would not mix with the French officers and Count M. Vorontsov, Commander of the Preobrazhenskii Guards, pretended to be ill and would not cross the Niemen.<sup>16</sup>

So strong was the Russian rancor towards France at Tilsit that it was necessary to issue an order-of-the-day admonishing the men "to be civil to the French" and to remember Napoleon's Imperial title. They were strictly forbidden to use the name "Bonaparte".<sup>17</sup> The use of this name is an important point to note. It had been employed up to then by all the Russian diplomats and it was only in ratifying the peace that Alexander had implicitly recognized Napoleon in the quality of Emperor of the French. Those opposed to the Alliance after 1807 continued to use the name "Bonaparte" and it became a pejorative designation which distinguished the user as part of the anti-French party.<sup>18</sup>

The attitude towards the French of the priests and the military could be considered normal in view of the preceeding period of struggle. Both Alexander and Napoleon hoped that this anti-French attitude would be overcome. The Emperors believed that their staged gestures of friendship, given time and possible future benefits for Russia, would lead to a greater degree of amity between the two countries at all levels. Nevertheless, at the conclusion of the talks in mid-July this remained only an expectation for the future.

The negative first reaction of most Russians present at Tilsit was not known inside Russia. News reached the cities only slowly and irregularly and the governemtn made no effort to publicize its negotiations with Napoleon. Between the Friedland disaster and the signing of the Tilsit

documents there was an almost total absence of reliable information in the capital cities of the Empire. Lehndorff wrote in his report of 3 July:

On est ici dans l'ignorance la plus parfaite sur les conditions de l'armistice conclu, sur les détails des événements qui y ont donné lieu, et sur ceux, qui pour voient en être la suite.<sup>19</sup>

Two weeks later the St. Petersburg and Moscow newspapers carried a notice from the Minister of War saying that peace had been concluded with France, and there was an initial period of rejoicing. A ceremonious Te Deum was sung in St. Petersburg (which the English, Swedish and Hanoverian ambassadors refused to attend) and there were a number of special fêtes in the capital cities.<sup>20</sup> As yet the public did not know of the secret articles or of the Alliance. Expecting to be rudely received, Alexander left Tilsit on 9 July and sent word of his pending arrival on the 19th. He quietly entered St. Petersburg on the night of the 17th.<sup>21</sup>

What was not known publicly about the Tilsit agreements was known privately to select foreign representatives in Russia. Saltykov, the Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs, gave Lehndorff a copy of the separate and secret articles and asked for a verbal report on them. In reading the documents the Prussian became fully cognizant of the reasons behind Alexander's reluctance to make the secret clauses known.

By the separate convention Alexander had ceded to France Cattaro and the Seven Islands, with Corfu. He also recognized Joseph Napoleon as King of Sicily.<sup>22</sup> In the Treaty of Alliance, which was both defensive and offensive in nature, Russia was pledged to come to the defence of France in the event of an attack by any power. There was a detailed stipulation of measures to be taken in concert if such action should occur, and an agreement not to conclude a separate peace. Of greater consequence than



these general measures of defence, was Russia's new commitment against England. Alexander agreed to force Britain to conclude peace with France or, in the event this could not be achieved by 1 November 1807, to join with France in a war against England by 1 December. If this should occur, then the new allies would jointly compel Sweden, Denmark and Portugal to join the struggle and to close their ports against English shipping. In a short and ambiguous statement concerning Turkish affairs, Russia and France agreed that if Turkey refused to accept peace then the two powers would "liberate" its European territories (except for Constantinople and Rumelia).<sup>23</sup>

Lehndorff was convinced that the Tsar could not have published the results of the secret negotiations when he returned from Tilsit - the public would not have stood for it. The nobility was accustomed to Russia playing a leading role in Europe and would have been shocked to learn of Napoleon's preponderant position.<sup>24</sup> The French newspapers arrived with the contents of the Tilsit treaties on 11 August.<sup>25</sup> They were announced by an Imperial Manifesto on 21 August, but did not appear in the St. Petersburg newspapers until 10 September.<sup>26</sup>

When the Manifesto was published and Russians were at last officially aware of the new course Alexander proposed to pursue, the reaction of various groups was swift. The military, nobility, merchants, court (and especially the French emigrés and the English party in St. Petersburg), as well as the Imperial family, raised their voices in criticism. There are five points to bear in mind when considering the attitude of Russians towards France and the Tilsit agreements.

First, it is necessary to distinguish between two separate sets of agreements at Tilsit: those which brought the armistice and peace,

and those which brought Russian concessions, recognition of the Bonaparte rulers, the French Alliance, commitments and the possibility of further involvement in European affairs. The vast majority of responsible Russians were prepared to accept the necessity and wisdom of the first agreements, but they could see no advantage in the latter.

Second, Russian society had been brought into an anti-French readiness between 1805 and 1807 and, partly as a consequence of the war, Russian patriotism and chauvinism was an accomplished fact by the time of the meeting of the two Emperors. It was not clear to the Tsar and his advisors how this national mood in 1807 could be turned to the benefit of the Alliance.

Third, some elements of society, especially the army and the illiterate peasantry, went far beyond chauvinism to reach a state of outright phobia with respect to "Bonaparte, the devil's agent" and "Bonaparte, the general". This attitude was encouraged by the Church and clergy and continued in the post-Tilsit period.

Fourth, the landed gentry and aristocracy had in the pre-Tilsit period already developed a dislike of the French influence in the reform movement. Their opposition to France and Napoleon during 1807 and subsequently was intimately bound up with an opposition to further reforms.

Fifth, the trend among the educated and influential makers of public opinion was away from the French and Enlightenment influence towards the more romantic and sentimentalist influences of the English and Germans. To a large degree this movement underlay all the foregoing attitudes and the Tilsit treaties, which most Russians viewed as an official attempt to reintroduce the French influence, only served as a further impetus to the national movement.

The military reaction to the French at Tilsit, which the two Emperors hoped to overcome, did not abate in 1807 when the forces returned to Russia. Following the announcement of the Alliance military leaders were among the first to object. General Savary, who became Napoleon's interim emissary to St. Petersburg, gives some idea of the attitude of the military, especially of General Bagration and Admiral Chichagov. Savary wrote of the general: "Le prince Bagration, homme sombre, ambitieux et n'aimant pas les français; on dit qu'il ne voulait pas la paix."<sup>27</sup> The French envoy described Chichagov in the following terms: "L'amiral Chichagov, ministre de la marine, est un jeune homme instruit dans sa partie; il n'est ni anglais ni français, c'est un bon russe."<sup>28</sup> When the Alliance was announced Chichagov wrote to Alexander:

Well, the peace terms which have been kept secret for so long are known at last. Your new ally was in a hurry to announce to the world through the press the shame which has fallen on our hands. The sons of Russia would rather have given the last drop of their blood than have bowed in disgrace under the yoke of one who has nothing to his credit except that he knew how to use weakness, incapacity and treason.<sup>29</sup>

At the same time Admiral Shishkov, an outspoken nationalist and a leader of the national movement, wrote in his diary:

The Tilsit peace lowered the head of mighty Russia by the acceptance of the most humiliating conditions which transformed the despised Bonaparte, fearful of our force, into the dreaded Napoleon.<sup>30</sup>

Bennigsen believed that the peace could not last a twelvemonth.<sup>31</sup>

The attitude of the military leadership is important for two reasons. First, it indicates that the initial response of the military at Tilsit had not diminished with time, despite the official gestures of friendship. Second, the role of the military in Russia, which had been

growing in the first years of the reign, continued to expand at an even greater pace after Tilsit under the influence of reconstruction, reform and war with Sweden and Turkey - brought on by the Alliance itself. The persistence among these leaders of a negative attitude toward the "Question Française" worked against the Alliance in an increasingly significant way, for it was above all people of military experience to whom Alexander turned after 1807.

The anti-French feeling among the nobility and at court was equally as pronounced. They believed that Alexander demeaned himself by acknowledging a low-born Corsican as a brother monarch, and were supported by the French émigrés who were all against the recognition of Napoleon as the legitimate Emperor of France.<sup>32</sup> Both within Russia and at foreign courts the Russian nobility voiced their opposition to the Alliance. Count S.R. Vorontsov, former Russian ambassador at the court of St. James, went so far as to propose that the dignitaries who had signed the Tilsit Peace should ride into the capital on donkeys.<sup>33</sup> The most serious criticism, however, came from Nicholas Novosiltsev who dared to throw openly into Alexander's face the threat that the Emperor was not immune but should remember the night of 23 March 1801 (Paul's assassination).<sup>34</sup>

At Vienna the Russian party felt particularly offended when it heard of the results of the Tilsit negotiations. Count Andrei Razumovskii, the Russian ambassador to Austria, resigned his post in protest but remained to carry on the struggle against Napoleon in a private way.<sup>35</sup> He was joined by others in Russian service, as well as by émigrés from various European courts who were equally opposed to the French Emperor.

Sir Arthur Paget, who had been attached to Sir Charles Whitworth's

embassy in St. Petersburg between 1792-94, was on a special mission to the Dardanelles in 1807 when the Peace of Tilsit was signed. At the time of the Alliance he was good friends with Pozzo di Borgo,<sup>36</sup> who had entered Russian service in 1803 and was an implacable enemy of Napoleon. Di Borgo resigned in 1807 in opposition to the Treaty of Tilsit and settled in Vienna.<sup>37</sup> Paget's papers include a letter written to him by di Borgo at that time:

Je ne pense qu'aux malheureuses transactions de Tilsit, et plus j'y pense, plus les conséquences m'en paraissent fatales et irrémédiables. Je voudrais avoir à qui parler sur les faits que nous connaissons, et sur ceux que nous avons raison de craindre, mais cette consolation même m'est refusée dans la situation où je me trouve. Rien ne nous est encore parvenu de la cour, depuis que nous nous sommes quittés.<sup>38</sup>

In Vienna di Borgo began to collaborate with other Francophobes, among them the publicist Friedrich Gentz.<sup>39</sup>

Inside Russia the nobility and the merchants were particularly opposed to the new Alliance. They did not believe that the hours spent with Napoleon would serve Russian purposes in the years to come. As Goltz noted, both groups had contributed heavily to the war:

Le corps des marchands de la ville de Moscou seul, s'est offert d'y contribuer par 5 millions de roubles sans compter les contributions de la noblesse...qui y apporte des sacrifices, qui plus d'un individuel présent avec 50 et 100,000 roubles par tête, et le don gratuit de 2 million de roubles que les corps des marchands de Saint-Petersbourg et de Moscou ont offert à la couronne rencontre tant de difficultés et présente tant d'inconvénients de toutes espèces.<sup>40</sup>

Partly as a result of these efforts the announcement of the Alliance brought bitterness and disillusionment. The merchants foresaw drastic consequences from the blockade, and the nobles were still upset about the last recruitment and taxes.<sup>41</sup> Their feelings were encouraged by English agents and especially

English merchants in Russia who stood to suffer severely from a rupture of commercial relations.<sup>42</sup>

Unfortunately not only the military, nobility, merchants and émigrés, but even members of the royal family were openly in opposition. In their eyes Alexander had consorted with the hated Napoleon to the detriment of all Europe and to the shame of his own country.<sup>43</sup> Constantine and Maria Feodorovna were particularly outspoken in their criticism, although Alexander laid most of the blame on Maria.<sup>44</sup> The Emperor's wife, Elizabeth, also believed that Maria was gathering the malcontents about her court at Gatchina.<sup>45</sup>

There has been considerable debate attached to whether or not there were assassination plots aimed at installing a new ruler at this time.<sup>46</sup> While they have usually been discounted as mere rumour, some have argued that, given Alexander's split personality, even the threat of assassination was in Alexander's psychological motivation a powerful force.<sup>47</sup> Our best sources to date have been the records left by Stedingk, the Swedish ambassador to Russia, Wilson, an English officer attached to the allied high command from 1805 to 1807, and Savary. Fateev, who has analyzed most of the documents on this question, shows that Stedingk and Wilson believed Alexander was menaced by assassination almost to the point that Paul had been.<sup>48</sup> Savary's writings support this view.

Alexander admitted to the French representative that there was a certain discord in the Imperial family, but he discounted the possibility of a palace revolution.<sup>49</sup> Marshall Soult, who had gathered intelligence from the Russian prisoners at Friedland about the possibility of a conspiracy against the Emperor, relayed the information to Alexander through Savary.

When the ambassador presented the Tsar with the story Alexander replied:

Ce n'est pas le premier avis que je reçois. S'il me revient quelque chose, je vous le dirai, et j'espère que vous me serviez s'il vient encore à votre connaissance le moindre bruit de ce genre.<sup>50</sup>

The possibility of a movement against Alexander was also known to the Prussians who requested an opinion on the matter from Lehndorff in July 1807. The ambassador, while recognizing that the Tilsit agreements were a bitter pill for Prussia to swallow, nevertheless concluded that there was no other leader in Russia who could offer more under the prevailing circumstances. He wrote from St. Petersburg at the end of July: "Le seule personne en Russie sur laquelle nous pouvons fonder quelques espérances, est celle du Souverain actuellement régnant."<sup>51</sup>

It is difficult to see how any assassination might have bettered the situation for Russia, or how the instigators could have gained much more than emotional support from the leading Russian nobility. The Imperial family consisted of Alexander, the Empresses Elisabeth and Maria Feodorovna, three Grand Dukes (Constantine, Nicholas and Michael), the last two of whom were aged eleven and nine respectively, and the Emperor's sisters Catherine and Elizabeth. Only Catherine was named in some drawing rooms as a likely successor to her brother. Failing her, no other Romanov could have won the allegiance of the guards.<sup>52</sup> Even a movement with Catherine as its leader seems very implausible. As Florinsky has shown, the letters of Alexander to his sister, even after they had passed the vigorous censorship of their editor, the Grand Duke Nicholas Mikhailovich, and presumably that of Emperor Nicholas II, still contain passages which indicate an exceptionally strong attachment between brother and sister.<sup>53</sup>

Alexander's difficulties with the Imperial family underlined the degree to which Russian society rejected the idea of an alliance with France. One cannot accept the view, expressed by some historians, that the Tilsit agreements ushered in a new period of cooperation. Tatishchev, for instance, stated:

L'entrevue de Tilsit avait pris fin. Trois semaines avaient suffi pour dissiper les malentendus accumulés dans le cours de trois siècles. Les deux nations si longtemps séparées entraient enfin dans une voie nouvelle et salubre, celle d'une sincère amitié et d'une parfaite bienveillance réciproque.<sup>54</sup>

Contemporaries were far more accurate in their assessment of the situation. Vigel characterized the Russian mood in the following terms:

This was the time when the most tender love that subjects can have for their sovereign was suddenly transformed into something worse than enmity - into a feeling of disgust.<sup>55</sup>

His evaluation is supported by that of an Englishman, Robert Lyall, who was living in Russia at that time and had access to important circles: "It is the foreign policy of Alexander that has turned thousands of voices against him, which, but a few years ago, hailed him with esteem and reverence."<sup>56</sup>

The seriousness of the internal situation, underscored for a short time by the threat of assassination, in part determined Alexander's first actions when he returned to Russia from Tilsit. Almost immediately upon his arrival in St. Petersburg the Emperor began to occupy himself with the military and with changes in the government. It is in analyzing these changes that one finds what Alexander believed to be the situation facing Russia as a consequence of the Alliance. It was the measures taken with respect to the military and government which in large part made the Alliance with France unworkable and which ultimately led to the Napoleonic invasion in 1812.



When the Tsar returned on the night of 17/18 July he was faced with two immediate problems. First, in view of the opposition he had to move quickly in order to ensure the loyalty and rebuild the morale of the army. Second, he had to take steps to reconstruct and reform the military, which had shown serious shortcomings in the war with France, and which would be necessary if Russia were to live up to the stipulations of the Tilsit agreements.

The Emperor left the capital on 21 July for Kronstadt. In an effort to boost morale among the returning forces he stopped on the way to visit the hospitals for wounded soldiers newly established at Orienbaum. At Kronstadt he personally supervised the unloading of vessels which were filled with war supplies that had not reached the allied armies in Germany.<sup>57</sup> The focus for military attention shifted from West to North and the Emperor turned his attention to rebuilding the army. The milice nationale [narodnoe opolchenie] of 1806, which had called for a recruitment of 612,000 soldiers, was replaced by a new ukase calling for a milice mobile of 177,000. This led to a tremendous buildup of military strength in the northwestern regions, especially at Reval and Kronstadt, as the militia was integrated into the regular army.<sup>58</sup> By August Baron Budberg had informed the Prussian ambassador that the strength of Russian actives had again reached 400,000.<sup>59</sup>

The rapid increase of Russian troop strength was but one aspect of Alexander's programme of reconstruction and reform. Equally important was the rectification of its main weaknesses. The disastrous campaigns against Napoleon had left the Russian forces demoralized and had revealed chronic deficiencies, most noticeably at the command level and in the supply departments. The retribution was swift. The War Minister, Viazmitinov, lost the right to

wear uniform and was retired in disgrace. Several senior officers were sacked and all the officials working in the supply divisions were forbidden to wear uniform.<sup>60</sup> Along with this went a realignment of key advisors within the central government.

The picture of Russia's government and society which emerged after Tilsit was first painted by General Savary, an Aide-de-Camp of Napoleon, who was appointed as the interim French representative to the Russian court in 1807. In December Savary wrote a long document on the situation in Russia after Alexander's return, entitled "Notes sur la cour de Russie et Saint-Petersbourg".<sup>61</sup> It was this analysis of the Russian society which determined for the most part the attitude taken by the French government and the policies devised vis-à-vis Russia. Savary's comments also determined to a large degree the subsequent views of French historiography. There can be no doubt, for example, of his value for Vandal who wrote:

Les talents d'observation, de pénétration, que Savary avait toujours déployé et qui plus tard devaient faire de lui un excellent chef de police, le rendaient particulièrement propre à ce rôle d'explorateur.<sup>62</sup>

Savary's mission was to survey Russia's government, ministers, officials, main nobility and the directors of public opinion: "tout ce qui a Pétersbourg pouvait influencer sur la marche des affaires, sous un prince indulgent."<sup>63</sup> Above all,

Il dut considérer de près la société russe, étudier les factions, les coteries, démêler le jeu des intrigues, examiner les moyens de créer un parti français, apprécier l'esprit de l'armée, et transmettre sur tous ces points des détails circonstanciés.<sup>64</sup>

Napoleon needed this information, "pour apprécier l'alliance à son juste prix et régler en conséquence sa marche ultérieure."<sup>65</sup>

The "Notes" are an extremely revealing document in several respects. First, they give some important facts about the nature and extent of the anti-French feeling in Russia after the Alliance was signed. Second, and equally important, they reveal the French lack of understanding about the nature of the transition that was then underway in Russia. Third, Savary's comments demonstrate the extent to which even the trained observer was under the influence of the eighteenth century French conception of Russian society. Finally, Savary was himself fooled on several occasions about the attitudes and activities of several leading individuals.

In his first communications to Napoleon Savary had been surprised and somewhat dismayed when he recognized "l'énorme influence des Anglais dans la société."<sup>66</sup> Later, in September, he remarked that he had been received "avec une froideur marquée par l'impératrice-mère [Maria Feodorovna], qui donnait le ton à la cour", and that the Russian nobility "se murant dans ses préjugés de castes, dans ses passions nationales", refused all contact with the victorious stranger.<sup>67</sup>

Savary's "Notes" of December are thus the result of nearly four months' reflection on the "froideur" and how he felt France stood at the Russian court. In analysing the court he detected only three elements: the Emperor, the Empress, and the Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna together with her children. Among the Emperor's suite he detected only six persons of note: Count P.A. Tolstoi, Prince A.N. Golitsyn, Prince D.I. Lobanov-Rostovskii, D.A. Gurev, F.P. Uvarov, and Count Kh. A. Lieven.<sup>68</sup> His observation is important, for these individuals had "l'entrée du salon de l'empereur en tous temps et dinent régulièrement trois fois par semaine."<sup>69</sup>

Although such is not given by Savary, the makeup of this group of

Alexander's close associates, in terms of functions and attitudes, is important to note. Tolstoi, a general, had been the military governor and High Commander of St. Petersburg, 1802-1805, and would become Russia's Ambassador to France, 1807-1808. Lobanov-Rostovskii, a general, would replace Tolstoi as Governor-General of St. Petersburg, 1808-1809. Uvarov was an Adjutant-General to Alexander with special responsibilities for military reconstruction.<sup>70</sup> Lieven was an Adjutant-General with special responsibilities for the army. He had been head of the Imperial Field Chancellery (Voenno-pokhodnoi E.I.V. kantseliarii) under Paul. An ardent Anglophile, Lieven later became one of Russia's leading diplomats.<sup>71</sup> Golitsyn had been Alexander's Imperial State Secretary in 1803 and Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod between 1803-1817.<sup>72</sup> He was on the rise to an even more prominent and commanding career as was Gurev, one of Alexander's closest and most trusted advisors. Gurev was Director of the Imperial Cabinet 1801-1825, became Director of Appanages 1806-1825, and would later become Minister of Finance.

One notices in Alexander's appointments of Adjutants-General three periods: 1801-1802, 1807, 1808-1812. The first marked his initial consolidation of power and showed a strong continuity from the reign of Paul. Prince P.G. Gagarin, Prince P.P. Dolgorukii and Kh.A. Lieven had all been Adjutants-General under Paul. After 1802, and as long as the reform party and the Unofficial Committee dominated the court, there would be no further appointments. However, in 1807, as a consequence of the war with France, three important military appointments were made to Adjutants-General, all of whom were outspoken opponents of France: Prince V.S. Trubetskoi, Prince M.P. Dolgorukii and Count A.P. Ozharovskii.<sup>73</sup>

Conspicuous by their absence in the first few months after Tilsit were the former members of the Unofficial Committee: Kochubei, Stroganov, Novosiltsev, and Czartorysky. In short, Savary identified, but did not fully appreciate the fact that the intimate group around Alexander had undergone a profound and, as far as the future of the Tilsit Alliance was concerned, foreboding change. What the French emissary did not see, but what Goltz had so clearly described earlier, was that this movement towards the military, and towards more conservative and nationalistic advisors, was the second shift within the central leadership in little more than a year. The first had occurred in June 1806 with the removal of Czartorysky and the installation of General Budberg as Foreign Minister. The second would be completed with the appointment of Rumiantsev as Foreign Minister in August 1807. Further evidence of this change is given by the Inspector of the Artillery, General A.A. Arakcheev, who wrote to his brother at this time of the "rise of a party of illustrious gentlemen, the Saltykov's Count N.G., Gurevs, Tolstois and Golitsyns."<sup>74</sup> Saltykov directed the affairs of the Foreign Ministry for three months between Budberg's dismissal and the arrival of Rumiantsev.<sup>75</sup>

The importance of these changes is not to be missed. In shifting the central leadership in favour of more military and more conservative influences Alexander was consciously doing three things. First, he was consolidating his position after a disastrous and unpopular war, and following an even more unpopular peace settlement: it was first and foremost a tightening measure. Second, the Tsar was already preparing for the possibility of a future conflict involving the armed forces. The elevation of people with military experience went together with a rapid reconstruction

of Russia's military strength. Third, by turning to military people as his key advisors he was continuing the trend toward increased military influence in the Empire - a trend already well established in the pre-Tilsit period.

Savary continued his discussion of the Imperial court by describing the position and attitudes of some of the Emperor's family. He correctly placed the Dowager Empress among the most important personages in the Empire. In a particularly descriptive passage he showed her stature in Russia at the time:

Dans les cérémonies publiques, l'impératrice-mère prend le plus souvent le bras de l'empereur. L'impératrice régnante ne marche qu'après elle et seule. En voiture elle a toujours la droite du fond - l'impératrice régnante à sa gauche, et l'on a vu quelquefois l'empereur sur le devant. Il est arrivé fréquemment dans les cérémonies militaires, et je l'ai vu, que les troupes étant sous les armes à l'empereur à cheval, la cérémonie ne commençait pas parce que l'impératrice-mère n'était point arrivée.<sup>76</sup>

The Imperial Mother and her position in Russian political and court life of the time were unique. The court at Gatchina, known as the "ancienne cour" to contemporaries, exercised a considerable conservative influence.<sup>77</sup> In politics it functioned as an unofficial high chamber - and it had not ratified the Alliance with Napoleon.<sup>78</sup>

Savary saw that Maria received the veneration of the public for her charitable works with orphans and the poor, and her activities with women's education. He also noted that her salon was frequented by the most powerful persons in the country and the men of letters. The French emissary properly emphasized to his government the necessity of winning Alexander's mother to the French cause:

Mais, je le répète, il est important, pour parvenir à l'influence que la France doit exercer sur la Russie, que l'impératrice-mère soit entièrement pour nous.<sup>79</sup>

Grand Duke Constantine was properly characterized, but briefly, as a man fascinated by things military:

Son chateau ressemble à une vraie place de guerre, où l'on sert plus rigidelement que dans nos principales villes de garnison. Son appartement est un arsenal où l'on voit des armes de toute espèce; sa bibliothèque est composée de tous les ouvrages militaires qui existent, et dans lesquels il cherche toujours quelques nouveautés à introduire dans l'armée russe.<sup>80</sup>

The two most glaring shortcomings in the Frenchman's report on the subject of Imperial personages were the Empress Elisabeth, of whom he said only that she "vit dans une entière retraite...elle est nulle"<sup>81</sup> and Catherine, Alexander's sister and family favourite. Both Catherine and Elisabeth were consistently pro-Russian and anti-French influences on the Emperor and Catherine, except for Maria Feodorovna, was perhaps the most politically active woman in Russia.<sup>82</sup>

The French observer's conception of the Russian court in 1807 as one of intrigues becomes quite apparent in his discussion of the nobility (which he simply divided into grande and petite), whom he treated as being part of either "un parti Anglais" or as possible friends of France. In the former he placed Czartorysky, Kochubei, the two Stroganovs, Novosiltsev, Orlov, Count Pushkin and Budberg.<sup>83</sup> He did not elaborate on "un parti Français". Equally indicative of the French view of the Russian court was the great stress laid by Savary upon the nobility and the possibility of a palace revolution. In Savary's view, "les révolutions de palais sont si faciles ici qu'on saurait trop être sur ses gardes."<sup>84</sup> He noted:

Il y'a même quelques individus dans le nombre qui sont dangereux pour l'empereur Alexandre. Il sera nécessaire que notre ambassadeur en reçoive beaucoup chez lui afin de contrebalancer l'intrigue anglaise, si elle avait le projet de s'en servir pour une révolution de palais.<sup>85</sup>

Savary connected the nobility and the threat of a palace revolution with his only comment about the military when he wrote in his concluding remarks:

Il est bon d'observer que la plupart des officiers aux gardes sont des enfants de ces nobles, et qu'il est plus important qu'on ne le croit de savoir ce qu'ils font et ce qu'ils disent. Ils n'aiment pas les officiers français par lesquels ils ont été battus et sont naturellement indiscrets.<sup>86</sup>

Savary's emphasis of the power of the nobility and his concentration on the court appear now to be inadequate, particularly his deficiency in regards to the army, the press and the Church. However, Napoleon himself recognized this shortcoming in the report and in September asked, "s'il existe une autre société, plus loin du trône, mais plus près du peuple." Savary mistakenly replied: "C'était l'aristocratie seule qu'il importait de connaître."<sup>87</sup>

Savary's emphasis of the nobility solely as courtiers greatly obscures the transition then taking place in Russian society. It was the nobility more than any other class in Russia that was leading the national movement. The struggle for national identity among the literati, as with the growing influence of the military, was in evidence already in the pre-Tilsit period. It continued to develop after 1807 and maintained its anti-French character. However, partly as a consequence of the Alliance with France the pace of the movement accelerated and the national movement underwent a significant transition. The same trend towards conservatism and nationalism as was noticed in the Tsar's choice of advisors can be found here as well. Slowly the leaders of the national movement in the press, literature and education came together with leaders in the military, Church and court life.



Alexander's continuing concern for the Russian press, and indeed, Napoleon's as well, was made evident early in the Tilsit negotiations during discussions between the two Emperors. As Caulaincourt, who took part in the Tilsit negotiations, later remarked:

L'Empereur Napoleon, qui se servait de cette arme d'une main habituée a ne point ménager l'adversaire, se rappela qu'Alexandre avait eu a souffrir d'attaques personnelles et en conservait un déplaisant souvenir: 'Il ne faut pas parler du passé', lui dit-il, 'mais je vous assure qu'à l'avenir il ne sera pas dit un mot qui puisse vous choquer en rein, car, quoique la presse soit assez libre, cependant la police a une influence raisonnable sur les journaux.<sup>88</sup>

There are a number of important points to be drawn from this exchange. First, Alexander was obviously admitting that the attacks in the press upon the conduct of the war, the negotiations with Napoleon, and himself personally, were a matter of some concern. Second, his reference to the police and their "influence raisonnable sur les journaux" is quite important because it reveals the Emperor's reliance on this newly created censoring body which itself was a creation of the military and under military influence. It was, furthermore, only the latest of three censoring bodies; the Ministry of Public Instruction and the Ministry of Internal Affairs having been given, theoretically at least, the first responsibilities in this area since 1802.<sup>89</sup> Finally, Alexander's intention not to speak of the press of the past and his promise about the press of the future take on special significance vis-à-vis the French Alliance - considering what actually transpired with the press and the literati after Tilsit.

When the Tsar returned to Russia in 1807 there had already been considerable changes in the press. The writers of the day were profoundly affected by the events 1805-1807 and the changing mood of Russia was

reflected in the transition in literary affairs. There was no more important manifestation in the intellectual and ideological life of the country at this time than the growth of individual and national self-consciousness.<sup>90</sup> The most important impact of the war with Napoleon had been the impetus given to the growth of Russian self-awareness and this was clearly reflected during the post-Tilsit period by the introduction of the word narodnost into the Russian vocabulary.<sup>91</sup> It is important to note that the word was coined not by the lower class literati, but by Prince P.A. Viazemskii, Karamzin's brother-in-law, from one of Russia's richest and most aristocratic families, who as a child met some of the foremost literary figures of the day in his father's home.<sup>92</sup>

The word narodnost is actually a neologism, suggested by the Polish narodowość, and its first use is attributed to Viazemskii who used it in a letter written to A.I. Turgenev from Poland in 1819.<sup>93</sup> However, despite the fact that the word may have first appeared only in 1819, Christoff has recently shown that the concept entered Russian ideology and the literary world several years before the term itself.<sup>94</sup>

It would be an easy matter to lay too much stress upon the word narodnost and the Russian sense of identification. One must bear in mind that there were other words in use to convey the same, or nearly the same, meaning. Azadovskii has shown that natsionalnost and prostonarodnost were already both in use during the late eighteenth century.<sup>95</sup> Moreover, educated Russians for the most part knew French and the use of "la patrie" was common at the time of the Tilsit Alliance.<sup>96</sup> Its use can even be found among members of the Imperial family. For example, Alexander's wife, Elizabeth, wrote the following to her close friend Countess Vorontsov:

N'oubliez pas, chère Comtesse, de me dire, chaque fois vous aurez des nouvelles...car malgré tout mes entrailles se remuent à l'idée de ce plaisant pays, qui est ma patrie la plus chérie. Ah! je vous assure que je vous rapporterai le patriotisme intact!<sup>97</sup>

The careers of individual literati are also indicative of the change - the closing of ranks and rise in patriotic feelings - which was then transpiring. By 1807, for instance, Karamzin had devoted himself to the study of history and became imbued with patriotism and state worship. This transition in Karamzin must be noted. As Mirsky points out:

Beginning as a reforming, almost revolutionary force Karamzin passed into posterity as the symbol and perfect embodiment of Imperial Russia's official ideals.<sup>98</sup>

This evolution of Karamzin from the Enlightened to the nationalist Russian exemplifies the transformation which many of the literary leaders were then undergoing. He and others like him in the period of the Alliance were closing ranks with those such as Admiral Shishkov and General Rostopchin who had already established themselves as nationalists and conservatives. They were all opposed to the Franco-Russian Alliance and, in varying degrees, to the continuation of the French influence which, in their view, the Alliance represented.

There can be no doubt that the same mood had also affected the reading public. This could be seen in the career of Ivan Krylov, Karamzin's successor at Vestnik Evropy, and in the fate of many periodicals of the day. By 1807 fables had become a veritable craze and Krylov, their most prominent writer, gained considerable success and popularity. Krylov's philosophy was eminently conservative and some of his most stinging criticisms were aimed at the fashionable French ideas which lingered in some circles. His common sense had no patience with the absurdities and ineptitudes of the upper classes

and the people in power.<sup>99</sup>

Several of the more 'western' journals, those which took a dim view of the war against France, or were openly pro-French, had either been closed or had lost so much of their readership as to make further publication impossible. Among these were Zhurnal rossiiskoi slovesnosti (1805), Avrora (1805-1806), Litsei (1806), Minerva (1806-1807) and Korifei (1802-1807).<sup>100</sup> But if some journals and papers went out of existence because of the changed public attitude others emerged to replace them. Notable in this regard was Genii vremen, an historical and political journal edited by two émigrés, Friedrich Shroeder and Jean Delacroix, which appeared in St. Petersburg in June 1807.<sup>101</sup> Another sign of the times, as Russian intellectual and cultural life matured, was the appearance of Russia's first artistic journal, the Zhurnal iziashchnykh iskusstv, which appeared in January 1807 under the editorship of I.F. Buhle, a prominent professor of German romantic philosophy at Moscow University.<sup>102</sup>

Nowhere were the changed circumstances more apparent than with the prominent Free Society of the Lovers of Literature, Science and Art, which underwent a pronounced reorientation in 1807. In its first period, 1802-1807, young and radical members had played a leading role in its liberal and European orientation. But in 1807, largely as a consequence of the war with France, the Society suffered a loss of membership. The editors, taking a new and more moderate line, sought to strengthen its position and even "awarded honorary membership to prominent people [e.g., Karamzin, Russia's official historian] and therefore became directly linked to the 'establishment'".<sup>103</sup>

When one measures the Emperor's avowed intentions to control

the press, against the subsequent developments, a noticeable contrast appears. Alexander made no effort to influence on behalf of France the growing national feeling in Russia and he did not attempt to stop the anti-French bias of the press and the literati. Shortly after he arrived in St. Petersburg Savary reported on the continuing struggle against France which he found in the Russian press and literature. He noted how, "à la devanture des librairies des pamphlets où sa nation, son empereur et lui-même étaient bafoués, des libelles contre-révolutionnaires."<sup>104</sup> In an interview with the French emissary in October 1807 Lehndorff, the Prussian representative to Russia, was made aware of how difficult it was for the French to overcome the attitude of the Russian writer and to establish a new image. Savary told the Prussian that Napoleon was particularly bitter about the fact that the extraordinary measures taken in Russia against the French during the last war had not abated. Indeed, the opposite was true: "la surveillance sur les gazettes, les théâtres et les endroits publics ne cessait pas à augmenter."<sup>105</sup>

The continuation of an anti-French attitude in the press and literature went together with the further development of the national movement and the trend towards Russian awakening. It was supported by the general tightening of society against France and the Alliance and by the elevation of predominantly conservative military people to the leading advisory positions. It was further supported by the activities of the Church. Not only did the Church refuse at Tilsit to destroy its anti-Napoleonic Manifesto, but the clergy defied official policy and continued its opposition to Napoleon and the Tilsit agreements. Lehndorff shows the difficulties being created by the preservation of the Church attitude at

a time when the Tsar was trying to establish an official policy of friendship with France:

Encité par le synode et les prières publique faites durant toute la guerre, ce de la peine à la vérité à se faire à la possibilité morale de cette reconciliation subite avec les Français et Napoleon en particulier.<sup>106</sup>

Alexander's attitude toward the Church and its anti-French bias in 1807 was much the same as his attitude toward the press and literature. While outwardly striving for a policy of friendship, he did nothing to ensure a similar development internally. Savary gave ample evidence of this shortly after his arrival in Russia. In his report of 6 August 1807 the French emissary wrote:

Alexandre n'avait pas encore songé à révoquer l'ordre donné d'appeler la malédiction du ciel sur les Français, ennemis du Tsar, ennemis de Dieu, on continuait de prier officiellement dans toutes les églises pour notre extermination.<sup>107</sup>

The position of the Church with regard to the "Question Française" stemmed in part from its reaction to the Revolution and, later, to Napoleon. Believing that the Enlightenment and French influences would lead inevitably to revolution, the Church had taken unusual measures to incite the population against France. Now that the Alliance with Napoleon was known it seemed more necessary than ever to continue the struggle. The influence of the Church was on the rise and part of a much larger movement in Russian society at that time. While intellectual circles were absorbed in such intriguing questions as folklore and narodnost, classicism versus romanticism, medieval influences on modern life, and the larger problems of Russia's future, official Russia was moving more and more in a conservative and mystical-religious direction.<sup>108</sup> The first clue had been given by Savary when he

pointed out Golitsyn among Alexander's circle of closest advisors. Golitsyn was the pro-Russian and anti-French Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod. He had been behind the Church proclamations against Napoleon and was a consistent conservative force within the Emperor's entourage. His influence grew steadily throughout the period of the Alliance.<sup>109</sup>

Parallel to the increasing influence of Golitsyn went a declining role for the remnants of the Unofficial Committee as new nominations were made to central government positions. These appointments indicate Alexander's continuing movement towards trusted and experienced officials. Novosiltsev, who had been curator of the important St. Petersburg Educational District, was replaced in 1807 by S.S. Uvarov, an ardent Francophobe who became one of the leaders in the growing reaction to the French influence in education.<sup>110</sup> Count Viktor Kochubei, who had been Minister of the Interior since 1802, and sharply critical of Alexander's French policy, was replaced by Prince Aleksei Kurakin. This change was especially characteristic of the internal restructuring of the government personnel. Kurakin was well respected at court, even by the opponents of the French Alliance. He was, as Savary noted, "un bon russe".<sup>111</sup> Kurakin had served as the Procurator-General in the Senate under Paul between 1796-98. Most important of all was the fact that he had been Governor-General and Military Governor of Poltava and Chernigov between 1801-1807.<sup>112</sup> It was this combination of qualifications - a military and civil experience, neutrality vis-à-vis the French Alliance, and a dedicated pro-Russian orientation - that provides the key to Alexander's developing policy and lay the foundation for the rise of other pro-Russian elements, far more hostile to the Alliance.

Czartorysky had already lost his directorship of the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs in June 1806 as the Tsar, under considerable domestic pressure, had been forced to appoint a less contentious individual - Budberg. The latter had remained unalterably opposed to France and in favour of war but by the summer of 1807 the new policy of Alliance with France required a new Minister.<sup>113</sup> Count N.P. Rumiantsev's assumption of the leadership of the Foreign Ministry in August 1807 shows Alexander's careful attention to selecting individuals of stature whose patriotism could not be questioned.<sup>114</sup> Rumiantsev's diplomatic background, the least of his qualifications, was his representation of Russia at Frankfurt between 1782-87. Like many of the Emperor's appointments of this period Rumiantsev had been a high court official under Paul in the days of the anti-French Second Coalition. He had served as Marshall of the Court (Oberhofmeister) from 1796 to 1798 and had been Minister of Appanages 1798-1800. Between 1801 and 1809 he was the Chief Director of Water Communications and his control over canals, locks and internal waterways kept him in close contact with the military establishment.<sup>115</sup>

Undoubtedly the most important of his positions, and that which bore largely upon his nomination as Foreign Minister, was his Ministership of Commerce. Rumiantsev first attained that position in 1802 and he held it until 1810, concurrently with Foreign Affairs. In his role as the head of commerce he had consistently supported pro-Russian and anti-English trade policies.<sup>116</sup> It was Rumiantsev who developed the new trade policy late in 1806 which was aimed at giving a larger share of commercial affairs into the hands of Russian merchants. The importance of this fact was stressed by the Prussian ambassador. In May, before Rumiantsev replaced Budberg, Lehdorff wrote: "Le comte Rumiantsev, Ministre de Commerce, fait dépendre son existence ultérieure dans le Ministère du maintien de l'ukase du 1 janvier."<sup>117</sup>



In September, less than a month after the appointment, the ambassador noted:

Il est à la vérité certaine que le comte de Rumiantsev a toujours passé pour être favorable à la France et contraire à l'Angleterre, et que l'affaire du traité de commerce dont on a tant parlé depuis 9 mois prouve que cette dernière opinion n'est pas sans fondement.<sup>118</sup>

Alexander's elevation of Rumiantsev to the post of Foreign Minister evinced a strong desire to make an appointment which, while continuing an outward attachment to the French Alliance, was in close agreement with the mood of the court and society. As Grimsted had recently suggested, Alexander himself was eager to direct foreign relations and needed a prominent man of respect to lend dignity to the Alliance with Napoleon, to support and implement the new French-oriented policy which aroused such strong opposition in gentry and court circles.<sup>119</sup>

In this regard, Rumiantsev possessed another set of qualifications and contacts which were an important asset. His national consciousness and his efforts for Russia in this area were one of his most outstanding achievements and led him into active participation with many of the leading literati of the day, including Russia's first slavianofil, Admiral Shishkov. Rumiantsev's study of the history of Russia and his interest and sponsorship of Slavic studies was already well known at the close of the eighteenth century.<sup>120</sup> From one of the wealthiest and most prominent Russian families, he spent lavish sums on collecting books and manuscripts on Russian and Slavic history and culture. With the aid of friends, literary figures, and agents throughout the continent he gathered one of the most important libraries in Russia.<sup>121</sup>

Students of Russia's power politics see in Rumiantsev's appointment the true design of Alexander's diplomatic intentions after Tilsit. According

to their way of thinking the act of Tilsit marked a return to eastern politics for Russia, the western having been unsuccessful, and this called for an 'orientalist' as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Vandal exemplified this viewpoint when he stated both the implications of Rumiantsev's appointment and some of his dispositions:

Les hommes d'Etat russes peuvent se diviser en deux catégories, les Européens et les Orientaux; les premiers rêvent surtout pour leur gouvernement le rôle de modérateur et d'arbitre dans les querelles du continent, les autres estiment que la Russie doit oublier l'Europe pour ne considérer que ses intérêts propres sur le Danube et la mer Noire. Rumiantsev était un Oriental; il l'était par tradition et, si je puis dire, de naissance.<sup>122</sup>

To this analysis must be added Rumiantsev's position on what may be called the external aspect of the "Question Française". Such is given by Lobanov-Rostovsky when he writes that Rumiantsev, "deplored the spending of national energies on European problems and on what he deemed to be a futile struggle against Napoleon, which was not Russia's concern."<sup>123</sup>

In the minds of Alexander and those on whom he depended to institute the Alliance, Tilsit represented above all a chance to end the disastrous support of European powers against France and to concentrate on Russian interests. Tatishchev summarizes what the leaders believed when he writes that Tilsit represented:

L'abandon des ses velléités philanthropiques, de toute idéologie abstraite, une saine appréciation des besoins réels de son empire, le retour en un mot à la politique nationale et traditionnelle, seule vraie, seul profitable.<sup>124</sup>

There are two additional important points to bear in mind about Russia and the external "Question Française" as it emerged at the time of Rumiantsev's appointment. First, for Russia the Tilsit Alliance represented

above all else the abandonment of the struggle against France by means of joint action with other European powers. Second, in the minds of the few leaders who actively supported the Alliance as well as those who passively accepted it, there was no idea of joining hands with Napoleon for the benefit of France. In short, the Russians were part of the Alliance in order to obtain whatever gains were possible for Russia - even if this meant accepting a conflict with England.

No more important manifestation of Alexander's drift toward leaders with military and administrative experience, or in persons connected with Paul's reign, could be found than in Alexander's growing dependence on General A.A. Arakcheev, who had been a friend of the Emperor since the latter's youth. He had risen to favour under Paul as his artillery officer in 1792, when Paul was still the Grand Duke, and he quickly became the Tsar's chief assistant in military affairs. Arakcheev first came into contact with the Grand Dukes Alexander and Constantine at Gatchina after 1796, and continued the relationship of 'military tutor' to Alexander when he became Quartermaster-General directing the affairs of the Imperial Chancellery under Paul 1797-1798.<sup>125</sup>

For present purposes the most important aspect of Arakcheev's position under Paul was that it brought the general into close contact with Alexander. The Grand Duke was the Governor of St. Petersburg and the General was his Commandant. Later Arakcheev became President of the War College and his Quartermaster-General was Alexander. Thus most of the orders issued by the Grand Duke in these capacities had to be countersigned by Arakcheev. It was undoubtedly during this period that the groundwork was laid for his later position in Alexander's reign.<sup>126</sup> From this time onwards the correspondence between the General and the Grand Duke began to reveal the beginnings

of a life-long friendship.<sup>127</sup>

Arakcheev remained in seclusion at his estate at Gruzino until 1803, when Alexander appointed him Inspector-General of artillery. On 27 June 1807, only two weeks after the Friedland disaster, the Emperor promoted him and sent a glowing tribute on the success which had been shown by his reform of the artillery. In December 1807 the Tsar issued an unusual and foreboding decree granting Arakcheev an unusual privilege: orders issued by him in matters concerning artillery were to be considered as if they came from the Emperor.<sup>128</sup> The general, however, was unhappy with the new policy toward France, which he believed compromised Russian interests. He was also ostracized in some court circles because of his identification with Paul's reign and toward the end of the year he tendered his resignation. By this time, though, Alexander's policy was moving toward war and he needed Arakcheev: the Emperor refused the resignation and appointed him Minister of War, effective 1 January 1808.<sup>129</sup>

Arakcheev completed the 1807 circle of military administrators who had come to prominence during the days of Paul's coalition against Napoleon and had risen again under Alexander. But it also showed an increasing reliance upon trusted friends in the military establishment. It is clear that Alexander still felt insecure with regard to the military, particularly those, such as Bennigsen, who opposed the Alliance. In September 1807 the Emperor said to Savary: "une seul chose m'occupe; c'est Bennigsen, qui est en quelque sorte un traître et capable de se mettre à la tête d'un parti contre moi."<sup>130</sup>

Savary's mission of exploration came to an end towards the close of 1807. Becoming more cautious because Napoleon had not removed his troops

from Prussia, and desiring some tangible benefits from the Alliance, Alexander appointed a permanent representative to the French court. Count Peter Tolstoi, brother of the Tsar's intimate Marshall of the Court, and an outstanding Russian nationalist with a strong military background, was sent to Paris. He had not aligned with either 'party', as the French conceived of it.<sup>131</sup> During the last days of August he was in St. Petersburg and was there officially designated for the Paris post.<sup>132</sup> When Alexander sent Tolstoi to Paris he introduced the new ambassador to Napoleon in the following way: "Je le recommande à sa bienveillance. Il n'est pas diplomate, mais un brave et loyal militaire."<sup>133</sup>

Tolstoi left St. Petersburg for Paris on 27 September but did not go to France directly. He stopped at Memel to confer with Prussian officials<sup>134</sup> and arrived in Paris on 1 November. The new Russian ambassador refused the grand accommodations prepared by Napoleon, until he received word from Russia, and took an auberge instead.<sup>135</sup> By the end of the year he was openly acting on Prussia's behalf to have the French troops removed.<sup>136</sup>

Tolstoi's arrival in Paris coincided with Napoleon's decision to appoint a permanent representative to St. Petersburg. Two factors guided the French Emperor's choice. First, he conceived of the Alliance more as a personal alliance with Alexander than with Russia.<sup>137</sup> Second, he was conscious of Savary's advice about the necessity of sending a courtier who was capable of counteracting the strong influence of Lord Alexander Douglas and Sir Charles Stuart, the English representatives in Russia. Hoping to influence the Tsar, Napoleon replaced Savary with Caulaincourt who was already known to Alexander through a temporary mission in 1801 and, as well, Caulaincourt had taken part in the Tilsit negotiations.<sup>138</sup> Equally significant,

however, was the French belief that money could influence the nobility, which they characterized as corrupt and self-satisfying. Napoleon hoped through adequate financing to create a pro-French party in St. Petersburg: "une ville de débiteurs, Savary cite à cet égard des détails caractéristiques."<sup>139</sup> Hence Caulaincourt was delegated Ambassador Extraordinary and given the unusually large purse of 800,000 francs plus a further 250,000 for his initial installation.<sup>140</sup>

Alexander, for his part, was determined to make a court showing of the official friendship between the two countries. In an attempt to avoid the embarrassment that had plagued Savary, the Tsar purchased the 'Volkonskii Hotel' for the new ambassador at a cost of 350,000 rubles.<sup>141</sup> Even in the Emperor's reception of Caulaincourt there was nevertheless a sign that the movement towards personnel of Paul's court had brought with it a different mood. When the French emissary arrived in St. Petersburg he was not greeted with the diplomatic ceremony usual to the early years of Alexander's reign: "à cette occasion l'ancien cérémonial pour la réception des ambassadeurs sous l'Empereur Paul, a été rétabli dans toute son étendue."<sup>142</sup>

The changing complexion of the Russian government was a preview of things to come. For the time being the Emperor publicly demonstrated his personal friendship for Caulaincourt, expecting that the nobility would follow suit. The Kamer-furerskii Zhurnal (Journal of Court Functions) lists more than 150 official gatherings to which the ambassador was invited between December 1807 and May 1811.<sup>143</sup> To these could be added the non-official meetings and private conversations, many of which have not been recorded except for Caulaincourt's recollections of them.<sup>144</sup>

Two things are normally understood by this obvious pushing of the French representatives into court view by Alexander. First, it indicated a deliberate attempt by the Emperor to show publicly Russian support for the Alliance with France: it was above all a diplomatic gesture. Second, and more important, it was an indication of the degree to which Alexander had personally assumed the direction of affairs with France - not necessarily the direction of all foreign affairs, since the Foreign Minister was highly active in affairs relating to Turkey and Sweden.<sup>145</sup>

When Caulaincourt arrived in Russia the Emperor was faced with a declining economic situation which had further aroused the opposition. Yielding to the protests of the nobility Alexander stopped all further recruitment for the milice mobile and a special committee was established in the Senate to review the finances of the last war.<sup>146</sup> By September the Senate hearings on finance had been held and the financial report submitted. There was universal criticism of the 100 million rubles spent on the Third Coalition and apprehension over the 20 million rubles already spent on massing 100,000 soldiers on the Finnish frontier. The price of wine, sugar, coffee and certain spices had already risen sharply and the Senate felt it might be necessary to set a ceiling on the prices for these goods.<sup>147</sup>

As the economy declined so did relations with England, leading to a rupture of relations in November. The unwillingness of England to accept the new Russian commercial policy contributed considerably to the deterioration. The British merchants in the capital, still hoping to return to the favourable arrangements of Catherine's era, refused for the most part to register in the guilds as stipulated in the law of 1 January. When the deadline was reached the Prussian ambassador wrote: "La majorité des

négocians anglais n'a pas encore pris un parti définitif dans la crise mercantile où ils se trouvent."<sup>148</sup> This irked the Russians, especially Rumiantsev, and matters were made worse in August when English ships arrived to pick up two million rubles of gold and silver from the English merchants in St. Petersburg.<sup>149</sup> The actions of the British government with respect to Denmark, and its attempt to gain support among the Russian nobility, were the final steps leading to the severing of relations.

Britain's attitude stemmed from its knowledge of the Tilsit agreements. Within a short time of the signing of the documents in July it had obtained a copy of the papers, including the separate and secret articles.<sup>150</sup> Quite correctly the English interpreted the Tilsit Alliance as an attempt by Napoleon to build up a naval coalition against England in which not only Russia, but Sweden and Denmark would cooperate as well. By virtue of its geographical location and its well-equipped fleet, Denmark was in a position to do the most harm. The British government decided on a preemptive strike, and a naval force under Cathcart destroyed the Danish fleet in harbour at Copenhagen on 1 September.<sup>151</sup> When news of the event reached St. Petersburg the Russian government was incensed. England was informed immediately that there were no circumstances under which the former Russian-British trade treaty would be reinstated.<sup>152</sup>

To make matters worse, the English attempted to gain support among the Russian nobility in the struggle against Alexander and the Tilsit Alliance. This task was given to General Robert Wilson, a natural choice, for he had been attached to the Russian High Staff during 1806-1807 and had gained many important friends - among them Generals Bennigsen and Bagration, as well as most of the Imperial family. He arrived in St. Petersburg during mid-October,



'officially' to see if Alexander really believed in the Alliance, and was soon convinced that the treaty was universally detested.<sup>153</sup> He was flattered to find that, whereas he was lionized on all occasions, the French envoy was refused admittance to all but a few houses. His cordial reception by the nobility and the Imperial family served to convince him that Alexander secretly repented the Tilsit 'betrayal'.<sup>154</sup>

Despite his personal feelings, and in an effort to influence highly placed Russians against the Alliance, Wilson began to distribute a pamphlet titled "Réflexions sur le traité de paix entre la France et la Russie"<sup>155</sup> in which the Tilsit agreements were critically attacked and in which the Emperor himself was slandered.<sup>156</sup> Rumiantsev gave Alexander a copy of the brochure, which had caused considerable reaction and agreement by most Russians, and told the Emperor that it had been given to Orlov, Novosiltsev, Kochubei, Stroganov and several others (i.e., to outspoken critics of the new arrangement with France).<sup>157</sup> Other copies were passed around to the diplomatic community, including to the Prussians.<sup>158</sup>

Alexander was outwardly incensed at the appearance of Wilson's brochure:

Je viens de lire cette vile brochure....Ce pamphlet dénote assez clairement les sentiments de ces messieurs et ceux qui, à Pétersbourg, l'ont reçu sans en faire part sont des traîtres.<sup>159</sup>

There were two reasons for the Tsar's behaviour at this point. First, he needed an issue upon which to base the severance of relations with England. This was part of the Tilsit agreement and a preliminary step to any Russian move against Sweden. Second, the Emperor knew that most Russians were opposed to the Alliance with France, and especially aware that many of those who read Wilson's pamphlet were sympathetic to the English view. For

these reasons Alexander suppressed further distribution of the document and declared that England was interfering in Russian affairs. Rumiantsev informed Douglas on 8 November of the rupture of relations and the British delegation left at once.<sup>160</sup>

There was not an immediate outbreak of hostilities. Quite to the contrary, the first move was to establish a bureau of liquidation in order to settle British-Russian commercial affairs. In contrast to the manner in which the French had been treated in similar circumstances less than two years before, the English were guaranteed a dignified withdrawal and would have their rights protected.<sup>161</sup>

The formal breaking of relations with England in November 1807, almost a month earlier than had been stipulated at Tilsit, carried with it the implication of joint Russian-French military action to force Sweden to join the Continental System. Following Russia's action against Britain the Tsar hastened to inform Napoleon of his plans and to build up his forces in the North at a rapid pace. The reasoning behind Alexander's decision to accept a conflict with Sweden must be noted. Caulaincourt, in a letter to Champagny on 23 December 1807, gave some of the reasons for the 'mesure d'agir' of the army and for Alexander's motives:

Le public, comme l'armée, paraît besoin de voir qu'il est résulté un avantage réel pour l'Empire des nouvelles relations avec la France...et pour avoir des récompenses.<sup>162</sup>

One week later the French ambassador was even more specific. The result of his observations with various ministers, the Emperor and numerous persons at court left him convinced that:

L'empereur personnellement n'a aucune vue d'agrandissement, mais que, pour légitimer aux yeux de son peuple, ou plutôt des grands et de l'armée, son alliance avec la France et la déclaration de

guerre à l'Angleterre, il faut qu'il puisse  
montrer qu'il en est résulté un avantage.<sup>163</sup>

It was not certain that this policy of public appeasement would serve its intended purpose. The immediate impact of Tilsit had been to give added impetus to the growth of the national movement which led to an increasingly conservative reaction to the internal "Question Française". This created a potential danger for the government as Lehndorff pointed out in the fall of 1807 when Russia was at war, officially at least, with Britain and it looked as if hostilities were about to commence against Sweden. Most Russians believed that they had been let down in the last war by Prussia and England, not to mention Austria. Based on this the general political feeling after Tilsit was that, with regard to the external "Question Française", the government was adopting a policy of 'peace and isolation'.<sup>164</sup> It was not clear how the nation would react to a new military involvement which, in the public view, was being undertaken because of the French Alliance and for the purpose of forcing Sweden to join the French Continental System.

In preparing for war Alexander appeared outwardly to be adhering to the Tilsit agreements, but he had yet to bring the rest of Russia into line - and that was another matter. As the Emperor himself said to the French: "Je pousserai la Russie vers la France tant que je pourrai."<sup>165</sup> The question at the close of 1807 remained, would he be able to do so?

### Chapter III

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- 127 A. Kizevetter, "Imperator Aleksandr I i Arakcheev", Istoricheskie Ochenki, Moscow, 1912, p. 199.
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- 130 Tatishchev, Alexandre I et Napoléon, p. 198; Savary to Napoleon, 9 September 1807.
- 131 Shilder, Aleksandr Pervyi, II, p. 380.
- 132 Bogdanovich, Tsarstvovaniia Aleksandra I, IV, p. 124.
- 133 Tatishchev, Alexandre Ier et Napoléon, p. 222; Alexander to Napoleon, 22 September 1807; C. de Grunwald, Trois siècles de diplomatie russe, p. 153.

- 134 DZA-PbD, Lehndorff, 24 September 1807, no. 58.
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- 136 DZA-PbD, Lehndorff, 15 December 1807, no. 83; G. Lefebvre, Napoleon, II, N.Y., 1969, p. 24. Among those with whom Tolstoi collaborated was Talleyrand, Napoleon's Foreign Minister until 1807: M. Paléologue, The Romantic Diplomat: Talleyrand, Metternich and Chateaubriand, London, 1928, p. 27.
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- 147 Ibid., Lehndorff, 8 December 1807, no. 81.
- 148 Ibid., Lehndorff, 21 July 1807, no. 39.
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<sup>150</sup> Granville Leveson-Gower, Private Correspondence, 1781-1821, II, London, 1916, p. 114.

<sup>151</sup> W.F. Reddaway, op. cit., p. 407; O. Warner, The Sea and the Sword: the Baltic 1630-1945, New York, 1965, p. 104-106.

<sup>152</sup> DZA-PbD, Lehndorff, 11 October 1807, no. 63.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., Lehndorff, 20 October 1807, no. 65; 24 October 1807, no. 66.

<sup>154</sup> R. Wilson, Life of General Sir Robert Wilson, H. Randolph, ed., II, London, 1862, pp. 354, 365.

<sup>155</sup> VPR, IV, p. 577.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> For Stroganov's reaction to the circulated brief see VPR, IV, pp. 108-109.

<sup>158</sup> DZA-PbD, Lehndorff, 25 October 1807, no. 67; 27 October 1807, no. 68.

<sup>159</sup> Tatishchev, Alexandre et Napoléon Ier, p. 225.

<sup>160</sup> DZA-PbD, 13 November 1807, no. 72.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., Lehndorff, 17 November 1807, no. 74.

<sup>162</sup> DSRF, I, p. 18.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>164</sup> DZA-PbD, Lehndorff, 12 October 1807, no. 63.

<sup>165</sup> Tatishchev, Alexandre et Napoléon Ier, p. 206; Savary to Napoleon, 5 October 1807.

#### Chapter IV

##### 1808: The Swedish War and the Evolution of Internal Policy

Alexander and Napoleon realized that if the Russian public was to accept the Franco-Russian Alliance war with Sweden for the control of Finland was a necessity. On Russia's part the prospect of military action necessitated additional preparation, leading to an accelerated growth both in size and importance of the military establishment. This evolved together with the continuing consolidation of the central leadership and resulted in the elevation of Arakcheev to Minister of War beginning 1 January 1808. Arakcheev's appointment marked as well a return to the program of internal reform which the Emperor had begun in the pre-Tilsit period.

Alexander's desire for a consolidation of power, the most characteristic feature of his internal policy after Tilsit, also manifested itself in 1808 by a return to reforms of the central administrative institutions. The development of this aspect of internal reform policy was to be seen in the Tsar's increasing reliance on Speransky, who replaced the members of the Unofficial Committee as the leading reform influence. It is important to note the similarities and differences between the Unofficial Committee and Speransky. Both represented an attempt to reform from above and both introduced changes based, in part, upon French models. More significantly, the Committee and especially Speransky were stigmatized as representatives of the Enlightenment and French influences. Apart from



these common features, however, their differences were remarkable. The four members of the Unofficial Committee were all aristocrats and in favour of war with France. Speransky stood alone without close collaborators, was the son of a priest and supported the unpopular Alliance with France. Alexander's return to institutional reform in 1808 and Speransky's elevation to a leading role in the central government put him at the center of the controversy between the external and internal aspects of the "Question Française". This, however, happened only toward the end of the year. In the meantime Russia was occupied with preparations for war.

Caulaincourt urged Alexander onward, knowing that the Tsar badly needed some tangible sign of value from the Alliance.<sup>1</sup> But by February, as hostilities over Finland loomed, public feeling swung against the policy of the Emperor. There were many who saw in the hostilities with Sweden a clever attempt by Napoleon to keep Russia militarily occupied while expanding French power in Europe. For instance, Alexander's most trusted Aide-de-Camp, N.I. Chernyshev, acted as Alexander's personal contact with Napoleon and frequently crossed through Poland and Germany where he saw the French garrisons at strength.<sup>2</sup> In February 1808 he cautioned Alexander about extending his effort northward. Russian armies were at the extremities of the Empire, in Moldavia and on the Finnish border, while the center opposite the French forces was left open ("se trouve dégarni").<sup>3</sup>

As Caulaincourt noted to Napoleon:

L'opinion de ce pays est toujours contre le système actuel du souverain, son embarras du moment perce comme l'inquiétude du ministère. L'un et l'autre sont cependant de caractère à le soutenir, mais comme c'est sans adresse et que ce gouvernement, tout despotique qu'il ne dirige pas.<sup>4</sup>

If Caulaincourt was being optimistic about the probable impact of

a successful war with Sweden, Napoleon was less so. He saw a possibility of further difficulty for Alexander and asked Caulaincourt some pointed questions:

Le peuple de Pétersbourg, qui ne sera plus distrait par le bruit des armes et par la perspective d'un nouvel agrandissement de l'empire, ne supportera-t-il pas avec plus d'impatience les privations et les pertes auxquelles l'expose l'interruption de ses anciennes relations avec l'Angleterre? Ce mécontentement du peuple ne sera-t-il pas encouragé par les mécontentements de la cour et de l'armée?... Enfin, combien de temps croyez-vous qu'on puisse conserver la tranquillité de cet empire, seulement en nourrissant des espérances que la paix dispenserait de réaliser?<sup>5</sup>

Napoleon was clearly counting on Caulaincourt's presence and his money to swing opinion on the French side, and he gave his ambassador every latitude in accomplishing it:

S'il est vrai que, par votre rang, votre représentation et l'impulsion que vous donnerez au corps diplomatique, qui sera bientôt composé de personnes dévouées à la France, vous puissiez influencer sur l'esprit de la société de Saint-Petersbourg, qu'on représente comme exerçant elle-même une grande influence sur la cour et l'armée, vous êtes invité à ne négliger aucun moyen d'atteindre ce but...en maintenant l'alliance de la France...et sans exposer l'empereur Alexandre au danger d'une révolution.<sup>6</sup>

Most of Napoleon's actions and concerns for Russia at this time were based on a rather callous and perhaps outdated concept of Russian society. This is obvious from his correspondence with Alexander in February when he wrote: "les peuples russes seront contents de la gloire, des richesses et de la fortune qui seront les résultats de ces grandes événements".<sup>7</sup> Alexander hoped that the conquest of Finland would have something of the same effect; perhaps some territorial extension would wipe away the opprobrium felt about the Tilsit Alliance. There were, however,

other reasons for the attack on Finland. Ever since St. Petersburg became the capital of Russia it had been the aim of successive Emperors to secure the whole eastern shore of the Baltic in order to protect the Russian capital from an invasion through Finland. The frontier was indeed perilously close. The Swedish attack of 1788, when Russia's hands were tied by the war with Turkey, had not been forgotten, and Napoleon now actively encouraged Alexander to take on the Swedes, since the latter were in alliance with England.<sup>8</sup> Alexander needed no second bidding; Russian troops under the command of general Buxhöwden crossed the border in February 1808 and began to occupy Finland.

When the Russian forces attacked Finland there had already been substantial changes made with the military. Alexander had taken some of the preliminary steps in 1807 but the reforms as a whole were left for Arakcheev to complete. His appointment as Minister of War marked the beginning of the reform movement in the post-Tilsit period. That the military should form the starting point for this process was a matter of supreme urgency for the need of reconstruction and reform had been all too apparent at Friedland. Reflecting in 1808 on Russia's chances of success in a showdown with France, the Prussian reformer Baron von Stein feared:

A thinly peopled country, devoid of industry, will make but a feeble resistance, and a country ruled by a weak sensual prince (intimidated by the failure of a number of schemes abandoned as lightly as they were undertaken) through the agency of a stupid, awkward, corrupt and meddlesome bureaucracy - a country where the great mass of the nation are slaves - such a country will not long maintain the fight against civilized Europe.<sup>9</sup>

Initially, Arakcheev's appointment did not sit well at court, largely because he had been so closely associated with the reign of Paul.

Among his detractors were both Empresses, Count Lieven, as well as Generals Uvarov and Tolstoi.<sup>10</sup> Joseph de Maistre was a close friend of many of the leading court personalities and his reaction to Arakcheev's appointment may be taken as a fair view of the court attitude:

From among the oligarchy of military favourites General Arakcheev has suddenly, without any warning signals, risen out of the ground. He is cruel, stern and unshakeable. People say that one cannot call him a bad man, but I consider him very bad. This does not mean that I condemn his appointment since at present only a man of his kidney can restore order.<sup>11</sup>

The new Minister was faced with three problems at the beginning of 1808. First, he had to restore confidence and morale in the troops. Second, he had to restore order and discipline in the forces from the very top. Third, he had to reorganize the army and to prepare for the possibility of a conflict, since Tilsit required as a minimum the breaking of relations with England and implied Russian action against Sweden.

The War Minister's first move, aimed at smoothing the discord between the military and the Emperor, was to intercede with Alexander to restore the honour of General Viazmitinov.<sup>12</sup> This accomplished, he then began the more difficult task of reconstruction. Initially this meant the restructuring of the armed forces senior command. Until the end of Viazmitinov's Ministry the effectiveness of Russian War Ministers had been hampered by the fact that they had no direct control over the military high staff, most of whom considered themselves responsible to the Emperor. The direct link between the staff and the Emperor's chancellery was provided by the Adjutants-General, thus creating a triple chain, large and unwieldy.<sup>13</sup> It was this structure which allowed for the various crippling dissensions and conflicts among the senior officers during the wars of the Third Coalition.

That the reform of this problem constituted a first priority was implicit in the powers given to the new Minister of War. To his ministerial appointment were added the Inspector-Generalships of the infantry and the artillery, thus giving him far more direct and personal control over the forces than any of his predecessors enjoyed.<sup>14</sup> Grand Duke Constantine had been made Inspector-General of Cavalry in 1807 and he retained this as well as his position as the head of military educational establishments.<sup>15</sup> Arakcheev's first move in his restructuring program was to end the Adjutants-General role as the link between the Imperial Chancellery and the staff of the Ministry of War. Two Aides-de-Camp (Dezhurnyi General = General du Jour) were appointed to assist him, and took their orders directly from him.

The second target of Arakcheev's reform plan was the problem of army discipline. On 9 June 1808 he published an order strongly reminiscent of those he had issued under Paul I:

I have noticed that in certain cases discipline is not observed as strictly as it should be. As discipline is known to be the chief principle on which the whole service rests, I consider myself bound by my position to state the following. Junior officers not infrequently fail to observe the due respect or even decency in their attitude to their seniors, particularly on public occasions. I put the blame for this not so much on the junior officers themselves as on the person of the senior officer who does not exercise his duty by putting a stop to this, and thus provides every excuse for open relaxation of the established rules of military service. I wish to emphasize this point, and I cite myself as an example, for I have never tolerated insubordination toward myself. Henceforth it must be firmly established that if a general does not prosecute his junior officers for not fulfilling their duties, it will be taken as evidence that he does not know how to obtain the respect due to him.<sup>16</sup>

The move towards greater discipline and control by the Minister

led to some dissention among the senior officers and the High Staff. But the Tsar supported Arakcheev even to the extent of siding with him against Constantine. In the summer of 1808, when the Grand Duke persuaded Alexander to give a special grant for improving the horses of the Duke's favourite regiment, the Uhlans, Arakcheev objected on the grounds that it was unnecessary and too costly. Alexander accepted the argument of his Minister and cancelled the grant.<sup>17</sup>

Together with the reforms went additional changes in personnel close to the Emperor, as he enlarged his circle of military advisors. This was partly a consequence of Alexander's tendency, already witnessed by Savary, to depend persons with a combined civil and military background. The Tsar's two new Adjutants-General in 1808, Counts P.A. Shuvalov and A.D. Balashov, show this same trend; furthermore, both were outspoken opponents of the Alliance with France. Shuvalov would become the ambassador to Austria 1809-1810, but Balashov was the more important and influential. An outspoken proponent of unlimited autocratic power and a friend of Karamzin, he had been Chief of Police in Moscow 1804-1807. When he became Alexander's Adjutant-General at the end of 1808 he became at the same time Military Governor and High Commander of St. Petersburg.<sup>18</sup>

These appointments were also a sign of the continued expansion of the military influence throughout the central and higher administration which was already in evidence before Tilsit, and which began with the formation of the Ministries in 1802. The creation of a staff in 1808 for the Medical Inspectorate, for example, was part of this train of events already set in motion in 1802.<sup>19</sup> But the elevation of the military's place in the Committee of Ministers, the most important policy making and administrative

body in Russia, was far more. The military was represented in the Committee by the Chief of the Naval Staff, the Chief of the Army High Staff, the Chief of Section III (Gendarmes) of the Imperial Chancellery, but most importantly by the Minister of War.<sup>20</sup> In 1808 Arakcheev was the dominant figure in the Committee, as he became its official Managing Director (upravliaiushchii delami komiteta).<sup>21</sup>

The shortness of time between Arakcheev's appointment as Minister and the engagement of Russian forces in Finland prevented the complete implementation of his reforms and the remaining dissabilities soon became apparent. Despite the efforts made for greater discipline, and Arakcheev's reputation in that regard, discipline was still not all it should have been.<sup>22</sup> Contributing to the problems of the army in Finland was the discord between the elderly General G.J. Knorring, former Quartermaster-General of Catherine's Army of Finland, who had received the new command from Buxhöwden, and the younger generals: Barclay de Tolly, Bagration and Shuvalov.<sup>23</sup> All of them, on the other hand, were critical of the methods of Arakcheev, his subordination of the General Staff, and his personal control over military affairs. Not everyone saw this as a bad thing however. As Lehndorff wrote:

Le nouveau Ministre de la guerre a entièrement changé l'organisation de son département et toutes les affaires ont actuellement administrées par ce Ministre...ces changemens ne pourront tourner dans la suite qu'à l'avantage des affaires.<sup>24</sup>

The problem of supply, which had severely hampered the Russian forces in the last two contests with Napoleon, predominated over all others from the outset of the campaign. It was only partly solved when Arakcheev ruthlessly commandeered provisions from the St. Petersburg garrisons and

divisions, and sent these supplies to the front.<sup>25</sup> By March he was forced to take matters into his own hands and go to the front: "l'armée, malgré ses succès, souffre beaucoup de manque de vivres."<sup>26</sup>

From the beginning Russia did not declare war and argued that her actions were undertaken solely to force the recalcitrant Sweden to join the French system. Even one month after the invasion, as Lehdorff remarked, "La cour de Russie continue à poser qu'elle n'est nullement en guerre avec la Suède".<sup>27</sup> When in March the army paraded captured Swedish flags in St. Petersburg, still without declaring war, it was sharply criticized and several prominent Russians sent their apologies to Stedingk, the Swedish ambassador.<sup>28</sup>

Alexander was worried about the attitude of the public and continued to hope that a swift success would pacify the public mood. In conversation with Caulaincourt on 12 March he said "Je ne veux rien faire qui laisse de l'inquiétude à l'opinion, ni de l'incertitude....On attend depuis longtemps un résultat: faites qu'il soit digne de l'empereur."<sup>29</sup> The following day, when the Tsar was informed of the swift initial victories of the Russian army, he optimistically wrote the French Emperor that the campaign was progressing quickly and the long-awaited reward should soon arrive:

La conquête de la Finlande n'a pas été difficile.  
Mes armées occupent déjà les points les plus  
importants et marchent sur Abo, tandis qu'on  
bombarde Swéaborg. Je compte que dans peu tout  
sera fini de ce côté.<sup>30</sup>

Three days later, on 16 March, the final conquest looked imminent and a decree then published prematurely declared the union of Finland. For a time there was a favourable impression made on those circles who opposed the French Alliance. On 17 April Alexander sent his Aide-de-Camp, Colonel Chernyshev,



to Napoleon with the message: "Monsieur mon frère, j'adresse ces lignes à Votre Majesté pour lui annoncer que toute la Finlande suédoise se trouve conquise."<sup>31</sup> The result of the news, as Vandal has remarked, was that "Pour la première fois, la valeur de l'alliance française se révélait par un signe matériel, palpable, évident pour tous."<sup>32</sup>

Alexander realized there was opposition to the Tilsit Alliance, but he felt the nobility would be won over with time and that "l'occupation de la Finlande et la déclaration de sa réunion à l'Empire y ont fortement contribué."<sup>33</sup> Toward the end of May Alexander optimistically wrote to Napoleon: "Monsieur mon frère, Swéaborg s'est rendu le 3 Mai, et je m'empresse d'en instruire Votre Majesté comme d'une nouvelle qui n'est pas sans intérêt dans les circonstances du moment."<sup>34</sup>

"Les circonstances du moment" referred to the fact that Alexander and Napoleon were negotiating a new meeting, to be held later in the year. The Tsar was trying to secure a satisfactory basis for the meetings and having difficulty. He seized upon every success against Sweden as proof that he was living up to the Tilsit Alliance. At the same time he was using it internally to show that the Alliance was of real value to Russia.

However, the brightened mood of public opinion, never completely optimistic about the Swedish war, did not last long. Following its first few successes in February and March, the Russian army bogged down and the Swedes successfully counter-attacked, thereby halting the advance for a time. The Swedish government, realizing that in Russia popular support for the war was lacking, and itself not having declared war against Russia, pulled a magnificent diplomatic coup which further undermined the Emperor's position. In May it released the captured Russian commander of Gothenburg, together with

his troops, on the proviso they would not be used against Sweden for a year.<sup>35</sup>

To make matters worse, word was received that 10,000 British soldiers had disembarked at Gothenburg and the British fleet was sailing in Danish waters.<sup>36</sup> Public support for the Swedish venture was further decreased when it was learned that the French had halted their advance against Sweden. Alexander was quick to blame the French for having abandoned their mission, thus, in his opinion, allowing the Swedes to concentrate all their forces against him.<sup>37</sup> As the war with Sweden dragged on and the prospect of British involvement loomed, opposition to Alexander and the French system grew. By mid-summer:

Alexandre retrouvait ses ministres, ses amis, sa famille, et, autour de lui, chacun semblait s'être donné le mot pour le détourner de la France....Alexandre retrouvait la société assemblée chez l'impératrice mère, chez les princes, dans les maisons où il avait coutume de paraître, et l'écho des passions anti-françaises montait jusqu'à lui.<sup>38</sup>

The first tangible sign of some benefit from the French Alliance, which the Emperor had counted on and which the French had repeatedly promised, thus quickly disappeared. It would not return and, as the affair in Sweden stagnated, the mood of the country sank even lower. When it was announced that Alexander would meet with Napoleon at Erfurt in the fall, all of Russia was openly questioning the Emperor's motives.<sup>39</sup>

Having failed to achieve the desired agrandissement from Sweden and having failed to win over the Russian public, Alexander urgently sought some benefit from France at Erfurt. His need at that moment was great. In the Imperial family, opposition to the meeting was swift to appear. The Emperor confided his intentions to go to Erfurt only in August, despite the fact that plans had been discussed with the French for more than six

months. In the Imperial family mistrust of the French superceded all else by this time. As Almedingen has shown, when the family was finally told:

Elizabeth begged him not to go, Grand Duke Constantine wondered if the cession of the entire Empire to Napoleon might not simplify the future. The Dowager Empress urged that such a meeting ran counter to Imperial dignity and to the interests of the nation.<sup>40</sup>

De Maistre wrote that the nobility was openly talking of the "Asiatic Remedy" as the only means of restoring Russia to her predominant influence in Europe.<sup>41</sup>

Despite this situation Napoleon was quite reluctant to make concessions to Alexander prior to a new meeting between the two Emperors. In the French view, Russia had not succeeded in her part of the bargain until Sweden signed a peace treaty and ended its alliance with Britain. There were, as well, a number of developments which led Napoleon to believe Russia was less sincere about the Alliance than it professed to be. These included the difficulty France encountered when trying to establish a commercial presence in St. Petersburg, as well the manner in which Russia was conducting its war against England.

Commercial relations between France and Russia were a high priority for Napoleon. Soon after Savary's arrival in 1807 he had formed a committee of French traders and merchants under de Lesseps, the Chargé d'Affaires, to look into the prospects for trade. On 3 March 1808 the committee presented a long memorandum which strongly criticized the special rights reserved for Russian traders;

La loi ne permet qu'aux sujets Russes de trafique librement dans toutes les villes de l'intérieur de l'Empire; ainsi, sous ce rapport, la condition de sujet est impérative.<sup>42</sup>

Also objected to were measures which the English had earlier

protested, particularly the necessity of registering in the Russian guilds, and the payment of a tax on imported capital. Even if a new treaty of commerce were to be achieved, one which would destroy the remaining English influences, the committee was not convinced matters would improve. Its conclusions were pessimistic about the possibility of regularizing French commerce in Russia:

Dans l'état actuel des choses, l'examen de cette grande question ne pouvait offrir des données satisfaisantes. La France serait peut-être forcée d'ajourner à des temps plus propices la naturalisation de son commerce dans cet Empire.<sup>43</sup>

Caulaincourt, in his report to Champagny which accompanied the memorandum, provided some of the reasons for the preponderant English commercial position. The English bought tremendous quantities of wood, iron and hemp for their navy and returned in their place finished steel products; these imports were especially valuable for Russia at the moment because it was embarking on a programme of naval construction. In short, the French ambassador wrote: "Les anglais achètent beaucoup en Russie, il est naturel qu'ils aient trouvé de grandes facilités à s'y établir."<sup>44</sup>

When the French ambassador approached Rumiantsev about the possibility of further trade agreements with Russia he did so with a view to returning to the pre-1797 situation of low tariffs. In keeping with the proposals of the Committee of French merchants, he also requested that the disabilities against foreign merchants be lifted. Especially onerous in the French view were the requirement of 50,000 rubles as minimum capital, and the entry tax on all capital brought into Russia by foreign merchants. Rumiantsev insisted upon maintaining the commercial law of 1 January 1807.<sup>45</sup>

The economic situation had been deteriorating rapidly and by 1808

the Russians were faced with a financial and economic crisis. The wars of the Third Coalition had seriously drained Russian resources and the Tilsit Alliance, which brought adherence to the Continental System, prevented Russia from regaining financial stability. As the ambassador from Holland, Six d'Osterleek, noted: "Ce n'est que donc les derniers guerres et surtout depuis l'année 1808 que les dépréciations a été effroyante."<sup>46</sup>

As long as Russia and Britain had been on friendly terms the crisis could be coped with through loans and subsidies. But in 1807 this source had dried up and Russia was forced to turn to Holland for additional funds. These were becoming harder to obtain by 1808 and inflation again hit the ruble. By late spring an internal crisis was building because the burghers and millers would come up to the coast from the interior cities, once the ice disappeared from the rivers, in order to buy their provisions and sell their winter productions.<sup>47</sup>

At the root of the problem lay Russia's chronic gap between state receipts and expenditures. In 1803 there had been a surplus of receipts over expenditures, but by 1808 state spending was approximately 248 million rubles and receipts, including loans, totalled only 162 million rubles.<sup>48</sup> To remedy the situation the government had resorted to the printing press and the amount of paper rubles (assignats) in circulation rose from nearly 292 million in 1805 to 533 million in 1809. Over the same period the value of the paper ruble decreased from 73 to 43 (based on 1774 = 100).<sup>49</sup> As the Prussian ambassador noted: "Les embarras pécuniaires de la Russie sont énormes."<sup>50</sup>

Zlotnikov has recently shown that this crisis was to a large degree produced by the drastically reduced trade of Russia, brought on by

the Continental Blockade, which particularly affected Russian sea trade. Russia's exports by sea dropped from 40.4 million rubles in 1807 to 28.3 million in 1808 and, in the same period, her imports dropped from 27.2 to 16.2 million rubles.<sup>51</sup> At the same time Russian imports from France continued to decline. In 1806 these imports stood at 1.38 billion francs. In 1807, during part of which the two countries were at war, they dropped to 29,000 francs and 1808, the first full year of peace, witnessed a further drop of 10,900 francs.<sup>52</sup> Clearly, the takeover by France of England's coveted commercial position in Russia had not taken place and this fact undoubtedly contributed to Napoleon's intransigence.

The Russian bureaucracy had already made moves to counter the declining economic situation, largely by choosing not to enforce the law. These measures, as well, worked against France and the Continental System. Caulaincourt had written to Champagny in March of an immense contraband organized on the frontiers of the Empire, principally along the Baltic and Black Sea coasts.<sup>53</sup> Schlöden supported this observation when he observed "Plusieurs vaisseaux Américains venants d'Angleterre et chargés de productions coloniales sont arrivés à Cronstadt."<sup>54</sup> Later he reported further arrivals of American vessels at Liebau, Riga and Reval.<sup>55</sup> Writing about the American role in Russian trade in 1808, an American historian has recently commented that:

The prostitution of the American flag to the interests of British commerce was so blatant - and would continue to be so for the next four years - that all honest Americans were forced to confess the existence of the unsavory practice.<sup>56</sup>

Other aspects of Russian policy gave Napoleon additional reasons to wonder at Alexander's actions in fulfilling his part of the Tilsit Alliance.

The war which had been declared against England at the close of 1807 was hardly to be called a war. As Joyneville correctly remarked, "on the part of Russia no war was ever inaugurated with more consideration to those who were most concerned."<sup>57</sup> No Englishmen were detained and no ships or goods were seized by the government. Sufficient notice was given to enable British vessels to leave the harbours, and at the request of the Committee of Liquidation two English merchants were added to their number.<sup>58</sup> The British capture of a Russian vessel in the Adriatic induced Alexander to declare all English subjects residing in Russia as hostages, "for their own safety", and to suspend their passports until the ship was released.<sup>59</sup>

In the meantime the English mixed freely in Russian society and received more marks of attention than the subjects of France.<sup>60</sup> Robert Ker Porter, who was an official court painter in Russia between 1805 and 1808, and a close friend of the Shchertkov family, wrote at the time: "I never in my life experienced so much attention as was there paid to us as strangers and Englishmen."<sup>61</sup> The attitude of Russian society can thus be contrasted with the somewhat mildly official attitude of the Government, for when Porter applied for permission to marry Princess Shchertkov, the government declined: such was impossible as long as the two countries were at 'war'.<sup>62</sup>

Even more revealing is the case of Lord Douglas, the English ambassador to Russia since 1806. Presumably suffering from gout at the outbreak of hostilities in 1807, Douglas remained in St. Petersburg after the English mission to Russia had departed. The former British emissary kept himself available to members of the anti-French opposition, among whom he was well respected, and was even visited secretly by Caulaincourt in July.<sup>63</sup>

In August 1808, nearly a year after the English mission had departed, Douglas left Russia. Baron Schladen, who had replaced Lehndorff earlier in the year as Prussian Minister to Russia, provides a description of the Englishman's departure:

Le Marquis Douglas est parti à bord d'un bâtiment Américain de Cronstadt, après avoir obtenu la veille de son départ des marques toutes particulières d'attention par la cour. Le Comte de Rumiantsev et le Ministre de la Marine [Chichagov] ont tous les deux passé à sa porte; Sa Majesté l'Empereur lui a fait souhaiter un heureux voyage, et à Cronstadt les ordres étaient donnés pour le traiter avec distinction, et même pour lui faire voir tout ce qu'il demanderait.<sup>64</sup>

The British, for their part, seemed determined to treat Russia with equal respect. Russia's Black Sea Fleet, which had been sailing under Admiral Seniavin in the Mediterranean since the summer of 1807, sailed into the western Mediterranean late in the year where it was forced to take refuge in Lisbon. It surrendered on honourable terms to the English in 1808. Similarly, Britain had attacked the Ionian islands in 1807 only after they had been handed over to France by Russia.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, the French were aware that the English representative in Constantinople, Sir Robert Adair, was negotiating on Russia's behalf with Turkey.<sup>66</sup>

If such actions made Napoleon reluctant to grant Russia concessions before Tilsit the same could not be said of Caulaincourt. The ambassador understood the situation facing Alexander as he prepared to depart for a meeting with the French Emperor. Circles had formed at court to oppose the continuation of the Alliance, the war with Sweden and the declining economy. It had become normal practice for various leading families to sponsor a formal dinner at which the anti-French leaders, especially Kochubei, Czartorysky or Dolgoruky, would be the guest of honour. Attempting



to make Napoleon aware of the situation, Caulaincourt candidly advised the French Emperor before the Erfurt meeting:

L'empereur est de coeur comme d'opinion à Votre Majesté; c'est la nation et le ministère qu'il faut conquérir....Un peu de circonspection sur ce point servirait puissamment les intérêts de Votre Majesté à Pétersbourg.<sup>67</sup>

Nevertheless, Napoleon believed because of the Tilsit negotiations that he had some influence on Alexander and insisted on settling affairs with the Tsar personally. He demanded from Caulaincourt a description of the measures being taken to secure Russia in Alexander's **forthcoming** absence. The ambassador replied:

Que toutes les mesures avaient été prises pour y maintenir l'ordre dans l'administration; que les troupes étaient confiées à des mains sûres, à des hommes dévoués: le prince Lobanov, gouverneur militaire de Saint-Petersbourg, à le général Uvarov, commandant intérimaire de la garde impériale....Kurakin vient de retirer son logement à Pavlovsk. L'impératrice régnante reste à Kamenii-Ostrov, la mère Maria Feodorovna va à Gatchina.<sup>68</sup>

These were only part of the internal security steps taken before Alexander's departure. Hoping to disarm the opposition at court, the Tsar granted Kochubei a 'vacation' in Germany, Czartorysky a three-month 'visit' to his estates in Vokynia, and Dolgoruky was given 'permission' to reside outside Russia.<sup>69</sup> With him the Emperor took Grand Duke Constantine, Prince Golitsyn and Count Tolstoi - three of the most powerful anti-French voices.<sup>70</sup> General Bennigsen was located far from St. Petersburg, Barclay de Tolly was Governor General of Finland, and the conduct of the war was left in the reliable hands of Arakcheev.<sup>71</sup>

In the meantime, the authorities continued their practice of censoring periodicals and newspapers, both local and foreign. Among the

latter it was a matter of policy to censor articles critical of government policy, either directly or through attacks on the government leaders.<sup>72</sup>

Schladerer gave evidence of this in October 1808 when he wrote: "Les numeros 152 de la gazette de Hambourg et 115 de celle de Berlin ont été supprimés ici pour un article qui regarde le Comte de Rumiantsev."<sup>73</sup>

The precautions taken for Alexander's trip reveal the degree to which the Finnish venture had not served the purpose intended, and underscored the fact that the "Question Française" was continuing to crystallize the opposition. There were other indications as well, for by then the first major defection occurred among those persons whom Alexander had brought to office after Tilsit, and on whom he placed such hopes for the continuation of the Alliance. The desertion of Count Tolstoy from the ranks of those willing to work for the Alliance in 1807 was highly important and had wide repercussions.

Tolstoy had been selected after Tilsit because of his combination of military and administrative experience, and because among his qualifications was the fact that he remained staunchly pro-Russian and had not aligned with either party. As Alexander remarked in March 1808: "J'avais choisi Tolstoy parce qu'il n'est pas intrigant."<sup>74</sup> Despite this, however, Tolstoy had become progressively disillusioned with the Alliance and with Napoleon's aims once he became installed at Paris as the Russian ambassador. Lehndorff wrote from St. Petersburg early in January 1808: "Le Comte Tolstoy est mécontent de sa position à Paris, parce qu'il croit d'être aperçu de l'impossibilité d'y opérer aucun lieu réel pour la Russie."<sup>75</sup> A month later the situation had worsened even further, as the Prussian ambassador noted: "Le mécontentement du Comte de Tolstoy à Paris augmente...voyant qu'à

Paris on n'avait aucun égard réel pour les ouvertures, propositions et désirs de la Russie."<sup>76</sup>

By then Napoleon realized he could not work with Tolstoi and asked for his removal. The French Emperor wrote to Alexander on 2 February 1808:

M. de Tolstoï est un brave homme, mais il est rempli de préjugés et de méfiance contre la France, et est bien loin de la hauteur des événements de Tilsit et de la nouvelle position où l'étroite amitié qui règne entre Votre Majesté et moi a placé l'univers."<sup>77</sup>

Tolstoi had been particularly cool to Napoleon's idea, mentioned to Alexander in the same letter, for a joint Franco-Russian expedition to India in order to strike at Britain.<sup>78</sup> However, it was not until after the war with Sweden had begun, and word was received that Tolstoi was collaborating with the Danish ambassador and openly mixing with persons hostile to Napoleon, that Alexander gave serious thought to replacing the brother of his influential Court Marshall. At that time the Tsar said to Caulaincourt, "Cette conduite de Tolstoï est indigne...avec cet esprit de travers cet homme peut tout arrêter."<sup>79</sup> Even so, the Emperor hesitated to blame his ambassador, preferring instead to shift the responsibility to his wife, "connue pour ses sentiments antifrçais."<sup>80</sup> The question of replacing Tolstoi was left for discussion at Erfurt and it was then that Alexander informed Napoleon of his intention to replace the Count.<sup>81</sup>

Tolstoi was not the only highly-placed official disillusioned with the Tilsit Alliance. The fact that Rumiantsev was an 'orientalist' in foreign affairs and at the same time Minister of Commerce, was also a source of difficulty for the French. As Caulaincourt remarked in 1808:

Le ministère du commerce est dans les mains du comte de Rumiantsev, c'est, on peut le dire, sa maîtresse, il disputera donc fortement comme

ministre des affaires étrangères tout ce qu'on voudra lui prendre, c'est un grand inconvénient pour traiter les affaires du commerce, de cette manière il est toujours deux contre un.<sup>82</sup>

The difficulty which the French ambassador encountered with Rumiantsev was indicative of a change then transpiring in the Russian Foreign Minister. Always considered pro-Russian, Rumiantsev had accepted the Alliance with France as being the best means of assuring Russian interests.<sup>83</sup> But by the summer of 1808 he was seeing less and less advantage for Russia from the Tilsit agreements. He had been sent to Paris before Erfurt to discuss matters of eastern policy with Napoleon. The line of thought being developed with the French Emperor was, however, no more acceptable to him than it had been to Tolstoi and the Foreign Minister left Paris in the middle of the negotiations.<sup>84</sup> The matter was left for further discussion at Erfurt.

The two Emperors met at Erfurt on 22 September 1808 and the Convention of Erfurt was signed on 12 October. The Convention stipulated that a joint offer of peace would be made to England and that the two powers would act jointly in negotiations resulting from the offer. France and Russia respectively guaranteed their mutual conquests accomplished since Tilsit and each retained whatever it had occupied. France in principle accepted Russia's annexation of Finland, Moldavia, and Wallachia, and promised in the coming negotiations with England to obtain recognition of these annexations by Great Britain. Each would assist the other in the event of a war with Austria. A new meeting would be arranged within a year in the event of failure of the peace negotiations and each agreed to respect and guarantee the remaining possessions of the Turkish Empire.<sup>85</sup>

The Erfurt Convention left unanswered two important questions. There had been no agreement on the withdrawal of French troops from Prussia

and there was no mention made of the Polish problem and Napoleon's plans for the Duchy of Warsaw. Russia's acceptance of possible French-Russian action against Austria lacked the precision found at Tilsit. In all, as Lobanov-Rostovsky has noted, "compromise veiled the mutual incompatibilities and suspicions which made this meeting very different from the meeting at Tilsit".<sup>86</sup>

The Emperors publicly went to great lengths to cover over their differences. A spectacular gala performance was staged at the theatre in Weimar, with Goethe and Wieland present, and the two Emperor's sat at the front with 34 crowned heads behind them. At one point in the play Alexander rose and ceremoniously shook hands with Napoleon, but the gesture, as well as the gifts each showered on the other, was lacking in sincerity.<sup>87</sup>

One of the main differences between Alexander's attitude at Tilsit and that at Erfurt, was his stubbornness in the negotiations. His resolve to bring back something tangible from Erfurt was forced upon him by the events and mood of Russia in the first half of 1808. A conference between Talleyrand and Alexander at Erfurt, which took place before the meeting of the Emperors, had a similar, but more startling impact.<sup>88</sup> It was the first sign that Alexander had powerful allies in France who were willing to work for the downfall of Napoleon. Talleyrand told the Emperor:

C'est à vous de sauver l'Europe et vous n'y parviendriez qu'en tenant tête à Napoléon. Le peuple français est civilisé et son souverain ne l'est pas; le souverain de la Russie est civilisé et son peuple ne l'est pas. C'est donc au souverain de la Russie d'être l'allié du peuple français.<sup>89</sup>

The Russian people could not see the underground fissures between Alexander and Napoleon. All that was evident was the public display of friendship and the outward continuation of the detested Alliance. It was

this outward semblance that leading Russians reacted to after Erfurt. Count Tolstoi, for example, did not return directly to Russia after the conference, but travelled to Vienna. It was there that a substantial coterie of self-exiled Russians led by Count A. Razumovskii, who had resigned over the Tilsit agreements, had been working against the Alliance. One salon in Vienna in particular dominated Viennese society and that was the salon of Princess Bagration. It was in her popular circle that fashions and political opinions were made, and the latter were completely anti-French.<sup>90</sup> Tolstoi was well received by this group and expressed openly his bitter anti-French sentiments.<sup>91</sup>

Vandal believed that it was from this point onward that "le cabinet autrichien se refusait plus que jamais à prendre au sérieux l'alliance franco-russe."<sup>92</sup> Tatishchev saw an even greater significance to this collaboration. He says it played a prominent part in swinging Austrian opinion away from any Franco-Russian-Austrian cooperation and hampered the settling of Balkan affairs.<sup>93</sup>

Underlying the crystallisation of anti-French feeling, and parallel to the growing pro-Russian and nationalistic sentiment of the leaders in government, there went a continued consolidation of leading administrators. Personnel changes in the central government during 1808 continued the same trend toward safe, pro-Russian bureaucrats. The Unofficial Committee, which had been disbanded before the Alliance of Tilsit, lost even more influence after 1807, as we have seen, when Kochubei was removed from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Novosiltsev ceased to be Curator of the St. Petersburg Educational District: the job went to Uvarov, who immediately began to return to a basic Russian orientation. This same declining status

of the original reformers continued in 1808 when Count P.A. Stroganov ceded his position as Assistant Minister of Internal Affairs to O.P. Kozodavlev, a conservative Russian bureaucrat from one of Russia's oldest families who under Paul had been head of the Chief Education Commission (glavnaia kommissia uchilishch).<sup>94</sup>

More importantly, Novosiltsev was forced to give up his position as Assistant Minister of Justice. To that post was appointed the Head of the Legal Committee in the Justice Ministry (komitet dlia sostavleniia zakonov), M.M. Speransky. Speransky thereby gained a firm position in the bureaucracy, but under the watchful eye of Prince P.V. Lopukhin, the Justice Minister, a well-known anti-French conservative aristocrat.<sup>95</sup> This appointment marked Alexander's intention to return to civil reform, just as Arakcheev's appointment six months earlier had indicated the Emperor's priority for military reform.

Although Speransky and Arakcheev are usually seen by historians ✓ as separate and opposite influences, representing as it were the 'dichotomy' in the 'enigmatic' character of the Emperor, the fact is that both men were part of the same movement after Tilsit towards able administrative people who had risen in the bureaucracy under Paul and who were personally familiar to the Emperor. There is one more point of similarity between the military and the civilian reformer: they would both contribute to the solidification of Russian society and the crystallization of opposition to the "Question Française". Ironically, while their contributions would have a similar effect, they were made in totally different ways and for opposite reasons.

Unlike Arakcheev, who began his career in the military service,

Speransky began his career in the civil service. Under the patronage of Prince Kurakin he entered the civil service in 1797 and in April was given the eighth rank, that of Collegiate Assessor (kollezhskii assessor), equivalent to a captaincy in the army, which conferred hereditary nobility on the bearer and his family. Barely a year later, on 1 January 1798, he was appointed Court Councillor (nadvornyi sovetnik) and on 18 November, became Collegiate Councillor (kollezhskii sovetnik), the seventh rank of the hierarchy and equivalent to a colonelcy in the military branch.<sup>96</sup>

As Ilorskii, a contemporary of Speransky, noted in his memoirs, Speransky's rapid rise in the bureaucracy was due to his remarkable ability to work, his unusually good analytical and writing ability, and his talent for becoming thoroughly familiar with a new problem in a short time.<sup>97</sup> By 1799 his administrative abilities had led to his appointment in the Bureau of the Chief of Provisions for St. Petersburg. It was there that Speransky became familiar with the Chief of Provisions - the Grand Duke and future Emperor Alexander.

Until 1807 Speransky was a bureaucrat and remnant of the reforming party led by the Unofficial Committee but his career was on the ascendant after a long period of secondary roles. He came to the personal attention of Alexander by chance in 1807 when Novosiltsev, confined to home by illness, delegated Speransky to present the weekly report of the Ministry. The Tsar was so impressed with his powers of presentation that he appointed Speransky his chief secretary and assistant. It was in this capacity that he accompanied the Emperor to Erfurt in 1808.<sup>98</sup>

In the meantime the Emperor decided to use Speransky's experience on educational matters. The Tsar's intention to reform in this area was



already known. He said in October 1807:

Notre éducation, qui est si négligée en Russie, nous donnera longtemps encore de l'occupation pour nous défaire d'une quantité de préjugés dont nous sommes esclaves....Je travaille à un changement, mais je ne puis l'opérer que lentement. Mon intention est de mettre tout sur un autre pied.<sup>99</sup>

It was later in the year, by a decree of 29 November, that Speransky first appeared, together with Golitsyn, on a commission that foreshadowed the direction of the reforms then being contemplated. At that time Alexander established a mixed commission of laymen and clergy and directed it to submit a plan for the complete overhauling of the ecclesiastical system of education.<sup>100</sup>

The last of the Church lands had been secularized under Catherine II and this had forced the government to assume the financial burden for Church activities, including the schools. Before 1706 the budget for ecclesiastic education was very low and clerical learning was one of the most abused aspects in the educational system. Under Paul, a generous man in religious matters, the budget for clerical schools was trebled.<sup>101</sup> The war with France in the pre-Tilsit period meant a shortage of funds and the reform of religious education was postponed. But ecclesiastic learning marked an important priority for Alexander by 1807: the Church schools were the lowest ones on the ladder and yet provided an increasing number of state officials.<sup>102</sup>

The Commission to which Speransky belonged presented a draft plan of reforms early in 1808 and it was approved by the Emperor. A set of regulations was issued by Imperial decree on 26 June 1808 reorganizing the ecclesiastical schools in the way which would remain in force throughout the 19th century.<sup>103</sup> The system established was parallel to the system established in 1804 for secular schools and clearly showed the continuation

of the French concept of école unique, as had been introduced into Russia by the Unofficial Committee on the basis of educational reform in Poland. Its purpose was much the same as the reforms of 1804 - to provide the necessary educated leaders for Church and state affairs.<sup>104</sup>

However beneficial and necessary these measures might have been, and regardless of the fact that they represented only the extension of principles already accepted for secular education, they were not readily accepted by the Russian public who tended to identify Speransky with the continued incursion of French influences. The denunciation of his pedagogical ideas and 'pernicious influence' on Russian youth became one of the issues in the campaign directed against him.

Speransky's work on the education commission still saw him as a secondary figure. It was only after the meeting at Erfurt that he rose to prominence in matters of administrative, financial and educational reform. While it is true that his hand can be seen in most domestic matters between 1808 and 1812, there were very real limits to his influence. The great exceptions to his activities were the military and diplomatic fields.<sup>105</sup> The opinion of many contemporaries was that his influence permeated the central administration. The contemporary Joseph de Maistre summed up this attitude when he wrote, "le grande et tout puissant Spéransky, Secrétaire-Général de l'Empire, et dans le fait premier Ministre et peut-être Ministre unique."<sup>106</sup>

Together with this went the belief that Speransky, in liaison with Talleyrand and other French officials at Erfurt, intended to introduce further reforms along French lines. Speransky had acted as a mediary between Talleyrand and Alexander at the conference and when word was received in

Russia of the meetings between the two it was widely believed that Speransky intended to introduce further reforms based on French models.<sup>107</sup> This belief among contemporaries led many subsequent historians to suggest wrongly that Alexander took Speransky to Erfurt to study the French government system.<sup>108</sup> Recent research has shown that this concept, together with the belief that Speransky yielded to the blandishments or bribery of Napoleon and Talleyrand, must be rejected as either legend or gossip.<sup>109</sup>

The important point to bear in mind is that regardless of the demonstrable relationship between Speransky, the herald of reform, and Erfurt, the stigma of French superiority, there was among Russians the belief that a close connection did exist. Those opposed to the Alliance insisted on seeing in Speransky a friend of both France and the Tilsit agreements. In their minds the Franco-Russian Alliance and reforms were intimately linked together and any further attempt to reform was regarded as yet another incursion of French influence at a moment when Russian society was rebelling against such.

There were many signs of this rebellion in 1808, as Russian society tightened against France and on behalf of the further propagation of pro-Russian and patriotic sentiments. The growth of conservative Russianism continued to manifest itself in the appearance of new publications. For instance, the first Russian journal devoted to news of Russian drama and theatre, Dramaticheskii Vestnik (Drama News) appeared in St. Petersburg 1808. Characteristically enough it was the conservative nationalists who provided the driving force: one finds there the names of Krylov, Derzhavin and Shishkov.<sup>110</sup> In 1808 Karamzin also began publishing more conservative and sentimentalist material. In that year he helped to found Aglaia, a

journal appearing in Moscow and devoted to sentimentalist stories and poems. Among his collaborators were Glinka and Merzliakov.<sup>111</sup>

Karamzin played a prominent and continuing role against the reform movement and against Speransky in particular,<sup>112</sup> but in 1808 he was not the only nobleman raising his voice in the press against further reforms. The same could be seen in the activities of General F.V. Rostopchin. A former head of the Imperial Field Chancellery under Paul, 1797-1798, later director of Russian postal services, Rostopchin had been a close collaborator of Arakcheev under Paul and was a close friend of Maria Feodorovna. It was Rostopchin who drafted the new set of army regulations, based on the Prussian models, for Paul.<sup>113</sup> In 1808 Rostopchin produced a pamphlet entitled "Thoughts Aloud on the Red Front Steps" (Mysli vslykh na krasnom kryltse). It was widely distributed in the court and government circles at Moscow and St. Petersburg and enthusiastically received.<sup>114</sup> Giving the view of the middle nobility, it showed intolerance toward the novel ideas and the new reforms, and took a stand opposed to both the Alliance with France and the incursion of any further French influence.<sup>115</sup> It represented the first attempt to elaborate and popularize the views of Russian chauvinism and to use the press and literature as a means of defeating the Alliance. Other attempts would be more sophisticated and more effective in the months and years to come.

Rostopchin met and developed a close relationship in 1808 with S.N. Glinka, an outstanding conservative who was to have an even greater impact than the general.<sup>116</sup> That year Glinka founded Russkii Vestnik (Russian Messenger), the most significant literary effort of 1808 from the point of view of the internal "Question Française" and the growing anti-French

national movement. After Vestnik Evropy Glinka's Journal was the most important publication in Russia at the time. Glinka himself is considered to be the founder of integral Russian nationalism, chauvinism, xenophobia and braggery.<sup>117</sup>

Glinka has been well-educated in French at the military school at Paul's residence, Gatchina, and was an officer in the Russian reserves. The transition which had earlier affected Karamzin was already evident in Glinka even in 1806, before the worst Russian defeats by France. At that point Glinka wrote about himself that he felt strong new emotions for his country and that others were being similarly affected:

A new thought was born in me, and not in me alone.  
It called us all to the defence of the country,  
to the defence of the tombs of our fathers....It  
was during that decisive year, spent among the  
Russian people, that I understood the spirit of our  
warriors....the Russian people were awakened to their  
country, it revealed itself to Europe; it was that which  
carried me towards a new life.<sup>118</sup>

After the war, when Alexander had returned home and the terms of the Tilsit Alliance had been made known, Glinka was beginning his new life in Moscow, which one French observer of the period described as follows:

"C'est en un mot une ville ou l'on peut observer encore les moeurs et l'esprit national."<sup>119</sup> Glinka's arrival in Moscow, and the impact of the city "with its living history of our country, its sacred annals of our past", provided the final impetus for the publication of Russkii Vestnik.<sup>120</sup> Glinka's intention when the journal appeared was to provide articles relating the history of ancient times in Russia, stories about "glorious ancestors" in order to enrich the existence of his contemporaries.<sup>121</sup> Among contemporary writers, he alluded to Karamzin's patriotic history teachings as evincing the proper principles of education.<sup>122</sup>

General Arakcheev, who always insisted on the simplicity of his origins and boasted about his lack of education, made education one of his chief passions and collected a library of more than 11,000 volumes.<sup>123</sup> If there had been any doubt about his feelings towards patriotism or the French influence, he publicly dispelled them in a letter to Glinka and the Vestnik:

I am pleased to have found, in different issues of your review, the refutation of the opinion, propagated by Voltaire and the foreigners, that our ancestors were plunged into the darkness of ignorance and barbarism, an indignant opinion, which always grieves me, because well the facts of our history prove that our past governments were not only enlightened and liberal, but even more civilized than most European governments.<sup>124</sup>

The search for narodnost which had been going on since the beginning of the century, and which is apparent in the foregoing passage, was found to exist in many different areas. Some sought it in folklore, especially the poets, authors and critics. Among the latter was A.F. Merzliakov, (1778-1830), a professor and dean of Moscow University. He was a poet-scholar and organizer of public lectures and literary societies. He translated the works of Goethe and Schiller and was a frequent contributor to the nationalist and sentimentalist publications including Vestnik Evropy, Aglaia and Russkii Vestnik.<sup>125</sup> His keen interest in Russian literature and his high regard for folklore were evident in 1808 when he wrote:

Oh, of what treasures we deprive ourselves when we neglect our own! In Russian songs we could see Russian mores and sentiments, Russian justice and Russian achievements.<sup>126</sup>

This thrust of national sentiment developed under the impact of the military and civil reforms, the continuing wars in Sweden and the Balkans, and the economically disastrous Continental System. To different

degrees and in different ways each of these influences acted as an impetus to Russia's movement along an increasingly nationalistic path. What the outcome would be was dimly visible at the close of 1808 when the King and Queen of Prussia visited St. Petersburg. They were received with a warmth and hospitality far out of proportion to their reduced status. As Tatishchev remarked, the Prussian monarchs were treated to "une série of fêtes magnifiques" by the Russian court.<sup>127</sup> It should be remembered that Prussia had only recently been denigrated in these same circles, because in 1807 the Russian nobility felt their country was unnecessarily involving itself with France on Prussia's behalf. This feeling had heightened even further in the pre-Tilsit days when it was believed that the lack of Prussian cooperation had seriously hampered Russian military operations at Friedland. Hence the warm welcome of the royal couple was interpreted as a tacit but hostile demonstration against France.<sup>128</sup>

The reception of the Prussian rulers, as well as the hospitality accorded the English, were indications of the degree to which the majority of Russians had rejected Alexander's solution to the external "Question Française". The Emperor's chances of gaining popular support for his policy, based on cooperation with France and a quick acquisition of Finland, faded away as the war with Sweden dragged on, and as the economic effects of adherence to the Continental System began to be felt. The Tsar's evolving internal policy of consolidation worked against the Alliance as well. The appointment of more conservative and nationalist leaders complemented the growing conservatism in the national movement. Opposition tightened and, as Speransky's first reform measures were undertaken, signs of a crystallization appeared.

After Erfurt Russian statesmen began to undergo a very definite and noticeable change in their attitude toward France. Almost unanimously the key ministers seriously questioned if anything worthwhile could come of the Alliance. The proposed war with Austria gave considerable cause for concern and Napoleon's reluctance to settle Prussian and Polish affairs contributed to their apprehensions. Finally, Napoleon's troubles in the Peninsular War tarnished his image of military invincibility.

The disillusionment among those who had accepted the idea of an Alliance was a preparatory step toward the merging of the external and internal policies. Outwardly, Alexander's continuation of the war against Sweden and his reassurance of support against Austria represented adherence to the agreements of Tilsit and Erfurt. However, as Schladen quite correctly commented in December 1808, "Malgré toutes ces apparences il règne une grande incertitude sur la nature des liaisons qui subsistent entre la France et la Russie."<sup>129</sup>



## Chapter IV

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## Chapter V

### 1809-1810: Russia at the Crossroads - the Merging of External and Internal Policy

The year 1809 opened inauspiciously for the Russian government. The war with Sweden continued to deprive Alexander and his advisors of the reward they hoped for and, as the possibility of a conflict with Austria loomed, opposition to Alexander's foreign policy intensified. The prospect of a further involvement on Napoleon's behalf took on even greater significance because of the Polish question. Since Erfurt the Tsar had not been able to bring either the Swedish or Turkish conflict to a conclusion and the Russian forces were still on the northern and southern extremities of the Empire. To make matters worse in the Russian mind, Polish troops in the Duchy of Warsaw were being organized under Prince Poniatowsky to help France against Austria. The Russian leadership considered any aggrandizement of Polish strength to be a serious development. The thought of the outspoken and anti-Russian Poniatowsky leading a Polish army on Russia's frontiers was seen as an imminent danger.<sup>1</sup>

The decision over intervention in Austria placed Alexander at the crossroads with respect to the external "Question Française". Until 1809 the wars with England and Sweden had not proven to be costly ventures and the Emperor had been able to follow a pro-Russian policy and at the same time cooperate with Napoleon. But the thought of a strengthened Poland, at a moment when Russian armies were engaged on two fronts, made it impossible to

cooperate with Napoleon and still foster national interests. Alexander decided he could not send his remaining forces into a full scale operation against Austria. By deciding in favour of limited action to safeguard Russian interests he threw overboard the idea of joint Franco-Russian pacification of Europe. As external policy evolved in a pro-Russian direction it merged with the internal policy of consolidation.

In going to war against Austria Alexander appeared outwardly to be respecting the Erfurt agreement and to be continuing the policy of cooperation with France. When, at the same time, Speransky began a series of internal reforms, opposition to the internal and external "Question Française" merged. It was then that the effects of Alexander's policy of internal consolidation became evident. By 1810 many of the leaders who had risen in the days since Tilsit joined with the court opposition and the leaders of the national movement to form a broad, crystallizing front to both aspects of the "Question Française".

The Tsar's anxiety over public opinion and the continuing unpopularity of his policies prompted him to take the unusual step early in 1809 of founding Russia's first government newspaper, the Severnaia Pochta (Northern Post), a biweekly publication under the control of the Department of External Affairs.<sup>2</sup> The aim of the paper, under the editorship of the Assistant Minister O.P. Kozadavlev, was made clear in Alexander's correspondence with Arakcheev. In instructing the Minister of War how his department could most effectively contribute to the Pochta, Alexander wrote that the purpose was to communicate to the public news of "agreeable events" and to keep public opinion as far as possible in support of the "beneficent policies of the government."<sup>3</sup>

The Emperor's need for effective propaganda was never greater. He was trying to find a way to maintain the Alliance on the official level, while avoiding a large scale participation in a way which he believed to be a dangerous venture, and which the people of Russia would not support. At the same time the Emperor was being pressured by Napoleon who urgently tried to obtain a firm commitment for military cooperation. Between 5 and 29 March the French Emperor addressed eight separate appeals to Alexander asking for aid.<sup>4</sup>

The court continued to exert pressure on behalf of Austria and against involvement. Since January Prince Schwartzenberg had been in St. Petersburg for the purpose of getting Russia to stop supporting France. The ambassador found much sympathy for his cause and had some basis for being hopeful. He was told by the Imperial Mother:

Une marche combinée avec calme et sagesse, mais exécutée avec rapidité et la plus grande énergie dans tous les détails feront bientôt ici l'effet le plus salubre.<sup>5</sup>

Alexander appeared to accept the same line of reasoning for he later said to Schwartzenberg that Russia would do nothing in the event of a swift and decisive Austrian victory against France.<sup>6</sup> When, on 24 March, Napoleon informed Alexander of the impending attack the Tsar urged Caulaincourt to caution the French ruler not to go too far:

La destruction de la monarchie autrichienne serait une calamité pour l'Europe, un malheur même pour notre alliance...c'est qu'il faut, pour le maintien de notre alliance, pour que nous vivions en bonne harmonie, qu'il reste un tiers en Europe indépendant de l'un et de l'autre.<sup>7</sup>

To preserve a semblance of participation in the action against Austria, and to keep a watchful eye on Polish affairs, an army was concentrated

on the Galician border. The force consisted of four divisions of infantry, one of cavalry and one reserve infantry division for a total of 60,000 men. Its command had been offered to Kutuzov but he refused to take part in a war to aid Napoleon and it went to Prince Golitsyn.<sup>8</sup> Despite the mobilisation, however, by the end of April there had been no concerted action by Russia and the French demanded to know why. Alexander pleaded that the affair in Finland was not yet finished:

Je ne puis donc pas arrêter mes opérations militaires et elles sont continuer jusqu'à ce que je voie de véritables dispositions de faire la paix....Mes troupes sont concentrées sur la frontière de la Galicie et pourrant agir sous peu.<sup>9</sup>

By then relations between the countries had deteriorated even further at the personal level as Prince P.M. Volkonskii, an Aide-de-Camp of Alexander in Paris, joined the ranks of the discontented leaders. In a manner recalling the actions of Tolstoi a few months earlier Volkonskii refused Napoleon's invitation to follow the French army to Austria. Outwardly incensed at this refusal, Alexander nevertheless made excuses to Caulaincourt and pleaded Volkonskii's health.<sup>10</sup> Both the Tsar and Rumiantsev wanted to maintain, on the surface at least, adherence to the Tilsit and Erfurt agreements. For Rumiantsev, who hoped to acquire new territory and to gain some advantage in the Turkish affair, there was still the prospect of future gains. He bluntly told Caulaincourt in May: "Je tiens à notre alliance. Je la crois avantageuse pour vous comme pour nous."<sup>11</sup>

Such arguments were having less and less effect on the Emperor, partly because of a significant shift which had taken place in the Tsar's thinking, a shift towards conservatism which had already been visible in

his first appointments after Tilsit of decidedly more conservative government leaders. Caulaincourt, who was in an excellent position to note this change, gave evidence of the transformation as he tried to turn the new circumstances to advantage. He decided to approach the Tsar on the subject of the Austrian war in a new way in 1809, and began for the first time to explain the Tilsit and Erfurt agreements as a defence of established governments against subversive passions. To Alexander the war with Austria was described by Caulaincourt in the following terms:

La guerre qui s'engageait n'est que la continuation de la lutte ouverte depuis dix-sept ans entre les principes d'ordre, de conservation sociale, et les passions subversives.....Napoléon se fait le défenseur de tous les gouvernements contre l'Autriche.<sup>12</sup>

Caulaincourt was openly optimistic about explaining the treaty to Alexander in this way, conscious as he was of the growing conservatism in Emperor's line of thinking. He wrote to Champagny, the French Foreign Minister:

Je fis sentir à Sa Majesté que l'Autriche s'était servie des mêmes moyens que les gens qui avaient fait la Révolution en France; qui si ses projets eussent réussi, non seulement elle n'aurait pu maîtriser les événements après avoir rompu tous les liens qui attachent le peuple au souverain....Je dis à Sa Majesté que l'exaspération d'une partie des salons n'était pas dirigé contre la France ou son souverain, mais contre celui qui le premier avait comprimé la licence du siècle, l'effervescence de toutes les têtes, et arrêté le torrent révolutionnaire qui menaçait tous les trônes et l'ordre social.<sup>13</sup>

As Russia had informally stated to the Austrians, it had no intention of full-scale cooperation with France against Austria. The Russian population, however, did not know this. On the surface it looked as though the government was cooperating with France against Russian interests. When the Polish forces under Poniatowsky moved into Galicia, Russians became

even more apprehensive. To many it seemed as if Russia were on the verge of losing the results of three partitions. The French emissary describes the mood of the capital when news was received of the Polish march:

La société on prenait occasion pour attaquer plus vivement la politique d'Alexandre; c'était donc, disait-elle, pour en arriver à de tels résultats que le Tsar avait mis sa main dans celle de l'usurpateur, accepté d'être son auxiliaire et son complice.<sup>14</sup>

Even Rumiantsev, who outwardly continued to support the Alliance, was privately voicing his concern over the Polish developments.<sup>15</sup>

As a result of the situation created by the Polish advance, the Russian forces under Tolstoi were ordered into Austria proper. The result was considerable dissention and a personal attack on Rumiantsev. Schladen, the Prussian emissary to St. Petersburg, describes what happened when the Russian army marched 'to help France':

Un pasquin contre le comte de Rumiantsev très spirituellement écrit en vers Russes a été trouvé repondû dans le jardin de la cour, et un autre qui attaque le personne de ce Ministre d'une manière très sanglante a été affiché à l'obélisque posé en honneur de son père dans la cour au Palais de marbre.<sup>16</sup>

Although this affair had no serious consequences, it serves as a positive indication of the connection between the "Question Française" and the combination of influences then affecting Russian life. The criticism of Russia's French policy through an attack on the Foreign Minister, by a member of the literati writing in verse, with strong religious overtones, represents the fusion of several different aspects of the national anti-French phenomenon.

Despite the allegations of the opposition that Russia was submitting to Napoleonic designs, the fact remains that when the forces moved into Austrian territory they were ordered to do so in a limited way, to avoid



pitched battles with the Austrian army, and to separate the Polish forces from the Austrian. In short, they were ordered to take no hostile action against the Austrians. For their part, the Austrians reciprocated this attitude in their own actions. When by mistake some Austrian guns fired on Russians and killed two soldiers, the Austrians, recognizing their mistake, sent an official apology to Russia.<sup>17</sup> At Cracow the Austrians invited the Russians to occupy the city ahead of the Poles and there were numerous instances of collaboration among Russian and Austrian officers.<sup>18</sup>

This cooperation was not, however, seen by the Russian public. The more the Russian government seemed to become involved in the Austrian affair the more the public opposed government policy. Each Austrian success was applauded and each French or Polish victory condemned. When word was received in St. Petersburg that the Austrians had won a victory over Poniatowsky there was open rejoicing in the salons and press except, of course, by Alexander and the government officials who were chagrined, outwardly at least, at the French and Polish set-back.<sup>19</sup> The Russian public was even more demonstrably pleased when Archduke Charles of Austria broke through the Napoleonic lines. Schladen wrote from the Russian capital at the time:

Ici l'on manifeste d'une manière très prononcée  
l'interêt qu'on porte aux succès des Autrichiens,  
et dans toutes les sociétés de la ville on célèbre  
la victoire qu'on suppose avoir été remportée par eux.<sup>20</sup>

On the other hand, when the Poles occupied the city of Cracow, with the Russians in it, the public in St. Petersburg was incensed. Caulaincourt sent Napoleon a report on some of the conversations he heard in different salons on that subject. On 19 August, for example, he heard the following:

L'Empereur est bon, mais bête, et Rumiantsev un imbécile; ils ne savent jamais prendre leur parti: en faisant la guerre, ils n'avaient qu'à la commencer par s'emparer de la Galicie; les Polonais ne seraient pas venus nous la disputer. Il faut faire l'Empereur moine, il entretiendra la paix du couvent; la Narishchkine /Alexander's Polish mistress/ religieuse, elle servira à l'aumônier et au jardinier, surtout s'ils sont Polonais. Quant à Rumiantsev, il faut le faire marchande de kwass /traditional alcoholic beverage of the lower classes/.<sup>21</sup>

The public display of association with the Austrian cause, like the reception accorded earlier to the Prussian monarchs, was a source of embarrassment for the government. The contrast between the official policy of the government and the inclinations of the Russian people were never more clear. The Prussian ambassador to St. Petersburg wrote at the time:

Le public se réjouit au succès des Autrichiens, mais le Gouvernement fait l'impossible pour le décourager et pour représenter les affaires de la Monarchie Autrichienne comme désespérées.<sup>22</sup>

The result was yet another crisis for the Tsar. The Tilsit system appeared to work against the interests of Russians: "La conséquence de cet état des choses est que sa position devient de jour en jour plus critique."<sup>23</sup>

In one of his frequent reflections on the subject of internal opposition Alexander said to Caulaincourt:

Les gens qui n'ont que de l'imagination sans jugement trouvent commode de blâmer ce qu'ils ne peuvent comprendre et ce qu'ils ne veulent pas admirer....Je pense comme vous sur la prépondérance que veut exercer une partie de la société; aussi ne ménagerai-je pas ceux qui sortent des bornes des convenances.<sup>24</sup>

Meanwhile, the French ambassador was trying to persuade the court of the successes of the French armies and the possible advantages to Russia. But his task was made more difficult by Napoleon whose actions in Austria were cause for suspicion and who appeared to be deliberately neglecting

Caulaincourt. The French ambassador did not always agree with Napoleon and there had already been rumours of his recall in February. In May Schladen wrote:

C'est avec surprise que l'on observe le silence absolu que l'Empereur Napoleon garde envers son ambassadeur ici, lequel depuis le depart de ce Monarque de Paris n'en a reçu aucune nouvelle directe....On se perd en conjectures sur la cause de ce silence, les uns veulent y voir une preuve de mécontentement contre la Russie et ses opérations tardives, d'autres y trouvent un signe d'orgueil pour prouver qu'il peut se passer de secours étrangers.<sup>25</sup>

There were actions taken by Napoleon in the Principalities and in Austria that were cause for alarm even for the Tsar and his advisors. It was known, for example, that French agents were working in Constantinople on behalf of Turkey, contrary to the Erfurt Convention. As the Prussian ambassador noted:

Cette demarche au moment même, où la France a promis à l'Empereur sa médiation et la possession de la Wallachie suffisait - il me semble - pour faire connaître la duplicité du nouvel allié de la Russie.<sup>26</sup>

At the same time, affairs between France and Poland gave continued cause for concern. During the course of the war in Austria Napoleon seemed ready to make an accomodation with Poland and his relationship with Poniatowsky rankled Alexander. He complained to the French ambassador in July 1809:

Il est trop politique, trop bon juge des intérêts des nations pour ne pas savoir que cet ordre de choses ne peut me convenir...Je me suis trop expliqué d'avance pour que l'on ait pu avoir un doute sur mon opinion à cet égard et je l'ai fait dans l'espoir d'éviter toutes les tracasseries. L'empereur Napoléon peut-il douter de moi? J'ai au moins deux guerres sur les bras pour lui; mon pays n'est riche qu'en productions et ne peut les exporter parce que l'une de ces guerres attire les forces anglaises contre mes ports. On

brûle mes établissements, on menace mes côtes,  
 en un mot, l'empereur ne l'ignore pas, en prospérité,  
 de mes Etats en souffre...Enfin, j'ai fait mes preuves  
 pour votre système, et le résultat de cela serait  
 qu'on organiserait une province française sur ma  
 frontière.<sup>27</sup>

There was no abatement from the French side, nevertheless, and in August Alexander was still quite concerned because of the publicity around the Polish question, as well as affairs in Galicia, and because of "articles des journaux qui parlèrent ouvertement de la restauration de la Pologne."<sup>28</sup> Few issues could arouse the emotions of Russians to the degree that the thought of a restored Poland did. In August the crisis point had been reached. At that time Schladen wrote from the Russian capital:

La Monarque et son Ministre [Rumiantsev] sont ici également incapables d'une résolution courageuse, gagner du tems leur paroît gain se cause, et pêcher dans l'eau trouble...la nation menaçent le Gouvernement d'une révolution si bientôt il ne revient à une marche plus conforme à l'intérêt national.<sup>29</sup>

So serious had the situation become that rumour was rampant throughout the western regions of the country about the abdication of Alexander and a Napoleonic invasion of Russia. So widespread was the rumour that it even reached Vienna.<sup>30</sup> The Russian government was forced to take strong measures "to caution the public against false rumours invented by misfortune". The Governing Senate issued a decree to prevent the population from fleeing the frontier regions. The peasants on the frontiers "taken by their simplicity to believing in false rumours that are unfounded", were leaving their domiciles without permission. The measures were harsh: those caught would be sent to the army; those incapable of fighting would be sent to work in the fortresses. Any members of the nobility aiding and abetting their escape would have their property confiscated.<sup>31</sup>

By late summer the Russian government was in dire need of some tangible sign of value from the Tilsit arrangement. For a short time developments in the Swedish war held out the possibility of such a realization. Early in the year Arakcheev had taken the daring step of ordering troops to march across the ice and attack the Aaland islands. Although the manoeuver was criticized by the General Staff, Bagration succeeded and reached Aaland on 4 March - the Swedes called for an armistice. Shortly afterward Arakcheev arrived with considerable peace terms: he demanded cessation of the islands forever and an end to Sweden's participation in the British system.<sup>32</sup> The negotiators accepted the terms and Alexander was so pleased with his Minister of War that he wrote: "I cannot thank you enough for your hard work and devotion: my own devotion to you is just as sincere, and every day I value your worth more."<sup>33</sup>

In the next letter a ukase was enclosed giving Arakcheev full powers over the whole of Finland.<sup>34</sup> When Alexander arrived at the Finnish Diet at Borgo the War Minister, who had demonstrated himself to be the prime organizer, had already promoted Bagration, Barclay de Tolly and Shuvalov.<sup>35</sup> By Easter the Emperor had returned in triumph with his Minister of War. The success of the crossing of the Gulf was rightly attributed to him alone, since he had undertaken it in the teeth of the almost unanimous opposition of the generals. As a feat of arms it was widely compared to Suvorov's brilliant march across the Alps during the Italian campaign of 1799. Alexander rewarded him with the Order of St. Andrew, the highest decoration that could be awarded to someone outside the Imperial family.<sup>36</sup>

The jubilation was slightly premature, for the Swedish government refused at first to accept the terms and it was only later, at Fredericksham

on 12 September, 20 months after the invasion, that peace with Sweden was finally achieved. Alexander was quick to capitalize on the event both externally and internally. Following the signing of the Treaty he wrote to Napoleon:

C'est maintenant que le système d'union avec la France acquiert aux yeux de ma nation tout son crédit. Que je serai heureux d'apprendre que Votre Majesté a terminé de même avec l'Autriche.<sup>37</sup>

France came to terms with Austria, and the Peace of Schönbrunn was signed on 14 October. Russia received Galicia and Saxony, although she had hoped for much more.<sup>38</sup>

Following the signing of the Fredricksham Treaty on 17 September 1809 and the Peace of Schönbrunn, there seemed to exist for a short time the aura of fruitful cooperation between France and the Russian government. Russia's acquisition of Finland, Galicia and Saxony produced the belief among foreign observers that at last the tangible benefits of the Alliance, which had eluded Russia for two and one half years, were now coming to fruition. Schladen wrote from the Russian capital on 17 November:

Les évènements des derniers dix semaines ont de beaucoup changé l'état des choses, et semblent avoir justifié - pour la Nation Russe aumoins - le système de l'Empereur, et le part qu'il a pris à la guerre contre l'Autriche.<sup>39</sup>

By the end of the year there was some basis for further hope as the Polish question seemed to be on the verge of being settled as well. Toward the end of the year a convention was worked out in St. Petersburg between Rumiantsev and Caulaincourt. The convention recognized the special relationship between Poland and Russia and the two powers agreed that Poland would never be reconstituted.<sup>40</sup> The treaty was not signed immediately, however, as Alexander was out of the capital to visit his sister at Tver.

In the meantime, the apparent harmony between the two powers showed itself to be very fragile indeed. The opportunity for cooperation between the two Emperor's which, for the first time since July 1807, seemed to exist late in 1809, was placed under a cloud of suspicion by the French position regarding Finland and Russia's attitude towards Austria. Russian diplomatic circles were not happy with the French attitude toward Finland. Russia maintained, following the signing of the Fredricksham Treaty, that Sweden would have to negotiate its adherence to the Continental System with France. However, until this was accomplished in January 1810, by the Treaty of Paris, the French withheld recognition of Russia's acquisition of Finland.<sup>41</sup>

For its part, France was not happy with Russia's participation in the war against Austria. Napoleon was particularly disturbed over the cooperation between Russian and Austrian military personages. He angrily stated so in a letter to Champagny on 21 December 1809.<sup>42</sup> When the accusation was transmitted to Alexander, the Emperor, as a token to the French, made an investigation into the operation of the Russian forces in Austria, notably those of General Gochakov. The Tsar informed Caulaincourt that he intended to reprimand the general, but the reprimand never took place.<sup>43</sup> Vandal somewhat caustically, but on the whole correctly, commented concerning Russian aid during the Austrian campaign: "A défaut de services effectifs, Alexandre nous payait en paroles."<sup>44</sup>

Russia's default on the Austrian question marked a change in the official policy regarding the external "Question Française". Alexander's return to reform, and Speransky's measures in education, administration, finance and law provoked a deepening reaction to the internal "Question Française" which further undermined the Tsar's policy of official friendship.

The return to internal reforms noticed with regard to the military after Tilsit went together with educational reforms. The changes in the ecclesiastical schools in 1808 represented the continuation of reforms already begun earlier. The new measures adopted by Speransky in 1809-1810 were partly an extension of measures taken previously by the Unofficial Committee and not surprisingly they had met with the same response. Both Alexander and Speransky realized that reforms of the education system were a prerequisite for further changes and were closely linked with noble responsibility. There could be no doubt as to where Speransky stood in 1809 on the connection between education and state reforms:

The kingdoms of this world have their periods of rise and fall, and in every period the structure of government must be compatible with the educational level of the citizens upon which the state rests. Whenever the form of government falls below or rises above that level, the state will be shaken by greater or lesser convulsions. In general this is what explains the political upheavals which in ancient times and in our own days changed the course of governments. This also explains the failures which often accompany the most beneficial political reforms when public education has not adequately prepared men's minds.<sup>45</sup>

The immediate necessity for further educational reform was that despite the fundamental changes in education 1804-1805, and despite the examination act of 1806, there had not been a considerable improvement in the quality of trained personnel. The law of 1806, which required a gymnasium leaving certificate or an examination, for entrance into the civil service, had led to a gradual increase in the enrolment of students from the privileged classes, but they were still a small minority.<sup>46</sup> At the beginning of 1809 the Tsar complained publicly about the gentry's lack of interest in academic schooling: "To our great sorrow we observe that the



nobility, which is preferred above every other class, participated less than others in this useful undertaking."<sup>47</sup>

It was only after the reforms of 1809-1810 that the number of higher class pupils increased considerably. By then the underlying movement of ideas and the struggle for national identity were compatible with the official attitude. Gradually general education, which was not only intellectually taxing but socially degrading, gave way to classical education, which was more appealing to the nobility. By the end of Alexander's reign the majority of secondary and university pupils were from the privileged classes.<sup>48</sup> Great impetus was given to this development by Speransky's reforms of 1809-1810 which linked together education and advancement in the public service.

The Education Act of 3 April 1809 was entitled, "Concerning Rules for Promotion in Rank in the Civil Service and for the Examinations in the Sciences for Promotion to College Assessor and State Councilor."<sup>49</sup> With his reform of these two positions, Speransky ended a very important noble privilege. The practice was suspended whereby the court titles of College Assessor and State Councilor, conferred by the monarch on young people of aristocratic families, automatically entitled their holders to enter the state service respectively at the fourth or fifth grade, thus exempting them from many years of work at lower levels.<sup>50</sup> Speransky's second decree, of 6 August 1809, prescribed study at a university, or a written entrance examination, as a condition for attaining the higher levels in the civil service. The nobility, who had until then little emphasized education, were upset considerably.<sup>51</sup>

Already in the 'preliminary rules' of 1803 it has been announced that after the expiration of five years no person who had not completed

a course of instruction in some public or private school should be appointed to any post in the civil service which required a knowledge of law or other subjects. A University degree already entitled its holder to a definite position in the scale of ranks; a doctor, for example, had the eighth rank, a magistrate the ninth, a candidate the tenth, and an ordinary graduate the twelfth.<sup>52</sup> The effect of the ukase of 1809 was to make the possession of a university diploma a condition for promotion, and to compel certain classes of civil servants, if not already in possession of such a diploma, to submit to a special examination in subjects of general knowledge, in order to obtain the right of advancement to the higher ranks of the civil hierarchy.<sup>53</sup>

Speransky's changes in the educational laws represented a number of things. In the broadest sense they represented a further extension of Enlightenment principles. In a narrower sense they represented the realization on the part of government of the importance of bureaucracy in the service of the state. The reaction to Speransky's reforms was swift and harsh. As the conservative Karamzin pointed out, "The Examination Act was everywhere greeted with sarcastic ridicule."<sup>54</sup>

If the reply to the educational changes was immediate, it was also complex, involving a number of different lines of reasoning. Russian ultraconservatives were violently opposed to both the French influence and to Speransky, the former because it represented the effects of the Enlightenment and the latter because he seemed to be preparing the way for the corruption of Russian leaders. The urbane Joseph de Maistre, a spokesman for this group, gave a typical response to Speransky's imagined influence in education when he wrote in 1809 that the "fils de prêtre" and those like him "perdront

l'Empereur comme ils en ont perdu tant d'autres."<sup>55</sup>

For others the educational reforms represented an additional bureaucratic incursion on the rights and privileges of the ruling classes. This attitude was based on the fact that Speransky's measures had, in essence, restored the Petrine bond between education and state service. To the nobility, which over the preceeding half century had achieved its most prominent and duty-free status, this represented an intolerable regression.<sup>56</sup>

Undoubtedly the most common reaction of Russians, encompassing all of the others within it, was the belief that these measures represented the continuing incursion of the detested French influence and were to be construed as positive proof that Speransky had fallen under the Napoleonic spell at Erfurt. In view of the steady erosion of the peace by Napoleon's threats to reconstitute an independent Poland, the court was in a defensive mood. Unable to attack the autocrat directly the ruling class vented its irritation on Speransky.<sup>57</sup> Its reaction to Speransky produced an approbrium so great, as Raeff pointed out, that some of the nobility wanted to see the "Francophone tyrant hanged."<sup>58</sup>

Speransky continued his drive to develop better trained civil servants by organizing two schools to educate them - the polytechnical institute and the lycée at Tsarskoe Selo late in 1810.<sup>59</sup> The latter in particular became a major channel through which reformist ideas were to penetrate the Russian aristocracy.<sup>60</sup> On this occasion, however, the opponents of reform had a friendly ear in the Minister of Education. The persistent movement within the bureaucracy towards more nationalistic and conservative leaders is also to be found in educational matters with the elevation of

Count Aleksei Razumovskii as Minister of Education. Razumovskii, brother of the disgruntled former ambassador to Vienna, as well as a friend and confidant of de Maistre, replaced Zavadovskii, and education began to slip away from further reform. De Maistre wrote to Razumovskii in 1810 expressing the view that Speransky intended through educational reforms to bring up a generation that would subvert the traditional order of autocracy in Russia.<sup>61</sup> This coincided with the emergence into public view of Admiral Shishkov, a Francophobe and spokesman for a "genuinely Russian" education based on Orthodoxy and Slavic law rather than French and natural law.<sup>62</sup> By this time Speransky had already moved into administrative, legal and fiscal reform as well, and the reception to these reforms was similar to that accorded the educational changes.

With regard to the "Question Française", one of the greatest political misjudgments of Alexander and Speransky was to keep secret all preparations about the new decrees for reform and reorganisation of the central agencies. In the mind of the nobility, the changes in the Ministries and central institutions, which emerged in piecemeal fashion during 1810, appeared to be part of a grand design for rationalizing the organs of Russian government. The Emperor's decision not to consult with the leaders at court, and especially the fact that the intended measures were never discussed in the Council of Ministers, gave to the reforms an aura of secrecy which, in turn, implied a seriousness that the proposed changes did not deserve. As a result, even moderates were alarmed over the apparent growth of French and Enlightenment influences. The way was paved for further opposition to reform in other areas and a powerful impetus given to the merging of various opposition groups.

Speransky's plan was commanded and carried out in absolute secrecy. The paper, to which the Tsar and Speransky put the final touches in the closing weeks of 1809, was only a draft and the country knew nothing of it. Only four men - Kochubei, Saltykov, Lopukhin and Rumiantsev - were aware of the full content of the proposals. So secret were they that on the evening of 27 December, only four days before the first measures were announced, Alexander showed Arakcheev the titles of the chapters for the first time.<sup>63</sup> The text of the draft was not made public: it went into the Emperor's private archives and would not be published for several decades. There is no record left to tell us of the Tsar's private feelings about the document.<sup>64</sup> The only indication the court and government leaders had of the scope of the intended reforms was what became evident through the Imperial decrees early in 1810.

Although much attention has been paid to Speransky's project, the only features relevant to the present discussion are those which were made public and actually became law. On the whole Speransky did not dare to come out openly in the role of an avowed constitutionalist. He hoped to preserve the real "autocratic constitution of the state", which by various statutes would develop gradually into a "true monarchical rule" compatible with the spirit of the times. He hoped that his reform would serve as a transitional step toward the serious changes of the state.<sup>65</sup> In some respects the changes Speransky introduced were a continuation of the trend toward administrative reform established in the pre-Tilsit period, while in other regards they were an innovation.

There were several important changes in the Ministries: State Treasury, started by Paul, but abolished in 1802, was now re-established;

State Controller was made responsible for public accounts; Directorate of Communications was made responsible for all transportation; Ministry of Internal Affairs was split in two; Ministry of Police was created for the first time and made responsible for public security and public health; Ministry of Commerce was abolished. The legislation of 1810 raised the total number of Ministries and central administrations (glavnoe upravlenie) enjoying the same status to eleven.<sup>66</sup>

The growth of the bureaucracy represented by the expansion of the central administrations gave rise to the same fears that had appeared in 1802 when the Ministries were originally established. Many regarded the Ministers as so many 'despots' limiting the rule of the autocrat. Even more startling in this regard was creation of the Council of State (Gosudarstvennyi Sovet) which was to become the supreme advisory body on legislation, made up of appointed elder statesmen. The most important draft laws were to be discussed by it and the machinery was to be operated by the Imperial Secretary.<sup>67</sup>

In the face of no preliminary discussion or consultation, and in the absence of any comprehensive document outlining the government's intentions, all the leaders of opinion could do was to speculate on the direction of reforms. Schladen noted at the time that the court believed the new measures would be accompanied by additional taxes, either direct or indirect.<sup>68</sup>

The introduction of the State Council was not as readily accepted as some contemporaries and historians would have us believe. For a long time it was said that the Russian nobility saw it as a way to influence further the making of policy.<sup>69</sup> Indeed, Arakcheev's acceptance of the

Presidency of the War Department on the Council was motivated by a desire to "be boss, rather than have a boss over me."<sup>70</sup> Such persons were disappointed when they found that their power was not as great as they had hoped, owing to the incompleteness of the reforms. Far more typical was the conservative reaction which opposed some aspects of the State Council on the grounds that it sounded like a form of national representation.<sup>71</sup> Admiral Chichagov, who became President of the Commerce Department in the Council, criticized the measures as concealed moves aimed at destroying the political and social influence of the aristocracy.<sup>72</sup>

A reaction to Speransky's constitutional and legal projects in 1810 could thus be anticipated. He had been head of the commission for the codification of laws since 1808 and it was in this capacity that he accompanied Alexander to the Finnish Diet at Borgo in 1810. Having annexed Finland, Alexander intended to grant it autonomy and a constitution. The constitution was Speransky's work and was initially intended as a preliminary step to the development of a constitution for the whole of Russia.<sup>73</sup> Although the latter connection would not be known for several years, the appearance of a constitution for Finland was by itself sufficient to alarm the conservative opposition. They regarded the measure as an application of French natural law and yet another consequence of the Tilsit Alliance.<sup>74</sup> It is not surprising that Speransky's attempt to introduce a code of Russian law based on French models met with the same reception. When his first two parts of the proposed code were presented in 1810 to the Council of State they were severely criticized as a mere copy of Napoleonic legislation, far too hastily completed. They never came into force.<sup>75</sup>

Together with the educational, administrative and legal reforms

went the first measures of fiscal reform. These were made necessary by the continued deterioration of the economic life of the country. Schladen gave an indication of the situation at the time when he wrote:

L'attention du Gouvernement paroît dans ce moment être fixée sur les finances, et l'on suppose qu'il s'occupe dans un grand travail pour arrêter la laisse rapide et progressive du cours de change, la dépréciation excessive des papiers de banque qui en résulte.<sup>76</sup>

However necessary and immediate reforms of Russia's finances undoubtedly were, Russians were apprehensive about the economy and in a sour frame of mind. As Tarle noted,

During December 1809 and January 1810 great anxiety prevailed at the Russian court....The more strictly Napoleon enforced the Continental Blockade, the more intense became the hatred felt for him by the entire nobility, and in particular the large land-owning aristocracy.<sup>77</sup>

Schladen was even more specific about the apprehensions of the nobility and their anticipation of new taxes when he wrote in December 1809:

Le public, toujours disposé à préjuger les résolutions de l'administration, suppose qu'un des moyens qu'elle emploiera pour parvenir à ce but salulaire, sera un impôt direct sur les biensfonds ainsi qu'une augmentation des droits sur les exportations et importations.<sup>78</sup>

The way was prepared for financial reform in 1810 when A.D. Gurev became Minister of Finance. Speransky, a member of the Commerce Department in the new Council of State, presented his plan there early in 1810.<sup>79</sup> Similar to the technique used for bureaucratic reform, the complete text of the reform plan was not made known. All the public saw were the individual measures as they were made law. The paper ruble (assignat) was recognized as a state debt and would be completely redeemed: a limit of 577 million rubles was set for the amount allowed into circulation. State expenditures



would be reduced by twenty million rubles and additional taxes were to be imposed to supply the balance of the budgetary deficit. A public loan was to be floated in order to build up a fund for the redemption of the assignats and state domains were to be put up for sale for this purpose as well. The relative values of silver and copper were set by law.<sup>80</sup> More important for immediate purposes, however, was the abolition of the poll tax and its replacement with a land tax.<sup>81</sup>

Two issues provoked an outcry, as might be expected, from the enraged nobility. First, the sale of state domains could be made to anyone and the title of the land was to be conferred on any purchaser, noble or non-noble. Second, the institution of land tax was a new burden for the privileged classes. Both aspects of the plan were considered to be an effort on the part of an upstart bureaucrat to lower the social and political prestige of the landed nobility.<sup>82</sup> Schladen gave a clear indication of their opposition when he wrote on 20 February 1810:

Le public est très mécontent des nouvelles impositions qu'on vient d'établir et loin de partager jusqu'ici les espérances du Gouvernement il se prononce ouvertement contre ses mesures de finance.<sup>83</sup>

The combined measures undertaken in the course of the 1809-1810 reforms - education, administration, codification and finances - thus all met with the same, or nearly the same, reaction. They served as a focal point for discontented opposition of every persuasion and created a defiant frame of mind among the leading circles. It was this mood which served as the background for continued and increasingly serious opposition to the government and the system it had attempted to install after Tilsit.

The attitude of Russians toward France was not exclusively

conditioned by the reaction to external or internal policies being followed by the government. To a large degree it was also the result of the continuation of the same basic trends in the press, literary and intellectual affairs that had been in evidence before Tilsit and that had continued since 1807. The outstanding feature of this movement toward Russian themes, the use of Russian language in writing, and the tightening of various groups of conservatives and patriots, was that they quickened during 1809-1810.

As the external, power-political bases of the Russian-French Alliance deteriorated, the administration, trying to preserve the exterior semblances and to promote internal accord, had made overt moves to propagate and explain its diplomatic ideas: hence the appearance of Severnaia Pochta. This was not its only publishing effort. Another government journal appeared which, significantly in view of the military preparations then underway, was put out by the military. The Quartermaster's Department of the army which, unlike its western counterparts, was a function of the High Staff and responsible for military administration, commenced publication of the Voennyi Zhurnal in 1810. The journal, under the editorship of P.A. Rakhmanov and A. Beliaminov, appeared monthly. It was devoted to articles on military history, including recent military history (one of the first issues carried an article on military history under Catherine II). Also covered were such timely subjects as fortifications construction, topography, geography and maps.<sup>84</sup>

The use of literature to make a point was not, however, confined to the government, as different leaders in society also took to writing of various sorts in order to dissuade the government of unpopular policies. No less a figure than Admiral Mordvinov, who had been one of the leading

figures in the Russian military establishment since the days of Paul, presented a long memorandum in 1810 attacking several government policies. Mordinov, who had been Alexander's Minister of Marine, became in 1810 the President of the Commerce Department in the Council of State. His memorandum proved the uselessness of territorial acquisitions, a direct attack on Russia's acquisition of Finland, and argued that the frontiers were already too disordered. In view of the situation vis-à-vis France, Mordvinov took the unusual step for an admiral of recommending that expenditures for the navy be cut and that the money be used instead for the army, which was likely to be of more use in a contest with Napoleon.<sup>85</sup>

This move on the part of Admiral Mordvinov, considered to be one of the most progressive men in Russia, was consistent with the trend toward a greater Russianism which had been developing since the days of Tilsit. In this movement the admiral played a leading role. He believed the French language had corrupted the Russian mind and had taught Russian's how to cheat and to slander. He was close to Karamzin, who lived with him for a time. His best friend was Shishkov and they shared an enthusiasm for the classics as well as the purity of the language. Both men vigorously denounced the Continental System and believed it to be directed against Russia in an effort to keep her poor, weak and dependent.<sup>86</sup> Within a short time they would join with other leaders of the national movement to oppose the continuation of the Tilsit Alliance in a common front. The continuing anti-French sentiment in the world of letters acted as one of their bases.

One of the most significant phenomena in the world of letters during 1809-1810 was the popularity of conservative, nationalist and anti-French writers. Among these, V. Ozerov contributed many very popular

tragedies with national themes between 1804 and 1809. Even more important were the still popular elegies of the short-lived Andrei Turgenev, who died in 1803, and the early work of Zhukovskii. The works of the latter especially were the swallows of the golden age, the first distinctive quality of which was to be found in his maturer works from 1809-1810 onwards.<sup>87</sup> Undoubtedly the greatest literary success was enjoyed by Krylov. Known for his satirical and stinging criticisms of French fashions, Krylov became instantly famous in a manner previously unknown in Russia when twenty-four of his fables were published in 1809.<sup>88</sup>

The popularity of the works of Ozerov, Zhukovskii and Krylov sparked an added interest in drama and the theater which was witnessed by the appearance of two new journals. Severnyi Merkurii, devoted to theatrical news, humour, poems and short stories, appeared in St. Petersburg under the editorship of A. Kropotov and M. Sverchkov. It published original Russian works as well as translated material from the English and French.<sup>89</sup> The world of the theater received another publication in 1810; this time from Moscow. Called Taliia, and not to be confused with A.P. Benitskii's journal of the same name which appeared briefly in St. Petersburg in 1808, the journal was edited by D. Veliashev-Volyntsev. It was devoted to sentimental drama, opera and children's fantasy and included works of the West European theater.<sup>90</sup> Moscow conservative circles began publishing a weekly paper, the Moskovskii Vestnik in 1809. It appeared weekly and was devoted mainly to children, but also published foreign and patriotic news, poems and original short stories.<sup>91</sup>

The following year Evroneiskii Muzei began to appear in the capital. It contained mainly translations from western journals, articles

on political economy, statistics, history and folklore. The editors were F.A. Schroeder and N.I. Grech.<sup>92</sup> An indication of the ideas of Grech, teacher and frequent collaborator and organiser in the conservative and sentimentalist publications, can be seen by the fact that the Minister of War, Arakcheev, enrolled his son in 1809 in a private school run by Grech in St. Petersburg, something which could never have happened if Arakcheev had any reason to suspect Grech's patriotic or Russian orientation.<sup>93</sup>

It is hard to underestimate the importance of the reviews and journals which under Alexander were open to all questions of literature, history and philosophy, rich in original writings and in translations from the English, German and French. They reigned without rivals.<sup>94</sup> Second only to this proliferation of literary outlets in the post-Tilsit period went a closing of ranks among the literati. Krylov and Derzhavin, like Shishkov, were leading conservative voices against the French influence, and part of the older generation. They were now joined by men of the younger generation such as Karamzin and Griboiedov,<sup>95</sup> Kantenin and Kukhelbeker.<sup>96</sup> On the other hand, nearly all of them maintained close relations with the Imperial court, especially with Catherine and Prince George of Oldenburg at Tver. Although the connection between these influences would not become fully apparent until 1811, there can be no doubt that a close collaboration existed. Caulaincourt gave a revealing description of the situation in January 1809:

A Tver, elle [Catherine] s'était fait sa part de royauté, gouvernait une réunion d'écrivains et de penseurs, et ce groupe était presque un parti; c'était celui des hommes qui opposaient à la politique novatrice de Speransky le retour aux traditions moscovites dans toute leur pureté, et qui désiraient que la Russie, au lieu de s'assimiler à l'Europe, restât elle-même. Plus Russe que sa famille, la grande-duchesse approuvait et favorisait ce mouvement d'idées.<sup>97</sup>

The tacit cooperation and sponsorship by the government of research and study into Russia's past produced, as we have already seen a result directly opposed to any long-term existence of a situation which compromised Russian amour propre. No better example of this aspect of internal policy colliding with the external in the period 1809-1810 can be found than Rumiantsev's activities in 1809. When he became State Chancellor that year the Moscow Archives came under his jurisdiction. It was there that his efforts spawned the further development of Russian national feeling. As one noted historiographer has remarked:

Russian historical science owes a profound debt to Count Rumyantsev for his enthusiasm and devotion to its cause. By his relentless drive in promoting research and the writing of history he erected himself a monument which not even the Revolution<sup>98</sup> was able to delete from the records of the past.

The coalescing among the leaders of government, the military and the literary world found support in its anti-Enlightenment and anti-French stand in other spheres of national life. It was, for example, aided by a religious revival then in progress. This stemmed largely from an increase in evangelical Christianity at the time, exemplified by the development of the Russian Bible Society.<sup>99</sup> Although the Society was officially recognized on 6 December 1812, six months after the invasion, it had been active from about 1810. It was brought to Russia from England, with direct English inspiration and with the support of Alexander, the highest government officials and even, for a time, of the hierarchy of the Orthodox Church.<sup>100</sup>

Under the impact of these ideas and forces all classes of Russian society began to look upon the Tilsit system and the French influence in a completely negative way. It is not surprising, therefore, when Napoleon

proposed a marriage in 1809-1810 between himself and the Russian Grand Duchess, that the thought was greeted with almost universal opposition. Historians have seen the proposal of marriage either as a test of Russia's commitment to France,<sup>101</sup> or as a move designed to put Franco-Russian relations on a firmer basis.<sup>102</sup> Whichever the case, and it seems likely that elements of the two existed, both the request by Napoleon and the delay in replying by Russia had serious political implications.

Neither Napoleon nor his ambassador in St. Petersburg could understand the difficulty in completing the marriage arrangements. All they believed to be necessary was the agreement of the Tsar. When the Emperor could give no such agreement it was interpreted as not wanting to put the Alliance on a firmer basis. Late in 1809 Rumiantsev undertook to explain to Caulaincourt that the Frenchman did not understand the nature of the Russian government. At the end of October 1809 he said to the ambassador:

L'empereur Napoléon, et en général tout le monde chez vous se trompe sur ce pays-ci. On ne le connaît pas bien. On croit que l'Empereur gouverne despotiquement, qu'un simple ukase suffit pour changer l'opinion ou du moins pour décider de tout. L'empereur Napoléon me l'a souvent dit en parlant des bavardages, de l'espèce d'opposition qui se manifestait ici. Il croit qu'un signe de souverain peut tout faire; il se trompe. L'impératrice Catherine, connaissait si bien ce pays qu'elle ménageait jusqu'à l'esprit d'opposition de quelques vieilles femmes.<sup>103</sup>

The subject of an Imperial marriage had been raised first at Tilsit, and the Prussian ambassador to Russia left no doubt that this was one of Caulaincourt's prime goals when he had arrived at the end of 1807:

Il s'agit d'un mariage de la Grande Duchesse Catherine avec le plus puissant Souverain de l'Europe qui se ferait à la suite d'un divorce du dernier.<sup>104</sup>

Not only had the subject been discussed before, but in fact two possibilities had been raised, since there was some discussion of marrying Catherine to Jerome, Napoleon's brother. An idea of how opposed was Maria Feodorovna, the mother of Catherine and Anne, can be gleaned from the fact that Caulaincourt wrote her a letter on the subject on 11 February 1809 and the Dowager Empress never replied.<sup>105</sup> She was openly in favour of a Prussian Prince. The marriage of Catherine to Prince George of Oldenburg thus took on a rather more political character when it occurred in the summer of 1809. The association of the Duke of Oldenburg with the Imperial family was much more than just a marriage relationship. By a ukase of 30 April particular favour was shown to the Prussian prince. He was given the title of "Altesse Impériale", made the Governor-General of Tver, Yaroslavl and Novgorod, and given the direction of all land and water communications in the Empire.<sup>106</sup> The Duke of Oldenburg, a fanatically anti-French émigré whose lands had been seized by Napoleon, was thus in a position to control much of the commercial traffic in the Empire. Two of Russia's most important ports, Riga and Reval, fell under his jurisdiction.<sup>107</sup> Rumiantsev, in conversation with Schlöden, left no doubt that the conferring of these titles and positions on the Prussian by Alexander before the marriage, was "un témoignage particulier de Son amitié."<sup>108</sup>

The heart of the marriage question was that the issue lay securely in the hands of Maria Feodorovna who, because it had been expressly stated in the will of Paul I, had absolute control over the matter of the marriages of Alexander's sisters.<sup>109</sup> The Dowager Empress objected on many grounds. She not only advanced reasons of age and of religion, but also reasons of state. She was especially concerned that Napoleon, through marriage, would



immobilize Russia especially with regards to Poland.<sup>110</sup> Also, because of her age Anne would not have the political experience to benefit from residence in Paris. In short, there was no advantage in it for Russia.<sup>111</sup> To this could be added the hesitation felt by an Imperial Russian Dowager Empress at the thought of uniting autocratic Russia with revolutionary France.

Maria Feodorovna was not alone in the Imperial family opposition to the proposed alliance of the two families. Both Constantine and Catherine were hostile toward France and the views of the latter were particularly well known. She said in St. Petersburg in 1809: "J'aimerais mieux être la femme d'un pape que souveraine d'un pays sous l'influence de la France."<sup>112</sup> Her marriage to Prince George of Oldenburg and the subsequent incorporation of that Duchy into France only intensified her feeling.

By the fall of 1809 both Catherine and Maria had established separate courts of opposition at Tver and Gatchina. In the former, Rostopchin and de Maistre were particularly conspicuous. They had a wide circle of powerful admirers all of whom opposed the marriage and it was through the court at Tver that they made their views known.<sup>113</sup> Maria Feodorovna, meanwhile, had withdrawn from St. Petersburg with Grand Dukes Michael and Nicholas to spend the winter at Gatchina, Paul's former residence. She had been trying throughout the summer of 1809 to influence Alexander on behalf of Spain.<sup>114</sup> The Emperor's lack of interest was equalled by her own stubbornness in the marriage question. When she returned to Gatchina in October, an unusual move because the winters were normally spent in the capital cities, Baron Schlöden remarked:

Cette résolution semble être l'effet d'une différence d'opinion entre la mère et le fils relativement au système politique....Elle forme le point central des mécontentements.<sup>115</sup>

A month later the party of malcontents was visibly forming. The Prussian ambassador, who frequently visited Maria at Gatchina, spoke of her court "où un grand nombre de personnes vû se rendre d'ici pour y passer quelques jours."<sup>116</sup>

Many pretenses were used by Alexander to cover over the negative attitude of Maria Feodorovna and the Imperial family. Frequently mentioned were the fact that Napoleon was Catholic and the Grand Duchess was Orthodox. The fact that Napoleon was not divorced was also a major obstacle. By December 1809 there had still been no firm reply to the French.<sup>117</sup>

When Napoleon, in letters of 6 and 25 December, raised the question of a marriage between himself and Alexander's younger sister, Anne, and demanded a reply in two days, the request then took on political meaning.<sup>118</sup> Whatever Napoleon's motives might have been in 1807, when the subject first came up during the conversations at Tilsit, in 1809 it was designed as a method to test Russia's real attitude toward France. By then Napoleon had already opened negotiations for the hand of the daughter of Francis I. Metternich had succeeded Stadion as Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1809, after the defeat by France, and on November 29 he was first approached concerning the possibility of a marriage.<sup>119</sup>

When word of the latter negotiations was received in Russia, official Russia was already openly skeptical of Napoleon's sincerity.<sup>120</sup> There were other reasons for the skepticism as well. Alexander had been out of the capital for the last weeks of 1809 and returned only on 26 December from a visit to Tver, where he met with Catherine and George. It was then that the Polish Convention drawn up by Rumiantsev and Caulaincourt was laid before him. It was signed on 4 January 1810 and sent immediately

to Paris. The Tsar was satisfied with the terms, which promised that Poland would never again be reestablished.<sup>121</sup> In a letter to Napoleon at the end of January Alexander stated that he was pleased with the solution to the Polish problem.<sup>122</sup> This, however, was more illusion than reality for Napoleon refused to ratify it until the marriage question was settled.

If Napoleon seemed insincere over the Polish question, Alexander was hardly less so concerning the marriage issue. Despite the fact that he had been formally approached by Caulaincourt at the beginning of 1809, it was not until the Emperor's visit to Gatchina in January 1810 that Alexander spoke with Maria Feodorovna on the subject.<sup>123</sup> By then it was too late, for the Imperial family and leading Russians had decided against it. Caulaincourt could sense the underlying mood of Russianism, the inner congealing of leading Russian circles and the roles of the Grand Duchesse and Imperial Mother.<sup>124</sup>

The twin issues of the marriage proposal and the Polish convention had still not been settled by June 1810. Most historians of the diplomacy of the period feel that there was a definite connection between the failure of France to ratify the convention on Poland and the failure of the marriage proposals.<sup>125</sup> On the night of 6/7 June 1810 Napoleon's political advisors decided in favour of Marie Louise, the daughter of Emperor Francis I of Austria. Shortly thereafter Napoleon made a veiled criticism of the marriage of Catherine to Prince George, and notified Alexander that he did not intend to ratify the Polish Convention.<sup>126</sup> The result of these developments was stunning: "La nouvelle simultanée du mariage avec l'archiduchesse et du rejet de la convention fut ressentie, à Saint-Petersbourg, comme une double offense."<sup>127</sup> Alexander himself made the charge of tying the two issues

together to Caulaincourt<sup>128</sup> - Napoleon replied that it was clear Alexander was not the master in his own house.<sup>129</sup> A number of historians, though mostly in the minority, date the end of the Tilsit Alliance from these announcements.<sup>130</sup>

If the events of 1809 had caused considerable trouble in Russia, it was bound to do no less than the same to the Russian community outside Russia which had since 1807 been struggling against the Alliance. In his Mémoires Metternich tells how the Russian community at Vienna was shaken by the news of the marriage and how Shuvalov, the Russian ambassador, was "terrified" at the prospects of a Franco-Austrian alliance.<sup>131</sup> Inside Russia, meanwhile, the impact was immediate and disconcerting. Caulaincourt wrote to Talleyrand:

Ce mariage fait ici une drôle de révolution; les plus grognons, les plus opposés au système, jettent la pierre à l'Impératrice Mère.<sup>132</sup>

Joseph de Maistre wrote that it had produced "une terreur universelle" in St. Petersburg.<sup>133</sup> Rumiantsev, who had defended the Franco-Russian alliance for pragmatic reasons, told Caulaincourt that "On ne peut pas dire que l'alliance nous sourit."<sup>134</sup> He was in part basing himself upon the pessimistic reports being received from Shuvalov in Vienna. Shuvalov believed any Austrian friendship with France would work against Russia's Balkan interests.<sup>135</sup>

When Napoleon decided to marry the Austrian princess his actions implied a political rupture with Russia even more than it did a new alliance with Austria. Vandal states that Napoleon's idea at this time was:

En maintenant avec la cour du Nord une union apparente et passive: les deux grandes puissances du continent immobilisées, la Russie par un semblant d'alliance, l'Autriche par un lien de famille.<sup>136</sup>

Meanwhile, there were indications that Alexander was prepared to step out on his own. Late in 1809 Czartorysky returned to St. Petersburg in response to the developing idea among Russian leaders that there might be a possibility to bring Poland independently back into the Russian fold. Correspondence between General S.F. Golitsyn, commander of Russian forces in Galicia, and Rumiantsev, which had been going on since June 1809, shows that there was a considerable willingness among some of the leaders of the Polish nobility in Galicia and Warsaw for reconstituting Poland and uniting it with Russia.<sup>137</sup> Alexander had been persuaded that Czartorysky and the Russian party in Poland could organize backing for a preemptive war for control over Poland.<sup>138</sup>

The concern on the part of Alexander and his advisors was that Napoleon would declare himself King of Poland in order to join Polish sympathy to his cause.<sup>139</sup> To clear up the question of a possible preemptive strike and to see if Napoleon had widespread support in Poland, Alexander accorded two interviews to Czartorysky in March and April 1810: the Polish prince did not believe that either was a viable possibility.<sup>140</sup> Alexander dropped his plans for immediate action, but in doing so he left both Czartorysky and other Polish leaders convinced that he intended to fight Napoleon over the Polish question and that it was merely a matter of time.<sup>141</sup>

Alexander's attempt to win over Poland was not the only diplomatic offensive made by the Emperor. The new friendship between Austria and France might have served to restrain Russia, as Napoleon intended, had it not been for the Russian community at Vienna. It had been embarrassed for a short time following the marriage of Napoleon and Marie Louise, but it soon regained its stature. As Vandal quite correctly stated:

Aux yeux du monde, le véritable ambassadeur de Russie n'est pas le comte Shuvalov: c'est toujours le comte Andrei Razumovskii. Celui-ci conserve les prérogatives sociales du rang qu'il n'a plus et les possède à un plus haut degré qu'aucun de ses prédécesseurs.... Il y a encore à Vienne une rue et une place Razumovskii.<sup>142</sup>

The former Russian ambassador was aided in his campaign by Princess Bagration and her popular salon in Vienna. Both carried on an effective anti-French propaganda campaign.<sup>143</sup> They were joined by Stein, the former Prussian Chancellor. Exiled from Prussia and outlawed by Napoleon, Stein exerted considerable influence among the Prussian émigrés in Austria.<sup>144</sup>

So concerned by then were the French over the campaign being waged against them by the Russian and émigré nobility in Vienna, that Champagny wrote to Caulaincourt demanding that Russia recall Razumovskii:

L'Empereur de Russie donnerait une preuve de ses intentions amicales envers l'Empereur d'Autriche, s'il rappelait dans ses terres M. de Razumovskii, qui est son sujet, que a été son ambassadeur, qui doit à la famille impériale une fortune immense.<sup>145</sup>

To the French request that Razumovskii be removed Alexander replied that he was powerless to do so. The most that could be done was to prohibit him from wearing uniform.<sup>146</sup> There is no evidence to suggest that this was ever done. Indeed, to have done so would have been very embarrassing for the Tsar for he had just appointed the former ambassador's brother, Count A.K. Razumovskii, as his new Minister of Public Instruction.<sup>147</sup>

Alexander began his own diplomatic offensive in Austria by using Shuvalov to approach Austria about exchanging parts of eastern Wallachia for parts of Poland.<sup>148</sup> The result was the turning of a treaty of neutrality into a treaty of mutual defense, but it was rejected for the time being by the Austrian diplomats.<sup>149</sup> When Shuvalov's temporary mission to Vienna

came to an end, Stackelberg became the first accredited Russian official in Vienna since 1807. He immediately struck up a close relationship with the Russian party at Vienna, especially its leaders.<sup>150</sup>

The growing Russian friendship with Prussia, which had been evident in the reception accorded to the Prussian monarchs at the end of 1808, continued both on a personal level and between the respective governments. In the summer of 1810 Russians were constantly seen in the company of Prussians at the resorts of Toeplitz, Karlsbad, Egra and Baden.<sup>151</sup> Prussian officials also provided a valuable 'middle-man' role for the Russians. Beginning in October 1810 the Prussian ambassador to Vienna, Baron von Humboldt, regularly sent reports on Austria and Turkish affairs to Baron von Schladen in St. Petersburg for transmission to Alexander.<sup>152</sup> At the same time Russia and Britain were carrying on affairs regularly through Lieven in Prussia and through correspondence carried by the Aides-de-Camp of Frederick William and Alexander.<sup>153</sup>

The English and Russians had been cooperating in other ways as well. Admiral Seniavin and the officers and sailors taken by the English at Lisbon in 1808 were transported back to Riga in October 1809 on English transport vessels.<sup>154</sup> Even earlier, after the conclusion of the Swedish war, the English newspapers had been regularly admitted into Russia where they had a significant effect on the isolated Russian reading public. News of the Peninsular War and Napoleon's difficulties were eagerly seized upon and in some cases translated by the literati opposed to the Alliance.<sup>155</sup>

Affairs in Sweden, following the election of Bernadotte in the fall of 1810, seemed at first to cast an ominous shadow over Russia's evolving diplomacy. When word was received of the event, Russian fears of

France were elevated to new heights. The Prussian ambassador wrote from the Russian capital: "Cet événement fait grande sensation ici, parce que les vus y trouvent une marque décisive de changement dans le système de la cour."<sup>156</sup> Caulaincourt wrote from St. Petersburg in November 1810: "Cette époque est une des plus délicates que j'aie eu à passer ici."<sup>157</sup>

For a short time there was some talk in Russian military circles of opening preemptive hostilities against Sweden which, it was felt, had fallen under Napoleon's control by the election of Bernadotte. Alexander, however, was more cautious than those who urged war. He was somewhat relieved when Gustav assured him that the Prince of Ponte Corvo had renounced all connections with France.<sup>158</sup> He was also cautioned by his key military advisors who, recalling the previous débâcle, warned against any offensive action in Sweden. Shuvalov wrote to Rumiantsev in November:

Je connais les épines de cette place...comme général et avec la convention tacite de reconquérir la Finlande: mais entreprendre une guerre pour cet objet, c'est une folie à laquelle je ne donnerai pas les mains.<sup>159</sup>

The conclusive proof that Bernadotte's election had worked to Russia's advantage and not to her disadvantage came in November when a large flotilla of English vessels was headed for the Baltic ports. Chernyshev was sent on a special mission to determine the position of Bernadotte and the Swedish government. Not only was the emissary royally received, but he learned that the Russian and Swedish attitude toward the Continental System coincided.<sup>160</sup>

Together with the worsening of relations between Russia and France went the continued expansion of the military establishment in the central bureaucracy. Following the Ministerial changes and a complete reorganization in 1810 of the Permanent Council, the latter changed its name to State Council,



which was led by a President and divided into four departments each with its own Head. The administration of the new council was joined with that of the Imperial Chancellery, which was presided over by the State Secretary, Speransky, for one year to complete the reorganisation. The new council was divided into five sections, one for the State Secretary and four corresponding to the old Departments of the council, now led by Assistant State Secretaries. The military establishment thus retained an Assistant Secretary for "Military and Naval Affairs" in a consultative capacity to the Emperor.<sup>161</sup> This proximity to the Imperial authority was indicative of the extent to which the influence and activities of the military establishment had grown.

To stop here, however, would be too misleading. The appointment of three military leaders among four individual Presidents in the Council was far more revealing of the real power of the military and of the internal changes. Of the four new leaders two were generals, Arakcheev (War) and N.S. Zavodovskii (Interior and Ecclesiastic Affairs); one was an admiral, Mordvinov (Commerce). The fourth, Prince P.V. Lopukhin, was a civilian and the most outspoken, reactionary and anti-French of them all.<sup>162</sup>

Equally important, when Arakcheev left the Ministry of War his position was occupied by Barclay de Tolly. The new Minister was also anti-French and had risen to prominence as a general in the campaign against Sweden and later as Governor-General of Finland.<sup>163</sup> For a short time Arakcheev tried to maintain a firm hand on reforms and soon after Barclay de Tolly assumed office Arakcheev wrote to the Minister exhorting him to carry on with the changes, especially in the supply department:

When I took over the direction of the War Ministry I did not find in the whole supply department a single rifle in good repair, nor any reserves of rifle ammunition.<sup>164</sup>

Arakcheev was not, however, to influence this aspect of military affairs for long. Owing to the incompleteness of Speransky's reforms the President of the War Department did not have the effective control envisaged for it.<sup>165</sup> The General Staff began to reassert its authority and effective power over military affairs remained with the Ministry.

Under the new Minister, the period from 1810-1812 was marked by a tremendous expansion of military strength in Russia. The initial moves were made quickly and quietly and it was only after 1810 that the preparations became overt. When Barclay was notified of his appointment as Minister of War in January 1810 he and the High Staff had already been thinking of a possible conflict with France. On 14 March he presented Alexander with a finished set of general war plans for the western regions.<sup>166</sup> Simultaneously with this went the rapid expansion of Russian troop numbers, as Alexander in the first weeks of 1810 ordered a 100% increase. This became Barclay's main task as he undertook the reform and reorganisation of the Russian military.<sup>167</sup>

The new Minister was faced with three main problems: the reform of the existing structures, the rapid increase and reorganisation of the troops, and the construction of fortifications. Among Barclay's many reforms were the following: the entire machinery of the army commissariat was thoroughly overhauled; the obsolete guns were overhauled and scrapped (a recommendation of Arakcheev's: the heavier carriages were replaced with lighter ones); the petty regulations were jettisoned and the training of recruits no longer followed after the regimented fashion of Paul; the munition works at Tula and Aleksandrovsk were allowed to break the law of the Church and disregard some of the major feasts of the year.<sup>168</sup>

The army was reorganized into fourteen corps: 8 infantry corps, 2 reserve corps and 4 reserve cavalry corps. The following year a Caucasus corps was added.<sup>169</sup> These corps were divided into 21 divisions of infantry, to which were added 8 cavalry regiments and 32 cossack regiments. In reserve were 24,000 infantry. The forces were grouped into 2 armies of the West, one on the Polish border and one slightly behind. In all they represented 240,000 effectives.<sup>170</sup> These two armies of the West were supplemented by Russia's Third Army (Army of Moldavia), which until 1812 remained in the Principalities at war with Turkey. It accounted for an additional 40,000 troops.<sup>171</sup> To these regular formations could be added the irregular troops - several different Cossack groups, as well as Kalmyk and Bashkir regiments. All of these irregular troops, which had been incorporated into the overall military structure, remained for the time being in the interior.<sup>172</sup>

While these forces were being organized, Russia began to fortify its lines to the Baltic and Lithuania.<sup>173</sup> Camps were established along the western frontier and the construction of fortifications from Riga to Dunaburg was pushed day and night.<sup>174</sup> A defensive line was prepared along the entire western frontier and the frontier forces were mobilised.<sup>175</sup>

If one were to sum up the idea motivating the military establishment to proceed as quickly as it did, one would have to say that it was their belief Napoleon was preparing to attack Russia. Chernyshev, Alexander's Aide-de-Camp, prepared a report in 1810 on French military intentions and concluded that Napoleon was planning an offensive.<sup>176</sup> Basing himself in the idea of a Russian-English Alliance, Napoleon had begun an ambitious programme of ship construction. He had also increased his garrisons at

Prague, Modlin and Warsaw, and distributed 30,000 rifles to the Polish population.<sup>177</sup> Shuvalov gave evidence of the frame of mind of the military when he wrote to Rumiantsev on the necessity of preparing for "une lutte décisive, suprême, qui commencerait du côté de la France dès que les affaires en Espagne seraient terminées."<sup>178</sup>

Confronted with these developments and in the face of growing pressure from all sectors of society, Alexander was himself undergoing a profound change, both in his outlook and in his method of government. Caulaincourt, who continued to meet with the Emperor as frequently as before, noticed two changes in the Emperor at this time. The first was a distinct and unusual calmness which had not been in evidence since 1807;<sup>179</sup> second, a noticeably increased interest in the military: "Alexandre parlait exclusivement de questions militaires; il signalait...les progrès accomplis par son armée."<sup>180</sup>

As it became evident that the bureaucratic reforms of Speransky had not given the new direction needed, and under the growing threat of war, the old practices of inner government were reviewed. The former ad hoc committees of Ministers, which Alexander was in the habit of calling whenever he wanted something done quickly, began to meet as before. The military High Staff reasserted its authority and the armed forces were moved onto a war footing.<sup>181</sup> As the situation worsened in 1810 Alexander and Napoleon each voiced concern over the other's military activities. The Tsar complained about the French strength in Poland and Napoleon protested the fact that fortifications were being constructed along Russia's western frontiers.<sup>182</sup>

The Russian government was in a difficult situation by 1810. It

appeared to be heading towards a new conflict with France and this called for the quick expansion of her military forces. At the same time, the country was faced with bankruptcy and therefore found itself without the means to finance the necessary forces. The Emperor was well aware of the necessity of further reforms in the military, especially some practices which affected the common soldier.

It was in this situation that Alexander fell upon the idea of creating voennii poseleniia (military colonies), to be staffed with self-sufficient soldier-farmers and placed in the western regions of the country. It was in the search for means of reducing army expenditures that the idea of military colonies came into being. Such a plan, it was thought, would achieve a threefold purpose: it would relieve the peasant population from frequent recruiting, which imposed upon them unbearable hardships; in peacetime it would free soldiers for work in agriculture; and, finally, the army would become self-sufficient and thereby lessen the burden of taxation. It may also be added that the government, by creating a military class, would lessen its dependence upon the grace of the nobility, which contributed its peasants for military service.<sup>183</sup>

A number of historians ascribe the origins of the colonies to a book written by General Servan, among them Shilder and Strakhovsky. According to them, when Alexander read the book by General Servan (Minister of War in Revolutionary France) entitled Sur les forces frontières des états, he found in it the formulation of his idea. The French general advocated the creation of military colonies along the frontiers of the Napoleonic Empire and, though Napoleon had not found any use for this plan, Alexander intended to give it a thorough test. He ordered Prince Volkonskii to translate this work into

Russian so as to make its contents accessible to Arakcheev, who was not versed in French. When the translation was completed, Alexander supplemented it with his own interpretation and sent it to his 'faithful friend'.<sup>184</sup> It can also be mentioned that when the Russians invaded Finland in 1808 they found prosperous and well-established communities of soldier-farmers that had been set up by the Swedes.<sup>185</sup>

Whatever might have been the antecedents for the idea, two things are clear. First, the idea was the Tsar's and not Arakcheev's, who is historically identified with it. Arakcheev made it perfectly clear to an official in the Ministry of Justice that the colonies were the Emperor's brainchild and that he would not part with the idea.<sup>186</sup> Second, the idea came to Alexander in 1809 as part of the overall reform movement and was designed among other things, to put an end to the terrible practice of recruitment.<sup>187</sup>

Russia could not afford to recruit the large standing army which she decided was necessary because of the deteriorating external situation with France. There was no regular conscription in Russia: all depended on recruitment at irregular intervals. The two earlier campaigns against Napoleon had taken a heavy toll and the landowners, already relieved of serf labour three days a week, asserted that a further call on their serfs would inevitably interfere with field labour.<sup>188</sup>

If it were possible to utilize the untapped reservoir of human energy of the Russian army to solve some of the most pressing economic and social problems, to westernize the Russian village, to raise the living standards of the more backward areas, and ease the hard lot of the Russian soldier, all without cost to the government, then such a measure,

no matter how difficult and unusual, would be worth trying.<sup>189</sup> Nothing indicated more clearly the actual intention of the project than the history of its origin.<sup>190</sup>

Alexander, who consistently used Arakcheev as his innovator and reformer in the military reform program, had turned to him again in 1810. As the situation worsened with France over the Polish question he sent Arakcheev a message requesting the general to draw up an estimate of the amount of land needed to make an army battalion agriculturally self-supporting. This instruction was the genesis of the voennii poseleniia.

Thus, it is quite evident that the idea of the colonies and the first machinery for establishing them were in existence before June 1810 when, on his return visit from Tver where he had seen his sister, Alexander stopped off at Gruzino, Arakcheev's estate. It was there that he saw the idea already existing in a real form. He immediately wrote to Catherine:

The streets of the villages here have precisely that kind of cleanliness which I have been trying so hard to see established in the towns. The best proof that what I have been demanding is possible is that it can be found in the villages here....I repeat, the villages here are proof that it is possible.<sup>191</sup>

He urged his sister to see the villages and to tell her husband, Prince George of Oldenburg, of the project. Catherine complied and later wrote Alexander that she had carried the respects of Prince Bagration to Arakcheev as well. This was an important indication of the degree to which opposition leaders were merging, for earlier Bagration had been critical of Arakcheev.<sup>192</sup>

Shortly thereafter the Tsar wrote to Arakcheev commending him on his work with the peasants and the villages and said:

When private husbandry is combined with the effective fulfillment of official duties, both the husbandry and the duties gain new value and new respect.<sup>193</sup>

The general was directed to draw up a plan for the colonies and a site for the first one was chosen in Mogilev province, between Minsk and Smolensk. The local peasantry sent to the Novorossisk region. On 9 November 1810 the Elitskii Musketeer Regiment was moved in. The land needed for the purposes was handed over to the Ministry of War.<sup>194</sup> Following this were other areas. There were four main regions in which settlements took place, each of which was occupied by ten or more regiments: one in the Novgorod province (North of Lake Ilmen, along the Volkhov River, and South of the lake, around Staraja Rossiia) and three in the South, given mainly to the cavalry, in the provinces of Kharkov (with the center at Chugaev), Kerson (East of the Bug River, with the center at Elizavetgrad) and Ekaterinoslav.<sup>195</sup>

Public opinion was hostile to the project from the very beginning. High army officers saw in it a dangerous move which eventually would deprive them of control over the military forces and pass it on to Arakcheev, whom they detested and feared. Barclay de Tolly, when asked for his opinion by Alexander, replied frankly that he considered military and agricultural life to be incompatible. Many officers attacked the project on the grounds that it lowered the fighting qualities of Russian troops, since a soldier 'burdened' with a family and property would not very willingly risk his life on the battlefield.<sup>196</sup> Despite the objections, however, the project continued and, for a time, succeeded.

The aim was to make the military colonies completely self-containing and independent. Indeed, with their own administration and a self-sufficient economy, they soon became a state within a state.<sup>197</sup> Karamzin, although one of those opposed to the colonies in principle, nevertheless visited a settlement at the invitation of the Tsar and was visibly impressed: "The



colonies are remarkable in many respects. Where there stood impossible marshes, you see orchards and towns."<sup>198</sup>

As relations between the two Emperor's cooled in 1810 Napoleon, in letters to Alexander on 20 June and 29 August, spoke for the first time of the future possibility of war between the two Empires:

Si je suis forcé à vous combattre ce sera certes  
contra ma volonté!...Conduire 400,000 hommes dans le  
Nord, verser le sang sans aucun but, sans poursuivre  
aucun avantage! Qu'avez-vous eu de votre guerre en  
Italie? Une masse de monde a péri uniquement pour  
procurer de la gloire à Suvorov!<sup>199</sup>

From the latter half of 1810 onwards Napoleon's correspondence with Alexander was dominated by attempts to convince the Tsar of the value of the Alliance. Often used as arguments were the capability and necessity of upholding the Continental System, an argument which had little or no effect on the Russians, and the question of 'naturalness' or geographic logic, which had a declining impact in some circles, especially upon Rumiantsev who had used that line of argument frequently.<sup>200</sup>

At the heart of Napoleon's politics stood economic matters. His decrees of 5 August and 11 September 1810 levied a 50% tax on all colonial goods intended for the Baltic states and he demanded that Russia comply with them.<sup>201</sup> His conditions for future peace were laid out in correspondence to Alexander at the beginning of December and foremost among them was Russia's adherence to the Continental System.<sup>202</sup> This required that an end be put to the contraband operations in the Baltic. Alexander admitted to Caulaincourt in November that this would be possible:

Le véritable entrepôt des marchandises anglaises et  
de contrebande est Gothenbourg...c'est ce port qu'il  
faut fermer. Si l'arrivée du prince de Ponte-Corvo  
Bernadotte enlève à l'Angleterre ce débouché, on  
frappera par là un coup qui se fera réellement sentir  
dans la Cité de Londres.<sup>203</sup>

Privately, however, he knew from Chernyshev's mission and his correspondence with Bernadotte, that Bernadotte's cooperation on such a project would not be forthcoming.<sup>204</sup>

Publicly the Emperor tried to leave the impression that tightened measures against foreign shipping were an integral part of Speransky's fiscal reforms undertaken at the beginning of 1810. As a result there was considerable apprehension in Russian commercial circles toward the end of May and the beginning of June 1810, before the shipping season started.<sup>205</sup> Privately, however, the Tsar had no intention of enforcing the measures required under the Continental System. To gain time he had established a commerce and a finance committee and instructed them, without setting a time limit, to decide the best policy for Russia. A firm decision still had not been taken by the middle of July 1810 when Schladen wrote:

Le Ministère russe délibère dans ce moment sur la confiscation d'un grand nombre de bâtiments entrées dans les ports de Russie avec des papiers suspects ou faux: cette décision peut avoir des suites importantes en servant de motif à l'Angleterre d'agir avec plus de rigueur contre ce pays. Cette affaire est un objet de douze à quatorze millions de roubles.<sup>206</sup>

By December still no action had been forthcoming on the issue of the importation of colonial merchandise. The committees continued to meet and to discuss the issue, but the Tsar made no attempt to intervene.<sup>207</sup>

For some time the Russian government had been breaking both the spirit and the stipulations of the Tilsit agreements by allowing trade of an illicit nature to enter Russian ports and from there journey to European towns. As Tarle noted:

English goods were being admitted into Russia and from there distributed along the entire western frontier, across Prussia, Poland and Austria - trickling through all the pores and crevices into Europe. All this would eventually destroy the effectiveness of the blockade.<sup>208</sup>

At the beginning of 1810, for instance, Alexander had formally annexed all the Turkish provinces North of the Danube, the Russian army having occupied them for three years. When the Swedish war ended he increased his forces considerably in those provinces to compel the Turks to sign a peace. During that winter, while the Russians commanded batteries along the North shore of the Danube, the Austrians and Turks carried on an active trade in English goods which, kept out from the North of Germany by the Continental Blockade, were introduced as largely as before through the South.<sup>209</sup>

Earlier in the year Russia had in reality legally broken the Blockade when it authorized the importation of English manufactures under the American flag.<sup>210</sup> Consequently, Russia's trade with the United States, which stood at \$842,000 in 1809, underwent a tremendous jump to \$3,976,000 in 1810.<sup>211</sup> The British government issued 15,226 licenses in 1809 and 18,356 in 1810. 80% of the licensed vessels went to the North German, Scandinavian and Russian ports.<sup>212</sup> It was common knowledge that of the 600 vessels sailing in the Baltic since late summer, 200 had been off-loaded in Russia.<sup>213</sup>

The reasons for Russian non-adherence to the Continental system are obvious. The system made it impossible for Russians to export their goods to England and the restrictive Napoleonic trade policies allowed in only expensive continental items. The price of goods went up and available cash went down. To counteract this the government was forced to print additional notes.<sup>214</sup> The result was that the ruble depreciated to less than 30 kopeks and the country faced bankruptcy.<sup>215</sup> Schladerer gave an indication of the seriousness of the situation when he wrote: "Chacun achète à tout prix des durées coloniales et des productions indigènes pour se défaire d'un

papier qui a perdu tout son crédit."<sup>216</sup>

No better example of the Tsar's concern for economic matters can be found than in his desire to accomodate Russian business interests. As Napoleon sought to tighten the Continental System in 1810 the merchants appealed to Alexander for help. The Emperor began to invite both Russian and foreign merchants to fêtes at the Winter Palace and called like a private gentleman at the houses of those merchants who were noted for their benevolence or their aid to government charities.<sup>217</sup> It was undoubtedly they who convinced the Tsar of the necessity of a new trade and tariff policy. When the ruble was devalued in November 1810 their help was sought. The Prussian ambassador wrote from St. Petersburg on 30 November: "La chute du change a allarmé le public au point que le Gouvernement vient de nommer une commission de négocians pour délibérer sur les moyens à employer."<sup>218</sup>

When the Duchy of Oldenburg was annexed to France in December 1810 and Napoleon occupied the Baltic coast, all of Russia was alarmed.<sup>219</sup> One week later the Russian government published a new tariff against French goods which had been discussed since mid-November.<sup>220</sup> By then there was nothing left of the Franco-Russian Alliance. The psychological aspect, what some historians refer to as the 'spirit of Tilsit', had long since withered under the icy blasts of the Russian aristocracy's hostility. Except for Rumiantsev and Speransky not a single member of the court in 1810 advocated a further alliance with Napoleon.<sup>221</sup> Speransky's reforms evoked additional opposition to the "Question Française". In the ensuing conservative reaction, the French influence in Russian life and the continuing Alliance with France were linked as proceeding one from the other. Both were rejected for operating against Russian interests.

The government's reluctance to join France in a war against Austria and its refusal to enforce the Continental System meant the abandonment of a policy of cooperation with France and indicated Alexander's resolve to follow a pro-Russian external policy. The innovation of the military colonies represented a belief that Russia in the years ahead would need a large standing army. The instruction given to Barclay de Tolly to more than double the size of the army was implicit acknowledgement of the possibility of a conflict with France. Together these measures were explicit demonstrations that Alexander's pro-Russian external and internal policies were rapidly merging with the intensifying conservative mood of the national movement.

## Chapter V

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114 A. Fateev, "La disgrâce d'un homme d'état russe", Zapiski Russkii svobodnyi universitet v Prage, X (1940), p. 51.

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122 Tatishchev, Alexandre I et Napoléon, p. 516: Alexander to Napoleon, January 1810.

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- 128 Ibid., p. 298.
- 129 Correspondance, XX, p. 212: Napoleon to Champagny, 23 March 1810.
- 130 N.V. Brian-Chaninov, Alexandre Ier, Paris, 1934, p. 176; E.M. Almedingen, The Emperor Alexander I, London, 1964, pp. 119-21.
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145 DSRF, VII, p. 235: Champagny to Caulaincourt, 30 July 1810.

146 Ibid., IV, p. 38: Caulaincourt to Napoleon, 15 August 1810.

147 E. Amburger, op. cit., p. 191.

148 Metternich, Mémoires, II, p. 397.

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151 Vandal, Napoléon et Alexandre Ier, II, p. 409.

152 DZA-PbD, Schladen, 2 November 1810, no. 63. Humboldt's first letter was written on 13 October 1810; his second arrived on 24 November and others appeared regularly thereafter.



- 153 Ibid., Schladen, 2 November 1810.
- 154 Ibid., Schladen, 8 October 1809, no. 58.
- 155 Ibid., Schladen, 13 October 1809, no. 59.
- 156 Ibid., Schladen, 25 September 1810, no. 55.
- 157 DSRF, IV, p. 154: Caulaincourt to Napoleon, 10 November 1810.
- 158 DZA-PbD, Schladen, 25 September 1810, no. 55.
- 159 VPR, V, p. 570; Shuvalov to Rumiantsev, 2 November 1810.
- 160 N.G. Chernyshev, "Doneseniia Chernysheva k Imperatoru Aleksandru I, 1810-1811 gg.", SIRIO, XXI (1886), p. 45.
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- 164 M. Jenkins, op. cit., p. 139.
- 165 N.A. Danilov, "Istoricheskie ocherk razvitiia voennago upravleniia v Rossii", SVM, I, Ch.I, p. 92.
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- 208 E.V. Tarle, Napoléon, p. 249.
- 209 C. Joyneville, op. cit., II, p. 121.
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218 DZA-PbD, Schladen, 30 November 1810, no. 70.

219 Ibid., Schladen, 4 January 1811, no. 2: "un bruit qui a fait beaucoup de sensation dans le public".

220 The Prussian ambassador spoke of the tariff discussions on several occasions and his contacts in the State Council gave him a good understanding of the proposed rates: DZA-PbD, Schladen, 23 November 1810, no. 67. Alexander wrote to Napoleon late in November explaining the forthcoming measures and the letter was carried from St. Petersburg by Chernyshev in the first days of December. The courier travelled to France via Stockholm and the correspondence was received by the French Emperor a few days after the annexation of Oldenburg; Tatishchev, Alexandre I et Napoléon, pp. 542-44: Alexander to Napoleon, [28] November 1810.

221 E.V. Tarle, Napoléon, p. 234.

## Chapter VI

### 1811-1812: The Climax and the Fusion of External and Internal Policy

The climax in the converging of Russian external policy and the crystallisation of the internal opposition to the Alliance with France was reached in the closing weeks of 1810. At that time Alexander handed over the decision on tariffs to the State Council which was dominated by the nationalist elements led by Mordinov and Gurev. In doing so Alexander deferred to the Council the decision to solve the external "Question Française" by breaking with France and the Continental System. He allowed the Council to make official what his administration had already been doing in an unofficial way and thereby fused the external and internal aspects of his pro-Russian policy.

The same period witnessed the climax of the reaction to Speransky's reforms, and the retrenchment of the nobility. This was characterized by the merger of the conservative opposition to both aspects of the "Question Française". At the moment Alexander handed over the tariff question to the State Council, opposition leaders among the literati, military, court and Imperial family were gathered together in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Tver and Gatchina. Between then and the invasion by Napoleon in June 1812 three things transpired. First, Russia prepared overtly for war both militarily and diplomatically. Second, leaders of the national movement were elevated to leading government positions. Third, Speransky was dismissed.

The decree of the reunion of Oldenburg to the French Empire was made on 13 December 1810 and the ukase on the tariff against French goods was issued on 31 December 1810. Many historians who regard Russia's choice in these years as a choice between Britain and France take the new customs law as the breaking point.<sup>1</sup> Napoleon himself later said on numerous occasions that this was the case.<sup>2</sup> Tatishchev, for example, wrote: "Alexandre avait déjà répondu à la dépossession de son proche parent le duc d'Oldenbourg par la promulgation d'un nouveau tarif douanier, qui élevait les droits sur les marchandises importées de France en Russie."<sup>3</sup> Others considered the imposition of the tariff to be Russia's first act of independence from the French system.<sup>4</sup>

The fondness of diplomatic historians for a supposed connection between Napoleon's seizure of the Duchy and Alexander's ukase completely obscures both the origins and the real reasons for the decision. Linking the two developments together may explain why the French Emperor dated the end of the Alliance from 31 December 1810, but it does not account for the view of the Russian partner and it was he who took the final action.

Alexander introduced the tariffs against France as one measure in a series of steps taken in response to demands by the Russian leadership for a new economic policy. The preliminary move in a series of actions designed to remedy Russia's abnormally poor monetary and trade situation had been taken with Speransky's measures of financial reform. An indispensable supplement to these financial measures was a rectification of Russia's imbalance of trade. There were three closely related aspects of the trade problem which Alexander took steps to solve between mid-1810 and mid-1811. First, Russian exports had to be increased; second, a new tariff structure was essential; third, a decision was necessary regarding the French embargo,

and especially the question of confiscation.

The first of these issues came to the fore in the middle of 1810 when the anti-Napoleonic Governor of New Russia (Novaia Rossiia), the Duc de Richelieu, began to argue strongly for the free export of grain from Odessa. He was supported by Gurev, the Minister of Finance.<sup>5</sup> Gurev had agreed with Speransky's reforms which had been undertaken to correct the devaluation of the ruble brought on by adherence to the Continental System. However, Speransky believed that the best Russia could do to maintain the Alliance and to abide by the Continental System was to prohibit imports from England.<sup>6</sup> The Minister of Finance disagreed and argued that an expansion of trade was the necessary counterpart to the monetary reforms if there was to be a general recovery.<sup>7</sup> Alexander took the side of Gurev and Richelieu and on 19 December 1810 he opened all northern Russian ports to the free export of grain.<sup>8</sup>

By this time the question of tariffs and confiscation of ships had been handed over by the Tsar to hostile bureaucratic committees in the State Council.<sup>9</sup> There Speransky, a member of the Commerce Department of the Council, met with considerable opposition led by the President of the Department, Admiral Mordvinov. Schladen reported from the capital on 25 December that the decisions had already been taken and that there was no doubt French commerce was a prime target of the new measures, as yet to be announced.<sup>10</sup>

It was not until 31 December that the new tariff law was published and the low rates of the Franco-Russian Treaty of Commerce (1797), reestablished at Tilsit in 1807, were abrogated. France was affected by the new tariffs in several ways. The tax on items that arrived by sea (i.e.,



from Britain, America, and the Baltic countries) was considerably decreased, whereas the tax on luxury goods and products that came by land (i.e., from France and the countries under her control) was substantially increased. There were other measures designed to limit the effectiveness of the Continental System as well, the most significant of which was the decision to end contraband categories. In addition, although no trading was allowed with countries with whom Russia was at war, such countries could send their goods to Russia on neutral shipping.<sup>11</sup> The clandestine American-British trade with Russia was thereby legalized.

The ukase respecting tariffs and trade was strongly protested by Caulaincourt, and the Tsar felt it was necessary to write directly to Napoleon explaining the new policy. On 5 April 1811 he wrote an accurate appraisal to the French Emperor:

Ce tarif a été impérieusement commandé par la gêne extrême du commerce maritime, par l'importation énorme par terre de marchandises étrangères de prix, par les droits excessifs mis dans les États de Votre Majesté sur des produits russes et par la baisse effrayante de notre change. Il a deux buts en vue: le premier, c'est en prohibant avec la plus grande sévérité le commerce anglais, d'accorder quelques facilités au commerce américain, comme le seul par mer dont la Russie puisse se servir pour exporter ses produits trop volumineux pour pouvoir l'être par terre; le second, de restreindre autant que faire se peut l'importation par terre comme la plus désavantageuse pour notre balance de commerce, introduisant une quantité à d'objets de luxe très riches et pour lesquels nous déboursions notre numéraire, tandis que notre propre exportation se trouve si extrêmement gênée. Telles sont les raisons toutes simples de l'oukaze de tarif.<sup>12</sup>

By March an internal crisis of considerable proportions had been reached and this made urgent the solution of the third aspect of Russia's trade policy - the freeing of Russian ports from the French embargo and an

end to confiscation. When Gurev's year-end report for 1810 was presented to the State Council early in 1811 the issue came to a head. The Finance Minister's report revealed that his Department had not paid its bills and that the 120,000 rubles per month allowance to Tolstoi for the upkeep of the royal household had not been dispensed.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the Council was alarmed to learn that many of the nobility were insolvent, unable to sell their grain, and unable to secure further advances from their creditors.<sup>14</sup> The nobles who depended on wheat exports were in particular distress because Odessa and Riga, the two main ports for the exit of wheat, were still officially closed to neutral shipping.<sup>15</sup>

Although the embargo was still in effect for restricted harbours, several ships had tested the system by 'taking refuge' in such ports hoping no officials were there. Schladen tells us on 1 February 1811 that 12 ships from the United States were released under this pretext and no ruling had been taken on another 30.<sup>16</sup> The result was an open split in the Council between Rumiantsev and Mordvinov. The Foreign Minister argued that under the terms of the embargo these ships should be confiscated. Mordvinov, on the other hand, "est opposé avec une grande véhémence à leur confiscation."<sup>17</sup> The issue was resolved when the final step in the reorganization of Russian trade was taken by the Tsar in June 1811. At the beginning of the new shipping season he opened Riga, the Black Sea Ports, and those of the Sea of Azov to neutral shipping, thus removing the last restrictions against trading in Russian ports.<sup>18</sup>

The combined commercial measures taken between October 1810 and June 1811 were significant in three ways. First, they effectively ended Russian participation in the Continental System by allowing almost complete

freedom for the export of Russian goods, while allowing the importation of some essential manufactured wares and keeping out luxury items. Second, these steps paved the way for a tremendous upsurge in commercial traffic, especially by the Americans. Third, the Russian and French Empires were moved closer to war.

The most noticeable effect of the new trade policy was the impetus given to the development of Russian trade. Almost overnight British ships, flying the American flag or the flag of Ténériffe to preserve appearances and avoid seizure by the French, entered St. Petersburg.<sup>19</sup> Schladen gave an indication of the increased shipping when he wrote from the capital in June 1811:

Un nombre assez considerable de navires marchands - 187 - la plupart en list et américaine sont arrivés ces jours ci dans les ports Russes, ce qui commence à donner quelque vivacité aux opérations de la bourse qui languissaient depuis six semaines.<sup>20</sup>

American trade underwent a considerable jump and almost doubled as it went from \$3,976,000 in 1810 to \$6,138,000 in 1811.<sup>21</sup> Out of the ports of Archangel, St. Petersburg and Odessa in 1811 American vessels alone did 24 million rubles of trade, part of which was destined for Austria and Prussia.<sup>22</sup>

Together with the deteriorating Continental System went increased diplomatic activity and preparations for war. Both France and Russia were trying to prepare diplomatically for a conflict that Napoleon felt to be inevitable and that Alexander could find no way of avoiding. France believed it was secure in its Alliance with Austria and concentrated its efforts on trying to obtain an alliance with Sweden and Turkey.<sup>23</sup> But European opinion was swinging away from the Napoleonic system.

In Austria and Prussia, both of which were firmly under Napoleonic military influence, there was substantial opposition to Napoleon. In Vienna the community of Russian émigrés was able to secure the support of influential persons even though Metternich wished for the time being to continue the French Alliance.<sup>24</sup> In Prussia a substantial group of leaders in the government had supported a general rise in feeling against France. Led by Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Blücher, the Prussians kept in close contact with Russia.<sup>25</sup>

Developments in Sweden also encouraged Russia. Following Bernadotte's election a substantial pro-Russian party had developed, especially among the Swedish nobility which was as opposed to the Continental System as were the Russians. The Swedish nobility supported the idea of a Russian-British rapprochement for it would mean the regularization of Baltic trade.<sup>26</sup> When Russian overtures were made to Bernadotte in March 1811 it was found that Sweden would not ally itself with France. As a result all but three divisions of Russia's army in Finland were withdrawn and sent South to the armies of the frontier.<sup>27</sup>

In England sympathy by 1811 was openly for Russia and Alexander had thrown overboard the pretenses of war with that country. Notwithstanding the existing trade with England via American ships and ships of dubious registry, there existed, as Schladen noted, "depuis quelques temps déjà, des communications entre Pétersbourg and Londres."<sup>28</sup> In August the first cargo of munitions arrived at Reval from England, escorted by a British frigate. They had been ordered through a St. Petersburg merchant. At the same time English volunteers captured by Russia during the Finnish war were returned via Riga, in exchange for which the English agreed not to harass

Russian vessels in the Baltic.<sup>29</sup>

Preparations were made within Russia as well. Similar to the situation that existed in 1806, there was considerable pressure exerted upon Alexander to dismiss the French in Russian service.<sup>30</sup> This the Tsar was reluctant to do because a number of royalist émigrés were valuable public servants and strong anti-Napoleonic voices besides. To name only two, Richelieu was the dominant figure in the administration of New Russia, while Traversay, an admiral in the Baltic command, became Minister of Marine late in 1811.<sup>31</sup> Despite this, however, by 1811 the French in Russia were being harassed by Russian officials and some were forced to leave. As the Prussian emissary noted in April, "Les préparatifs continuent et la police surveilles les Français avec une attention redoublée."<sup>32</sup>

At the same time the police began to exert greater control over publications. State police functions were assumed by a military-dominated Ministry Police in 1810, led by General A.D. Balashov, a staunchly patriotic and anti-French man. He had been Director of the Moscow police from 1804 to 1807 under Count I.P. Saltykov and there made close friends with members of the conservative opposition, including Karamzin, Rostopchin and Maria Feodorovna.<sup>33</sup> Balashov and the Ministry of Policy were given broad but ill defined powers to deal with domestic and foreign publications, and there were numerous instances of confiscation by the police of books and articles passed by the Ministry of Education.<sup>34</sup>

There was a notable exception to this state of affairs. As Russia moved towards war with France the English newspapers were no longer regarded as being injurious to government policy. Police surveillance in this respect was eased and the papers began to stream steadily into the

country through Sweden and the commercial houses in St. Petersburg. They were, to use Jouffroy's phrase, "entre les mains de tout le monde."<sup>35</sup> They acted as an encouragement to the Russian reading public and supported Russia's developing anti-Napoleonic position. The court was enthusiastic about Napoleon's reverses and Wellington's successes, and delighted to learn that General Robert Wilson had captured Mapena's rear guard in Spain.<sup>36</sup> In Severnaia Pochta the government itself began to publish 'factual' news of the situation in Spain in January 1811.<sup>37</sup> The papers were also full of English preparations against Napoleon and this gave additional reassurance.<sup>38</sup>

By the beginning of 1811 Russian troops were already being deployed along the western frontier, toward Lithuania, Podolia and the Duchy of Warsaw. The troops from Finland were on a slow march southward. The points of concentration were Vilna, Grodno, Brześć and Bialystock. On the Niemen and the Bug points of embarkation were prepared. Rafts were built and materials for the passage collected.<sup>39</sup> The first serious troop movements began in February-March and were of a defensive posture, a strategy being urged by the Emperor's two top military advisors, Generals Barclay de Tolly and Pfuhl.<sup>40</sup> It was widely believed that because of the situation in Spain Napoleon would not begin an attack in the summer of 1811.<sup>41</sup> As long as the Eastern army was still operating against the Turks no independent westward action was planned.

Forces on the frontier, ranged one behind the other, were grouped basically in two armies placed on the same line. The first formed around Vilna behind the Niemen and represented the main force: its main camp was Drissa and fell under the direction of Barclay de Tolly. The second army formed South of Vilna, behind the Bug. Its task was to harass the

enemy's right flank and was originally given to General Lavrov but went to Bagration. A third army, under Tormasov, was held in reserve.<sup>42</sup>

A new recruitment was called, a levy of 4 men per 500 of all those of eligible age, but they would require months of training. Alexander's correspondence with Czartorysky shows how far the plans for military preparations in the west had progressed. He spoke of 3 armies, the first composed of 106,500 men, the second of 134,000 and a reserve army of 124,000 (44,000 reserves and 80,000 recruits under the new levy).<sup>43</sup> To this could be added the Moldvian army still at war with the Turks, a further 40,000.<sup>44</sup>

The buildup of Russian military strength on the western frontiers was proceeding openly in 1811 and to the Russian public this signalled, more than any other development, that Alexander and his advisors had changed their attitude toward France. Schladen wrote from St. Petersburg in March:

Les mouvements militaire qui se dirigent vers les frontières occidentales de l'Empire ont fait une grande sensation dans l'intérieur et on assure que le peuple s'y livre à tout son penchant et témoigne, hautement la satisfaction d'un changement du système qui lui a causé des pertes si considérables.<sup>45</sup>

When Caulaincourt spoke to Alexander of these military preparations, particularly the fortifications along the Dvina and Dnieper rivers, the Tsar said they were in response to rifles sent by Napoleon to Warsaw. He also said the 13 new regiments would not be armed.<sup>46</sup> When Napoleon repeated his concern over the Russian increase of strength on the frontiers Alexander replied: "Mes armements ne sont bornés à donner une meilleure organisation à des régiments déjà existants. C'est ce que Votre Majesté n'a pas cessé de faire chez elle."<sup>47</sup>

So well known were these preparations throughout Europe, that the apprehension was reflected on the Paris Bourse.<sup>48</sup> Although Caulaincourt remained serene in St. Petersburg, confident that Alexander did not want war, Napoleon had other sources of information that presented a much more serious interpretation.<sup>49</sup> He believed that Caulaincourt was being misled in St. Petersburg and in February the ambassador was notified that Lauriston would replace him. Napoleon notified Alexander that Caulaincourt was leaving because of 'ill health',<sup>50</sup> but left no doubt as to the real reason. In the first conversation between Caulaincourt and Napoleon after the ambassador returned to Paris Napoleon said: "Vous êtes dupé d'Alexandre et des russes; vous n'avez pas su ce qui se passait."<sup>51</sup>

Napoleon by then was receiving alarming reports from his observers in Poland. Poniatowsky, the Polish Minister of War, notified the French ruler of the forced march of 5 of the 9 divisions of the Moldavian army toward the Polish frontier.<sup>52</sup> By then, as Schlöden noticed in St. Petersburg, it was general knowledge that the Poles were calling for a preventative war.<sup>53</sup> To improve upon his information from Poland, in the face of Russia's increased activity on the border, Napoleon sent a certain 'M. Bignon' to Warsaw in February as an 'observer'. Bignon supplied information supporting the concerns of Poniatowsky.<sup>54</sup> These reports were supplemented by the despatches of Davout, in command of the French forces of the east, who also painted a very serious picture.

Napoleon began his preparations during March-April 1811. In May he developed and multiplied his means of war by a combined series of military and diplomatic means and created the first of his advance forces of 230,000 men in Davout's army of the East.<sup>55</sup> The French Emperor by then was



convinced that war between Russia and France was only a matter of time.

He wrote to the King of Württemberg in April:

La guerre aura lieu. Elle aura lieu malgré moi, malgré l'empereur Alexandre, malgré les intérêts de la France et ceux de la Russie. J'ai déjà vu cela si souvent, et c'est mon expérience du passé qui me dévoile cet avenir. Tout cela est une scène d'opéra et les Anglais tiennent les machines.<sup>56</sup>

When Lauriston arrived in the Russian capital in May he was well received,<sup>57</sup> and his evaluation of Alexander's intentions were the same as Caulaincourt's: he was convinced that Alexander did not want war.<sup>58</sup>

His opinion is supported by that of Schladen, who believed Alexander would fight only if attacked.<sup>59</sup> The Tsar himself wrote to Napoleon revealing his reasons for maintaining the peace:

D'ailleurs, mon amour-propre est attaché au système d'union avec la France. L'ayant établi comme un principe de politique pour la Russie, ayant dû combattre assez longtemps les anciennes opinions qui y étaient contraires, il n'est pas raisonnable de me supposer l'envie de détruire mon ouvrage et de faire la guerre à Votre Majesté.<sup>60</sup>

To these signs of Alexander's attitude could be added the arguments of Caulaincourt when he returned to Paris from St. Petersburg. The former ambassador undertook to correct Napoleon's misconceptions about the Russian nobility and Alexander's plans vis-à-vis France. When the Emperor characterized the nobility as corrupt, egotistic and incapable of discipline, Caulaincourt replied that patriotism was now first among all other sentiments. He was adamant about Alexander's desire to maintain the peace.<sup>61</sup> This conversation, together with the other signs of Alexander's belief in avoiding war, served to convince Napoleon that Russia would not attack in 1811. He cancelled additional troop increases and sought to achieve a diplomatic solution to the problem.<sup>62</sup>

Napoleon offered, through Chernyshev, to meet Alexander or a plenipotentiary somewhere in Germany. In the French view there were only three sources of disagreement: common concerted measures against English commerce and the execution of the stipulations at Tilsit; a treaty of commerce to be concluded between Russia and France; and an arrangement, to be discussed, over Oldenburg.<sup>63</sup>

In Alexander's mind there was no possibility of a third meeting between the two Emperors or their representatives. The first two conferences had provoked considerable opposition in Russia and further dissention was the last thing the Tsar needed or wanted at the moment. When Napoleon demanded that Kurakin be given the powers necessary to conclude a new agreement Alexander handed the note to Rumiantsev with the comment: "Le prince Kurakin a ceux [powers] nécessaires pour tout entendre, mais on ne pouvait lui donner ceux de conclure sans référer à sa cour, et c'est là ce qu'on a exigé."<sup>64</sup>

The evolution of government monetary and trade policy, the frantic scramble for diplomatic connections, and the increasingly conspicuous military preparations on the frontiers and in the interior of the Empire during 1811-1812, together represented the fusion of Russia's external and internal policies. Thus fusion was the end result of the converging process which was already evident during 1809-1810. It represented in large part the bending of external policy to bring it in line with an internal policy that had been developing more or less consistently along the same, broad, nationalistic path since the beginning of the reign.

In one sense this represented a return to the situation as it existed in 1805-1807, when government policy and the internal movement

complemented one another in opposition to France. But, it is important to note that the situation as it was developing in 1811 was qualitatively different as well. When the fusion occurred the internal forces were not static. Indeed, the movement of personalities and ideas was towards a far more nationalistic and anti-Napoleonic position than had been in evidence in 1806. Thus, when the fusion transpired, the binding force was far more profound than it had been earlier.

Between 1807 and 1810 there had been a gradual increase of nationalistic and more conservative leaders in educational, literary, religious, military and government affairs. By 1811 the last attempts at reform met with opposition which could not be overcome and the conservative leaders gained the upper hand in the direction of affairs. Although Speransky was still undoubtedly a force of considerable significance, the rising mood of Russia in external matters coincided with the rise of conservatives, reactionaries and chauvinists. Nowhere is this more evident than in the thought and careers of Count Aleksei K. Razumovskii, brother of the Russian émigré in Vienna, who succeeded Count P.V. Zavadovskii as Minister of Public Instruction. But it is also seen in the careers of General M.N. Muravev, Curator of the Moscow Educational circuit, 1803-1807, and Sergei S. Uvarov, Curator of the St. Petersburg educational district after 1810.<sup>65</sup>

The rising Russian national mood in education, already apparent at Tilsit, had not been broken by the attempted democratization of the school system. The reason was that the government had made several important concessions already. The existence of academies for young army officers, private pensions for noblemen, seminaries for priests and institutes for young ladies had continued and pushed the underlying trend toward a more

conservative and national education.<sup>66</sup>

After the Education act of 1809 steps were taken to convert the principal schools into gymnasia exclusively concerned with university preparation. By 1811 a large number of ecclesiastical schools had been founded for the instruction of the children of the clergy. For the education of the clergy themselves there were now four academies (St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kazan and Kiev), as well as seminaries in various places. Fifteen provincial schools were also established for the education of noblemen's sons destined for a military career; and the year 1811 also saw the foundation at Moscow of the private school of M.N. Muravev for future officers, where some of the most remarkable men in succeeding years received their education.<sup>67</sup> It was, as Pypin says, "one of the best expressions of the social spirit which was awakened in Russian society in Alexander's time."<sup>68</sup>

Some important steps were taken in 1811 with reference to the private boarding schools which, as we have already seen, continued to be in great favour with the nobility and well-to-do classes.<sup>69</sup> In that year a special report was prepared by Count Razumovskii, the Minister of Public Instruction, pointing out the evils which threatened the state and the national life from the system of entrusting the training of the youth of the upper classes to persons who "knew no Russian and despised it", and were bound by no ties to the country in which they lived. "Their pupils both think and speak after the manner of foreigners, and cannot put a few words together correctly in their native tongue".<sup>70</sup> As a result of this report it was provided that in future permission to open a boarding school should be made dependent, not only on intellectual but even more on moral qualifications; that a knowledge of Russian should be required from the

keepers of boarding schools; and, most important of all, that the language of instruction in all such schools should be Russian.<sup>71</sup>

The year 1811 is also notable for the introduction, in the form of an experiment confined to the St. Petersburg educational district, of certain changes in the curriculum of the gymnasium which were destined to be generally adopted later on, and which involved nothing less than a revolution in the whole aim and spirit of Russian secondary education. These changes were due to Count S.S. Uvarov who in 1810, at the age of 25, had been appointed Curator of the St. Petersburg Educational District by Razumovskii, his father-in-law.<sup>72</sup> Although the real reaction was to come a few years later, after the war with France and the creation of the Holy Alliance, the ground was laid for it in 1810 when Uvarov began to mold the new system to his own ideals.<sup>73</sup>

The principles underlying the changes introduced by Uvarov in 1811 were outlined by him in a memorandum accompanying his new educational proposals which he presented to the Minister of Public Instruction in October:

Religion, the mother tongue, and the classical languages, history understood in a wide and deep sense, geography in all its departments, grammar, logic, rhetoric and native literature - these are the subjects with which alone the gymnasium should occupy itself. Such are the principles to which we must return.<sup>74</sup>

The plan of instruction was sanctioned by the Minister in November 1811 for introduction in the Educational District of St. Petersburg. Whereas the major schools of 1796 and the provincial schools of 1804 had been locally oriented, now secondary institutions became funnels directing talent toward the universities, toward rank in service and toward participation in

capital society.<sup>75</sup>

The experiment of Uvarov succeeded so well that the universities were requested to consider the advisability of a more general adaptation of the system. The encyclopedic curriculum of 1804 went by the board and the new views were adopted by the Administrative Council. The system of Uvarov was finally extended to all Russia in 1819.<sup>76</sup> Uvarov was not an isolated figure in the central administration, for in 1810 M.L. Magnitskii had risen to State Secretary in the Imperial Chancellery. He detested revolutionary French and German influences, especially in the universities.<sup>77</sup>

Within the educational sphere the other internal trends were also reflected. In the new curriculum, for example, one notices an added emphasis on religion and the Russian language, both of which were evidence of the concern among the clerics and literators of the day. The Church operated in numerous ways to support the anti-French policy of the various nationalistic publications and societies. It had an especially valuable role to play in the military.

The village priests had remained consistently against the Alliance and exerted themselves strenuously to spread a strong hatred among the peasantry against the French as being atheists and republicans. They even went so far as to attribute the scarcity throughout 1810-1811 and an outbreak of the plague in the Southeastern districts to the Alliance of Russia with an unbelieving Empire.<sup>78</sup> After 1810, in connection with the continued growth of conservatism and self-awareness, the first beginnings of an Orthodox reaction began to make itself felt. The extremists opposed all outside influences, especially secular knowledge and culture, and denounced with particular fierceness the non-denominational piety and broad-

church ideas of the Freemasons.<sup>79</sup> But this reaction, like the changes of Uvarov and the emergence of Magnitskii, was only the foreshadowing of things to come. For the time being there were more immediate problems calling for the attention of the Church.

As the Russian forces expanded in 1811 and 1812 the Church once more found itself called upon to play its traditional role. With the expansion of troop numbers it resumed its place as an instrument of control and support in the Imperial army. The troops were given regular religious services, duplicating as much as possible familiar patterns. The priests in the army were instructed to report those soldiers not conforming.<sup>80</sup> Again the Manifesto of 1806, charging Napoleon as an enemy of mankind, was circulated. The troops were called upon to defend the Fatherland and to struggle for their faith and freedom.<sup>81</sup>

There were many signs of the conservative trend in literature as well, as society at all levels harmonized in opposition to the "Question Française", and on behalf of the further propagation of pro-Russian and patriotic sentiments. Alexander Shishkov, who had been promoting an ardent anti-French policy for years and who was at the forefront of the national movement, rose into prominence as Russian external and internal policy fused. In 1811 he delivered a fiery lecture to high Petersburg society on the need to educate the younger generation in the spirit of reverence for the historic faith, love of country, and enthusiasm for the mother tongue.<sup>82</sup> This would later serve as his spring-board into national politics. In the meantime, the ultra-conservative literati around him and Derzhavin gathered together other patriotic writers and founded the Beseda liubitelei russkogo slova (Gathering of the Lovers of the Russian Word). Although the group took

the title formally only in 1811, it is known that they had been meeting from 1808 onwards.<sup>83</sup> Meeting in Derzhavin's St. Petersburg drawing room, academicians, dignitaries and semi-retired literary men of Catherine's time delivered speeches to stately, bemadalled old officers, high government officials, and society leaders all seated in hierarchical order among the pillars and potted palms.<sup>84</sup>

The society is an important aspect of Russia's national development at that time. Its membership is highly revealing, as it included Old Believers, conservatives like Derzhavin, Sumarokov and Karamzin, and even 'liberals' like Mordvinov.<sup>85</sup> In short, it was made up of many types of discontented persons, each with their own grudge and grievance. Their common denominator was their sense of patriotism, their dislike of the French influence in government, their opposition to the Tilsit Alliance.<sup>86</sup>

A clear sign of the times was that publications seeking to propagate more liberal and western views fared very badly. A.P. Benitskii, for instance, made an attempt to publish such a journal in St. Petersburg after 1810, devoted to poems and prose, with the help of liberal supporters within the Volnoe obshchestvo liubitelei slovesnosti, nauk i khodozhestv. The periodical, called Taliia, lasted until 1812 when it failed for lack of public support.<sup>87</sup>

There was no development during the last years of the Franco-Russian Alliance that was more important, or more indicative of the solidification of Russian society, than the collaboration between members of the literary world with those of the Imperial, high court and military circles. The vocal re-emergence of Admiral Shiskov and General Rostopchin, who combined a military and civilian background with verbal and written protests against



the French influence, had been indicative of the patriotic, conservative and noble elements of Russian society blending their opposition. The apogee of this opposition, which pushed the cause of Russian national interests before all else, came not unexpectedly from one of the most talented authors of the day - N.M. Karamzin. In March 1811 he presented Alexander with his Memorandum Concerning Ancient and Modern Russia (Zapiska o drevnei i novoi Rossii).

When Karamzin became Russia's official state historian in 1803, at Imperial instigation and expense, he also began to move in a wider circle which encompassed members of the literati, government, court, military and Imperial family. It was as a consequence of these associations, and his own dissatisfactions and the Napoleonic threat, that he was impelled to write the Memorandum. An important work, it emerges as the foremost political document of the period and remains one of the most systematic and complete expositions of conservative thought produced during the nineteenth century.<sup>88</sup>

The general circumstances which inspired the writing of the Memorandum were the failure of Russian foreign and domestic policies in the first decade of the reign of Alexander I. This failure engendered among considerable segments of Russian public opinion first disappointment, then resentment, and finally fear for Russia's very survival. Karamzin's work echoes all these sentiments.

By 1811 there had emerged a significant body of public opinion, much wider than just Church circles which were the first to rebel, that upheld the proposition that the Revolution had been a logical consequence of the injuries inflicted on the ancient stabilizing forces of society by the corrosive actions of philosophic criticism.<sup>89</sup> The Russian reaction to this

was a reversion to tradition, to habits and to institutions whose weakening, in their minds, had led to the disintegration of the state and which would eventually, as in France, lead to revolution. Against this Russians now placed added emphasis on the study of their own language (Derzhavin and Shishkov), their literature (Zhukovskii, Dmitriev), their folklore (Merzliakov) and their history (Glinka, Karamzin). Karamzin in his Memorandum provided the best analysis of Russia's past as it pertained to the autocracy, government and bureaucracy, social classes, finance and foreign affairs. In this sense he is an exposition of that elusive thought in Russian society - the thought motivating men in power, that is, of those who tried to conserve rather than to change.<sup>90</sup>

The specific circumstance resulted from the efforts of the politically ambitious sister of Alexander I, the Grand Duchess Catherine Pavlovna, to substitute her own influence at the court for that of the 'liberal' party, personified by Speransky.<sup>91</sup> Karamzin was part of her circle of conservatives and it was through her that his work reached Alexander. The closest bonds of affection tied Alexander to Catherine, the only member of his family from whom he did not feel estranged. The Emperor had a very high regard for his sister's intelligence and character; she was his intimate confidante, and his letters to her are the only documents in which he reveals himself openly and fully.<sup>92</sup>

Catherine, who was outspokenly against the Alliance with France, sometime during 1810, asked Karamzin to prepare a critique of contemporary government policy reflected against Russian policy of the past. Complying with her request, Karamzin presented the manuscript to her at the beginning of 1811 and she gave it to Alexander in March during his visit to Tver.<sup>93</sup>

Alexander left it with Arakcheev for safekeeping on his return from Tver to St. Petersburg.<sup>94</sup> It was obvious to Schladen that something was about to happen when Alexander left for the visit. The Prussian ambassador noted on 2 April:

On est très curieux d'apprendre quel effet aura produit sur Sa Majesté Impériale la voyage de Tver: les principes de la grande Duchess Cathérine et les opinions de plusieurs personnes marquante qui dans ce moment ont été réunis à Tver.<sup>95</sup>

This was the mood of the country and, for the most part, the mood of the Tsar when Karamzin presented his Memorandum and began to discuss foreign policy. The reason that foreign policy should be the first subject discussed during Alexander's reign is clearly stated by the author: "foreign policy had such an important impact on the internal life of the country."<sup>96</sup> Russia's true position was one of neutrality as the "magnanimous arbiter of Europe." But shortly after Alexander ascended the throne there had been a betrayal of this policy. Under the influence of some of the Unofficial Committee there began a change:

A youthful favorite of the sovereign's, as yet more vain than clever, and quite unversed in the science of politics, declared unequivocally in my presence that Russia should make war in order to occupy the idle minds and maintain the military spirit of our armies.<sup>97</sup>

If getting into a war of the Third Coalition was a mistake, so was the Tilsit Peace: "It was the one most pregnant with consequences, because it reacted at once on the internal condition of the country." Karamzin's conservative mind offered as an alternative a kind of isolationism:

We should have forgotten Europe, and turned all thoughts to Russia, in order to safeguard her internal welfare. That is to say, we should have accepted no peace save on honorable terms, which would not have required us to break our profitable commercial relations with England or to fight Sweden, in violation of the

holiest of laws of mankind and of nations. We could have rejected Europe without suffering disgrace, but we could not maintain our honor by transforming ourselves into an instrument of Napoleon in Europe.<sup>98</sup>

If isolationism marked Karamzin's views, so did pragmatism and a concern for Russia's own interests, "In politics", he wrote, "self-preservation is the supreme law. It would have been better to consent to Napoleon's seizure of Silesia than to have recognized the Duchy of Warsaw."<sup>99</sup>

There can be no doubts as to the 'benefit' to Russia brought by the Tilsit Alliance: France consolidated her hegemony over Europe, becoming the neighbour of Russia in the process; the unprofitable Swedish war and the break with England resulted in an excessive printing of money, in rising prices, and in widespread discontent in the country. But the acquisition of Finland, in Karamzin's view, had other costs as well, including moral ones: "We are hated by the Swedes and reproached by all other nations."<sup>100</sup>

Karamzin acknowledged that the government had made some movement away from the French system since 1809, during the Franco-Austrian war; but he wondered to the wisdom of the policy: "Shall we deceive Napoleon? Facts are facts. He knows that inwardly we detest him, because we fear him: he had occasion to observe our more than questionable enthusiasm in the last Austrian war."<sup>101</sup> True to his conservative form, and consistent with his distaste for bureaucracy, Karamzin did not lay the blame at the Autocrat's door, but at his advisors. His most outspoken criticism was that Alexander's collaborators had not taken into consideration Russian needs, interests and wishes:

The voice of the people is the voice of God.  
No one will be able to persuade Russians that in matters of foreign policy the counselors of the emperor have followed the principles of sincere, wise patriotism, and stiven to advance the interests of the sovereign.<sup>102</sup>

In dealing with public spirits, and in treating the relationship between the autocracy and the nobility, Karamzin offered two further comments on Alexander's conduct of external affairs. Both of these, even when expressed subtly, were profound criticisms. In the first place, Karamzin realized that one of the important political legacies of the French Revolution was national spirit and it was clear to him that the government could not afford to neglect the developing feelings of patriotism. He criticized Peter the Great, and by implication Alexander, for having failed to realize that "national spirit constitutes the moral strength of states."<sup>103</sup> The Tilsit Alliance was disastrous for Russia because it was destroying Russia's national spirit. Second, his Memorandum offered a stern warning against any change in the foundations of the state - the tacit agreement between the monarch and the dvorianstvo (the land owning nobility or gentry) by which the former was limited in the exercise of his power only by Christian precepts and a strict respect for the social and economic privileges of the latter.<sup>104</sup> It was precisely these privileges that had been compromised during the period of the Alliance. By implication, Alexander's continued adherence to the system of Napoleon was destroying the very foundations of the Russian state.

For present purposes Karamzin's Memorandum is important for two reasons above all others. First, it is clearly a document of its times and appears as part of the broadly based and expanding opposition to the French influence in government, politics and foreign affairs. It is true that Karamzin's appeal in the name of Russian nationalism was but one among many in Russia during the period of the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>105</sup> But the Memorandum, more than any other contemporary document, testifies to the

rapidity with which the current of patriotism was transformed into a conservative nationalism.<sup>106</sup> Less than ten years earlier Karamzin had been considered the epitome of the cosmopolitan, Enlightened Russian. Second, Karamzin's voice was the voice of the conservative patriotic establishment in Russia. The Emperor could not escape the fact that these were the sincere views of that segment of Russian society which constituted the ruling class. To greater and lesser degrees the Memorandum repeats criticism heard consistently from various high and even Imperial personages since 1807. What made them different coming from Karamzin, and more valuable, was that they were directed to the Emperor, were blessed by the Imperial family and came from Russia's official historian, a man whom Alexander himself supported.

Since there is no firm record of Alexander's having read the Memorandum, many historians have downgraded the effects it must have had on him, preferring instead to consider the pre-1812 period as Alexander's 'liberal period'.<sup>107</sup> Under such an approach the invasion itself becomes the turning point and Alexander's concern for religion, which supposedly occurred after, if not a result of the invasion, is combined together with the 'post 1812 reaction'.<sup>108</sup> Recent authorities, however, more or less unanimously agree that Alexander did in fact read the Memorandum.<sup>109</sup> Second, it seems incontrovertible that Alexander was 'in the mood' to be affected by the document. For one thing, he himself was part of the pre-1812 general religious revival. It has sometimes been argued that Alexander's absorption in religion did not begin until 1814, when the English Quakers, Lutheran pastors, Madam Krüdener, Mademoiselle Tatarisova and Archimandrite Photius, to say nothing of lesser stars in the pseudo-mystic firmament, began

attracting his attention.<sup>110</sup> There is ample evidence to prove that 'the change' in the Emperor started much earlier and certainly by 1811 it was evident, for in January 1812 Alexander wrote a letter to A.I. Koshelev, since 1810 President of the Commission for Petitions in the State Council, saying that he was already much religiously inclined and had been for several years.<sup>111</sup> Alexander's concern for religion, the general religious revival, and his dependence on Arakcheev and Prince Golitsyn were all part of the same phenomenon which occurred more or less simultaneously about 1807.

Concerning the connections between Arakcheev, Golitsyn, Alexander and religion there can be no doubts at all. The friendship with Arakcheev, which began when Alexander was a boy at Gatchina, was renewed in 1807 and, as Strakhovsky and Jenkins have shown, combined religious devotion with a remembrance of Alexander's father.<sup>112</sup> This relationship was to continue until the Emperor's death in 1825. Similarly, Golitsyn was a boyhood friend of the Tsar, who became in his youth a free thinker, later a Freemason and finally an inquisitor. He had been Alexander's Ober-prokuror of the Holy Synod since 1803, a position he would retain until 1817 when he became Minister of Education. He had been responsible for the Church Manifesto against Napoleon in 1806 and since 1810 also lead the Directorship of Spiritual Affairs for Foreign Faiths. It was in this capacity that he promoted the introduction of the Russian Bible Society which came into existence in 1812, but which evolved from the British and Foreign Bible Society. The latter society had been operating in the Caucasus since 1806.<sup>113</sup>

Karamzin's concerns about the expansion of the bureaucracy and the creation of powerful executives around the sovereign were only partly justified on the basis of the 1802 reforms of the central administration.

There had been slightly more concern created in 1810 by the expansion of the Ministries and Central Administrations to eleven, but these still gave the individual Minister very little additional authority since the collegial system still determined much of the internal workings of the Ministry. The real proof of the conservative fears came in June 1811, three months after the Memorandum was given to Alexander, when Speransky put the final touch to the reorganisation of the central executive agencies of the Empire.

On 25 June 1811 the statute for the internal reorganisation of the Ministries was published.<sup>114</sup> This legislation greatly amplified the laws of 1802 and 1810, and provided the basic form of organisation of the Russian central administration (glavnoe upravlenie) for the remainder of the nineteenth century. The general statute was to be followed by separate regulations for each ministry. Before his dismissal Speransky had time for only two of them: Finance and Police.<sup>115</sup> The remnants of the collegial system were thrown overboard and the Minister was made absolute master of the Ministry with first responsibility for formulating policy. The gist of the reform was the personal responsibility imposed upon the ministers, the careful delimitation of the functions of the executive departments, the elimination of their interference with legislative and judicial matters, and the formulation of precise and comprehensive rules for their own administration. This legislation, which remained in force with but minor changes until 1905, has been aptly described as the 'organic charter' of Russian bureaucracy.<sup>116</sup> The conservative fears seemed to be justified.

Apprehensions over the modification to the powers of the



autocracy brought on by Speransky's reforms were amplified by his changes and innovations in other areas as well. This is to be found quite readily in his educational reforms, for example, and came to the fore when the lycée at Tsarskoe Selo was introduced late in 1810.<sup>117</sup> The idea was to create a 'special' school for the instruction of Russia's future leaders. Heavily emphasized in the programme were the sciences, mathematics and languages.<sup>118</sup> The reaction of Count S.R. Vorontsov to this development was typical. He wrote to his son in 1812:

Le prince Kutusov et le comte Rostopchin jouent des rôles honorables de Pozharskii, quoiqu'ils ne savent pas plus de latin que leur modèle, en dépit de l'opinion de l'illustre Speranskii, qui a décidé qu'un gentilhomme russe n'est bon à rien s'il ne sait pas le latin, et cela afin de remplacer la noblesse par des popovichi /i.e., "sons of priests", e.g., Speransky himself/.<sup>119</sup>

To the conservative and aristocratic leaders in Russia this represented a dangerous intrusion of Enlightenment principles. Joseph de Maistre repeatedly wrote to his friend Razumovskii, the Minister of Education, denouncing Speransky's pernicious influence on Russian youth. The ultra-conservative view was that Enlightened and rational education accounted for all the political evils of the day and that in developing the Lycée Speransky intended to raise a generation to destroy autocracy in Russia.<sup>120</sup>

When Speransky presented his plan for reuniting old Finland (Karelia and Vyborg) to New Finland, and granting it autonomy, their conservative fears seemed to be justified.<sup>121</sup> These territories had been annexed by Elizabeth in the eighteenth century and, as Speransky's biographer points out, the thought of granting them autonomy incensed the nobility who viewed it as the loss of Imperial control over its territories.<sup>122</sup>

To these complaints could be added the truly revolutionary innovation

in 1812, as an emergency measure, of a progressive tax on incomes derived from landed estates. Contrary to precedent, the tax was computed on the basis, not of the servile population on such estates, but of their revenue. The rate of the tax, one per cent on incomes of 500 to 2,000 rubles, was increased one per cent on each 2,000 rubles of income over 2,000 until it reached ten per cent on incomes of 18,000 rubles, when the rate became stationary.<sup>123</sup>

The hostility of the landed nobility towards the new impost was all the greater because Speransky's financial program, which was never made fully effective, failed to stop the depreciation of the ruble.<sup>124</sup> Despite the financial laws of 1810, which put a ceiling on the level of assignats in circulation, and despite the levy of additional taxes in 1810 to cover state expenses, the government found itself unable to meet its expenditures and continued to issue new notes. 2.02 million additional rubles were printed in 1811, and in 1812 the laws were destroyed in effect when the government issued a further 64.5 million new rubles.<sup>125</sup> The value of the ruble continued its downward trend. From its level of 43.33 in 1809 it had fallen to 26.4 in 1811 and it dropped again in 1812 to 25.2 (based on 1774 = 100).<sup>126</sup>

Meanwhile, both courts maintained diplomatic relations, but on a noticeably cooler level. As Napoleon began his own military preparations he began to pay less and less attention to Lauriston in St. Petersburg. Jouffroy noted in St. Petersburg in October 1811, about Lauriston's embassy: "Il est en général moins bien informé que son prédécesseur."<sup>127</sup> Kurakin continued discussions in Paris with the Duc de Bassano, who had succeeded Champagny as Foreign Minister, but on 15 August Napoleon indicated his displeasure at Russia's preparations when he publicly harangued Kurakin

(as he had with Lord Witworth in 1803 and Metternich in 1808) for more than two hours before the diplomatic corps.<sup>128</sup> This led the historian Tatishchev to conclude:

A partir de ce jour et jusqu'à la fin de l'année 1811, on n'entendit plus que le bruit sinistre des armements que l'on poursuivait de part et d'autre avec une fiévreuse ardeur.<sup>129</sup>

He is supported by Jouffroy who wrote "les préparatifs de guerre continuent des deux parts avec une égale activité."<sup>130</sup>

By then Alexander had extended his efforts to Prussia, with which he hoped to sign an alliance. In the fall of 1811 Scharnhorst, the reorganizer of the Prussian army, travelled to St. Petersburg to try and elaborate a common plan on the invitation of the Tsar.<sup>131</sup> He made the trip in September-October 1811 and had meetings with Alexander at Tsarskoe-Selo.<sup>132</sup> The Emperor agreed with Scharnhorst that war was inevitable. The text of an agreement was worked out with Scharnhorst, Barclay de Tolly and Rumiantsev, and signed in St. Petersburg on 17 October 1811.<sup>133</sup>

The winter months were taken up with feverish military activity. A new conscription was called for in October of 4 men per 500. This levy, which expected to raise 120,000 soldiers, was designed to provide interior strength. They were designated as "corps de formation" or "troupes de l'intérieur", to use Jouffroy's appellations.<sup>134</sup> In part they replaced the regiments of marines from Kronstadt and the customs troops, both of which had been mobilized and sent to the frontier armies.<sup>135</sup> By then the parts of the southern forces were available as well, for in December Kutuzov handed the Turks a smashing defeat at Rustchuk and the way was cleared for concluding peace and bringing the army northward.<sup>136</sup> Most of the force spent the winter in Moldavia and in the spring marched northward to its quarters

in Podolia and Volhynia.<sup>137</sup> At the same time the battalions attached to the military colonies were ordered to leave for the front.<sup>138</sup> Alexander himself devoted great personal attention to the military preparations and Jouffroy noted in January that "l'Empereur avait visiblement négligé Rumiantsev pour le Ministre de la guerre."<sup>139</sup>

It was evident to the Prussian ambassador by the end of 1811 and during the first few months of 1812 that war was unavoidable and could be expected in the spring. He testified that Alexander was counting on the aggressor facing "les difficultés nombreuses sur le territoire Russe".<sup>140</sup> He also noticed something of the character of the preparations then going forward and clearly foresaw the 'total' aspect of the eventual conflict. On 25 February 1812, he wrote of Alexander's frame of mind:

Elle est résolue à se défendre jusqu'à la dernière extrémité dans ses propres foyers; de faire de son Empire une vaste champ de carnage; de vaincre ou de mourir pour son indépendance plutôt que de souscrire aux lois d'un étranger. Telle est sa ferme résolution.<sup>141</sup>

Alexander's resolution not to submit to the Napoleonic system can be found in his correspondence with Czartorysky about the same time. He wrote to his friend in April complaining that Napoleon was demanding the interruption of all trade with neutrals and the free entry of French luxury products, which Russia had no money to pay for. The Tsar stated his resolve not to consent to Napoleon's proposals and concluded that war could follow.<sup>142</sup>

The Prussian ambassador was also unerringly accurate in his assessment of the character of the war of 1812 when he wrote on 6 March 1812:

Le système militaire de l'Empereur est défensif. Il veut faire de cette guerre; une guerre de consommation et ne s'engagera point dans des affaires décisives où la tactique savante de son adversaire auroit inévitablement le dessus.<sup>143</sup>

Some months would elapse before Jouffroy's analysis could be shown to be correct. For the time being Alexander had yet to make the final external political preparations. Unfortunately for Russia the military convention signed with Scharnhorst in October 1811 had not been ratified. Napoleon threatened to invade Berlin if the convention was accepted, and he was able to force Prussia to sign an Alliance with France on 24 February 1812. Scharnhorst and Gneisenau resigned in disgust.<sup>144</sup> On 14 March Napoleon signed an offensive Alliance with Austria.<sup>145</sup>

Alexander at the same time was negotiating with both Sweden and Turkey. By the secret treaty of Abo on 9 April an Alliance was concluded with Sweden whereby Sweden agreed to join the struggle against France. In return Alexander promised to support Sweden in a conquest of Norway.<sup>146</sup> The following month, on 28 May, Turkey signed the Treaty of Bucharest, by which it retained Wallachia and Moldavia except for the eastern portions (Bessarabia).<sup>147</sup>

In the meantime, the Emperor was faced with a critical internal situation as the opposition to Speransky hardened. Speransky's reforms in finances and education, his position in the central government and his suspected contacts with the French since Erfurt all served as a stimulus for the development of anti-French feelings, and drew his antagonists together. The extraordinary thing about 1811 and Speransky's reforms was that they served as a focal point for opposition from the most diverse areas: Imperial family, nationalists, chauvinists, French and German émigrés, foreign visitors and dignitaries, missionaries of secret societies, absolutists and revolutionaries, patriots and cosmopolitans.<sup>148</sup> As Shilder pointed out:

In the eyes of Russian society Speransky was a free thinker, a revolutionist; a Martinist, an illuminate, very soon they called him a traitor and an enemy of the public welfare.<sup>149</sup>

There were several marks against Speransky. Since Erfurt in 1808 it had been known that he had engaged in several conversations with Frenchmen, particularly with Talleyrand.<sup>150</sup> The antagonists of Speransky did not know, however, the subjects discussed and had they known that Speransky was the go-between for Talleyrand's collusion with Alexander against Napoleon, things may have been different. In the face of no hard information, rumour worked unfairly to his disadvantage.

If the necessity for secrecy over Talleyrand was unfortunate and, in a sense, unfair; his critics were at least partly justified in their belief that he was cooperating with the French. After his return from Erfurt, Speransky was transferred to the Department of Finance, but he continued his labours on the legal code and corresponded with Baron Locré, the Secretary-General of the French State Council, regarding legal borrowing, and with a view to introducing part of the Code Napoleon in Russia.<sup>151</sup> Such correspondence had been closely watched, especially by the conservative and anti-French Balashov, Minister of Police, and its contents were used against him.<sup>152</sup> Equally unfortunate, though completely understandable, Speransky used the diplomatic officers to carry on this correspondence. To many, including Alexander, this was regarded as an uncalled for interference in the conduct of foreign relations.<sup>153</sup>

There were others, however, whose reactionary views were strengthened by strong personal hostility to Speransky. One was Count Armfoldt, one of the Swedish nobility who had collaborated with Russia on the incorporation of Finland. He wanted for himself the Curatorship of the Finnish University of Abo,

which Speransky held.<sup>154</sup> While he was undoubtedly an important influence working against Speransky and on behalf of a more belligerent policy, it is undoubtedly an exaggeration to suggest, as Vandal does, that "Son crédit tout intime ne laissait plus de place aux conseils officiels de Rumaintsev et reléguait au second rang Speransky lui-même."<sup>155</sup> Another was Rostopchin, who was critical of many European influences, lumping Martinists, Freemasons and mystics into the same detestable category. He carried on correspondence with Catherine on the subject.<sup>156</sup> and even appealed to the Tsar personally to stop Speransky and his dreadful French policies.<sup>157</sup>

The immediate leaders of the movement to rid Russia of Speransky were three men raised in office by Alexander in the post-Tilsit consolidation: General Balashov, Military Governor of St. Petersburg since 1809 and Minister of Police since 1810; together with the conservative poet I.I. Dmitriev, Minister of Justice since 1810, and Baron G.A. Rosenkamppff, Director of Russia's law academy since 1809. It was probably Rosenkamppff who wrote the memorandum later published by Dmitriev, which called for Speransky's dismissal and which was presented to the Tsar with the support of both Ministers.

They accused Speransky of overweening pride, of atheism, and of antagonizing all social classes alike.<sup>158</sup> He had destroyed the valuable collegial system and replaced it with an administrative machinery so complicated that it paralysed the principle of unity and control. His taxes had ruined the state finances:

Ses principes administratifs preuvent, à peu d'exceptions près, qu'il a eu l'intention de désorganiser l'ordre de choses existant et d'amener un bouleversement général....L'homme qui a peu entreprendre avec sang-froid une pareille tâche, en joissant de la confiance et des bienfaits de l'Empereur Alexandre; qui sait cacher

avec un art inouï la vérité et masquer le danger auquel il exposait l'empire; qui en effectuant une âme pénétrée de sentiments religieux, ne craignait ni les reproches de sa conscience ni le mécontentement de son maître, ni les murmures de toute la nation; un tel homme, dis-je, avait pris son parti depuis longtemps et se conduisait l'après un plan purement réfléchi.<sup>159</sup>

In the face of this criticism and in the face of an almost certain war, Alexander was left with no choice. It was clear that reforms were at an end and that it was of the utmost urgency to unify the country. He summoned Speransky to an interview on the evening of 17 March 1812 and two hours later the deposed Secretary of State was on his way to exile in Nizhnii Novgorod, escorted by Balashov. The dismissal of Speransky was carried out in the utmost secrecy and, as inevitably happened when factual information was lacking, the rumours began. Jouffroy wrote on 3 April 1812:

L'explication qu'on donne le public renferme des détails si odieux, qui l'on ferait en passant, qu'ils pourrait être vrais. On parle de trahison, de conspiration contre l'Etat, de projets de soulèvement dans l'intérieur, sourdement fomentés par la France et dont il [Speransky] avait été le vil instrument.<sup>160</sup>

The exclamation of N.I. Bakunina, often quoted by historians, was quite expressive of the sentiment of the Russian nobility:

A great day for the Fatherland and for all of us - the 17th of March! God has shown us His favour, for He has turned towards us and our enemies have fallen.<sup>161</sup>

She was not alone in her sentiments. A.I. Bulgakov wrote in his diary on 22 March:

In St. Petersburg there has been discovered a conspiracy which aimed at betraying Russia to the French. The wastrel Speransky has been arrested....An example must be made by punishing him, by hanging Speransky! O outcast, monster, ungrateful and base creature. You were not worthy of the name of Russian nobleman. That is why you persecuted them [nobles]. Everybody speaks only of this.<sup>162</sup>



The dismissal of Speransky was the last act in the fusion of Russia's external and internal policies. The immediate consequence of this union of government policies was the elevation into state service of a number of leaders of the opposition and national movement. Admiral Shishkov, whose patriotic appeal to Russian youth impressed Alexander, was summoned by the Tsar who said:

I read your oration on patriotism. With feelings like that you can be useful to the fatherland. It appears that war with France is unavoidable and it is necessary to mobilize recruits. I desire you to draft the manifesto.<sup>163</sup>

So important was the call to arms then drafted and issued by Shishkov, that it remained for the rest of the century a piece for Russian schoolboys to memorize.<sup>164</sup> But this was not all, for following Speransky's dismissal Shishkov became the new Secretary of State. He also replaced Speransky on the codification project and later became both the Minister of Education and the Director of Spiritual Affairs for Foreign Faiths.<sup>165</sup> To Shishkov and Dmitriev there was a third member of the literati added in 1812 when Krylov was given an important post in the St. Petersburg Public Library.<sup>166</sup> Joining these were General Rostopchin and Armfeldt, the former of which became the Military Governor and High Commander of Moscow in 1812.<sup>167</sup> Armfeldt was made a General of Infantry and attached to Alexander's personal staff. He was given special responsibilities for the inspection of the magazines.<sup>168</sup>

When Alexander left to join his general headquarters at Vilna in May 1812 he turned the administration over to the Director of the Committee of Ministers, and to the State Council.<sup>169</sup> Fieldmarshal-General N.I. Saltykov, who had been the President (1791-1802) of the former War

College and the Head of Alexander's first State Council in 1801, became simultaneously the Head of the Committee of Ministers and the President of the State Council.<sup>170</sup> In addition to the Ministers, the Committee was made up of Prince P.V. Lopukhin, former Minister of Justice and Head of the St. Petersburg Police, who became simultaneously head of all the Departments in the State Council.<sup>171</sup> They were joined by the State Secretary, Admiral Shishkov.

On 10 May Kurakin declared his mission in Paris terminated and reclaimed his passports to return to Russia. Napoleon left to see the Empress Marie-Louise at Dresden and at the same time he sent the Comte de Narbonne on a 'pacific' mission to Alexander's general headquarters to stall for time and to evaluate Russia's military readiness.<sup>172</sup> One month later the Grand Armée crossed the Nieman - on 24 June 1812. It was only then that Alexander learned from Lauriston in St. Petersburg that Napoleon had considered France and Russia to be in a state of war the moment Kurakin had demanded his passports.<sup>173</sup> Alexander did not permit Lauriston at the Russian headquarters. By then he had already read the proclamation prepared by Admiral Shishkov, and to all of the charges made by Napoleon he said simply: "Dieu est contre l'agresseur."<sup>174</sup>

Alexander, who had offered Stein an opening in 1807, wrote him directly on 22 March 1812, asking him to join his court at once. The letter reached Stein on May 19 and he accepted immediately. A week later he started on the long journey around the French army and arrived at the Russian headquarters in Vilna on 12 June 1812. No other step taken by Alexander was so fully calculated as was the summoning of Stein to indicate to Napoleon and the world that the break between the two former allies was irreparable.<sup>175</sup>

Stein, who had been so critical of Russia earlier, had considerably changed his opinion when he returned to Russia in 1812. The enthusiasm for the Tsar by serfs and nobles alike convinced him that Russia was not one of those artificial states which shattered after defeat, but "one of those great spiritual fabrics which are state and church and family in one and which are well-nigh invincible."<sup>176</sup>

The nobility responded enthusiastically to the Tsar's Manifesto of 6 July 1812 demanding a new recruitment of militia, and they greeted him loyally when he came to Moscow later in the month. The country was divided for the purpose of raising militia into three districts - Moscow, Petersburg and Reserve. These three districts provided respectively 125,000, 24,000 and 41,000 men. The Moscow nobility at first proposed to raise four militiamen from every hundred souls on their lands, but then voluntarily increased the proportion to 10 per 100. The merchants competed with each other in offering sums to the Treasury:<sup>177</sup> the 'Otechestvennaia Voina' had begun.

On the diplomatic level, the war with Napoleon finally resulted from a steady deterioration of relations following the introduction of high tariffs in 1811. But this decision on Russia's part was not primarily a diplomatic decision: it was part of the trend toward a greater Russianism in all aspects of national life in the post-Tilsit period. It was a crucial decision for three reasons. First, it signalled the government's resolve to come to grips with the economic chaos that had been building since 1807. A steady increase in paper money had some benefit on a short term basis, but by 1810 the situation was far out of hand. Second, the tariff laws represented the necessary bending of power politics

to the exigences of domestic politics. In the face of desertion by leading functionaries and government leaders to the ranks of the opposition, the decisions of 1810-1811 were signals to Napoleon that Alexander and the advisors who had favored the Alliance in 1807 had not, in the interval since, been able to 'sell' the Alliance to the Russian public. Third, the decision on tariffs signified the last step in the merging of the Emperor's external and internal policies. It was the final admission that Russianism, peace and cooperation - the Russian interpretation of the Tilsit Alliance - were not compatible. In choosing the pro-Russian path the Tsar hoped for peace, knowing that cooperation with Napoleon was not possible. The rest was up to the French Emperor.

## Chapter VI

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### Conclusion

When Alexander succeeded his father to the throne in 1801 Russia's relations with France were quite uncertain. There had been a decade of cool relations between the two countries resulting from the partitions of Poland and the Russian attitude toward the French Revolution. In 1801 Paul appeared to be moving toward an alliance with France and this had been one factor leading to his assassination. Upon his accession and for a short time thereafter Alexander was concerned primarily with internal affairs and during the first months of the new reign he and his advisors sought to achieve a normalization of Russian-French affairs. But there were both long term and immediate influences in Russia that militated against peace with France. In 1805 the Tsar joined the Third Coalition and went to war against Napoleon with the support of the Russian people.

From the beginning of the reign there were two conflicting internal movements in progress that affected the Russian attitude toward France. The first was a loosely-knit national movement evident in government, court, commercial, educational and literary circles, which supported a greater emphasis on things Russian and sought to decrease the French influence in Russia. The other was the reform movement led by a circle of young advisors close to the Emperor which sought to change the country along West European lines, especially French ones.

The Enlightenment in eighteenth-century Russia had left a conflicting legacy. It led to the wide acceptance of French customs, dress, speech and

mannerisms, especially among the upper classes. During the first part of Catherine's reign this cosmopolitanism was accompanied by the freeing of the nobility from state responsibilities. Under her the dvoriane achieved their most duty-free status. The Enlightenment also provoked the intellectual awakening of the country which in turn led to a new national awareness and a search for national identity. Many of the leaders in this search were themselves members of the service nobility. The beginnings of fundamental change occurred after the French Revolution with the anti-French policies of Catherine's last years and the measures of Paul. During these years Russia was turned forcibly away from further French influences. Paul also began internal reforms aimed at making the nobility a responsible class. Under the impact of these policies and the twin influences of Freemasonic and pre-Romantic thought the cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment era was breaking down.

As Russians turned inward after 1790 their search for narodnost took on an anti-French character. The intellectual leaders of the country sought to end the "préponderance française" in Russian cultural life by returning to Russian patterns of an earlier day. The purification of the Russian language, the study of folk life, and the writing of national history were the first responses to the growing demands for a national identity. The result was a flowering of publications which under Catherine had already taken on political significance. These tendencies were strengthened with Alexander's arrival in power. His relaxation of censorship restrictions and his sponsorship of the literati led to a rapid increase in writing on national themes and a proliferation of new journals and reviews. Under Alexander these publications were open to the discussion of all types of

social, economic and political questions. The literati, influenced by sentimentalism, emerged as distinct and important influence in Russian affairs.

Two institutions played a commanding role in the life of the country - the Orthodox Church and the military. The Church was particularly anti-French in the 1890's and subsequently. It had clearly defined its attitude toward the Enlightenment, the Revolution and Napoleon. Church leaders believed the Revolution was a consequence of the Enlightenment and that Napoleon was the step-child of the Revolution. The influence of the Church was expanding because of a religious revival and was seen especially in the growth of mysticism and evangelical Christianity at the turn of the century. The Church also played an important role in education, in indoctrinating the soldiers, and in training officers.

The army was expanding in size and its leadership, virtually all of whom were nobles, were anti-French as well. They were apprehensive about the social implication of the Revolution and had an inflated opinion about the effectiveness of the armed forces. The latter attitude was based upon the successful campaigns for territorial acquisition under Catherine and Suvorov's victories against France during Paul's reign. Alexander took special steps to strengthen the military and during his rule it played an increasingly important role. Under the impact of almost continuous wars and institutional reform the military establishment expanded both in size and in the scope of its activities. Increasingly it absorbed within itself functions previously held by other administrations and its influence spread throughout the administrative, executive, and judicial organs of government.

These tendencies from the preceeding century, which not only continued under Alexander but were strengthened, went together with an

infant reform movement. The reforms began when, shortly after his accession, Alexander appointed the Unofficial Committee to study various questions, ranging from the reform of serfdom and the development of a national school system to the restructuring of the central administration and the introduction of a constitution. From the start the political potential for reform was severely restricted and the threat of rapid transformation of the Empire was more imaginary than real. The Unofficial Committee and the Tsar were not as radical or as young as many contemporaries thought them to be. The Tsar's respect for established governmental traditions and his infatuation with things military were from the beginning factors militating against fundamental change. Further restrictions on reformist activity were caused by the necessity of depending on a bureaucracy resistant to change and by political exigencies that forced Alexander to appoint older and more conservative statesmen to high offices.

The innovations accomplished by the ruler and his collaborators had an important effect on the national movement. The significant changes in educational, administrative and military affairs all served to increase the anti-French feeling in Russia. Many Russians saw the introduction of Russia's first national education system as the spread of pernicious Enlightenment influences, and the nobility regarded the discussions about reform of serfdom as the first step leading to fundamental social changes. Similarly, the restructuring of the central administration was viewed as a restriction of the autocracy, and the debate on a future constitution appeared to be leading to a basic modification of the old order. Within a short time the court and government leaders began to react against the Tsar's plans for reform and against his Unofficial Committee. The dominant

attitude was that the reformers were overcome by rational and Enlightenment influences most of which were French. This reaction was partly based on the fact that some members of the Committee had developed close contacts in France and also because some of the reforms were based on French models. This reaction to French influence in the reform movement complemented the growing anti-French attitude among the leaders of the national movement.

When Russia went to war against Napoleonic France in 1805 the reform movement had considerably abated and the national movement had been strengthened. The struggle against France was at first popular and Russians believed that the Third Coalition would soon see the Russian, Prussian, English and Austrian allies victorious. The Orthodox Church took unusual steps to develop an anti-Napoleonic and anti-French feeling in Russia and the government took extraordinary steps against the French residing in Russia. These measures combined with the anti-French aspects of the national movement and the reaction to French influence in the reform movement. The result of this combination was that the war against France became less a contest for political or military gain than it was a contest of principles.

The inability of the allied armies to secure a victory over Napoleon between 1805 and 1807, and the lack of effective cooperation between the members of the Coalition, led to a growing malaise about the war. By the end of 1806 Napoleon's victories against Austria and Prussia left Russia alone and a substantial segment of the Russian population began to argue that a continuation of the struggle was against Russian interests. This led to Czartorysky's replacement as Minister of Foreign Affairs by Budberg and the Tsar made this first move towards more conservative leaders favouring more nationalist policies. British reluctance to support the

Russians in a way the Russians thought necessary, and the English opposition to Russia's increasingly nationalist trade practices, cast dark shadows on the Coalition by the beginning of 1807. The breakdown of the Russian military at Tilsit made peace with Napoleon a practical necessity. The Tsar's political and military advisors were almost unanimous in their desire for a cease-fire after the battle at Friedland.

At Tilsit Alexander agreed to three things; first, a cessation of hostilities; second, a treaty of peace between the two Empires; third, a secret treaty of alliance. Russians were agreed that an end to the war was desirable, and the peace was generally regarded as a welcome end to Russian involvement in European affairs that promised no real advantage. The decision to expand the peace treaty to include an alliance with Napoleon was Alexander's personal decision. It was conditioned by three things; first, disappointment over the participation of Austria and Prussia during the preceding war; second, hostility towards England because of its disregard for Russia's desire to assume greater contact over its own commercial affairs; third, the prospects Napoleon held out for Russian territorial gains in Finland and the Balkans. The Russian interpretation of the Tilsit Alliance in 1807 was one of peace and cooperation, whereby peace meant an end to the losses that had been sustained over the preceding two years, and whereby cooperation meant cooperation for the benefit of Russia. It was, in short, a pragmatic decision designed to make the best out of a bad situation.

The Russian public was prepared to accept the wisdom and necessity of the first two agreements but they were not prepared for the idea of an alliance with France. In the view of most Russians Tilsit represented not only a continued involvement in European problems but, even worse, cooperation



with 'General Bonaparte', the 'step-child' of the Revolution. The domestic reaction to the Tilsit Alliance was hostile and nearly unanimous. The seriousness of the internal opposition during 1807 was underscored for a time by the threat of assassination. Alexander and Napoleon were aware of the necessity of placating the Russian court and both believed that territorial acquisition in Finland would prove to Russians the value of the new arrangements. They took great pains to make a public display of friendship immediately after the signing of the Alliance and in the following weeks. Despite these gestures the immediate domestic impact of the Alliance was an intensification of the opposition to what seemed to be a new thrust of French influence.

When Alexander returned to Russia he took immediate steps to consolidate his position and to prepare the armed forces for a possible conflict with Sweden and France. Apart from his personal display of friendship for the new French representatives the only measures taken internally by the Tsar on behalf of the French was the writing of an official journal designed to publicize the government's diplomatic policies. In addition, censorship was applied against the most blatantly anti-French writings and those which personally attacked the Tsar or his advisors. No action was taken against the anti-French leaders, either inside Russia or those residing in Austria. No efforts were made to influence the Church or the armed forces on behalf of France. The only political casualties were Budberg, who had favoured an alliance with Prussia, and the members of the disbanded Unofficial Committee, who had favoured an alliance with England.

At the same time Alexander took a second step toward more conservative leaders in government. Most of these new leaders were reliable acquaintances with a combined civilian and military experience. This leadership was willing

to support the Alliance with France as long as it promised some advantage for Russia. Budberg was replaced as Foreign Minister by Rumiantsev, a prominent aristocrat whose patriotism could not be questioned and a man who had placed Russian interests first in the development of commercial policies when he was the Minister of Commerce.

Britain's stubborn insistence on a privileged position in Russia's commercial life and the preventative English strike against the Danish fleet in 1807 led to the breaking of diplomatic relations. On the official level relations between the two countries deteriorated although there were no aggressive measures taken by either power. Alexander was preoccupied with military reconstruction and it was for this reason that he appointed General Arakcheev, a trusted friend, as Minister of War. With Arakcheev's appointment Alexander began the internal reforms in the post Tilsit period and the preparation for a campaign in Finland.

The war which began against Sweden early in 1808 did not serve its intended purpose. The quick victory anticipated by Alexander and Napoleon failed to materialize. On the contrary, Sweden proved a stubborn enemy, and as the war dragged on important figures in the military and at court began to regard the venture as a Napoleonic tactic designed to keep the Russian army militarily occupied while the French armies remained in Central Europe. By the late summer of 1808 anti-French feeling was further intensified by the first effects of Russian adherence to the Continental System and the ruptured relations with England. As government expenditures rose trade and commercial revenues fell. The ruble began to depreciate and prices, especially for colonial produce, rose sharply. The first defections occurred among those leaders who had come to prominence in 1807 and who had supported the Alliance.

Leading families at court demonstrated their hostility to the Tilsit system by publicly honouring the critics of Alexander's policy.

It was under these circumstances that the Tsar met with Napoleon at Erfurt in 1808. He and his officials were more determined than ever to achieve some gain from the Alliance but were disappointed by Napoleon's unwillingness to grant concessions. Alexander returned to a hostile court with the prospect of a joint Russian-French action against Austria and further involvement on Napoleon's behalf. There were signs that the Tsar's attitude at Erfurt was less friendly toward the French ruler than it had been at Erfurt. The Tsar's invitation for the Prussian monarchs to visit Russia at the close of 1808 and the warm reception accorded them by the court were indications that the Russian government was already becoming disenchanted with the Napoleonic system.

The growing insistence on the part of government leaders for some benefit to Russia was indicative of the growth of a greater national feeling at all levels in Russia. In the literary sphere this could be seen in the appearance of new conservative publications and the reception accorded to writings on national themes by the most prominent authors of the day. The most popular members of the literati were the conservative writers and poets such as Zhukovskii, Ozerov and Krylov, all of whose work was bathed in fashionable sentimentalism. The change produced in Glinka by the last war with France was symptomatic of the change then underway among the Russian leadership generally. Karamzin's devotion to the study of history and his collaboration with conservative court personalities exemplified the rapidity with which the current of patriotism brought forth by the wars of the Third Coalition was being transformed into a conservative nationalism.

This atmosphere of growing national feeling coincided with the threat of an armed Poland and influenced the Russian attitude regarding a joint Russian-French action against Austria. The question of Russian participation in Napoleon's new campaign placed the government at the crossroads with regard to the French Alliance. In deciding to enter the war in a limited way to safeguard Russian interests in Poland Alexander decided in favour of a Russia-first policy and the merging of his external and internal policies began. Because the Tsar's rationale could not be explained publicly the movement of troops into Galicia seemed like additional government support on behalf of Napoleon and led to further discontent with Alexander's external policy. The fact that the Russian troops rendered only token aid to the French forces had no impact inside the country. Sentiment at court was openly in favour of the Austrians and against the French, the Poles, and Alexander's apparent policy of cooperation. The sympathy of Russians for the Austrian cause, like the reception accorded to the Prussian monarchs at the close of 1808, was indicative of the degree to which the opprobrium felt towards Austria and Prussia after the Third Coalition had been replaced by a sense of common purpose against Napoleon. When Napoleon proposed to marry Anne, Alexander's youngest sister, no support could be found for the idea, either at court or within government circles.

The participation of Russian forces in the Austrian campaign coincided with Alexander's return to reforms in education and the central administration. This led to the elevation of Speransky as the central reforming figure and placed him at the center of the controversy between the growing conservative and anti-French sentiment of the internal movement and the apparent pro-French external policy of the government. He became the

focal point for discontent in many different quarters and he had few collaborators in his efforts to rationalize Russia's administration. The aristocratic members of the Unofficial Committee had become popular after Tilsit for their anti-French position, but Speransky was in favour of the Alliance, alone and a commoner. This made him more vulnerable to political attack.

Speransky's reforms in education, the bureaucracy, codification and finances during 1809-1810 were part of the same policy of consolidation that Alexander had started after 1807. The Tsar realized that the nobility had to assume responsibilities in administration, and the educational changes during 1809 and subsequently were designed with this in mind. The further reorganisation of the central administration was a necessary continuation of the changes begun in 1802. The financial reforms were essential to combat the effects of the blockade and the ensuing trade and monetary crisis. Despite the timeliness of these measures they all met with opposition from various sections of society.

Speransky had been at Erfurt with Alexander and it was widely believed that he had been taken there to study the French government system. He introduced compulsory education for the civil service, taxes for the nobility, a projected code of laws based on the Napoleonic code, a Finnish constitution granting autonomy to a recently acquired territory, and plans for a rationalization of the administration. The court interpreted these as encroachments on noble privilege and attempts to subvert the traditional order and limit the autocracy. All his measures were seen as a consequence of the Tilsit Alliance and the suspected thrust of French influence in government circles after 1807.

By 1810 the effects of Alexander's policy of consolidation became

evident as many of the leaders who had risen to power since Tilsit joined with the court opposition and the leaders of the national movement to form a broad crystallizing front in opposition to the French Alliance. The government itself took steps to protect Russian interests by allowing illicit trade with Britain on American vessels or ships of dubious registry. The introduction of the military colonies in 1810 was an indication that Alexander and his advisors were anticipating the need for military preparations. They anxiously sought some ways to increase the size of the forces without added expenditures. The critical point was reached in the closing weeks of 1810. By then an internal crisis of considerable proportions had been reached and Russia faced bankruptcy. The court was solidifying and serious conservative opposition developed at Moscow, Tver and Gatchina as members of the military, government, literati and Imperial family gathered together both informally and in literary societies.

When Alexander handed over the tariff question to hostile bureaucratic committees late in 1810 the military had already developed a set of war plans for a campaign in the West. The replacement of Arakcheev by Barclay de Tolly at the end of the year brought with it Alexander's decision to double the size of the armed forces and implicitly acknowledged the possibility of a conflict with France. They were a tangible demonstration to Russian society that the developing pro-Russian external policy of the Tsar was rapidly merging with the conservative and anti-French mood internally.

The decision to introduce higher tariffs against French goods in January 1811 represented three things; first, it was one step in a series of measures taken to counter the effects of the Continental System; second, it was acknowledgement of the fact that the policy of cooperation with

Napoleon was not a workable one; third, it was the final step in the merging of Russia's external and internal policies.

The Tsar's decision to place Russian interests first on the tariff question was made with the full knowledge that conflict with Napoleon could be the result. This decision to accept the possibility of war with France was accompanied by overt military and diplomatic preparations from the beginning of 1811. It was clear to contemporaries by the close of 1811 that the approaching conflict would be a decisive contest. Both the character of the war and the Russian strategy were known before the invasion took place. Together these measures represented the fusion of Russia's official French policy with the anti-French mood inside the country. This fusion coincided with the climax in the external trends which had been in evidence since the beginning of the reign. The period 1810-1812 saw the culmination of Alexander's policy of consolidation begun after Tilsit, the retrenchment of the nobility, the merger of the opposition to both aspects of the "Question Française" and the final, successful act of opposition to the reform movement.

The Emperor's move toward more conservative leaders with military experience after 1807 had strengthened the conservatism in the national movement. The creation of Council of State in 1811 saw leaders of the military establishment in nearly all the prominent positions. They formed an insurmountable obstacle to Speransky's attempt to continue reforms. Similarly, there was a retrenchment in educational affairs and with the elevation of new leaders signs of a reaction began to appear. Demands were made for a return to a more 'Russian' curriculum. In keeping with the spirit of the times these demands included the use of the Russian language,

increased emphasis on religion and an end to private boarding schools run by non-Russians. The changes in education were an indication of the direction Russian internal affairs would later take. The leadership which had come to power after Tilsit also conspired against Speransky and brought about his downfall in 1812. The Tsar's appointment of leaders of the conservative opposition to high government positions in 1812 was a normal climax to careers that had been on the rise since 1807.

When Napoleon began his invasion the Russian response was similar to that which had occurred between 1805 and 1807. The Church had once again attacked the French ruler in highly emotional terms and the public was as well prepared for the war of 1812 as it had been for the war of 1805. Alexander's return to an anti-Napoleonic policy once more met with favour. The government in 1811-1812 also had taken extraordinary internal measures against the French residing in Russia, as it had done previously. Similarly, the aims of the war were not primarily power political or military. They were to a large degree ideological. Seen in this way the war of 1812, at the outset, was a repeat performance of the wars of the Third Coalition. In other ways, however, the situation had considerably changed. Russia in 1812 was far more nationalistically and conservatively minded than it had been in 1805. The reform movement had not only stopped, but there were signs of its retreat as well. The unity of purpose between government policy and national aspirations made the binding force between monarch and subject stronger than it had been at any point since Alexander's accession to the throne twelve years earlier.

To a large degree this change was a consequence of the Tilsit Alliance itself. The complementary aspects of an anti-French policy regarding



the external "Question Française" and a conservative, nationalistic response to the internal "Question Française" had been broken at Tilsit when Alexander changed the official policy from war to cooperation. The result had been a national reaction to government policy which strengthened the internal opposition and led to a collaboration between various groups that had not cooperated previously. The Tsar's policy of internal consolidation after 1807 had been made necessary partly by the disastrous wars, but partly by the Tilsit Agreements as well. This consolidation favoured the development of the national movement and brought forward personnel from an expanding military establishment which by 1812 dominated the organs of government. The Tsar's decision to return to reforms after Tilsit had provoked a further reaction and provided a focal point for the crystallizing opposition which saw all Russia's troubles, both internal and external, as emanating from the same source - the association with Napoleonic France. Almost unanimously Russians believed the only solution to their many different problems was to end the Alliance. This is what Alexander had finally accepted at the end of 1810..

List of Abbreviations

- AF-MDR France. Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères à Paris. Mémoires et documents. - Fonds divers (Russie).
- AGM Arkhiv grafov Mordvinovykh, V.A. Bilbasov, ed., 10 Vols., St.P., 1901-1903.
- AKV Arkhiv kniazia Vorontsova, 40 Vols, Moscow, 1870-95.
- ASEER American Slavic and East European Review.
- BM-LP Great Britain. British Museum. Lieven Papers.
- Bogdanovich, Tsarstvovaniia Aleksandra I M.I. Bogdanovich, Istoriia tsarstvovaniia Imperatora Aleksandra I i Rossiia v ego vremia, 6 Vols., St.P., 1869-71.
- Bolsh Sov Ents Bolshaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia, 50 Vols, Moscow, 1949-57.
- Correspondance Correspondance de Napoléon Ier, 32 Vols., Paris, 1858-70.
- CSP Canadian Slavonic Papers.
- CSS Canadian Slavic Studies.
- Czartorysky, Memoirs Memoirs of Prince Adam Czartoryski and his Correspondence with Alexander I, A. Gielgud, ed., 2 Vols., London, 1888.
- DSRF Diplomaticheskie snosheniia Rossii i Frantsii po doneseniiam poslov Imperatorov Aleksandra i Napoleona 1808-1812 gg., Grand Duke Nikolai-Mikhailovich, ed., 7 Vols., St.P., 1905-1914.

DZA-PbD (Prussia) DDR. Deutsches Zentralarchiv. Saint-Pétersbourg Dépêches.

Ekaterina Pavlovnov Perepiska Imperatora Aleksandra I s sestroï  
velikoi kniaginei Ekaterinoi Pavlovnoi, Grand Duke Nikolai Mikhailovich,  
 ed., St.P., 1910.

Ents Slov Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar, I.A. Efrom and F.A. Brokgaus, 86 Vols.,  
 St.P., 1890-1907.

FOG Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte.

Hist Zeit Historische Zeitschrift.

JGO Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas.

JMH Journal of Modern History.

Metternich, Mémoires Mémoires, documents et écrits divers laissés par  
le prince de Metternich, Prince Richard Metternich, ed., 8 Vols.,  
 Paris, 1880-1884.

Nikoali-Mikhailovich, Aleksandr I Grand Duke Nikolai Mikhailovich,  
Imperator Aleksandr I. Opyt istoricheskago issledovaniia, 2 Vols.,  
 St.P., 1912.

PSZ Polnoe sobranie zakonov rossiiskoi imperii, Series I (1649-1825),  
 45 Vols., St.P., 1828-30.

R d'HD Revue d'histoire diplomatique.

Russ Star Russkaia Starina, 176 Vols., St.P., 1870-1918.

SEER Slavonic and East European Review (Slavonic Review).

Shilder, Aleksandr Pervyi N.K. Shilder, Imperator Aleksandr Pervyi, ego  
zhizn i tsarstvovanie, 4 Vols., St.P., 1897-98.

- SIRIO      Sbornik Imperatorskogo Russkogo Istoricheskogo Obshchestva,  
148 Vols, St.P., 1867-1916.
- Martens, Sobranie traktov      Sobranie traktov i konventsii, zakliuchennykh  
Rossiei s inostrannymi derzhavami, F. Martens, ed., 15 Vols.,  
St.P., 1874-1909.
- Sov Ist Ents      Sovetskaia Istoricheskaiia Entsiklopediia, 13 Vols., Moscow,  
1961-72.
- Stroganov Graf Pavel Aleksandrovich Stroganov, Grand Duke Nikolai Mikhailovich,  
ed., 3 Vols., St.P., 1903.
- SVM      Stoletie voennago ministerstva, 1802-1902, D.A. Skalon, ed.,  
13 Vols., St.P., 1902-14.
- Tatishchev, Alexandre Ier et Napoléon      S. Tatistcheff, Alexandre Ier et  
Napoléon: leur correspondance inédite, 1801-1812, Paris, 1891.
- Vandal, Napoléon et Alexandre I      A. Vandal, Napoléon et Alexandre I,  
l'alliance russe sur la premier empire, 3 Vols., Paris, 1891-96.
- Voen Sbor Voennyi Sbornik, 149 Vols., St.P., 1858-1917.
- VPR      Vneshniaia politika Rossii XIX i nachala XX veka - dokumenty  
rossiiskogo ministerstva inostrannykh del, Series I, (1801-1815),  
7 Vols., Moscow, 1961-70.
- ZhMNP      Zhurnal ministerstva narodnago prosveshcheniia, St.P., 1834-1917.
- ZOG      Zeitschrift für osteuropäische Geschichte.

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- T.XIV - doc. nos. 10-12, (recruitment and conscription practices 1803-1812).
- T.XIX - doc. nos. 5-8, 12-15, 17-20, 22, 24 (memoirs and statistics concerning trade practices, the French commercial committee in St. Petersburg, and correspondence between Caulaincourt and Rumiantsev during 1808-1810).
- T.XXVI - doc. nos. 1-2, 4-7, 17, 19 (statistics on exports and finances, and estimates of Russian forces 1810-1812).
- T.XXXII - doc nos. 12-21, 23, 26-44, 46-48 (political commentaries on the Russian court 1807-1810, statistics on commerce 1808-1812, statistics on finances 1810-1812).
- T.XXXV - doc. nos. 50, 52-54 (reports of French agents on the court mood 1802-1806).

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ff. 1-62 These folios contain thirty-six letters from General A.A. Arakcheev to General Kh.A. Lieven between 25 May 1800 and 21 January 1824. Eight of these were written in the period 1804-1812. Lieven, during these years, was an Adjutant-General to Alexander, an Anglophile, and served as a liaison with the Prussian court. He became the ambassador to England in 1812. Arakcheev rose from Inspector General of Artillery to Minister of War and finally President of the War Department in the State Council.

ff. 63-172 The fonds hold thirty-nine letters from General P. Dolgoruky to Lieven between 18 May 1804 and 28 November 1806. Dolgoruky was attached to Alexander's personal staff throughout the period and was also a prominent Anglophile.

(Prussia) DDR. Deutsches Zentral archiv. Saint-Petersbourg Dépêches (R. XI. n. 175.a.1 and A.A.1.Rep.1)

A.XI.n.175.a.1

January 1806 - March 1807 (628 ff.): "Petersbourg dépêches du et au comte de Goltz". Graf August von der Goltz had been the ambassador to Russia since 1802. He left to join Frederick William and Alexander at Memel in 1807 and did not return. He became Prussian Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1807 after Hardenberg's fall.

April - December 1807 (158 ff.): "Petersbourg dépêches du et au comte de Lehndorff". When Goltz left for Memel his duties had been assumed by the Chargé d'affaires, Graf von Lehndorff. Lehndorff was an interim representative and was replaced by the Baron Friedrich von Schladen late in 1807.

A.A.I.Rep.I

January 1808 - December 1811 (nr. 2407 - nr. 2418; 1479 ff): "Petersbourg dépêches du et au Baron von Schladen". Schladen had been attached to the Prussian-Russian headquarters at the outbreak of war in 1806 and after Hardenberg's return he was sent to St. Petersburg where he remained until 1811 when he left for Vienna. His functions were assumed by the Chargé d'affaires, Sieur Jouffroy.

January - August 1812 (m. 2419) "Petersbourg dépêches du et au Baron de Schladen". The file is misnamed. Jouffroy had been responsible for the reports since late in 1811 and continued to send the despatches until Napoleon's invasion interrupted the correspondence in August 1812.

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