

Roman Empire 31

Chapter 31: Measures

Metternich's proposal was meaningless, except to his supporters, while others seemed to have not heard.

At that time, it was risky to abolish serfdom. Even if it was a small, mistaken operation, it was highly possible that the local nobles would rise in revolt.

Throughout history, it's always been easy to take others' interests, while it's difficult to give up one's own.

Moreover, in order to restore confidence in the market, there was much more to do than just to abolish serfdom. For example, it was also necessary to abolish a series of privileges of the noble class, and maybe even redistribute their land; otherwise, where would the purchasing power come from for the serfs?

Only by abolishing this series of restrictions unfavorable to economic development, further reducing the cost of commodity circulation, and releasing a much larger market, could this country get rid of the economic crisis.

Such a big concession, even if some agreed to make it, might not make any difference: the noble class was impossible to unify.

The abolition of serfdom could be discussed, but dividing their land was just not negotiable for them. Still, maybe enough money could gather them around the table.

It was still possible to cancel the privileges of the nobles, but it would take time, step by step, and anyone who wanted to solve it in one swift stroke could only fail.

The other option was that the land's productivity could be further developed, and the government could pay to redeem their land. As long as the army was still under the control of the nobles, it was impossible to adopt coercive means.

These radical means, Metternich surely did not dare use; at most, he would only abolish serfdom and free the productive forces of the people.

"Prime Minister, if we announce the abolition of serfdom now, maybe you will receive news of Hungarian independence tomorrow!" Archduke Louis said disrespectfully.

The abolition that Metternich insisted on was still fruitful: by 1848, many Austrian nobles had released serfs.

However, this situation was limited to the core area of Austria. The government of Vienna was relatively strict with the local governments. After the abolition order was issued, the government did a lot of work for the nobles.

This was also the reason Metternich was not popular: many Austrian nobles, including the Royal Family, had to release serfs to keep their honor.

The local nobles were different. They, like local emperors, often took the documents from the central government as toilet paper, so the Vienna government did not have the determination to stick to their resolve.

In some cases, Prime Minister Metternich even used the abolition of serfdom to intimidate the Hungarian nobles and force them to make political concessions.

The abolition of serfdom at that time could really satisfy the capitalists; however, the issue was that the Hungarians were going to rebel, and rebellions might also occur in other regions.

That the government should pay to compensate the nobles' loss was out of the question. At that time, the Austrian central government's finances could barely be balanced, and if there was a surplus, it went in the pockets of the capitalists.

"Sirs, we can discuss this issue later. Now we should solve the urgent problem first; otherwise, it will be too late!" Franz Anton Von Kololat Libstinsky interrupted the dispute between the two.

The Austrian Regent committee was composed of four people: Metternich, Archduke Louis, Archduke Franz Carr, and Kololat, but Archduke Franz Carr had absolutely no political ambition. (This was mainly due to congenital defects and inability to participate in politics.)

In politics, Kololat and Metternich were competitors, but the competitors were not unable to cooperate, and most of the time, their political views were the same.

Even if they opposed each other for the sake of opposing, the struggle between them had not reached the point of life-or-death. For example, at this moment Kololat and Prime Minister Metternich's political propositions were very similar.

However, as a political opponent, it was not possible for him to help Metternich. Maybe it was the biggest gift just not to add to his troubles.

Seeing that even Archduke Louis could not be convinced, Metternich sighed helplessly.

"If even you don't agree, the local nobles surely won't."

Once the local rebellion was raised by the abolition of serfdom, it was like a whole new a can of worms had been opened.

Metternich was unable to bear such a big political disaster alone; the Regent committee at least needed to fight together. It was possible for them to smooth over the difficulties.

"Well, then arrest them first!"

After making this reluctant decision, Metternich felt very depressed. He knew that the capitalists themselves had no way out.

If the economic crisis could not be resolved, then they would go bankrupt. In order to avoid bankruptcy, they would have to break the social order.

Their counterparts in France had set an example, smashing the crisis with a revolution and unlocking the shackles that restricted the economic development of capitalism.

For instance, taking advantage of the opportunity of revolution, the bankers were completely wiped out, and the debt naturally disappeared.

Without debt, no one was afraid to hoard goods, or at least, to sell them slowly. Without loans from the banks, no one could possibly go bankrupt.

Even further, they could let the government pay for them, pay for buying their goods, and pass the crisis on to the government.

Their American counterparts had done that. Of course, they went even further: it was not for the purchase of their goods that the government paid, but for saving the market.

The broken capital chain was reconnected, and the economic crisis was delayed, so everyone had time to retreat, and, at last, the scapegoats suffered.

Austria had not yet evolved to that level. Before serfdom was abolished, the capitalists could not even find any scapegoats. The working class was exploited by them too much, and they were not even qualified to be scapegoats.

The stock market in Vienna was, then, just a game for the rich; the poor did not even have the qualifications to open an account.

The stock market transactions in that era were all manually operated, so the labor cost was also very high. A few Austrian Schillings would not even be enough for the labor cost of the reception, and naturally, the poor were not able to open an account.

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After the order came down from the Vienna government, the secret police were dispatched overnight, and they began to arrest the organizers of the demonstrations.

Obviously, it was not a smart decision. The organizers who showed up in the public were just nobodies, and the leaders could not possibly charge forward.

The student representatives were the easiest to find. There were just a few universities in Vienna, and their addresses were very obvious. However, no one wanted to do this work.

The gate of the University of Vienna was not easy to go through. As a hotbed of anti-government forces, most of the ignorant teenagers were opposed to the government, and the rest were the reformists of the nobles.

Sheriff Winston had a headache: the suspects were in the school in front of him, but he could not even pass through the gate. There was no doubt that the university was resisting government enforcement.

However, the influence of the university was too great, and the impact of violence rushing in was too serious. There were no ordinary people among the teachers and students, whose family backgrounds, at the lowest, were small businessmen, lawyers, and doctors.

The working classes were so poor that they could not afford the tuition, and of course, neither could the peasants, most of whom were serfs.

Chapter 32: Out of Control

Two stone pillars, one tall and one short, stood on both sides of the closed iron gate like two majestic sentries.

The security guard inside seemed to be absent-minded, and he did not care about the calling at the door outside.

"Sheriff, what should we do next? Since the people inside the campus won't cooperate, what if we rush it?"

A police officer, who was in a hurry to show his loyalty, did not notice that he had touched a nerve for the Sheriff.

"Where would we rush, you dumbass?"

"Are the people inside ordinary people?"

"In this darkness, in case of an accident, maybe death, in the rush, who is going to take responsibility, you or me?"

Winston scolded the officer, venting his internal frustration.

He was already a sophisticate in the workplace, and he knew that the simple-headed teenagers looking for trouble in the university were not easy to deal with. If they rushed in right away, they might be beaten well and never know who did it.

If they did not use guns, they might not be able to beat the students inside; however, he did not dare use guns, for if he killed someone with powerful connections, an avenger could kill him in a million different ways.

All this wisdom came from his rich career experience; otherwise, Winston could not have been climbed up to the position of Sheriff, as an ordinary person. He was already satisfied. If he wanted to go further, he must participate in politics. Winston knew his distance: he, who hadn't even finished primary school, would definitely be a dead man sooner or later if he got involved in politics.

"Everyone, stay put, in case the suspects inside rush out!"

Winston came up with a simple plan: block the gate. As long as the students were under control and not free to go out to make trouble, things would be much easier to handle.

Compared with students at the university, people in other places were not so lucky. They had nothing to give the police second thoughts, so many were jailed.

By doing this, though, the Vienna government not only failed to scare the public, but also inspired everyone to share the same enemy. Following the planning of the revolutionaries, an even bigger demonstration broke out in Vienna the next day.

In the government building, Prime Minister Metternich was already panicked, because, in the past, as long as the leaders of the unrest were under arrest, the anti-government campaign would collapse.

Unfortunately, this time was different: it was more difficult for the public to give up the demonstration since everyone was forced to their corners. Only the government could solve the real problem.

The massive group of demonstrators broke through the police blockade and headed straight to the palace. The Vienna government panicked, and, hurriedly, Prime Minister Metternich commanded the City Defense Army to move into the city to maintain order.

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A fast horse was galloping up the mountain road, and the Austrians knew that it was a messenger. In front of the military camp, the messenger got down from his horse and was taken in.

"Commander, military emergency!"

Albrecht, who had already prepared himself, took the emergency report and opened it on the spot. It was not unexpected that Vienna was in chaos. The government was worried that the situation would get out of control, so they'd ordered the field training troops to return to the city immediately.

"Pass on the order: stop training immediately, pack the luggage, and get ready to go back!" Albrecht said calmly.

It only took half a day for the messenger to come, but it would take at least two or three days for the army to return. Much could happen in such a long time.

Franz did not stop the army from returning to the city, because it would be too obvious to do so. He needed the Austrian Empire to be broken and re-established, but there was absolutely no need for Austria to be really divided.

The Vienna rebellion could break out, but it must be extinguished immediately. He needed to take advantage of the rebellion to clear the worms in the government, but he did not intend to let the rebels overthrow the government altogether.

"Franz, the situation in Vienna has gotten very bad. One hundred thousand people took part in the demonstration yesterday. If the government does not handle it properly, the consequences could be very serious!"

Albrecht said this seriously, and by that time, he was already a little worried about Franz's plans, fearing it would become like the Paris February revolution.

Franz smiled slightly, then pointed to the military camp and said slowly, "Don't worry, Austria is different from France. We still have troops loyal to the royal family!"

That was the reason for his confidence: there was still a group of palace guards in Vienna that could defend the palace. Even if all the remaining five thousand soldiers of City Defense Troops were useless, they were still uselessly loyal to the emperor.

Unlike France, the Austrian army was not open to everyone. The officers were basically nobles and would not easily betray their own class.

An uprising without the support of the Army was at most a massive riot and would eventually be suppressed.

Franz was ready to dismiss Metternich's cabinet first thing after he returned, as an explanation to the public.

Then he'd announce the abolition of serfdom and the implementation of the Labor Protection Act to appease the people, and then the policy that "it is the leaders who would be punished, and the others would be spared."

At worst, he would arrest a few corrupt officials, pass a sentence, and so on, to divert the public's attention.

Even after the First World War, the Hapsburg family held a very high position in the minds of ordinary people. If their descendants were not too weak, the Austro-Hungarian Empire would not collapse.

In history, after the outbreak of the Vienna revolution, some people proposed to abolish the monarchy, but it was opposed by the Viennese people.

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Vienna

The demonstrators surrounded the government, palace, and parliament to force the government to accept their conditions.

To dismiss the cabinet, release political prisoners, carry out constitutional reform, open up election restrictions, abolish serfdom, confiscate the fiefs of nobles, distribute land to serfs, and abolish the book and newspaper inspection system ...

The situation was already on the verge of falling apart. The Vienna government could not agree to these conditions, which would mean the destruction of the Empire.

Things had changed: the capitalists were no longer satisfied with ordinary reforms, and they wanted to seize the reins of the country in order to survive the crisis.

In order to achieve this goal, they no longer cared about the future of Austria. Patriots were used by conspirators who did not consider the consequences of doing so.

Ordinary people were blinded, and most of them were just fooling around. Even most workers were participating in the demonstrations just for money.

Yes, there were wages for people to participate in the demonstrations; otherwise, the revolution would not have had the ability to organize so many people in such a short time.

Without the cooperation of capitalists, as communication in that era depended entirely on word of mouth, it would have taken a month for around a hundred members of the revolutionary party to organize more than one hundred thousand people.

Someone in the demonstration shouted, "Metternich, get out!" and then it spread quickly. Thousands of people shouted at the same time:

"Metternich, get out!"

"Metternich, get out!"

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The situation had already gotten out of control. The old Prime Minister Metternich went pale, for he had lost the momentum of the past.

Chapter 33: March Revolution

Go out?

It was impossible for Metternich to go out. Who was that stupid? The enemy was waiting for him to go out.

He did not even try to explain; it was likely that as soon as he showed his face, someone would rush up and kill him, just making it happen as simple as that.

This kind of thing happened in history, again and again, and mostly it was skimmed over in books, or worse: the books could tell it as though he was killed by angry people.

If that explanation worked, the political struggle would not so complicated.

"Prime Minister, order the expulsion of the demonstrators, or the situation will soon be out of control!"

The speaker was the director of the Vienna Police Department, Oppenheimer, whose pressure was the greatest when such major events were occurring. Many people in the government thought that Metternich's day had passed, and, by that time, he was already preparing to find a way out.

Unfortunately, while anyone else could run away, this police chief couldn't. Once Metternich fell, he would be dismissed following him, or maybe he would be purged.

Metternich took a few steps and finally made up his mind. "Command the City Defense Army to disperse the crowd !"

Before his order could come out, the situation outside already was out of control. The revolutionaries among the crowd found the right moment and fired a shot at the intercepting soldiers. Reflexively, the soldiers shot back.

"The army is killing us!"

After a loud shout, the crowd soon fell into chaos and ran in all directions.

For the time, there was no need to disperse the crowd, as the people scattered themselves on their own.

However, the aftermath was very serious. Except for a small number of people, most of them knew that the army had shot and killed civilians.

The Revolutionary Party, who provoked the dispute, concealed the truth from the public.

Angry people had been fooled into launching a revolution, while capitalists tried to collect some weapons and sent them there at the same time.

Some hot-blooded youths were selected, and the Revolutionary Armed Forces were established. In the evening, the rebel army attacked the police station. The Vienna government, who had already turned toward the Revolutionary Party, provided help for the rebels.

When the rebel gunshots sounded, the situation in Vienna escalated quickly, and it had already been a mess to start with.

The remaining troops of the City Defense Army really deserved their nickname of "waste." After a short period of shooting, the timid noble officers unexpectedly retreated and did not suppress the rebellion very much at all.

The police in Vienna turned a blind eye and stayed neutral because of the city government's defection.

To some extent, this uprising was also a court coup. Some of the nobles who were tangled up in the economic crisis abandoned their class position and crossed over to the side of the revolutionary party.

They attempted to reorganize the regime through revolutionary means, as well as to wipe out the bankers to get rid of the debt crisis.

History changed there. The rebel army seized the bank right away and burned all the documents. The Austrian Financial Group was ruined.

In the face of this chaotic situation, Prime Minister Metternich panicked, the nobles panicked, the Regent Committee panicked, and the Vienna Court panicked.

The February revolution in France had just passed, and they were still laughing at jokes about the French. They had not expected the crisis to spread to Vienna so soon.

That was the second great revolution of the French. The first time it had already damaged the nobles, caused the abolition of serfdom, and destroyed the privileges of the nobles.

Meanwhile, in Austria, it was just the beginning: the nobles still had a lot of privileges and a lot of benefits. This revolution was obviously aimed at them.

If they followed the practice of the French, they would probably be sent to the gallows, or perhaps killed in the chaos. Prime Minister Metternich had already lost his temper, as he often did; by that time, he was at the end of his wits.

As a qualified scapegoat, Metternich was the most hateful person in the eyes of the people. Once he fell into the hands of the rebels, the only question was how he would be killed.

A man in a tuxedo said anxiously, "Archduke, the carriage is ready. Let's go now, or it will be too late!"

Metternich was torn. He knew that he had become a target, and it was very dangerous for him to stay in Vienna.

However, as a noble, he also had his own pride, and he didn't want to be a deserter. Early that morning, he'd sent his family away and stayed alone to deal with the situation he faced.

"Holder, I ..."

Not waiting for Metternich to speak out, Holder reacted and embraced the role of the good housekeeper wholeheartedly. He ordered, "You all, escort the Archduke away!"

These bodyguards were the family retainers of Prime Minister Metternich, and their loyalty was certain. At that point, no one had the time to worry too much.

Ignoring Prime Minister Metternich's struggle, they forced him into an old carriage and hurriedly left Vienna. At the same time, some others took his most commonly used carriage and rushed to the palace.

Loyalty was shown in adversity, so it was time for the retainers to show their loyalty. Not only Prime Minister Metternich, but also many other nobles, chose to escape from Vienna that day.

By this point, the only safe place in Vienna was the palace. Most of the soldiers in the rebel army were still in awe of the emperor and refused to attack the palace, and the revolutionaries could do nothing about it.

Even within the revolutionary party, many people did not plan to overthrow the Hapsburg family. In fact, most of them were reformists who joined the revolutionary party only after they became desperate for reform.

There were a lot of Revolutionary Armed Forces who'd had no time to establish a unified leadership organization, and they simply fought separately.

Most of the rebel army did not even have guns. The weapons in their hands were like those of the Middle Ages.

Many ordinary people had no interest in revolution. In fact, revolutionary ideas had no market in Austria. After venting their anger, many people dispersed.

In order to strengthen their own troops and to suppress the growing armed forces of the working class, the revolutionary party was desperate to pull people in. This changed the quality of the army, so in the newly launched army, the good and bad were intermingled.

For example, in the name of the liberation of political prisoners, all the prisoners in Vienna were released. Many vicious criminals suddenly became members of the revolutionary party.

Gang members and gangsters also took advantage of the mess. Murder, arson, burglary, rape--all kinds of crimes took over Vienna.

The first to be affected were not the nobles, but the ordinary Viennese citizens, small businessmen, and the middle class.

The darkness of the night covered up endless sins. Vienna, an international metropolis, sank into the ocean of sin that night.

Chapter 34: Panic of the Royal Archdukes

In the Palace of Hofburg, after receiving the news, a group of Royal Archdukes was anxiously thinking about countermeasures. It was not that they didn't want to run, but that they couldn't.

Before the situation had gotten out of control, the Vienna court was holding a secret meeting to consider whether to dismiss Prime Minister Metternich and calm the anger of the people.

As a result, the sudden chaos prevented many people from leaving. Suddenly, there were rebels everywhere outside, and they dared not risk leaving.

The French Revolution taught them that it did not matter what noble status they had: the rebels' aim was all nobles.

In actuality, at the time, as long as the court guards went out to calm the chaos, there was still a good chance to put off the rebellion before it really even got started.

Unfortunately, not even one of these nobles would take responsibility. No one dared make this decision, and no one even had the courage to go out and command the City Defense Army.

The attitude of Emperor Ferdinand I could be ignored, as he was suddenly stimulated by such an intense situation, so much so that he had another seizure due to his epilepsy, so he could not be expected to make a decision.

No one wanted to take the blame. Queen Anna was not stupid. She never liked to be involved in politics. At that time, she would certainly not express her position.

Archduke Franz Carr, who was second only to the Emperor, was also pale with fear. It was obviously impossible for him to make a decision.

Archduke Louis, who was the only one with some ability, was also incapable of dealing with this kind of big issue; otherwise, he would not be suppressed by Prime Minister Metternich in the Regent Committee.

"The news has been sent out. Within two days, the City Defense Army will come back to counter the rebellion, so just order the troops to stand against the rebels until aid arrives!"

Archduke Louis with a frown finally made a decision--if you could call it that.

Give up Vienna and run away?

No one could bear the aftermath, even Archduke Louis.

Once Vienna was abandoned, the impact would be enormous. Maybe the Hapsburg family would lose the throne and be in exile overseas, like the royal family of Orleans from France.

At that moment, everyone looked at the child-like Ferdinand I, and everyone felt that the future was dark.

If Ferdinand I had been a normal person, he could have summoned the leader of the rebel army to negotiate. After all, most of the rebels in the city revolted in the name of the Emperor.

By using political means, it could still be possible to convert some rebels, and after that, the rest would be easy to handle.

They thought that they had the ability to fight politically and would not lose to a bunch of upstarts. As long as everybody played by the rules, they would find a way to deal with it.

This kind of situation was favorable to Franz. For their own benefit, the nobles then needed a promising monarch to reshape the empire's majesty and protect their rights and interests.

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The news of the Vienna rebellion had reached Franz, but it came one day later than the government order.

"Albrecht, something is happening in Vienna. On March 7, the demonstrators and the army that intercepted them clashed. That night, a rebellion broke out in Vienna."

Hearing the news, Albrecht's face changed, and he hurriedly asked, "What is the situation now? Has the rebellion been suppressed?"

Franz shook his head and said, "I don't know yet. However, the possibility of the rebellion being suppressed is very small. Prime Minister Metternich is already old, and no one else in the Vienna government has the courage!"

The Austrian Empire was old, and no one was willing to take responsibility for suppressing the rebellion.

When the emperor could not administer normally, whoever made the decision instead of him would face the end of his political life, and he might have to go to prison.

This would come not only from the enemy, but also from the internal attack: executioner, butcher, and many other charges would be put on the head of the government.

Because of this, in order to avoid becoming a scapegoat, many officials were timid at the beginning of the rebellion and dared not order a bloody suppression.

Basically, they had to wait for things to get completely out of control, so everyone was aware of the threat, and then the Conservatives could work together to suppress the rebellion.

That was the commonality of the old empires in Europe. Take the Paris revolution as an example: the death toll was less than ten, which did not even look like a revolution but just a small fight in a village.

The March revolution in Vienna was almost the same. The casualties caused by the fight between the rebels and the government forces were absolutely below those caused by the local ruffians and hooligans.

In many history books, the so-called Army sympathized with the revolution. In fact, they remained neutral in the revolution because no one gave them orders to suppress it.

In that era, when "traffic depended on legs, and communication depended on mouths," information transmission was very inefficient. There was no order to suppress at the beginning, but once the rebellion was out of control, the order couldn't even get through.

This was European politics: the officers at the bottom didn't dare to make decisions. The suppression of the rebellion had to be reported from the bottom to the top, and then they had to wait for the Cabinet to make a decision. When they finally made a decision, it was too late to carry it out.

Albrecht sighed and looked at the direction of Vienna. He said helplessly, "Then let's speed up!"

"No need! At our current speed, we can arrive in Vienna the day after tomorrow. Even if we speed up, we can't launch an attack at night!"

And Vienna will not fall so soon. There are still so many policemen and five thousand soldiers of the City Defense Army in the city. Even if they are all useless, they should at least be able to delay things.

I have given the order to the court guards, and let them raise their alert. A mob cannot break through their defenses!" Franz explained.

It was impossible to march overnight. The troops must maintain sufficient physical strength; otherwise, how could they ensure combat effectiveness?

Although Franz's military command ability was only average, he still knew that tired soldiers could not fight.

The main reason why Albrecht wanted to speed up was out of political consideration. Already, the City Defense Army hadn't suppressed the rebellion in the first place because they'd been out for training, and he, as the commander of the City Defense Army, was the one to blame.

Then, after they got the news, he did not rush back at the fastest speed, which would be another political stain.

All these responsibilities would be taken by him, and none by Franz, because it was he who was the commander of the City Defense Army.

Franz surely knew his concerns, but at the moment he could not take risks. It was the most important thing to proceed steadily and surely and suppress the rebellion.

As for the problem of taking the blame, what subordinates did not take the blame for their leader?

"However, the rebel party is still a mob, but it will not take a long time for them to be united, and then they will not be easy to fight!" Albrecht thought for a moment and said.

"Albrecht, don't worry about that. I can guarantee that the longer the time, the more chaotic the party will be, and it will be impossible to unify them!" Franz said with confidence.

Chapter 35: To Call White Black

On March 9, 1848, Vienna became more and more chaotic. Burning, killing, and looting occurred, and the whole city lost order.

This was the third day of the revolution. Due to the conflict between the working class and the capitalists, there had been many scuffles between the two sides.

If it were not for the existence of a common enemy, the two sides would have parted at that time. Even if they maintained a nominal alliance, both sides were acting willfully.

The fact was that those in the revolution still needed to feed themselves; as a result, the first ones out of luck were the capitalists in the grain industry, as their grain stores were taken over by the workers.

The workers, who had been exploited severely for generations, at the encouragement of some "kind" people, began to think of revenge. Since the violence had already started, many people simply did everything they wanted to do to the capitalists, taking an eye for an eye.

They killed the supervisors, they finished the thugs hired by the capitalists, and then they turned on the capitalists themselves.

After the first time, there was a second time. The hands of the capitalists were covered with the blood of the workers. It would have been fine if there was no one to guide the workers, but once someone encouraged them, the workers could no longer stay back.

Many union representatives who wanted to stop them instantly became known as counter-revolutionaries and capitalists in the eyes of workers. Nothing could stop them from taking revenge.

The people's desire was deep and dark. After they killed the first capitalist and distributed his wealth, they couldn't help themselves.

This situation heightened the conflict between the two sides. In order to safeguard their own interests, the capitalists hurriedly formed their own revolutionary army, and there were many fights between the two forces.

The revolutionary army led by the capitalists aimed the revolution at the Vienna nobles, while the working class revolutionary army went against the nobles and capitalists together.

In a manor in Vienna, a large group of people gathered. These people were all putting money ahead of their own lives: people who were afraid of death had already fled Vienna.

An old man said in a trembling tone, "Mr. Owen, what else can I do now? The mob is targeting us. Within just two days, 13 gentlemen have been killed!

The property that has been robbed is even more difficult to count. If this situation continues, it will not be long before it is our turn!"

Everyone turned to Owen, who had planned the revolution. The situation was out of control, and everyone was hoping that he could come up with effective measures.

Owen looked at the crowd with a livid face. He hadn't expected the situation to become such a mess. His original purpose was to use the working class's lives to establish a capitalist regime.

Unfortunately, before the new government had been established, he lost control. The revolutionary party he'd raised had no ability to fulfill the mission entrusted to them.

The representatives of the labor unions, who were bought by the capitalists, could not control the workers at all. The revolution deviated from their predetermined purpose from the beginning.

"I am also deeply sorry for the accidental murder of these thirteen gentlemen. Death cannot be undone. May they rest in peace!

However, their blood will not flow in vain, and we will get revenge. Including everyone's property losses, the current loss is just the price we pay for future gains.

The current situation is very unfavorable. We have to start forming an alternative plan to send people to negotiate with the Emperor, and at the same time, we must prepare to suppress these rebels!"

Everyone was silent. Negotiation was the last choice. They were also smart enough to understand that they were at a disadvantage, and the Army was still loyal to the royal family.

This time, they'd just caught the government unprepared. If the City Defense Army returned, the situation would probably change.

No one thought that it was possible to beat the regular army with a group of rabble.

Smart people were all rational: if they found that the situation reversed, they would surely find a way to get out. Especially after the internal conflicts broke out, everyone's revolutionary enthusiasm was even lower.

It was all right to revolutionize others, but not their own; that was out of the question.

At that time, a young man in his twenties, wearing glasses, stood up and asked, "Mr. Owen, do you think it is possible? Don't forget, we've had no way out since the beginning of the uprising.

Think about how many nobles we have executed in the past two days! I am sure that you know the complicated relationship between ourselves and the nobility. Do you think they will let us go after all that?

Even if they let us go now, how can we guarantee that they will not hold it against us afterward? Do you think that our epileptic emperor can make the decision?"

People who had been ready to accept reality and prepare to compromise hesitated again then.

In this revolution, the nobles in Vienna suffered heavy losses, and the enmity between the two sides had already been set.

Even then, they could rely on their power to force the Court of Vienna to compromise. But once the City Defense Army returned, the dynamic between the two sides would be reversed.

The armed forces in their hands were not the regular army, whose dissolution was only a matter of time. If the two sides fell out, they would not even have the strength to resist.

This time was different from the previous confrontation with Prime Minister Metternich. They followed the rules and did not use extraordinary means.

For if they had broken the rules themselves, how could they expect the nobles to follow the rules of the game?

This was a very realistic question. Even if they had controlled the government, they had no power to fight against the nobles.

After listening to the young man, Owen's face was more livid. How could he have failed to think of these problems?

However, he still had a way to ensure that he himself could get out safely, even if it wouldn't work for the others. In this uprising, he had already had enough, and the worse deal for him was exile overseas.

"Rams, everyone recognizes the problems you stated, and I have no way to give a guarantee. But don't forget, even though the casualties of the noble are so great, it is not us who did it.

Obviously, it was all done by those bumpkins. We organized the army only to protect ourselves and suppress the rebellion. This uprising has nothing to do with us.

Aren't there some nobles who have supported us before? It is time for them to come forward to take on this rebellion!"

Owen called white black without a blink. Although it was self-deception, it was undoubtedly a good way to transfer hatred.

The nobles wanted revenge after what had happened, out of grief and honor. In order to safeguard the interests of their class, they had to do it, but this did not mean that all of them really wanted to avenge their dead.

Many people would even celebrate this. Since some families had no descendants, they could inherit a title and maybe a fief.

As long as they could find scapegoats, transfer the hatred, and then throw money at their problems, they might be passed over.

Chapter 36: Suppression and Negotiation

When the capitalists wanted to withdraw, it was already too late, because Franz had returned to Vienna with his army.

"Albrecht, it's up to you!"

Franz still knew himself well: if he made a strategy or something, it would be very good; if he commanded the troops to fight, he would not be sure about it.

As he had estimated, based on the experience of leading troops for more than two months, he was afraid that he would not be able to command this army. In order to be on the safe side, Franz decisively chose to let Albrecht do it instead.

Anyhow, in history, Albrecht was also a famous Austrian general, who, in the Olympic war, used his few forces to defeat the many of Italy and, thus, defended the prestige of the Austrian Empire.

Albrecht smiled and said confidently, "Relax, Franz! A disorderly mob is not difficult to defeat!"

Franz nodded. He had done so much preparatory work: the intelligence organization had infiltrated the rebel army in advance to create internal conflicts for the enemy. If they still couldn't win, the City Defense Army could be disbanded.

The military affairs were handed over to Albrecht, but the political problems could only be faced by Franz himself, for others could not afford this responsibility.

"Take the third regiment as the starter, and launch an attack!"

With Albrecht's order, the prelude to the suppression of the rebellion was begun.

At that time, the word to describe Vienna would be — chaos!

The various insurgent armies, large and small, did not belong to each other, and when the City Defense Army came, there were still many of them who did not know that the enemy had already come.

This was mostly because they were busy robbing and looting. In the beginning, they'd only attacked nobles and capitalists, but as time went on, ordinary citizens were under attack, too.

Either out of jealousy or out of interest, military discipline disappeared, and even the commander had no way to restrain the troops.

When human beings' animal nature was stimulated, after being suppressed for too long a time, everything about them would change, and the destructive power that broke out then was often shocking.

Due to the lack of strict organization and binding force between them, after the local ruffians and hooligans joined, the rebels were quickly brought down to their level and started killing, burning, looting, and doing all kinds of evil.

The Viennese citizens who originally sympathized with the revolution regretted it at that time. Not only they but also Vienna University, known as the cradle of revolutionary ideas, were not spared.

In order to avoid the harassment of the rebels, the school had to organize an army of students to protect the campus.

The number of conservative students was much larger than that of the revolutionary party. Seeing the tragedy outside, then, everyone recalled the Paris Revolution in 1789: more than 30 thousand people were guillotined in Paris alone.

Before that, everyone had thought that this was a lie fabricated by the government, but when the Vienna revolution broke out, they finally understood that revolution needed bloodshed.

...

Franz, who was still preparing for the aftermath, had no idea what kind of devil he had released or what kind of harm it had brought to Vienna.

Of course, even if he knew, he would still have made the same choice, for the Austrian Empire had rotted. If it was not broken down and then re-established, it would die little by little.

Without this rebellion, it would take at least ten years to abolish serfdom, facing the counterattack of the nobles all the time; that way lay the incomplete reform of Russian history.

However, it was different here: the Vienna revolution was only the beginning, and the local revolutions would still come fiercely. For the safety of life and property, all they could do was bear it with suffering.

As for Lombardy, Venice, and Hungary, Franz had been waiting for their rebellion. As long as the rebellions occurred, he would solve the problem once and for all by overthrowing the rich and dividing up their fortunes.

As for all the nobles and capitalists involved in the Vienna rebellion, he was not going to let them go, but to confiscate their fortune. Without it, where would Franz get the money to carry out national construction?

Did Austria really have no money? This problem was simply a fallacy.

From the establishment of the Vienna system until 1848, the economic development of Austria in the past 30 years had generally been very good, and the economic aggregate had doubled.

In this context, the wealth created by society was certainly absolute; unfortunately, however, the dividends of economic development had no benefit for common citizens, for wealth was concentrated in the hands of a few people.

As a member of the vested interest class, Franz obviously could not attack them radically, but he could take advantage of the opportunity of revolution, and it was still possible to eliminate some traitors.

...

In the Hofburg Palace, in Vienna.

After they received the conditions from the capitalists for negotiation, the Archdukes were all a little relieved. At that time, it was still most important to keep their lives, before the rebels came in.

They were all used to being pampered, and no one wanted to be put on the guillotine before they enjoyed their lives in full.

Ferdinand I could not make decisions; Prime Minister Metternich knew that he was in big trouble and had run away in advance; the whereabouts of the Count Kolofit were unknown. The only remaining members of the Regent Committee were Archduke Louis and Archduke Franz Carr.

There was no doubt that all the burdens then fell on Archduke Louis, and Archduke Franz Carr could be counted on.

Archduke Louis, pale, said, "The capitalists have put forward conditions: as long as we agree to dismiss the cabinet, implement constitutionalism, open up national elections, abolish serfdom, confiscate aristocratic land and distribute it to farmers ...

They will help us to suppress the rebellion. The Constitution has even been formulated, and this is a template that everyone can have a look at!"

He did not dare to agree to these conditions: if all of them were agreed to, it would not be the capitalists who rebelled, but the nobles.

In Austria, like in any country in the world, if the land of the noble class was confiscated and distributed to the peasants for no reason, they would absolutely rise up and rebel.

The Austrian army was under the control of the nobles, who had large areas of land. Those who had released the serfs might be allowed to keep some land; however, those who had not released their serfs would have all their land confiscated.

Which would mean to take their lives.

To confiscate their land was to take their lives.

What would they do, become capitalists?

The purpose was clearly to reform the noble class and turn them into capitalists, or maybe worse, into a destitute class.

In addition to economic interests, political reforms were not negotiable: if the constitution would be formulated by the capitalists, the political rights of the nobles would surely not be as good as those of ordinary people.

Without any rights, they could not join the army, come into politics, become a member of parliament...these conditions were complete nonsense to them.

Of course, this was a process of negotiation, and also of strategy: the initial offer was just to test their bottom line. Even so, it let them share a bitter hatred of the enemy.

Chapter 37: Each Flew His Own Way

Before anything came of the two sides' negotiation, the City Defense Army returned to Vienna, and the news that they had begun to suppress the rebellion reached the Hofburg Palace.

The negotiation immediately came to an impasse: the dynamic between the two sides changed, and the initiative of the negotiation was transferred, so the Vienna Court was no longer in a hurry to reach an agreement.

The conditions put forward by the capitalists were a great shame to these Archdukes. If they had no choice, for the sake of their lives, they might have accepted them, submitting to humiliation.

But the main force of the City Defense Army had returned, the troops around Vienna were also on their way, and, besides, there was still a regiment of troops guarding the palace.

At that time, the danger had disappeared, everyone's mind changed, and Archduke Louis was not willing to compromise with the capitalists.

Even if political reform was to be carried out, it was very important that they took the initiative to reform instead of being forced to do it.

...

The speed of suppressing the rebellion was faster than Franz imagined. A mob was a mob. When they confronted the army, their first reaction was not to fight them but to run away from them.

There was no suspense. At first, the rebels organized several resistances but were scared away by the City Defense Army. Albrecht also deliberately released the defeated fighters, and they spread the fear of failure.

At the same time as the military attack, Franz also made a political attack. He announced as the Crown Prince that it was the leaders who would be punished, while the rest would be spared.

In that era, the Hapsburg family was still very influential in Austria, and with Franz's guarantee, many trapped rebel soldiers surrendered without hesitation.

The Viennese citizens who had been harassed by the rebels then took the initiative to help the counter-insurgent army, and without the support of the public, the rebels became rootless.

Although the counter-insurgent army marched forward smoothly, Franz was not happy at all. Looking at the broken buildings, he knew that Vienna's economy would regress for at least five years after this battle.

But Franz had no time to be sad, for he still had to appease the public. After being harassed by the rebels, the Viennese people were shaken.

As the Crown Prince, Franz naturally wanted to restore their confidence and ease their pain.

"Archduke, the road to the palace has been cleared!" The guard said with excitement.

Franz smiled slightly. This was good news, which meant that the overall situation had been resolved and the rebels did not control the emperor. Failure became a foregone conclusion for them.

"Send a message of this good news to the emperor, and I will go over after I deal with things here!"

Politics was dark, and in order to achieve the greatest victory, Franz wanted to suppress the rebellion and stabilize the situation in the city before he could report his accomplishments.

Otherwise, if he came over, maybe the Regent Committee would try to seize power from him. He was not interested in gambling on the moral integrity of these politicians.

Obviously, Franz did not know that Prime Minister Metternich had run away, that Count Koloft was not in the palace, or that only Archduke Louis and his father were left in the Regent Committee.

Thus, even if Archduke Louis wanted to seize power, he could not possibly do it. Unless Ferdinand I personally went into battle, the biggest political benefit from this rebellion would go to Franz.

...

A young man eagerly urged, "Father, let's go, otherwise it will be too late!"

The middle-aged man looked unhappy, glancing around his manor, but he reluctantly got in the carriage.

Yes, this was one of the leaders behind the rebellion, Owen, a major capitalist. At that moment, he had lost his former high spirits, and looked so much older.

When the City Defense Army had returned to put down the rebellion, they didn't take it seriously. In just a few days, the number of rebel troops had expanded to more than 50 thousand.

But when they fought, everyone knew that they were going to be finished. When both sides were free to fight each other, how could this mob be a serious opponent to the regular army?

Unlike at the beginning of the rebellion, the soldiers were very afraid and did not dare to fight hard against them.

But then, the situation had completely changed, and the cannons were taken out, pointed at them, and bombarded them ruthlessly. They had never even seen a battle like this, and before they could react, they'd already lost in their confusion.

"After we leave here, I don't know when I will be able to come back. The family business that I have worked hard to build for decades is ruined!" Owen said, sighing.

"There is no time for being sad. It is not a big deal to change locations and rebuild another one!" the young man said carelessly.

If not for the sorrow in his eyes, his father would really think that he did not care.

Although capital had no borders, in fact, in that era, it was not so easy to move to a new place and start a new business.

Without a long-term business relationship in a new place, your business might be swallowed by others without anything left for you.

They'd had that experience many times, and it could be said that all the primitive accumulation of capital was bloody.

It stood to reason that a big-time capitalist like Owen had no reason to personally participate in the revolution. They were involved only because when the price was high, they'd invested too much money. They wanted to make a big profit, but they hadn't expected to lose all their money.

If the revolution hadn't been launched, most of their businesses would go bankrupt, and the whole family would decline forever.

Propelled by his interests, and encouraged by his peers, Owen decided to let go of it; at the worst, he would just run away.

And then, they actually had to run away. If they stayed in Austria, even if the government did not make trouble for him, the rebels, who'd suffered great losses, would kill them.

This rebellion could intensify internal conflicts in a short period of time. In addition to Franz's arrangement, there was the internal struggle of capitalists.

Two of a trade never agree: even at that time, capitalists wanted to crack down on competitors, so that they could monopolize their markets.

Making use of another person to get rid of an enemy was naturally the best choice. Taking advantage of the opportunity of the revolution, they planned to loot their opponent's wealth, or even take his life, and then pass the buck to the army.

If the revolution succeeded, then their plan would naturally succeed. Bad luck for them: in the end, the plan fell short. Seeing that success was a long shot, before the rebellion was suppressed, the smart ones ran away.

As long as you had money in Austria, most troubles could be settled, but revolution was an exception.

In revolution, even money could not go far. So long as he was involved, no one could expect that the Vienna government would let him go.

Owen and his son were far from the only ones to run away: everyone who took part in the planning, whether they were capitalists, nobles, or politicians who wanted to speculate, all fled from the whirlpool of Vienna at that time.

Chapter 38: Regency

Time flew. By March 11, 1848, the rebels in Vienna were almost eliminated, and some remnants of the defeated army were handed over to the police.

This sudden rebellion came on fast and passed quickly, but their influence was just beginning. Many places in Austria had begun to appear unstable.

Franz had no energy or time to pay attention to other regions since there were nearly 40 thousand prisoners in the custody of the counter-insurgent army, and figuring out how to dispose of these people was still a big problem.

It was obviously impossible to kill them all, for Franz was not a maniac murderer, and these people had no blood feud with him.

It was also not possible to release them: even if they were accomplices under duress, they did participate in the rebellion. If they were not punished for it, what could Franz do in the future if the same situation arose?

Impose a penalty on them?

If they had any money, they wouldn't have joined the rebellion.

It was less than two days from the beginning to the end of the rebellion. These people were not diehards, for the real ones had already run away and those left behind were all abandoned.

At that time, Albrecht arrived with bloodshot eyes: obviously, he wasn't sleeping well these days.

"Albrecht, how are the casualties?" Franz asked with concern.

"Fortunately, there were not many fights, and there are only about three hundred casualties!" Albrecht said after a moment's thought.

"That's good. There's nothing much to deal with now. Albrecht, go and have a rest!"

Hearing the news, Franz breathed a sigh of relief. Three hundred casualties were still within his acceptable range.

However, the casualties of the rebel forces were large: more than three thousand people were killed on the spot alone, and more than five thousand people were wounded in captivity. All of those were only slightly wounded, for those seriously injured had become corpses.

Roughly tens of thousands of people were killed in the rebellion, which lasted less than a week in Vienna, and most of them were killed by the so-called revolutionary party.

The residential area of the nobility was almost turned into a piece of bare land then. The number of nobles killed exceeded hundreds. If this news spread, the entire European continent would surely be shocked.

When almost all the issues on his list had been disposed of, Franz knew that it was time to go to Hofburg Palace, where Austria's power was still waiting for him to take over.

In such a big mess, not only had Prime Minister Metternich left, but even the Regent Committee had no reason to stay.

Thus, all the obstacles that blocked Franz's regency had been cleared.

Both the nobles and the capitalists were hit hard this time. The imperial power returned to the Hapsburg family, but they declined because of the failure of Ferdinand I.

"Franz, you finally came back, and this time, you did a great job!"

It was Franz's father, Franz Carr, and Franz was deeply suspicious of his ability to say something so decent.

But he soon understood that it was his mother, Princess Sophie, who'd instructed Franz's father to praise him.

"Father, are you all right? After I heard the news of the rebellion in Vienna, we rushed back overnight, thanks be to God, and finally caught up with it!" Franz said with fake excitement.

Watching the performance of father and son, Louis was about to say something, but he realized it was too late to say anything at that time.

In this incident, the Regent Committee failed to play its due role, and they had already left the Vienna Court dissatisfied.

They all questioned the ability of the Regent Committee, including these Archdukes, while all of them spoke highly of Franz, who brought troops back in time to suppress the rebellion.

Of course, Archduke Albrecht, who commanded this counter-insurgency fight, had been selectively ignored by them.

It was just because Franz was one of their own, and he was also the crown prince of the empire. If the Hapsburg family didn't want to lose their power, their best option was to support the crown prince to become the regent.

Some people were even planning to let Ferdinand I abdicate. With this rebellion, everyone was very afraid of the decline of imperial power and the possibility of another revolution.

Yes, to them, this rebellion was a manifestation of the decline of imperial power. If the authority of the monarch were still strong, there would not have been so many rebellions.

If Franz approved, they could get Ferdinand I to abdicate soon; however, he was not shameless, and he would not do something as cruel as forcing his uncle to abdicate.

Besides, tensions in Austria were high just then; the Vienna rebellion was only the first one, followed by the Italian rebellion, the Hungarian rebellion, and the Dalmatian rebellion ...

Every rebellion was a blow to Ferdinand I, and the conservative nobles couldn't stand it.

In history, Ferdinand I actually abdicated against this background: the successive rebellions frightened Queen Anna, and the Hapsburg family also worried about their dominant position in Austria, so, finally, a decision was made to let Ferdinand I abdicate.

To be exact, the decision was to persuade Ferdinand I to abdicate. However, considering the actual situation, Franz believed that persuasion was no different from making a decision for him.

After greeting everyone, Franz went directly to the topic at hand: how to deal with the aftermath.

"For such a big incident, the Cabinet is the first to blame, so I suggest we dismiss the Cabinet!" Archduke Louis was the first to speak.

"Aye!"

"Aye!"

There was no doubt that it was passed unanimously, and Prime Minister Metternich was dismissed.

"During the Vienna rebellion, the Regent Committee was not able to perform its duties, so I think it is also the time for the Regent Committee to be dismissed," Archduke Franz Carr said.

Really, he didn't want to do the job for a long time: from the time of the establishment of the Regent Committee until then, he had never really taken charge of its affairs. So, he took this opportunity to dismiss himself, and secure his ability to step back from responsibility.

"Aye!"

"Aye!"

Archduke Louis wanted to curse them all in his heart: what it did have to do with any of them, since, besides the Emperor, only the Regent Committee itself had the right to dismiss the Regent Committee.

Unfortunately, at that point, there were only two members of the Regent Committee, and one of them proposed to dissolve the Regent Committee. Whether the other Archdukes had rights or not, they only got a small say in its affairs.

After a moment of hesitation, finally, Archduke Louis said helplessly, "Aye!"

He knew that nothing would change even if he opposed it. Unless all members of the Regent Committee united, there was no way to fight against the Vienna Court.

That was obviously impossible: Archduke Franz Carr had no interest in politics, so, no matter what his consideration was, he would support his son.

"I propose that after the dismissal of the Regent Committee, the Crown Prince Franz Joseph should be the Regent!"

Seeing nothing could be changed, Archduke Louis swam with the current and proposed that the crown prince become the regent, in order to show his position.

"Aye!"

"Aye!"

Chapter 39: The First Measure Applied

There was no market for modest declines in Europe. If you started to decline, you would come out empty.

Since the regime had been taken over, Franz surely would not ask for trouble, so he took power as soon as possible and did not give Louis the opportunity to change his mind.

Then Franz changed the topic.

"All of you here, the rebellion in Vienna has been suppressed, but other parts of Austria may soon be in chaos. In order to avoid the collapse of the empire, we must take more decisive action!"

Everyone's faces changed, and their good mood over surviving the disaster completely vanished. The collapse of the Empire? What a terrible idea it was!

As the nobles of Austria, their interests were bound to the country, and if the Empire collapsed, everything they owned would disappear.

"Franz, things are that bad?" Archduke John asked with concern.

"Yes, they are. Since the February revolution in Paris, the whole of Europe seems to be coming apart, and revolutions are brewing in many regions, including Austria.

The bureaucrats of the empire are in decay, just like in the Vienna rebellion. It could have been settled by the police, but in the end, it became an appalling tragedy, and tens of thousands of Austrian people were killed, including hundreds of nobles!

Under these circumstances, if we don't take more active measures, the present of the Orleans dynasty is our future, or something even worse!" Franz threatened.

Would Franz's words scare them? Obviously, it was impossible. The fact that all these grand dukes were incapable did not mean that they were easy to bluff. It was just too naive an idea.

Franz brought up these opinions to take advantage of the fact that everyone had just experienced the Vienna revolution, and their mentality had not yet recovered. When looking at the problem, they were sure to be pessimistic.

At the time, Franz exaggerated and used the lack of real information to create an illusion for them: that the Austrian people were dissatisfied with the current political system and the distribution of benefits, and if there was no reform, people were going to rebel, as they already had.

"Franz, can you tell us about the situation outside?" Archduke Louis asked.

Apparently, he was also taken aback by the news Franz had brought. Maybe they were not afraid of the rebellion of the people in Vienna, but if the people of other places followed suit, it would be horrible.

After thinking about it, Franz answered cautiously, "Well, after the February revolution in Paris, the revolutionary parties in all European countries were encouraged, and various undercurrents sprung up in the big cities, which was obvious to everyone.

After the outbreak of the Vienna revolution on March 7, the domestic revolutionary flame in Austria was soaring. Although we successfully suppressed this rebellion, the planners behind it ran away.

What is worthy of our vigilance is that, during the Vienna revolution, not only the revolutionary party, but also the capitalists, nobles, and city government officials got involved.

If we look from the perspective of social class, it actually involves workers, peasants, citizens, the middle class, the capitalists, and the nobles, which means the coverage is too wide.

If it weren't for the sudden occurrence and the serious internal conflicts of their party, the Vienna revolution would have been successful!"

Hearing this, everyone was dumbfounded. Even the nobles took part in the revolution--that was to say, the current Vienna government was undermined.

Archduke John hurriedly asked, "Franz, are you sure there were nobles involved in this rebellion? Is it individual, or ..."

Franz said with a wry smile, "There are 83 nobles whose participation in this rebellion has been confirmed. The number of people who have not been found out may be bigger.

The reason for their participation in this rebellion is very simple: they were dissatisfied with the government's inaction in the economic crisis, or they hadn't made a good bargain after they stored up goods!"

"These bastards, didn't they know what they were doing? If the Empire is finished, they think they can still live a good life?" Archduke Louis said angrily.

Other people shared his bitter hatred of the nobles who rebelled, whose action was killing their livelihoods: without the Austrian Empire, could these nobles maintain their current status?

Franz explained, "I'm afraid this problem has something to do with our system, which lets them have no fear. Anyway, even if they fail, we can't kill them all.

If they succeed, the new government could also become a member of their interest group. As for the glory of the nobles, if they still care, they will not participate!"

The crowd stopped talking, for, at that moment, everyone realized that Franz was going to take action against them, which meant the interests of the nobility would be damaged. When it came to their own rights and interests, no one was willing to give in.

The only one who looked the same was Archduke Franz Carr. It seemed that he was just listening like an outsider from beginning to end, as though these discussions had nothing to do with him. Suddenly, he spoke.

"Franz, what are you going to do?"

Everyone's face changed slightly, but they didn't say anything. They weren't ready to stand up against him before they were sure about Franz's purpose.

"Those who participated in this rebellion must be severely punished. Specifically, the leaders will be sent to the gallows, and others will be sentenced according to the seriousness of the case.

We must abolish all titles of the nobles who participated in the rebellion and confiscate all their property, but other specific plans can be decided by the noble parliament!"

Franz spoke out decisively, for he was not afraid that someone would oppose him. Hundreds of nobles died in the Vienna rebellion. If those rebels were not severely punished, the relatives and friends of the dead would not let it go.

For the nobles, in fact, the most serious punishment was not to be killed but to lose their title and their fief, which meant that the family glory was ruined.

Several Archdukes looked at each other, and Archduke Louis spoke first. "Franz, this time the involvement is too wide; can you let them keep their titles, at least?"

Franz shook his head and said, "If the punishment is mild, I am afraid that even more people will participate in the next rebellion.

And how should we explain it to the families of those who died? According to our rough statistics, I am afraid that there are more than a dozen noble families that will be wiped out!"

Everyone's faces fell, as "being wiped out" was definitely the most terrible consequence. If some noble families were wiped out, then the quality of punishment was very different.

During the period of the Holy Roman Empire, if the emperor wanted to confiscate a fief, it would have been collectively opposed by everyone. But it was different in the Austrian era.

The domestic nobles were not that strong, and there was no situation in which the emperor could do nothing just because several nobles united to fight against him, so Franz dared to play like this.

Even more nobles would be involved as the investigation went on. As long as a member of a noble family participated in the rebellion, all his family would be involved, because there was no other way to make this kind of thing clear.

Of course, if they were smart enough, there was still a way to escape: as long as they could prove their value to Franz before the investigation was completed, Franz could be merciful.

Chapter 40: Wartime Economic System

After the rebellion was suppressed in Vienna, Franz immediately ordered that the military take control of the whole city. Then, he was busy searching the rebels' houses and confiscating their property, which took him a long time because of the wide range of people involved.

In order to appease the public, Franz gave out relief food right away. All the money was from the confiscated property, so he did not mind giving it away.

Food, coal, and other necessities were then distributed for free, and as a result, the public, who had just been harassed, finally settled down.

For political purposes, Franz also decisively defined the rebellion and placed the blame on the capitalists.

The media in Vienna was controlled by him, so at that time, all the articles published were "Beware of the capitalists' conspiracy," "the role of the international evil backstage manipulators in the Vienna rebellion," "the capitalists ran away"...

Other headlines were "property confiscation," "property confiscation," and "property confiscation," for at that time the most important work of the Austrian interim government was to conduct property confiscation. As the capitalists and nobles involved in the rebellion were not all in Vienna, this work had a long way to go.

Before Franz had appointed a cabinet, the news of the outbreak of the Lombardy rebellion reached Vienna. It came as another heavy blow to the conservative nobles.

When alarmist talk became a reality, then reform was inevitable, and the voice of reformists in the Austrian government rose again. In order to avoid the collapse of the Empire, conservatives had to accept this reality.

In March 18, 1848, Franz appointed Marquis Felix Schwarzenberg as prime minister;

Carl Ludwig von Brooke as Chancellor of the Exchequer;

Earl Leo von Tus-Haw Stein as Minister of Education;

Archduke Louis as Minister of the Interior;

Count Koloft as Minister of State;

Clemens Metternich as Foreign Minister ...

With regard to the political reform of Austria, Franz took conservative measures from the start, as can be seen from this list above.

Political stances were vividly displayed: a prime minister who advocated a strong suppression of the revolution, a finance minister who advocated financial reform, an education minister who advocated education reform, and a conservative Minister of the Interior and Minister of State.

For the sake of checks and balances, Franz even reappointed the infamous former Prime Minister Metternich as the Foreign Minister.

In fact, the main reason was that Metternich's diplomatic means were strong enough, and that at that time, there was no better choice in Austria.

The first priority, after the new government established, was to deal with the aftermath of the Vienna rebellion.

The process of distributing relief food would definitely not last long, but the capitalists had been deeply involved in the revolution and could not extricate themselves, and some had even run away. Thus, it was impossible to resume production.

At the time, half of the population of the city was unemployed. If there were no relief supplies from the government, Vienna would soon be in chaos.

Franz presided over the cabinet meeting decisively. "At present, the rebellion in Vienna has ended, so the post-war reconstruction work must begin immediately. Nearly 40 thousand prisoners are in urgent need of resettlement. What plans does the cabinet have?"

Considering the situation at this critical moment, all the officials had to perform their duties as soon as they took office, and they'd had no time to familiarize themselves with their jobs.

Prime Minister Felix replied, "I suggest that the wartime economic system be adopted: the government will take over those unowned factories and resume production to protect the employment of the public.

As for specifics of the plan, we can adjust according to the actual situation. We also will rearrange the production line by market demand, to avoid waste!"

As expected, Austria also took a wartime economic system in history and survived the initial difficulties.

The situation this time was better than the history because Franz moved fast enough to seize the capitalists and directly confiscate their factories.

In other words, as time progressed, this country was dominated by the state-owned economic system, and the public would not oppose it, because state-owned enterprises could not unscrupulously exploit them like private enterprises.

"At present, the situation in Austria is very bad. There has been a rebellion in Italy, and Hungary is also stirring, so it is necessary to adopt a wartime economic system.

However, if the government has confiscated so many factories and tries to resume production, labor costs will surely increase!" said the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Carl.

There was no doubt that the government would have to maintain its reputation, and the laws it had enacted must be observed. The Labor Protection Act, which had been suspended, could not be ignored.

Franz shook his head and said, "The labor cost will not increase much. It is based on the average wage level of the workers in the Vienna industry before the rebellion. In most industries, we can also adopt a piecework system. More work and more money will stimulate the enthusiasm of workers. As wages increase, the products produced by workers will also increase.

If we turn to the wartime economic system, the waste caused by market competition will no longer exist. As long as our management is not a problem, there should be no so-called loss!"

There was no market competition for the time being. If production was carried out according to the plan, there should be no losses or great cost increases unless something went seriously wrong.

Anyway, the planned economy was only for the short term. It would only take two or three years at most to suppress rebellions in various places as much as possible. The process of corruption of the leadership would take longer than that.

When the Crimean War broke out, Austria took advantage of the war to transfer the pains brought about by economic changes, and they relied on war money to heal their wounds.

Carl's eyes were lit up by an idea: if they adopted the piecework system, they could neatly avoid the Labor Protection Act.

If the wage of 99% of workers exceeded this standard, the remaining 1% just did not matter.

"Your Highness's suggestion is very good. In fact, all industries can adopt the piecework system. If any work needs the cooperation of more than one person, they can also group the workers. This can effectively raise the efficiency of production!" Carl said with a smile.

"Hold on a moment there; this suggestion has nothing to do with me. It is what experts have discovered through research. We must prepare very carefully to explain it to the outside world. As long as the workers get more money, presumably there will be no problem with the implementation!" Franz said, stopping Carl.

He didn't want to be scolded by others in the future. No matter how he beautified it, it was essentially a more advanced method of exploitation. Considering his status, he could very well be scolded.

Thus, it was a better idea to ascribe this idea to the experts. They were all used to taking the blame and would possibly not care about taking a bit more.

If needed, they could rationalize any conclusion. They had drawn plenty more crazy conclusions, and this "piecework system" was really nothing.