

Schlieffen wanted to *win* the war, whereas Moltke didn't want to *lose* the war. Psychologically, very important. Moltke was more defensive; he was very much afraid. He thought that under the Schlieffen Plan, the east would be nearly unprotected; the northern wing was much stronger; the southern wing was not strong enough—it was so risky. It was true! The Schlieffen Plan *was* risky! But it was the only possibility that existed. You have only one chance, and you have to take a risk. And that's where the real power of a commander, a military leader, comes in. That is what LaRouche really stresses. It's a question of being willing to take a risk, and of least action.

But, Moltke tried to make compromises everywhere. He tried to make a plan that would *always work*. And because it would "always work," it would work *never*. Because Germany was much too weak for that: to have sufficient troops everywhere. So, when the First World War broke out, the wing that was supposed to go around Paris was no longer strong enough; it could *not* go around Paris; it could only go *to* Paris. And then, in came the British intervention, under General French.

The problem in 1914, was that the Schlieffen Plan, under Moltke's direction, was much too weak, and came into a crisis. Not so much for objective reasons, but more subjective: The German commanders, especially Moltke, lost their nerve. They got scared, because they overestimated the strength of the English, and so the Battle of the Marne, in September 1914, led to a retreat of the German Army. This led directly to the trench warfare, which started at the end of 1914, and lasted nearly to the end of the war. The trench warfare was

nearly won by the Germans in 1917, because France collapsed in 1917, after the Battle of Verdun in 1916.

Germany finally lost the war as a result of the unfortunate intervention of the Americans, who declared war in April 1917, because of the so-called total submarine warfare. But one has to know that the British, especially in 1915, made an enormous propaganda assault against Germany, especially around the sinking of the *Lusitania*, in 1915. It has now come out that that so-called unarmed British ship was actually full of ammunition; it was an auxiliary cruiser, in reality. The British designed this ship in order to be sunk, to provoke an intervention by the Americans.

If the Americans had not intervened in 1917, there would at least have been an armistice, rather than a surrender, as happened in 1918-19. For American history, too, that was a disaster, because this meant a real turning point, a much stronger British influence over the Americans after 1917. The German language was forbidden in American schools, and there was an effort to exterminate any German influence.

It was a real tragedy, that the nations that should have been the real allies, on a philosophical basis, did not join together. It was not just the Americans' mistake; Kaiser Wilhelm and those around him underestimated the role of the United States, and were, of course, anti-republican. This led to the catastrophe of the First World War, and everything that came afterward.

Prussia's military tradition: 'Auftragstaktik'

Schlieffen based himself upon the Prussian tradition of warfare, which is well expressed not only by Frederick the

LaRouche on Moltke

The following is from a speech given by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., to a Schiller Institute conference in Bad Schwalbach, Germany, on Dec. 15, 1997:

This is a very interesting time, in which we have to look at such examples in Europe, as the difference in character, between the action of the French in defense against the invading forces, the action, which was led and organized by Lazare Carnot; in distinction to the folly of compromise, imposed by the German state upon an ineffective leader, young Moltke, at the beginning of World War I. Had young Moltke acted as von Schlieffen had specified, the war would have been over in weeks. There would have been a general peace throughout Europe, and the British Empire would have been defeated forever. . . .

We have many problems, today, in the world. There are many excuses for leaders to fail. Young Moltke had excuses for his failure. His excuse was the corruption around his own circles, through the Anthroposophs, and the Kaiser's circles. But, as a patriot, *he had no right to fail*.

You have no *right* to make excuses for betraying your nation. For *personal* reasons! Out of *personal* fear! Or, "I could *offend* so-and-so, by not losing the war, or not taking the irresponsible action, which would have lost the war."

Young Moltke was completely acquainted with the von Schlieffen Plan: He betrayed it. He didn't buck the Kaiser; didn't buck the Kaiser's circles: As a result, all Europe went to Hell.

And, therefore, even though young Moltke was not the author, he was not the complete architect of this failure, *he was in the position, where he should have acted—and, did not!* And all Europe, since then, and all civilization, has been paying the price, for the criminal negligence, and cowardice, and corruption of young Moltke.