

In League with Rivals: Parliamentary Networks and Backroom Politics in Interwar Europe

By James McSpadden, 2022 Hunt Fellowship

In considering interwar European politics, scholars often focus on the catastrophic crumbling of democracy and the rise of authoritarianism. The sheer number of monographs on the rise of Benito Mussolini and the advent of the Third Reich, for instance, far outstrip the number of books on the creation of robust interwar republics. Indeed, when one mentions Germany's "Weimar Republic" in the context of politics, it is essentially synonymous with failure. After all, the Weimar Republic's democracy was killed off and produced Adolf Hitler! However, making democracy's demise the vanishing point in our narratives of interwar European politics distorts our understanding of everything that came before. Scholars reduce the interwar years to the railway tracks for European fascism, when this period was also a moment of democratic experimentation. The end of the First World War brought about a political revolution in which monarchies crumbled, new republics emerged from old empires, and universal suffrage was implemented for the first time in many countries. This upheaval reshaped Europe's capitals, as women and working-class folks joined an older political and social elite. At the same time, the previous political systems that included unaccountable ministers, all-powerful bureaucrats, and decisions made behind palaces' closed doors seemed consigned to the dustbin of history. Interwar Europeans looked to public decision-making and open diplomacy, and this expectation focused attention on elected parliamentarians—as representatives of the people—who would serve as ministers, diplomats, and strong checks on executive power. My work explores this unexpected parliamentary moment and the revolutionary changes that this period brought about in political culture and decision-making.

I am deeply grateful for the support of the Hunt Fellowship that enabled me to travel and complete historical research in Germany for this project during the summer of 2022. Although I was awarded the fellowship in 2019 for use in 2020, the ongoing pandemic and travel restrictions prevented me from taking up the grant until the summer 2022, but I completed more work in Europe than I thought was even possible. My archival work in Europe was the last bit of German material I need for my book manuscript entitled "In League with Rivals: Parliamentary Networks and Backroom Politics in Interwar Europe." I traveled across Germany and completed research in Berlin (at the Staatsbibliothek and Bundesarchiv-Lichterfelde), Bonn (at the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung), Koblenz (at the Bundesarchiv-Koblenz), and Munich (at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte). During my time in Europe, I even included a weeklong separate trip to Prague (where I worked at the Národní Archiv) for German-language archival research

in the Czech Republic. One dramatic change from when I was a graduate student and last did extensive archival research in Germany was that taking photographs in the German Federal Archives was prohibited at the time, so I had to skip a ton of material to be more efficient in taking notes with my limited time. Now that photography is permitted in German Federal Archives and my project has evolved, consulting collections was incredible because I came back to the US with so many photographs of material—both for this project and for future work. I now have 2,751 photos from Berlin, 9,892 photos from Koblenz, and 828 new photos from the Czech National Archives. I have pages and pages of notes from these archives as well. This will be a gold mine for future projects. Unfortunately, neither the SPD's Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung nor Institut für Zeitgeschichte in Munich allows photos, but I took copious notes and noted in a master Excel sheet what I would like to photograph or scan in the future if they ever change their policies.

For this final report of my fellowship activities, rather than bore the reader with a lengthy narrative of my travels or construct a grand argument based on the thousands of photos of archival material I found, I am sharing some of the academic fruit that this fellowship has borne. This is a part of a new edited volume contribution that been shaped by material from my summertime Hunt fellowship research. This excerpt comes from work I am doing on trying to understand the radicalizing right in the final years of the Weimar Republic. In my original grant proposal, I wrote: “[N]ot all interwar politicians were welcomed with open arms into this informal political culture. Why did almost all Nazi parliamentarians refuse to mingle with their colleagues from other parties? How did radical parties punish their members who befriended political rivals? I overlooked these questions in my earlier research; answering them in my [research] will require me to return to the German archives.” I wanted to understand the power of political parties to punish centrist rebels, and with support from the Hunt fellowship, I worked to answer these questions with extensive research on the German nobleman Siegfried von Kardorff and his trailblazing wife Katharina von Kardorff-Oheimb whose papers are now all in Koblenz. This excerpt draws on books from the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin and the German Federal Archives, and it quite literally the first of many research results of the generous funding of the American Council on Germany.

Siegfried von Kardorff:

A Center-Right Patrician Clashes with Radicalizing Political and Social *Milieux*

The long-serving parliamentarian and later Vice President of the Reichstag Siegfried von Kardorff is an example of what could happen if a political party wanted to make an example of a member. Kardorff left or was expelled from two different Weimarer right-wing political parties. Kardorff was an aristocrat who slowly stepped towards the political middle and reached out a hand of friendship beyond his natural social milieu. Kardorff's more middle-of-the-road stances meant that he left or was expelled

from two different Weimar-era conservative parties. In turn, Kardorff's moderation bred resentment of the more collaborative nobleman, and his opportunities to rise into the German cabinet were spoiled by members of his own political party rather than by his rivals. Although Kardorff ultimately was elected vice president of the Reichstag from 1928 to 1932, he was later ushered off the political stage for failing to follow party instructions by casting a key vote in accordance with his more pragmatically inclined conscience.¹

Kardorff was born into an aristocratic East Elbian political family, and his father had served in Otto von Bismarck's Reichstag. The younger Kardorff also went into politics, was elected as a conservative to the Prussian parliament in 1910, and became a district administrator in part of Prussian Poland. Surprisingly for the scion of a storied noble family, Kardorff was converted to the cause of reform and spearheaded progressive changes to the Prussian voting system in the final years of the First World War. Advocating for these liberalizing reforms earned Kardorff the formal censure of his fellow conservatives in 1918 and prompted the enduring skepticism of his more right-wing colleagues throughout the Weimar years.² Despite this widening gulf between him and others on the traditional Wilhelmine right, Kardorff nevertheless followed his fellow imperial conservatives into the post-war *Deutschnationale Volkspartei* (German National People's Party, DNVP). He gravitated towards the more pragmatic wing of the DNVP when he served in the newly republican Prussian legislature, but he broke definitively with the party in 1920 and left for the right-liberal *Deutsche Volkspartei* (German People's Party, DVP).³

This decision to leave the DNVP in 1920 and abandon the natural political home of most Wilhelmine patricians was a defining moment in Kardorff's political life. Bourgeois and conservative writers sympathetic to Kardorff often paid special attention to his departure from the DNVP in reflecting on his career. For instance, in marking Kardorff's 60th birthday in early 1933, a society newsletter in Berlin claimed he left the DNVP "because he did not approve of its monarchism and antisemitism."⁴ The *Vossische Zeitung* also congratulated Kardorff on his birthday in a brief article that noted the tension between Kardorff being "conservative-bourgeois in tradition and inclination" and his "incorruptible devotion to his convictions."⁵ The *Neue Freie Presse* in Vienna put Kardorff's break with the DNVP in the context of interwar German democracy: "In this party [the DNVP] that clung to the past and tried to turn the clock back, there was no space for a politician who was conservative – no doubt – but looked towards the future and recognized that Germany had to progress on the path of democratic development."⁶

Kardorff's 1920 break with the DNVP came to be cast in moral terms as reflective of the aristocrat's character, but Kardorff's letters from 1919 pointed to his more pragmatic desire to position the newly formed DNVP on the center right of Weimar

politics as a potential party of government. In mid-1919, for example, Kardorff expressed his exasperation with DNVP hotheads who attacked the Catholic Centre Party as no better than the socialists, since this undercut a potential governing coalition partner. Kardorff was also leery of antisemites active in the DNVP: “These activities [of antisemitic provocateurs] are both a public danger and a danger for the party.”⁷ One might be inclined to praise Kardorff as an enlightened conservative who rejected antisemitism outright, but his centrism was based more in pragmatism. In correspondence in 1919 about the new DNVP party program, for instance, Kardorff tried to tone down a blanket DNVP antisemitic indictment of “Jewry” with the still antisemitic condemnation of “certain Jewish circles.”⁸ Indeed, in 1919, Kardorff advocated minimizing the party’s allegiance to monarchy: “In the question of monarchy, objectively – and you will believe me – I agree complete with you, namely I also want the restoration of the imperial and royal rule of the Hohenzollerns. Nevertheless, I doubt whether it is expedient to state this in black-and-white terms in the manifesto.”⁹ Kardorff wanted to frame the DNVP as a center-right party of government rather than a reactionary party on the far-right fringe.

By early 1920, Kardorff’s attempts to create a political party that was center right in its stated positions made him persona non grata for the DNVP’s right-wing majority. His opponents within the party criticized his public speeches in the conservative press and ganged up on him in private meetings. Kardorff understood this treatment as part of the larger project of side-lining the DNVP’s “left wing” in favor of the “old conservative show horses [Paradepferde].”¹⁰ In Kardorff’s earliest correspondence from 1920 after leaving the party, he began framing his departure in more ethical terms, claiming that “the differences that exist between [the party leadership and me] are irreconcilable differences of world view.”¹¹ Moreover, in several letters from 1920 and 1921, Kardorff emphasized that he was particularly disturbed about the DNVP’s response to the Kapp Putsch. He in fact believed that some of his DNVP colleagues were co-conspirators with the putschists and that the party moved to protect them in the wake of the failed coup.¹² Kardorff decried everyone who helped cover up for those involved in plotting as “fellow travelers in the Kapp affair.”¹³ His rejection of the coup should be seen as an early implicit acceptance of the republican order from a man who sought a middle ground with the new status quo. His DNVP colleagues’ sympathy for an avowedly reactionary coup and their rejection of Kardorff’s center-right positioning prompted Kardorff’s final break with the party.

Kardorff paid both a steep personal and political price for defecting. Weimar’s political landscape was not only made up of parties but also defined milieux. Kardorff’s decision to leave the DNVP meant turning his back on his own patrician social world. Kardorff wrote of this within weeks of leaving the DNVP: “When I tell you that I almost exclusively socialize in DNVP circles, that all my student fraternity colleagues vote

DNVP, when you understand that my affiliation with the party has brought me into close friendly contact with countless people in the DNVP, then you will believe me when I say that this step was exceptionally difficult for me.”¹⁴ Years later, Kardorff took to lecturing on Otto von Bismarck, and he paused on a similar point in the Iron Chancellor’s life when Bismarck’s friends turned against him: “Prince Bismarck was a conservative statesman, and since he was a conservative statesman, the attacks on him from the Conservative Party deeply wounded him in his heart of hearts. Ultimately, these were men—who were of the same flesh and blood as he was—they were his professional colleagues, his social brethren, and his childhood friends who all agitated and slurred him in this way.”¹⁵ Although Kardorff was ostensibly reflecting on Bismarck’s life, one cannot help but read Kardorff’s own experience of being shunned: “I nevertheless believe that these fights with [Bismarck’s] own friends perhaps stirred the most bitter sentiments within him.”¹⁶ Kardorff’s departure from the DNVP tore apart long-standing friendships and forced him to remake his social world.

As his DNVP social milieu collapsed, Kardorff met his future wife on the night of the 1920 Reichstag election.¹⁷ Katharina von Oheimb, or Kathinka as everyone knew her, was a trailblazing woman of the interwar period. When she met Kardorff, she had married and divorced three times in an era when that was exceedingly rare. She ran factories, inherited a fortune, qualified as a hunter, and set up training courses for middle-class women.¹⁸ Oheimb and Kardorff only served together in the Reichstag for four years, although she continued to advise him after her role in elected politics ceased. The two married in 1927 and became known for their Berlin salon.¹⁹ As politicians, both Kardorff and Oheimb worked to reconcile the new republican reality with their nationalist and upper-class social milieu. In politics, they took a centrist course, voting against the more conservative DVP majority on free votes in the Reichstag, to the ire of some DVP colleagues.²⁰

Throughout the 1920s, Kardorff was busy befriending colleagues from across the politician spectrum. When he collected four of his speeches on the life of Otto von Bismarck into a book, Kardorff distributed copies to his parliamentary colleagues. Ludwig Kaas, the leader of the Catholic Centre Party, which had been Bismarck’s main opponent during the *Kulturkampf*, took the time to read Kardorff’s book and sent comments to the author applauding his depiction of “the dry charm that surrounded this powerful and often such richly contradictory person.”²¹ Even the socialist President of the Reichstag Paul Löbe responded to Kardorff’s gift copy of the book waning nostalgically about the politics of the Wilhelmine past.²² In the context of the fraught politics of the Weimar Republic, Kardorff believed that the conservative Bismarck could be seen a unifying center in German political history who would resonate even with Catholics and socialists.

In reflecting back on her late husband's biography, Katharina von Kardorff-Oheimb characterized the "highlight—I daresay, triumph" of Kardorff's political career as a 1927 speech that marked his most public move into the moderate political middle ground.²³ The Reichstag organized an annual speech marking *Verfassungstag* (Constitution Day), and conservative politicians generally skipped out on this event. However, when an aristocrat of Kardorff's pedigree was the invited guest speaker, even a Junker skeptical of democracy was hard pressed to play hooky.²⁴ In Kardorff's speech, the DVP politician did his best to chart a middle path invoking both Friedrich Ebert and Paul von Hindenburg: "This should be a day on which the political conflict between parties ceases, a day on which we remember that which unites us, a day on which we want to speak about the German past, the German present, and the German future, when we want to speak about German suffering, about German hope, and about German faith in a better era."²⁵ For this celebration of the Weimar constitution, Kardorff distanced himself from the revolutionary character of 1918 and 1919 to instead focus on Germany's unity in an attempt to find common ground across Weimar's political divisions. Kardorff's speech was an attempt to create a new center in Weimar political discourse where everyone could accept the status quo of the republic while distancing themselves from the left-wing utopian desires of the republican revolutionaries of 1918.

As Kardorff publicly softened to the republican status quo over the course of the 1920s, he was not done tangling with his old conservative social milieu. Like many bourgeois and conservative Germans of his era, Kardorff was a member of various gentlemen's clubs in Berlin. The fact that he often frequented their Berlin clubhouses is evident in how often he used club stationery, particularly from the *Union-Klub*, to send letters.²⁶ This particular club was founded in 1867 and brought together men interested in horse racing and horse breeding. Even Bismarck, a racing enthusiast, had been a member of the club.²⁷ More explicitly political gentlemen's clubs in Berlin included the *Deutscher Herrenklub*, which was founded in 1924, to bring together conservative men from politics, business, administration, and the military.²⁸ Perhaps the most right-wing and nationalist club in Berlin was the *Nationaler Klub*, founded in 1919, with specific anti-Bolshevik and nationalist goals despite its claim to be "established on a non-partisan national basis."²⁹ For a more moderate conservative like Kardorff, this right-wing club landscape could be a social minefield, as evidenced by the fact that when Kardorff was hounded out of the DVP—his second political party—in 1932, he privately wrote to the *Nationaler Klub* to resign his membership. The club's president expressed disappointment in this resignation—"My own commitment has been to bridge and settle political differences, even if that goal has not always been crowned with success,"—but the wind was blowing in a more extremist direction, and Kardorff felt he could no longer associate with this *Nationaler Klub*.³⁰

In addition to experiencing the politicization in club life, Kardorff was still captive to the sense of gentlemanly honor of the Wilhelmine elite. Kardorff's conservative peers' understanding of honor in politics and his own came into conflict. For instance, in May 1921, Kardorff voted in the Reichstag for a rapprochement with the Allies, and two of his fellow aristocrats challenged this decision as dishonorable. Thilo von Trotha, another member of Kardorff's old student fraternity Saxo-Borussia zu Heidelberg, referred him to the *Ehrenrat* (honor council) for a "violation of national honor" for his political stance and demanded his expulsion from the fraternity. A commission of five aristocrats on the *Ehrenrat* rejected the complaint as beyond their purview.³¹ This same 1921 Reichstag vote prompted a far more dramatic showdown with Diether Prinz zu Ysenburg und Büdingen. The prince wrote an open letter to the *Frankfurter Nachrichten* that provocatively challenged Kardorff's honor. Ysenburg und Büdingen rhetorically asked Kardorff "how can you square [this vote] with your sense of duty and your honor" and most offensively claimed that Kardorff's vote was "a sign of weakness of will, dishonesty, and cowardice."³² This was the Wilhelmine aristocratic equivalent of an atomic bomb, and Kardorff responded by immediately appointing a second to arrange a duel with the prince.³³ The two seconds negotiated to find a time and location for the fight: "A spot can easily be found in my woodland that would almost completely preclude the arrival of any unwelcome guests. I can make vehicles available for both parties, and I will ensure that a doctor is present."³⁴ Ultimately, however, scheduling difficulties, problems procuring pistols, and allegations of slow walking the process meant that Ysenburg und Büdingen's second forwarded the issue to the *Ehrenkammer* (honor chamber) of the Hessian officers' association, and Kardorff, in turn, forwarded the matter to his student fraternity's *Ehrenrat*.³⁵ A duel was ultimately averted when the Hessian officers' association *Ehrenrat* stepped in to negotiate a "compromise proposal" that both parties accepted to settle the whole affair.³⁶

Kardorff's showdowns moved from the dueling field to the honor courts that policed Wilhelmine respectability. Within Kardorff's traditional conservative social milieu, his pragmatism and centrist parliamentary votes were not merely understood as political decisions but as questions of honor. Kardorff's continued centrism was so noxious to some in this social world that in 1930, Thilo von Trotha, the embittered student fraternity member from Saxo-Borussia zu Heidelberg who was frustrated that the *Ehrenrat* did not expel Kardorff in the early 1920s, sent a pointed letter to Kardorff: "Considering the political stance you have taken for years that in no way reflects the monarchist traditions of Saxo-Borussia, I hereby respectfully inform you that this letter dissolves the outward expressions of any remaining fraternal relationship to you."³⁷ Political differences and party purges were not merely a matter of high politics, but they trickled into the social world in which a man like Kardorff moved and into the ideas of honor that shaped this milieu.

Turning to 1932, there is a sense of déjà vu when considering Kardorff's political biography. Once again, Kardorff bucked a political party that was moving in a more conservative direction, although this time it was the DVP rather than the DNVP. After the long-serving DVP leader Gustav Stresemann died, the party took a more conservative and obstructionist turn in a futile attempt to compete with the DNVP and the Nazis for right-wing votes.³⁸ Kardorff opposed this trend; he had always positioned himself on the more constructive and cooperative wing of the DVP. Kardorff began to run into trouble with the new right-wing party leadership that objected to his honest conversations with party members in which Kardorff challenged the new orthodoxy. When Kardorff was reprimanded for speaking his mind, he furiously responded to the DVP leader who chastised him: "No one—not even you—has the right to forbid me to speak to my election committee. If a decision in this direction were taken and published, perhaps you would have the right to regret such an action 'out of collegial concern.' However, that did not occur."³⁹ Kardorff pointed out that the new party leadership was trafficking in rumors and building up a system of political spies to keep tabs on and intimidate politicians like himself.⁴⁰ This policing of Kardorff's social world, private conversations, and political connections suggested that a break with the DVP loomed in the near future.

Kardorff's problems with the rightward drift of the party ended up in the party judicial system—again called *Ehrengerichte*. From 1931, Kardorff and his wife were involved in a family inheritance legal quandary. Embarrassing financial investigations and legal inventories of the couple's properties were made, and the attorney opposing the Kardorffs, Ludwig Schultz, happened to be a leader in the DVP and member of one of its more right-wing local party groups. Since the Berlin press did not report at length on all the lurid steps of the legal process, Schultz personally dragged Kardorff's name through the mud within the party. Kardorff elected to challenge Schultz in the party *Ehrengerichte* rather than through a more public libel lawsuit. Eventually, the inheritance issues were settled, but Kardorff continued to pursue the *Ehrengericht* process into December 1932, long after the aristocrat had departed elected politics.⁴¹

When the DVP sponsored a motion of no confidence in Catholic Centre party Chancellor Heinrich Brüning's government in February 1932, the DVP parliamentary party implemented strict disciplinary procedures that would automatically expel any member who did not vote in favor. Kardorff purposefully missed the vote in order to avoid voting against a center-right government he supported. Kardorff knew what to expect for disobeying the party, and he soon received a formal letter from the party chief severing all party-political ties with him.⁴² Without another party to join, Kardorff unceremoniously left active politics when the next general election was called a few months later. This automatic DVP party discipline for a parliamentary vote the nobleman

skipped anti-climatically drove him out of politics and hollowed out Weimar's pragmatic political center just a bit more. ⁴³

Alfred Hugenberg's provocative question in 1928 was whether the DNVP wanted to be a "bloc or mush."⁴⁴ This political problem of whether to be a small ideologically pure party or a big-tent movement vexes political parties to this day. All groups need borders to define who is in and who is out, and where political parties draw these lines has changed over time based on ideology and tactics. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, however, the DNVP and DVP both opted to become more defined right-wing parties that flirted with reactionary politics. This transition led to the purging of moderates and the hollowing out of the center of Weimar politics.

Only in the late 1920s did Kardorff and similarly situated centrists become liabilities in their parties. Radicalizing conservative parties could no longer tolerate the extent of the political diversity that people like Kardorff represented. Some historians and the general public want to imagine that Weimar's right wing was destined to radicalize and become the midwife to Hitler's Third Reich, but more recent scholarship is skeptical of this view. Referencing British nineteenth-century conservatives who reached a settlement with democratization in the United Kingdom, "Tory democracy" refers to conservatives at peace with the new republican status quo.⁴⁵ Although men like Kardorff were not progressive, they did represent a more "Tory democratic" possibility for the right wing in the Weimar Republic that persisted into the early 1930s.

Kardorff represented an alternative conservative settlement with the Weimar Republic. He pined for politics governed by strong Bismarck-like individuals, freed from the shackles of party. Kardorff had outlined this view for all to hear in his 1927 Constitution Day speech: "In the long term, the country does not want to be governed by anonymous party majorities, the country does not want to hear about the sovereignty of parliamentary parties, instead the country wants to be governed by men...who possess the courage borne out of responsibility towards both party and voters."⁴⁶ Kardorff's patrician idea of individuals—freed of class concerns or party dictates—compromising and collaborating for the good of the state feels more Wilhelmine than Weimar. Ultimately, Kardorff's cooperative individual politicians represents a Tory democratic approach to the republic than radicalizing conservative parties could no longer accept. As long as people like Kardorff were tolerated in their conservative parties a Tory democratic rapprochement was possible. The political purges of the late 1920s and 1930s set a course towards a more rabid, reactionary right and a hollowed-out center.

¹ Bureau des Reichstags, *Reichstags-Handbuch*, V. Wahlperiode (1930) (Berlin: Reichsdruckerei, 1930), 385; Konrad Reiser, "Kardorff, Siegfried von" in: *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 11 (1977), 149-150, <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd101265956.html#ndbcontent>.

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- ² Bureau des Reichstags, *Reichstags-Handbuch*, V. Wahlperiode (1930) (Berlin: Reichsdruckerei, 1930), 385; Konrad Reiser, "Kardorff, Siegfried von" in: *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 11 (1977), 149-150, <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd101265956.html#ndbcontent>; Deutscher Zentral-Verein der Vereinigten Konservativen der Provinz Posen to Kardorff, 24 June 1918, N 1040/9, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz.
- ³ Bureau des Reichstags, *Reichstags-Handbuch*, V. Wahlperiode (1930) (Berlin: Reichsdruckerei, 1930), 385; Speech by Moldenhauer marking Kardorff's 70th Birthday, 7 February 1943, N 1040/5, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz.
- ⁴ Excerpt of *Korrespondenz der Gesellschaft*, 25 January 1933: "Civilcourage: Zum 60. Geburtstag des ehemaligen Vizepräsidenten des Reichstags Siegfried von Kardorff am 4. Februar 1933," N 1040/4, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. "...weil er ihren Monarchismus und ihren Antisemitismus nicht billigte."
- ⁵ *Vossische Zeitung*, Berlin Clipping, 4 February 1933, N 1040/4, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. "...Konservativ-bürgerlich aus Tradition und Neigung...unbestechliche Überzeugungstreue..."
- ⁶ *Neue freie Presse*, Wien Clipping, 11 February 1933, N 1040/4, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. "Bei dieser Partei [DNVP], die am Vergangenen festhielt und zu ihm zurückstrebte, war kein Platz für einen Politiker, der, obwohl ein Konservativer, den Blick in die Zukunft richtete und erkannte, dass Deutschland auf dem Wege der demokratischen Entwicklung fortschreiten müsse."
- ⁷ Kardorff to Hergt, 21 August 1919, N 1040/10, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. "Dieses Treiben ist gemeingefährlich und eine Gefahr für die Partei."
- ⁸ Kardorff to Westarp, 21 December 1919, N 1040/14, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. "...Judentum...gewisse jüdische Kreise."
- ⁹ Kardorff to Westarp, 21 December 1919, N 1040/14, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. "In der Frage der Monarchie stehe ich, das werden Sie mir glauben, sachlich ganz auf Ihrem Standpunkt d.h. auch ich wünsche die Wiederherstellung des Kaisertums und Königtums der Hohenzollern. Ich bin mir aber im Zweifel, ob es opportun ist, diese Forderung klipp und klar in das Programm aufzunehmen."
- ¹⁰ Kardorff to Neuhaus, 19 Apr 1920, N 1040/16, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. "...der linke Flügel...alte konservative Paradedepferde..."
- ¹¹ Kardorff to Neuhaus, 19 Apr 1920, N 1040/16, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. "...die Gegensätze, die zwischen uns bestehen, sind unüberbrückbare Gegensätze der Weltanschauung..."
- ¹² Kardorff to Neuhaus, 19 Apr 1920, N 1040/16, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. "Sehr unangenehm berührte mich aber, dass die Fraktion es für nötig hielt, ihre schützende Hand über unseren Fraktionskollegen v. Kessel zu halten. Herr v. Kessel hatte ohne Frage um den Kapp-Putsch bereits vorher gewusst."
- ¹³ Kardorff to Lindeiner, 30 Jan 1921, N 1040/11, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. "...Mitläufer des Kapp-Unternehmens..."
- ¹⁴ Kardorff to Neuhaus, 19 Apr 1920, N 1040/16, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. "Wenn ich Ihnen sage, dass ich fast ausschließlich nur in deutschnationalen Häusern verkehre, dass meine sämtlichen Korpsbrüder deutschnational sind, wenn Sie wissen, dass meine Zugehörigkeit zur Partei mich mir unendlich vielen Persönlichkeiten der Deutschnationalen Volkspartei in nahezu freundschaftliche Beziehung gebracht hat, so werden Sie mir glauben, wenn ich sage, dass dieser Schritt mir außerordentlich schwergefallen ist."
- ¹⁵ Siegfried von Kardorff, *Bismarck: Vier Vorträge Ein Beitrag zur Deutschen Parteigeschichte* (Berlin: Ernst Rowohlt Verlag, 1929), 34. "Fürst Bismarck war ein konservativer Staatsmann, und weil er ein konservativer Staatsmann war, darum haben ihn diese Angriffe der Konservativen Partei so tief in der Seele gekränkt. Es waren doch schließlich Männer, die Fleisch von seinem Fleisch und Blut von seinem Blut waren, es waren seine Berufsgenossen, seine Standesgenossen, seine Jugendfreunde, die ihn in dieser Weise gehetzt und verleumdet haben."
- ¹⁶ Siegfried von Kardorff, *Bismarck: Vier Vorträge Ein Beitrag zur Deutschen Parteigeschichte* (Berlin: Ernst Rowohlt Verlag, 1929), 34. "Aber ich glaube, dass diese Kämpfe mit den eigenen Freunden doch vielleicht die allerbittersten Empfindungen in ihm wachgerufen haben."
- ¹⁷ Katharina von Kardorff-Oheimb, *Politik und Lebensbeichte* (Tübingen: Hopfer Verlag, 1962), 94.
- ¹⁸ Anita Blasberg, "Sie nahm sich, was sie wollte," *Die Zeit*, (23 Jan 2014), <http://www.zeit.de/2014/05/katharina-von-oheimb-abgeordnet>; Raffael Scheck, *Mothers of the Nation: Right-Wing Women in Weimar Germany* (Oxford: Berg, 2004), 34-35.
- ¹⁹ Excerpt of *Korrespondenz der Gesellschaft*, 25 Jan 1933: "Civilcourage: Zum 60. Geburtstag des ehemaligen Vizepräsidenten des Reichstags Siegfried von Kardorff am 4. Februar 1933," N 1040/4, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz.
- ²⁰ Cornelia Baddack, *Katharina von Kardorff-Oheimb (1979-1962) in der Weimarer Republik* (Göttingen: V & R unipress, 2016), 195-200; "Politische Lebenserinnerungen," n.d., N 1019/1, Nachlass Paul Moldenhauer, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz.
- ²¹ Siegfried von Kardorff, *Bismarck: Vier Vorträge, Ein Beitrag zur Deutschen Parteigeschichte* (Berlin: Ernst Rowohlt Verlag, 1929); Kaas to Kardorff, 19 June 1929, N 1040/11, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. "Der herbe Reiz, der diese kraftvolle und oft doch so widerspruchreiche Persönlichkeit umgibt."

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- ²² Löbe to Kardorff, n.d., N 1040/5, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz.
- ²³ Katharina von Kardorff-Oheimb, *Politik und Lebensbeichte* (Tübingen: Hopfer Verlag, 1962), 166.
- ²⁴ Katharina von Kardorff-Oheimb, *Politik und Lebensbeichte* (Tübingen: Hopfer Verlag, 1962), 166.
- ²⁵ Rede des Herrn Reichstagsabgeordneten Siegfried von Kardorff anlässlich des Verfassungstages im Reichstagsgebäude am 11. August 1927, (Berlin: Verlag von Georg Stilke, 1927), 1, <https://portal.dnb.de/bookviewer/view/1131560752#page/7/mode/1up>. “Das soll ein Tag sein, an dem der Parteistreit zu ruhen hat, ein Tag, an dem wir uns auf das besinnen, was uns eint, ein Tag, an dem wir sprechen wollen von deutscher Vergangenheit, von deutscher Gegenwart von deutscher Zukunft, wo wir reden wollen von deutscher Not, von deutscher Hoffnung, von deutschem Glauben an eine bessere Zeit.”
- ²⁶ See the Union-Klub letterhead used by Franz von Papen in N 1005/637, Nachlass Hermann Pünder, and in N 1040/13, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, both in Bundesarchiv-Koblenz.
- ²⁷ Walther F. Kleffel, “Eine geschlossene Gesellschaft von Gentlemen,” *Die Zeit* (25 August 1967), <http://www.zeit.de/1967/34/eine-geschlossene-gesellschaft-von-gentleman>.
- ²⁸ Small Book on the Deutscher Herrenklub, N 42/7, Nachlass Kurt von Schleicher, Bundesarchiv-Freiburg.
- ²⁹ Gerhard Feldbauer, “Nationalklub, 1919-1943,” in *Die Bürgerlichen Parteien in Deutschland; Handbuch der Geschichte der bürgerlichen Parteien und anderer bürgerlicher Interessenorganisation vom Vormärz bis zum Jahre 1945*, Ed. Dieter Fricke (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1968), 341
- ³⁰ Kreth to Kardorff, 29 Apr 1932, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, N 1040/11, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. “Es ist mein wenn auch nicht immer von Erfolg gekröntes Bemühen gewesen, die politischen Gegensätze zu überbrücken und auszugleichen.”
- ³¹ Decision and Attachments from Der Ehrenrat des Alten-Herrenvereins des Corps der Saxo-Borussia zu Heidelberg, 14 Nov 1922, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, N 1040/5a, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. “...Verletzung der nationalen Ehre...”
- ³² Diether Prinz zu Ysenburg und Büdingen to Kardorff, 12 May 1921, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, N 1040/5a, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. “...wie Sie es mit Ihrem Pflichtgefühl und Ihrer Ehre vereinbaren können...Ein ‚Ja‘ ist ein Zeichen von Willenschwäche, Unehrllichkeit und Feigheit.”
- ³³ Kardorff to Reischach Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, 16 May 1921, N 1040/5a, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz.
- ³⁴ Diether Prinz zu Ysenburg und Büdingen to Reischach, 22 May 1921, Reischach to Carl Fürst zu Ysenburg, 30 June 1930? [sic—the date is incorrect], and Carl Fürst zu Ysenburg und Büdingen to Reischach, 22 May 1921, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, 16 May 1921, N 1040/5a, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. “In meinen Waldungen kann leicht ein Platz gefunden werden, der ein Hinzukommen unerwünschter Personen fast ganz ausschliesst. Wagen für beide Parteien kann ich zur Verfügung stellen, ebenso würde ich dafür sorgen, dass ein Arzt zur Stelle ist.”
- ³⁵ Carl Fürst zu Ysenburg und Büdingen to Reischach, 30 May 1921 and Reischach to Carl Fürst zu Ysenburg und Büdingen, 1 June 1921, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, 16 May 1921, N 1040/5a, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz.
- ³⁶ Der Ehrenrat II des Vereins der Offiziere des Hessischen Leibgarde-Infanterie-Regiments to Kardorff, 30 June 1921, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, 16 May 1921, N 1040/5a, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. “...Ausgleichsvorschlag...”
- ³⁷ Thilo von Trotha to Siegfried von Kardorff, 14 February 1930, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, N 1040/5a, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. “Teile ich hierdurch ergebenst mit, dass ich mit Rücksicht auf die von Ihnen seit Jahren eingenommene politische Haltung, die den monarchischen Überlieferungen der Saxo-Borussia in keiner Weise entspricht, dies der äußeren Form nach bisher noch bestehenden corpsbrüderlichen Beziehungen zu Ihnen hierdurch auflöse...”
- ³⁸ Hans Mommsen, *Die Verspielte Freiheit: Der Weg der Republik von Weimar in den Untergang, 1918 bis 1933* (Frankfurt: Propyläen, 1990), 292-293, 460-461.
- ³⁹ Kardorff to Dingeldey, 27 February 1931, N 1002/61, Nachlass Eduard Dingeldey, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. “Niemand, selbst Sie nicht, haben das Recht, mir in meinem Wahlvorstand den Mund zu verbieten. Wäre ein Beschluss in meinem Sinne gefasst und veröffentlicht worden, so hätten Sie vielleicht das Recht gehabt, „aus kollegialen Gründen“ ein solches Vorgehen zu bedauern. Das ist aber nicht geschehen.”
- ⁴⁰ Kardorff to Dingeldey, 27 February 1931, N 1002/61, Nachlass Eduard Dingeldey, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz.
- ⁴¹ Cornelia Baddack, *Katharina von Kardorff-Oheimb (1979-1962) in der Weimarer Republik* (Göttingen: V & R unipress, 2016), 538-540; Schultz to Dingeldey 24 Aug 1931, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, N 1040/16, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz.
- ⁴² *Verhandlungen des Reichstags*, V. Wahlperiode 1930, Band 446, 2454-2465, <http://www.reichstagsprotokolle.de>; Dingeldey to Kardorff, 27 Feb. 1932, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, N 1040/16, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz.
- ⁴³ Excerpt of *Korrespondenz der Gesellschaft*, 25 Jan 1933: “Civilcourage: Zum 60. Geburtstag des ehemaligen Vizepräsidenten des Reichstags Siegfried von Kardorff am 4. Februar 1933,” N 1040/4, Nachlass Siegfried von Kardorff, Bundesarchiv-Koblenz.
- ⁴⁴ Larry Eugene Jones, “Between the Fronts: The German National Union of Commercial Employees from 1928 to 1933,” *The Journal of Modern History* 48, no. 3 (1976), 466. “...Block oder Brei...”
- ⁴⁵ Thomas Mergel, “Das Scheitern des deutschen Tory-Konservatismus. Die Umformung der DNVP zu einer

rechtsradikalen Partei 1928-1932," *Historische Zeitschrift* 276, no. 2, (April 2003): 323-368, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27635096>.

⁴⁶ Rede des Herrn Reichstagsabgeordneten Siegfried von Kardorff anlässlich des Verfassungstages im Reichstagsgebäude am 11. August 1927, (Berlin: Verlag von Georg Stilke, 1927), 12, <https://portal.dnb.de/bookviewer/view/1131560752#page/7/mode/1up>. "Das Land will auf die Dauer nicht von anonymen Fraktionsmehrheiten regiert werden, das Land will nichts wissen von einer Souveränität der Fraktionen, das Land will von Männern, will von Persönlichkeiten regiert werden, die den Mut der Verantwortung gegenüber der Partei und den Wählern besitzen."