The Revolution of the Saints

knight, the marauding baron with his feudal entourage, the local war; the state strove to suppress even the duel. And eventually the mercenary captains were brought into its service, morally transformed (up to a point) by the new aristocratic ethic of honor and public duty. But the corollary of the King's Peace, thus established, was the king's war.

The great religious communions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries also found the politic rationality of the new doctrine attractive and useful. And as reason of state justified the king's war, so reason of religion might justify the war of God. The preservation of the church or the establishment of God's kingdom on earth: these were occasions for warfare parallel to the ever-threatened security of the dynastic state. Like the latter, they too might call forth the wisdom of the serpent. What is more important, they would require, and produce, an organization of power strikingly similar to that of the new kings. This is what lay behind one of the most singular features of sixteenth and seventeenth-century history—the appearance of voluntary associations, usually religious in character, which claimed the right to organize politically and to wage war. The Huguenot churches, the Catholic League, the Scottish Covenant are all early examples. Their appearance parallels that of the dynastic states, though in their later forms these independent political organizations often claimed a more far-reaching and total loyalty than did the state and granted to their activists an even greater freedom from casuistic restriction. The effect of these developments quickly became apparent: the precisely defined and circumscribed idea of resistance gave way to the idea of revolution; the tactical stalemate was overcome; the feudal melee was succeeded by military discipline and international war.

In still another sense, Machiavelli had pointed the way to all three of these changes with his suggestion that wars should be fought by citizen armies. His reasoning was not merely utilitarian; it had its roots in the Renaissance revival of what might best be called classical civisme—a republican sense of patriotism and virtue. That a city should be defended by its own armed citizens was an old burgher notion; but that a citizen army might, like the legions of ancient Rome, be the basis of an offensive force was unimagined until the astonishing success of Sweden's national conscript army in the Thirty Years' War and of the New Model in the English civil wars. Major changes in discipline and morale underlay these successes; together they made possible a tactical revolution that produced for the first time something very much like modern warfare. The new tactics were tentatively experimented with in the Huguenot and Dutch armies and were more fully developed by Gustavus Adolphus and Cromwell. Machiavelli's writings were only a distant anticipation of the forms of warfare later introduced in the north; for in the event, the emotions upon which they rested were neither classical nor civic. By and large, they were Protestant and national—and the combination was significant. More than any other factor, perhaps, it was the new confessional and patriotic ardor that ended the tactical stalemate and the highly civilized fashion of endless maneuver, and brought direct contact back into fashion. The cavalry onslaught was first revived by the Huguenots and the same reliance on the impact of man and horse was a feature of Swedish tactics.

Experimentation took place largely (though not entirely) in the Protestant armies. Rebels, defying the traditional order, the Protestant commanders proved themselves more open to innovation than were their Catholic rivals. This was not only because of their rebelliousness, however, but also because of their more clear-cut sense of purpose, their more ruthless pursuit of definite goals. It was the Swedes who broke medieval precedent and first attempted to fight through the winter. And it was the English and Dutch who took the lead in getting rid of richly ornamented

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The Prince, chs. xii and xiii; The Discourses, book III, ch. xx; The Art of War, part I.

The argument here and in the next several paragraphs follows that of Roberts, Military Revolution; see also Lynn Montross, War Through the Ages (New York, 1946), pp. 83ffff.

Roberts, Gustavus Adolphus, II, 84ff.
Calvinist writers quickly developed ideas of discipline and exercise, contributing to the remarkable power of Cromwell's cavalry. The immediate result of the transformation in tactics and discipline was a centralized army, composed of small, highly mobile units, capable in battle of rapid maneuver, attack, and orderly retreat. The religious purposes that so often underlay the tactical innovations had to be made explicit. Fervor had to be encouraged even in common soldiers and war itself described as if it were a crusade.

Officers like Gustavus and Oliver Cromwell acted so as to increase the number of men participating in organized warfare and to intensify the involvement and activity of each individual soldier. In turn, these changes made army morale a more crucial factor than it had ever been before. Neither feudal loyalty nor mercenary calculation were sufficient to sustain the new warfare.

The new ideas about warfare were readily transferable to politics. The religious soldier directly paralleled the pious magistrate. In politics too the conflicts engendered by social change or religious reformation would come to be viewed as continuous struggles of permanently rival forces. Men would turn away, at least in their rationalizations, from individual ambition and familial interest and would search for higher goals in politics and transcendent purposes in the state. And as politics became a serious and protracted struggle, so its "common soldiers," electors, parliamentarians, and minor magistrates, would commit themselves to the goals of the struggle and take on a new importance. The more sensitive and intellectual among them would understand that their goals could not be reached except by disciplined domestic armies.

Politics like war would have to be waged through the winter and the morale of the saints sustained. These tendencies toward a military view of the political world are most noticeable among Puritan writers. Their elaborate use of warfare as an image of the Christian life suggests that the military outlook was entirely compatible with Calvinist theology.

III

Puritan writing about warfare is in the nature of an elaborate conceit, worked out in great detail, continually employed though with varying degrees of seriousness. It may be said that as the news...
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it. If he had succeeded in overcoming the freelance knight, he now had to face the conscientious saint, permanently at war.

The Puritan development of just-war theory suggested a considerable increase in the participation of godly men in the politics of warfare. It was inevitable that the ministers should also urge participation in the actual fighting. Men should indeed labor for peace, wrote Alexander Leighton. "But we must understand with whom we live in this world, with men of strife, men of blood, having dragon's hearts, serpent's heads." It behooves the saints to "work with one hand and with the other hold the sword." If actual fighting was nothing but unpleasant, Puritan preachers nevertheless insisted that drill was a godly discipline and the new army a highly commendable order. Without reviving the old feudal zest for combat, they labored to improve "the soldier's honor" and to create a new, Protestant version of the "dignity of chivalry."

The organization of the new army—as distinct from "the feudal collection of bellicose individuals"—had a special appeal to the Puritan mind: it was an order based on command and requiring a rigid discipline; it resembled the order that a sovereign God had established in his church. "The people of God . . . are beautiful," wrote Richard Sibbes, "for order is beautiful. Now it is an orderly thing to see many together submit themselves to the ordinance of God . . . An army is a beautiful thing, because of the order and the well-disposed ranks that are within it. In this regard the church is beautiful." Protestants strove to introduce the discipline of the reformed churches directly into the army; this would serve to reinforce a system already parallel in its purpose and genesis, for the Calvinist discipline and the new army regulations were responses respectively to disorder and melee. Cromwell's request to Richard Baxter that he organize the East Anglia cavalry into a church is well known. The covenant army of Scotland actually achieved such an organization, at least on paper. The first article of the Scottish Military Disci-

43 Leighton, Looking Glass, pp. 79.
44 Sibbes, Works, II, 292.