BRITISH POLICY TOWARDS TERRITORIAL CHANGE IN TROPICAL AFRICA, 1905-1914

BY

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ABSTRACT

Towards tho end of the Nineteenth Century, the *(proving* awareness of Britain's isolation in Europe and tho pressures eho faced in the colonial field,both in Africa and the Far '-ost, led to a move by some British Statesman, notably Joseph Chamberlain, for a rapprochement with one European Croat Power. Attempts were made to establish such a relationship with Germany, but those failed because of the divergencies in policies and objectives of tho two powers,

Britain, however, succeeded for various reasons which have been made clear in the text, in effecting" a rapprochement with France based on an understanding on some reconcilable colonial interests in Africa and elee* whore.

This understanding, tho Entente Cordials of 1904* later led to a closer alignment of An£lo-French intoro3ts, not only in Europe but also in Africa. This had sorro rolevaroe for Africa.

The partition had loft some unresolved questions such as frontior rectifications and anomalies like extensive territories under weak rulers* Come of the frontier rectifications went beyond mere local delimitations and they raised issuoc of territorial change, while the territories of weak powers were under constant throat of despoilation by thoir more powerful rivals. Xn resolving these problems, while it tended to prefer tho maintenance of the territorial status QUO, the attitude of tho Foreign Office was /rovemod by its appreciation of the relationship between Britain and the two other Great Powers, Germany and France.

Thus, although irritations continued between France and Britain, these never got out of hand; and Britain was able to overlook some of the excesses
i
C Prance in certain areas, for example in Liberia. With regard to Germany, resentment against tho blackmailing tactics practised by Bismarck *ami* the .'aval rivalry between the two powers, engendered less generosity or understanding from Britain* On frontior -questions tho Germans always seeded to be overstating their case; the question of tfivin ssions in Walfisoh

Day or cedin this territory to Germany was soon as strengthening the enemy

Tn 1911, however, British support for Franco during the Agadir crisis the criticisms whioh it evoked from radicals and liberals, led the government to review its general policy, The strident cries of Germans for a pl-oe in the sun found a responsive chord in Britain. There was a foolinr that Germany had not had a fair chare of Africa, and, some argued,' this was ono reason for her aggressive demands. It was suggested that colonial concessions might evoke come flexibility in German Haval policy. Some, notably Lulu lfercourt, even hoped that the colonial detente mi«ht lead bo wider fields. The literature of the period was full of Suggestions for ths repartition of Africa in whioh the Just demands of the powers could be satisfied and peace in Europe preserved. The idea was to uoe Africa as a safety vnlvo.

Critioioa. of Grey', policy aid not induce th. Liharal government to Chang, the linos of its foreign policy, out it Bad. a.mo mo-e to roach, an Undemanding vith Carmany. Britain waa prepared to accommodate Crmany in colonial matters and to agree to n political formula, if Germany would modify its naval policy. Eventually, there was no headway in th. naval Political talk.. this proved wrong ths assumption that an offer of colonial concessions would Germany to modify her Kavy programme.

K . , negotiations on a colonial agreement, essentially the revision of the Secret Treaty of 1890, ware pushed ahead hy Ilarcourt'o enthusiasm for an An_elo-German understanding. The experiment was not easy to carry out| not on'y were there etrong material reasons militating against a colonial d.al or a repartition of Africa, hut, more important, there were very strong objections in terms of general policy and strategy, from varioua

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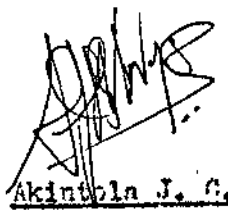
Although thia movement for a repartition of Africa dooa indicate that, many people, including Statesmen, helieved that some of the snomali.s left ^y the nineteenth Century partition could he rectified, In the prcc... of which

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis has been composed by me, and has not been accepted in any previous application for a degree. All quotations have been distinguished by quotation marks and the sources of information have been specifically acknowledged by means of footnotes.



Akintola J. C. Wyse

ABBREVIATIONS

A.A.	Auswärtiges Amt.
B.D.	British Documents on the Origins of the War.
B.S.A.C.	British South Africa (Chartered) Company.
C.I.D.	Committee of Imperial Defence.
C.O.	Colonial Office
D.D.F.	Documents Diplomatiques Français.
D.M.O.	Director of Military Operations.
F.O.	Foreign Office.
G.P.	Die Grosse Politik.
I.D.C.	Interdepartmental Committee
L.D.C.	Liberian Development (Chartered) Company.
P.R.O.	Public Record Office, London.

CHAPTER I

THE DIPLOMATIC SITUATION IN 1905

"... It would hardly be wise to incur novel and most onerous obligations in order to guard against a danger in whose existence we have no historical reason for believing."

(Lord Salisbury, May 29, 1901)

"I do not propose to discuss the argument from the point of view of a bargain between two governments ... the real point of view from which we ought to look at the agreement is the point of view of general policy. I do not think it is an expression of general policy so much as an expression of general sincere goodwill towards each other on the part of both nations. That is the spirit in which the House will desire that the agreement as a whole should be regarded; and if they will study the agreement closely they will see how much more important the agreement is in the spirit in this case than in the letter, especially with regard to the future."

(Sir Edward Grey, June 1, 1904 on the Entente Cordiale of April 8, 1904)

The partition of Africa neared its close towards the end of the 19th century. Apart from Morocco, Ehhiopia, Tripoli, Liberia and various frontier questions in West Africa, East and Southern Africa (e.g. Walfisch Bay), the "dark continent" appeared to have been completely partitioned between the European powers. Britain had gone through the phase of partition, despite one or two episodes when her

involvement in Egypt [1] had advised her to align herself with the Triple Alliance, more particularly Germany, without abandoning what was called "splendid isolation".

However by 1900 - 1901 ~~British~~ BRITAIN'S world position was under increased pressure especially from the Far East which sharpened Britain's difficulties resulting from past clashes and confrontations with Germany and France in West Africa (the Niger and the Congo), Fashoda and South Africa. Concern about Britain's weakness in the face of attacks in areas where she had paramount strategic and political interests led to a movement by important politicians like Joseph Chamberlain and Balfour (to a lesser degree) for abandoning the policy of isolation. Various agreements were reached with Japan 1902, France 1904 and Russia 1907 which changed the diplomatic situation in Europe.

The entente of April 8, 1904 was ostensibly a settlement of various colonial questions (in Africa, Siam and Newfoundland) which had caused irritation between Britain and France for many years. It was not an alliance, nor was it a diplomatic instrument directed against any power, so argued its authors. But after 1904 British policy tended to be closely aligned with French policy on the great questions of the day, not only in Europe, but also in Africa.

Historians are generally prone to view the entente in the light of European politics, relegating its African aspect or simply ignoring it, the assumption being that the formal partition of Africa was at

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1 For British involvement in Egypt, see Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher with Alice Denny: Africa and the Victorians: the Official Mind of Imperialism Macmillan & Co. Ltd., London (1961). See also G.N. Sanderson, England, Europe and the Upper Nile 1882 - 1899 Edinburgh University Press (1965)

an end, and there were no more areas to be divided amongst the Powers.[1] The Partition however left certain anomalies, like territories under weak powers and various frontier questions, whose adjustments were affected by the relationship of the powers in Europe or rather European politics impinged on these questions which in turn became a factor in the computations of general policy. For example, Grey at one time toyed with the idea of giving concessions to Germany in Walfisch Bay, an enclave in the German Colony of South West Africa with the only good harbour on that coast, as an inducement for a more flexible German approach to the Naval question under discussion at that time.[2] On the other hand certain key members of his permanent and diplomatic staffs, eg. Crowe and Bertie, were opposed to the idea of further increase of German territory in Africa and were unwilling to pay blackmail to Berlin.[3]

It is against this political and diplomatic background that I will investigate British policy in the disposing of territories in tropical Africa either through frontier rectifications or cessions of territory. And here it is relevant to give a short analysis of Britain's progress from "splendid isolation" to "triple entente".

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1 Sir Charles P. Lucas, "The Scramble and Franco-German National Problems," in Raymond F. Betts (Editor) The Scramble for Africa- causes and dimensions of Empire Heath and Co. Boston (1966) pp. 11 - 18
Nicholas Mansergh The Coming of the First World War: a Study in the European Balance 1878 - 1914 Longmans, Green & Co. London (1947) pp. 61 - 62.

2 Keith Robbins, Sir Edward Grey: a biography of Lord Grey of Fallodon Cassell & Co. Ltd. London (1971) pp. 151 and 191.

3 (Bertie Papers) FO 800/160 Bertie to Tyrell Nov. 25, 1907 and Memo on German ambitions for a Mittel Afrika, FO 367/42/4544 Minutes by Crowe on Lascelles to Grey, Feb. 6, 1907.

Salisbury returned to Office in June 1895 to find the situation in Afrion bleak. During his last administration he had reached agreement with France laying down the boundary between French and British spheres north of the Niger (August 5, 1890).

The French colonial groups disliked the agreement since it blocked their path to the lower Niger.[1] Resentment against this treaty stimulated efforts by Eugene Etienne, who had already formed a plan - the Chad Plan - to create a French Empire stretching from Algeria and Tunisia to the Congo with her West African colonies as the connecting link. Expeditions by Decoeur, Monteil and Mizon which penetrated the Niger basin after 1890 found that some of the territories claimed by the Royal Niger Company were based on treaties of dubious validity or were not effectively occupied. Consequently representatives of both France and Britain raced each other to occupy spheres of influence - a procedure which resulted by 1896 in a series of confrontations likely to lead to armed clashes.[2]

Britain fared no better with Germany. The honeymoon following the Anglo-German agreement of July 1, 1890 laying down their respective spheres of influence in East, West and South Africa

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1 A.S. Kanya - Forstner, "French African Policy and the Anglo-French Agreement of 5th August 1890," The Historical Journal Vol. XII No. 4 (1969) pp. 628 - 650 ; C.W. Newbury, "The Development of French Policy on the lower and upper Niger 1880 - 1898", Journal of Modern History Vol. XXXI (1959) pp. 16 - 26.

2 The most recent study on European rivalry in the Niger basin is Boniface I. Obichere, West African States and European Expansion Dahomey - Niger Hinterland, 1885 - 1898, Yale University Press New Haven and London (1971).

ended by 1894.[1]

In West Africa, Britain and Germany had a series of disputes in the hinterland of the Gold Coast; for example, Britain found the "Neutral Zone" in the north of the Gold Coast, on which the two powers had agreed in 1888 not to obtain exclusive influence, a stumbling block to her expansion northwards from the coast. Germany found excuses for refusing its partition and Britain opposed the German proposal for an access to the Niger to link up her Togoland protectorate. While this tussle was going on and both powers committed infringements in the "Neutral Zone", Germany showed a predilection for working with France against Britain.[2]

This was not all. When Rosebery signed the Congolese Agreement with Leopold in May, 1894 designed to protect the Nile, Berlin protested in the most vociferous and threatening manner against Article III, which leased to Britain a 25 kilometre territory, because it would separate the Congo State from German territory. The obnoxious clause was withdrawn in June.[3] Also Germany's interests in Mozambique and her pronounced pro-Boer sentiments in

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1. Wm. Roger Louis, Great Britain and Germany's Lost Colonies 1914-1919 Oxford (1967) p. 23.
   C.J. Lowe, The Reluctant Imperialists: British Foreign Policy 1878-1902 London (1967) Vol. 1 p. 176.

2. Obichere, West African States and European Expansion, p. 174ff;
   Roger Louis, Germany's Lost Colonies, p. 23;
   G.P. Gooch and Harold Temperley (eds.) British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898-1914, H.M.S.O. London (1927) Vol. 1, hereafter cited as B.D. *Memorandum* by J.A.C. Tilley respecting Relations between Germany and Great Britain 1892-1904 p. 322ff.

3. Roger Louis, Germany's Lost Colonies, pp. 23-24 cf. G.N. Sanderson, England, Europe and The Upper Nile, pp. 106-110 for a discussion of the connection between the Congolese treaty and the Franco-German treaty of March 1894 which was regarded as an anti-British move to nullify the Anglo-German treaty of Nov. 15, 1893. See also pp. 162-187, Ibidem.

1894 and 1895 appeared to the British as an attempt to threaten their imperial position in South Africa.[1] The result of all these anti-British moves was the birth of a strong suspicion of Germany which characterized British policy in subsequent years.

Outside Africa Britain's diplomatic position was not very good. The Franco-Russian Naval build up in the Mediterranean in 1893 and the alliance which followed the next year for a time caused some panic among Naval circles, though it gave the Rosebery administration an opportunity for implementing the Spencer programme which provided for a minimum of seven additional battleships by 1898.[2]

In the Near East neither Rosebery nor Salisbury could get the disinterested support of the other powers - Russia, Germany, Austria and France - to press the Sultan of Turkey to implement reforms and stop the Armenian massacres. British public opinion wanted the government to take effective steps to stop the massacres, but Britain could not act alone, and besides the Admiralty could not move without being sure of French neutrality. British leaders thus had to fall back on improvising.[3] In the Far East Britain was equally isolated.

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1 See Wolfgang Hallgarten, "L'Essor et L'Echec de la politique Boer de L'Allemagne (1890 - 1898)", Revue Historique CLXXVII (1936) pp. 505-529. Henri Brunschwig, L'Expansion Allemande outre mer du XVe Siècle à nos jours, Paris (1957) pp. 150 - 151. Jeffrey Butler, "The German Factor in Anglo-Transvaal Relations", in Prosser Gifford and William Roger Louis with Alison Smith (Eds.) Britain and Germany in Africa: Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule New Haven and London (1967) pp. 179-214.

2 A.J. Marder, British Naval Policy, 1880-1905: The Anatomy of British Sea Power, London (1940) pp. 174 - 205ff; for the Admiralty's arguments after the Alliance had been made see also C.J. Lowe, op. cit. p. 172.

3 Lowe, p. 196ff. J.A.S. Grenville, Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy: the Close of the Nineteenth Century, London, (1964) pp. 24-53.

Germany and Russia refused to join the British call for joint intervention to stop the Sino-Japanese war which threatened to upset British trading interests, but they co-operated with France to force Japan to reduce her terms (Treaty of Shimonoseki, April, 1895) of peace to China.[1]

In the face of such reverses in diplomacy the logical thing for Britain to do was to effect a rapprochement with one of the major Powers. Though Salisbury wanted to be good friends with Germany ("... as good friends as we were in 1892. That is to say, we wish to lean to the Triple Alliance without belonging to it.")[2] Anglo-German relations did not strictly follow such noble sentiments. Besides, Lord Salisbury was suspicious of alliances and he had an almost incredible faith in Britain's power to meet all comers. "Isolation is a much less danger than the danger of being dragged into wars which did not concern us" - was his dictum.[3] Rather he was disposed to settle small grievances and to co-operate with the powers, where British interests advised, on specific issues. The French and German Ambassadors in London, Baron de Courcel (1895-1898) and Count Hatzfeldt (1885-1901), with varying degree of emphasis agreed with Salisbury's policy.[4]

In line with this policy Salisbury reached agreement with France

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1 Kenneth Bourne, The Foreign Policy of Victorian England 1830-1902 Oxford, (1970) pp. 153-154.

2 Quoted in C.J. Lowe, op. cit. p. 196; W. R. Louis, p. 25.

3 Quoted in C. Howard, "The Policy of Isolation" in The Historical Journal, Vol. X No. 1 (1967) pp. 77 - 88.

4 See J.D. Hargreaves, "Entente Manque: Anglo-French relations," Cambridge Historical Journal, Vol. XI No. 1 (1953) pp. 65-92 for relations between Courcel and Salisbury; N.R. Rich, Friedrich von Holstein: politics and diplomacy in the era of Bismarck and Wilhelm II, Cambridge University Press (1965) Vol. II passim, for Hatzfeldt's relations with Salisbury.

(15th January, 1896) over Siam where the clash of Anglo-French interests almost led to war three years previously. [1] This favourable atmosphere was utilized to settle the Niger question. French incursions in the Lower Niger, hitherto internationally recognised as the preserve of the Royal Niger Company, had resulted in each side erecting forts in Borgu, Nupe and Ilorin. The situation was inflammable. Germany was on the wings ready to foster an Anglo-French quarrel or to combine against Britain. It was therefore advisable to settle with France, Britain's own boundary negotiations with Germany on the Volta region having proved abortive at the end of 1895. [2]

A Joint Anglo-French Boundary Commission was appointed to study the Niger question. Britain was ready to cede some less economic areas, such as Western Borgu and Gurma, but she insisted that the Say-Baruwa Line must be recognised and she refused to give up Bussa. [3] The French however wanted access to the Lower Niger and they contested some of the treaties which Britain had signed. Eventually the conference broke up and ushered a new phase of a race to occupy territories effectively, the French attitude being that the area was a res nullius and it should belong to the first power to occupy it. [4]

By 1897 the French had entrenched themselves well around the vicinity of the west bank of the Niger from Say to Bussa and had also penetrated Gandu and Sokoto. The Royal Niger Company did not seem able to resist

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1 J.D. Hargreaves, "Entente Manquée", Cambridge Historical Journal Vol. XI No. 1. (1953) pp. 69 - 75. hereafter cited C.H.J.

2 Obichere, op cit p. 178ff. B.D.I. p. 327. Memo by J.A.C. Tilley.

3 Obichere, op cit p. 181ff.

4 Obichere p. 91.

the French, neither did Salisbury, for reasons to be explained later, approve of an aggressive policy on the Niger. [1] His Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, (1895 - 1903), believed British policy should be more forceful. A product of Victorian Industrialism and self-sufficiency, he was forceful, dynamic and impulsive. Prior to his entry into the Colonial Office, his interests had been mainly restricted to domestic reforms, but after his split with Gladstone over the Reform Bill and his visits to the Middle East, Egypt, Canada and the West Indies in 1886 - 9 his interests were extended to Imperial matters. This new found interest was with mixed blessing, because he tended to generalize trends of foreign policy (though he had an uncanny gift of reflecting popular moods) and was wont to see imperial matters in terms of foreign policy - an analysis which did not generally accord with the more classical and pragmatic approach of Salisbury. [2]

But Chamberlain was an important member of the Cabinet and his views, whatever Salisbury and the other conservative members might think of them privately, could not be ignored. Thus, Chamberlain was allowed to set up his West African Frontier force which he launched in February 1898 with the aim of checkmating the French incursions. By May - June French and British forces faced each

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1 Ibidem p. 191ff. Robinson and Gallagher, op cit pp. 402 - 409.

2 For the Political Life of Chamberlain, including his handling of the Niger question, based on his private papers, see J.L. Garvin, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain MacMillan & Co. Ltd., London, (1934), Vol. III especially p. 202 - 223.;
Robert V. Kubicek, The Administration of Imperialism : Joseph Chamberlain at the Colonial Office Duke University Press, Durham N.C. (1969) has a good analysis on Chamberlain's administration at the Colonial Office, but it does not treat his West African policy. For a discussion of Chamberlain's approach to foreign policy and the differences between him and Salisbury, see J.A.S. Grenville, Lord Salisbury and foreign policy pp. 153 - 176.; K.W. Koch, "The Anglo-German Alliance Negotiations: Missed opportunity or myth", History Vol. LIV (1969) pp. 378 - 392.

other in Borgu. The prelude of Fashoda was being enacted.[1] The principles Chamberlain was fighting for were the control of the navigable part of the Niger and a hinterland for the British coastal colonies of Gold Coast, Lagos and the Niger territories.[2] The negotiations which began in October, 1897 revolved around these principles. Salisbury was willing to cede West Borgu, Gurma and Libtako in order to give the French connection between Dahomey and their other territories. There were difficulties[3] about giving access to the French on the Niger; for the areas in which they showed interest, Jebba and Ilo, were important places on the Niger which Chamberlain was unwilling to give up. Questions of fiscal policy and the military advances of both disputants also lent their weight in prolonging the negotiations. Eventually agreement was reached on June 14, 1898 by which British control of the Niger was guaranteed. The French were assured facilities for navigation in the river. They retained Nikki and Mossi and the British secured Sokoto and Ilo.[4]

Almost certainly the negotiations were rushed to a close because grave questions had arisen elsewhere.[5] The initial flexibility of Salisbury towards the Niger question was influenced by a desire not

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1 Robinson and Gallagher, op cit pp. 402 - 409.

2 Garvin, op cit p. 210ff. For these he would even go to war : "He ought - even at the cost of war - to keep the hinterland for the Gold Coast, Lagos and the Niger territories. He ought not to allow the Gambia and Sierra Leone business to be repeated", he said to Selbourne in Sept. 1897. Ibidem p. 211.

3 B.D.I. No. 157. Salisbury to Cosselin, Dec. 30., 1897 forwarding British proposals. The cause of the negotiations can be traced in B.D.I. Chapt. IV.

4 Garvin, p. 212ff.; Obichere, p. 221ff.

5 Grenville, p. 122.

to add another problem to British difficulties in South Africa, the Nile and the Far East.

In the first question Anglo-German hostility in Africa reached a climax when the Kaiser sent his congratulatory telegram to Kruger on January 3, 1896. The backward and staid Boer republic of Transvaal of the early 80's became wealthy overnight as a result of the discovery of gold in 1886. The latter drew an influx of non Boer elements (Uitlanders) who, though they soon outnumbered the Boers, were denied political freedom and were handicapped by various restrictive measures designed to keep political powers in the hands of the Transvaal government. But the new status of the Transvaal also jeopardized British political and strategic positions in South Africa since it threatened to draw the other British colonies within its orbit. Such a prospect was unwelcome since a Boer dominated South Africa was likely to be anti-British and the flirtations Transvaal had had with Germany in the previous years did not encourgge any optimism. [1]

The British government and powerful imperialists like Cecil Rhodes had exerted pressure regularly on Kruger, the President of Transvaal, to grant the Uitlanders a franchise and more political liberty, hoping that by this means the latter would obtain political power and blunt the edge of the Boers. Their hope was not realised, and extremists, allegedly with the connivance of Whitehall, took matters in their own hands to overthrow Kruger's regime by force. A force of 500 led by Dr. Starr J. Ameson, Cecil Rhodes' Lieutanant, met an ignoble end when

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1 For good background study see Robinson and Gallagher, op cit Chapt. VII and XIV including Selborne's memorandum, printed on pp. 434 - 437 cf. W.L. Langer, The Diplomacy of Imperialism 1890 - 1902 Alfred A. Knopf, New York (1965) Second Edition, pp. 216 - 222.

they surrendered to the Boers on January 2, 1896. [1]

The international repercussions were dramatic. Condemnation of the British action was universal. London disavowed the raid and promised an investigation. However, the most heated and vitriolic public indignation in Britain arose when the Kaiser congratulated Kruger for frustrating the plans of "disturbers of the peace." [2] The British public saw this affront as "the climax of a conspiracy carried on for years by official Germany against British rule." Not only that, Germany was also jealous of British trade (which E.E. Williams' polemics "Made in Germany" endeavoured to advertise), their industry and world position. Chamberlain reacted by sending a "flying squadron" to Delagoa Bay which nullified the small German force there. [3]

So bitter and virulent were the anti-German feelings at this time that Cleveland's more offensive and bellicose message of December 17, 1895, which implied the reassertion of the Monroe doctrine, was forgotten or rather forgiven. [4] At the same time the actions of these two powers who were regarded as friends of Britain raised searching questions in some quarters about British diplomatic position in the world. On January 16, 1896 reference was made to the policy of isolation (a word, which Christopher Howard tells us originally meant "an embarrassing lack of friends among other powers") in a speech in the Canadian House of Commons and Chamberlain added the

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1 Robinson and Gallagher, p. 419 - 428; Kubicek, op cit p. 94ff., Grenville, pp. 98 - 102. On Whitehall complicity, see Ethel Drus, "The Question of Imperial complicity in the Jameson raid, English Historical Review Vol. 68 (1953) pp. 582 - 593.

2 Grenville, p. 102. For the origins of the Kruger telegram see Langer, p. 237ff.; Rich, op cit pp. 466 - 472. Otto Hamman, The World Policy of Germany 1890 - 1912 translated by Maude A. Huttman George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London (1926) p. 66ff.

3 Langer, pp. 242 - 246.

4 See Grenville pp. 54 - 73 for the story of the Cleveland Message.

appelation "Splendid". The term soon gained currency. Though some doubted whether it was a good policy others such as Salisbury and Goschen, the first Lord of the Admiralty, thought it was sound policy and good for Britain. [1]

This smug attitude was however given a hard knock two years later. In the wake of the Kruger telegram the Far Eastern crisis arose. On Nov. 14 1897 the German fleet occupied Kiaochow - an action which seemed to portend the partition of China. British policy was opposed to partitioning China; it was primarily interested in securing the Chinese Market of over 400 million for her goods by means of the "Open door" principle. The territorial integrity of China was a prerequisite for the attainment of such a goal. But when Russia reacted to Kiaochow by occupying Port Arthur, a strategic port commanding the sea approaches to Peking, in January 1898, Whitehall was forced to review its policies and to acquire Wei-Hai-Wai and Kowloon as leases to protect her interests in China. [2]

Though he did not go all the way for partition Salisbury now settled for what were virtually spheres of influence. In the process of effecting this he met with increasing difficulties with Russia who acted as though she was master of the situation. This created an indelible impression in the minds of those, such as Chamberlain, who were increasingly becoming critical of Salisbury's handling of foreign policy. Already they were alarmed at the signal successes

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1 Langer, p. 250ff.; C. Howard, "The policy of isolation", The Historical Journal Vol. X No. 1 (1967) pp. 77 - 78. Hereafter cited as H.J.

2 C.J. Lowe, p. 225ff. cf. Grenville, p. 130ff., see Alfred von Tirpitz My Memoirs (English translation) Hurst and Blackett Ltd., London (1919) Vol. I pp. 70 - 75 for Naval influence on the decision to seige Kiaochow, "Memo by J.A.C. Tilley respecting the Relations between Russia and Great Britain 1692 - 1904" B.D. I pp. 1 - 3.

of Russia in China, the threat the projected Trans-Siberian railway posed to the security of India and Russian intrigues with the Afghans.[1]

In addition to these difficulties, Britain had differences with France on the Niger, already discussed, and on the Nile. Relations with the Boers had also worsened.

Ever since the occupation of Egypt by Britain in 1882 it had been French policy to force British evacuation. This had taken the form of colluding with Germany occasionally, and the despatch of several missions to the Nile, designed to force Britain into the conference table, threatening the headwaters of the Nile. A foreign controlled Nile was inimical to the security of Egypt. One such mission, that of Captain Marchand of 1896, to the Nile ended in the confrontation at Fashoda. Previous to this British policy had restricted itself to making treaties with various powers to protect the Nile and warnings, like the Grey Declaration of March 28, 1895, against an infringement on British rights in the Nile Basin. ~~Britain became concerned towards the end of 1896 when it was realised that the Mahdists, a fanatical Islamic sect in the Sudan who had revolted against Egyptian rule, were a formidable military force.~~ Reports of the missions of Liotard and Marchand in the Nile basin and the fear that they might effect a juncture with the Mahdists galvanised Salisbury, who had been prone to wait until the Uganda railway was completed before advancing northwards to the Nile, into ordering a push to Khartoum in June, 1897, to forestall the French. When difficulties with the mutiny of the

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1 In the Commons a "Committee to promote a policy of resistance to the ascendancy of Russia and other foreign Powers in China" was formed and it passed a resolution on March 24, 1898 "that the doors through which our trade must pass should be kept open at the risk of war", quoted in Langer, pp. 493-498, Garvin, p. 248ff.

"Nubies" - ex-followers of Emin Pasha and unrest in Uganda delayed the MacDonald Mission, Salisbury had to approve of the conquest of the Sudan from the north in January, 1898. [1]

In acquiescing in the plan for the reconquest of the Sudan, Salisbury was well cognizant of the diplomatic repercussions : "If we ever get to Fashoda the diplomatic crisis will be something to remember", he said in October, 1897. [2] His plan was if the French and British forces should meet at Fashoda the superiority of the British would neutralize the French presence, and in Europe he would be well prepared to achieve British objective by diplomacy. Hence he was relatively flexible in the Niger dispute.

But Chamberlain challenged Salisbury's assumption that Britain would be in a position to resist a possible hostile combination of the Continental Powers. Already the Boers were arming, confident of German support. [3] Milner was writing home about "working up a crisis". A plan to render the Boers militarily helpless without resorting to war was based on the control of Delagoa Bay by Britain. Its possession would force the Transvaal to "renounce their foreign intrigues as of no further practical utility, and they would come to terms with us." It was also the best chance "for the mastery in

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1 The background to Fashoda can be traced in many competent works, but the following have dealt exhaustively with the question : G.N. Sanderson, England, Europe and the Upper Nile, passim: Robinson and Gallagher, Chapt. XII ; Grenville (pp. 113 - 123 and 218 - 234) gives a good and concise analysis of the Fashoda clash against the background of Salisbury's African and general policies; R.G. Brown, Fashoda Reconsidered : The Impact of Domestic Politics on French Policy in Africa 1893 - 1898 The John Hopkins Press, Baltimore and London (1970) gives a new interpretation to Fashoda. He suggests that the forward movements to the Nile coincided and were connected with the Dreyfus crises which rocked France in the 90's. Documents relating to the Fashoda crisis are in B.D. I pp.158 -193.

2 Quoted in Grenville, p. 122.

3 Quoted in Garvin, p. 364.

South Africa without a war". But Germany was also interested in Delagoa Bay as well as Transvaal. She would have to be squared. [1]

It was the appraisal of these factors and the fear that Britain could not resist the pressures of the other powers, especially Russia in the Far East, without a friend, that led Chamberlain to campaign for an alliance.

Overtures were made to Japan and the U.S.A., but without success. The former was engaged in arms build up for a confrontation with Russia and could ill afford to antagonize that power while her army was not well equipped. The U.S.A. did not want to jeopardize her cordial relations with Russia nor did she want "entangling alliances." [2]

Eventually Germany was chosen as a partner. There is no need to go into details of who took the initative or the conversations which followed. [3] Much has been written on them already and they are well known by now. The salient points to note are that there was a body of opinion, of which, we might say, Chamberlain was the unofficial leader, who felt that Britain should abandon her policy of "splendid isolation" since her resources did not seem adequate to

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1 On the Delagoa Bay factor see Garvin, p. 311.; Grenville, p. 179ff.; Robinson and Gallagher, p. 446ff.

2 Garvin pp. 248 - 249, pp. 251 - 252.; Blanche E.C. Dugdale Arthur James Balfour 1848 - 1906, London (1939) pp. 191 - 2.; Langer pp. 490 - 491.

3 The following works are relevant to this episode; Baron von Eckardstein, Ten Years at the Court of St. James 1895 - 1905 London (1921). Though the general accounts can be substantiated elsewhere this book must be read with care since Eckardstein's zeal for an Anglo-German understanding tended to make him take liberty with some of his facts; Garvin, p. 246ff.; Langer, p.492ff.; N. Rich and M.H. Fisher, The Holstein Papers : The memoirs, diaries and correspondance of Friedrich von Holstein 1837 - 1909 Cambridge University Press (1963) Vol. IV p. 62ff.; Rich, Holstein II pp. 556 - 585. R.B. Mowatt, "Great Britain and Germany in the Early 20th Century." English Historical Review Vol. XLVI (July 1931) pp. 423 - 441.; K.W. Koch, op cit. argues that there never was an opportunity for an alliance nor was there need for one p. 384. See Johannes Lepsius, Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Friedrich Thimme, Die Grosse Politik der Europaischen Kabinette 1871 - 1914 Berlin, (1925) Vol. XIV cited hereafter as G.P..

deal with conflicts, present and potential. As Chamberlain saw it, Germany had a strong army which could divert Russian attention in case of an Anglo-Russian conflict. Since it was assumed that she also stood for the "Open Door" policy in China she would be interested to co-operate with Britain. Thus, Chamberlain's proposal was for an Anglo-German Alliance specifically for co-operation in the Far East and in return he was willing to consider German interests in the colonial questions between them.[1]

But this was far from an attractive formula to Germany. The latter was concerned about her European position and there was a psychological fear of the "Russian Steam Roller" on her extended frontier with Russia. So long as Britain would not guarantee Germany's Western Frontier with France, which was wont to surge with bursts of revanchisme over her lost Alsace-Lorraine provinces, Berlin could not afford to alienate Russia. Besides an Anglo-Russian involvement in China, which was far removed from the German border, or an Anglo-French clash would be welcomed. Either could relieve the pressure on the frontier. An underlying factor above all was the suspicion that Britain would want to leave the brunt of fighting on Germany's shoulder and Bülow was not impressed by Chamberlain's assertion that parliament would ratify the alliance; bearing in mind the popular reaction to the Kruger telegram compared to the Cleveland message, it was naive not to appreciate the deepseated antipathy towards Germany.[2]

Berlin's care not to antagonise Russia and her suspicions of the

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1 Rich, pp. 568-572; Garvin, pp. 258-267.

2 Rich, II, ibidem; K.W.Koch, History Vol. LIV (1969) pp. 382-385; G.P.XIV Nr. 3782. German documents quoted are, with few exceptions, translated by E.T.S. Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 1871-1914, London, (1930), 4 volumes.

the British offer cooked Chamberlain's goose. The Kaiser summarised German policy in April thus : Germany would be disposed towards a closer understanding if Britain should offer an alliance covering Europe; at the same time he revealed an opportunistic and blackmailing trait in German policy which irritated Salisbury so much and which had an unfortunate effect on Anglo-German relations in the period under review : "Nevertheless, even for the present it is of greater importance for us to keep official sentiment in England friendly towards us and hopeful. A friendly England gives us one more card to play against Russia, as well as the prospect of colonial and commercial concessions from Britain....." [1]

Berlin was clearly not interested in an alliance at this time. But in Britain too, Chamberlain's exuberant excursions into foreign policy did not receive whole hearted support. Certainly Salisbury, the Duke of Devonshire and Balfour (perhaps even more than this) desired a closer connection with Berlin, but they were not ready to go all the way to an alliance. In Parliament, few members approved of an Anglo-German Alliance, though Sir Edward Grey and Sir Charles Beresford, later to be cast as Germanophobes supported the gesture. [2] Hatzfeldt and Balfour ended this first round of the attempts for an Anglo-German understanding at a meeting on 5th April, 1898, in which both agreed that the time was not yet ripe for an alliance and that differences on smaller questions (colonial) should first be settled as a necessary prelude for a possible political rapprochement. [3]

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1 Quoted in Rich II p. 573.; G.P. XIV pp. 217 - 218.

2 Langer, p. 497.; Garvin pp. 262 - 280.; Grenville p. 167.

3 Rich II p. 573.

This broad outline of British policy agreed with that of Friedrich von Holstein, political director in the Auswartiges Amt, who contrary to popular opinion, though suspicious of British policy, was not opposed to an understanding with Britain. He believed co-operation on specific subjects eg. Colonial questions in Africa and China would prepare the way to more general basis for an understanding. Already in April 1897 he had formulated a plan to abandon the Boers, "who like all Dutchmen (are) full of mistrustful antagonism towards Germany" for British concessions in China, Walfisch Bay and Samoa. Salisbury had not been encouraging. [1]

Not that the British Prime Minister was opposed to co-operation, but he was hostile to what he considered the blackmailing tactics of Berlin. They always demanded their pound of flesh for any consideration shown to Britain : "You ask too much for your friendship" - he told Hatzfeldt in May, 1898. [2] Moreover, he did not believe the crisis in the Far East was all that serious or that British diplomatic position was beyond repair. Thus, Salisbury saw no real need for German support or alliance in the Far East (though he warned those who wanted to take a strong line against Russia during the March crisis :..."I don't think we carry guns enough to fight them and the French together.") [3] This fundamental principle of no "entangling alliances" was enunciated in his "Dying Nations" Speech

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1 Rich II pp. 556 - 559, pp. 567 - 582, pp. 586 - 601.

2 Quoted in G.S. Papadopulous, "Lord Salisbury and the projected Anglo-German Alliance of 1898", Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research Vol. XXVI (1953) pp. 214 - 218. This despatch describing the meeting between Hatzfeldt and Salisbury on 11th May 1898 was overlooked by the Editors of the British documents on the Origins of the War.

3 Quoted in A.L. Kennedy, Salisbury 1830 - 1903 : Portrait of a Statesman, London, (1953) p. 276.

of May 4th 1898. [1] And in his interview with Hatzfeldt on 11th May he told the latter bluntly..... "I could not recognize that Germany had any claim that we should purchase her support by concessions to which, except for the consideration of that support, we should be averse." [2]

This pattern of British niggardliness and German blackmail became all too familiar. Anglo-German understanding was difficult to attain basically because the interests of the two were different and so were their emphases. And the attitude taken by London to German colonial demands made Berlin assume that only strong pressure could wrest any concession from the British.

The following Anglo-German negotiations on the Portuguese colonies, illustrate the points I have been making above.

It is now generally agreed that Salisbury reluctantly approved of the Anglo-German deal over the colonies of Britain's oldest ally because of the international situation - the Far Eastern crisis, Fashoda and the coming struggle with the Boers - and the pressures from his Cabinet Colleagues, for example Chamberlain. [3]

As noted elsewhere the control of Delagoa Bay in order to deny supplies to the Boers, became a lively issue in the political strategy of Whitehall. Already, London had made attempts in negotiations with Portugal since 1897 to control the port of Delagoa Bay. The British plan was to help Portugal (who was expecting

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1 For various interpretations of this speech and Chamberlain's "Long Spoon Speech" of 13 May 1898., see Garvin, pp. 281 - 283.; Langer, pp. 504 - 508 and Grenville, pp. 170 - 172..

2 Quoted in Papadopulous, op cit p. 215.

3 Grenville pp. 190 - 192, Sir Raymond Beazley, "Britain, Germany and the Portuguese Colonies 1898 - 99". Berliner Monatshefte (November, 1936) pp. 866 - 887. cf. Pierre Dubois, "Le Traité Anglo-Allemand du 30 Août, 1898 relatif aux colonies portugaises", Revue de la Guerre Mondiale (1939) pp. 236 - 246.

to pay a huge indemnity for cancelling the MacMurdo Railway Concession, to be discussed in another chapter) out of her financial quandary by offering her a loan on the security of the customs dues of her African Colonies. In return Britain was to guarantee her Colonies. [1]

Word about these negotiations reached the Wilhelmstrasse on June 3, 1898. [2] Although the unfortunate and illadvised intervention of Eckardstein first secretary at the German Embassy in London, to promote Anglo-German relations in April - May did not materialise into anything, the Wilhelmstrasse jumped at this opportunity of co-operating with Westminster with the aim of proving whether Salisbury was prepared to be friends with Germany through showing accommodation to her. [3]

The reasoning of the A.A. went like this : It was obvious that Britain wanted to control Delagoa Bay with the political objective of isolating the Boers. Since Germany had so.e interests in that area, especially the Railway (the Lourenco Marques) leading to the Transvaal, the British should pay handsomely for the abandonment of their interests which was tantamount to giving Britain control over

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1 Ibidem ; R.J. Hammond, Portugal and Africa 1815 - 1910 : A Study in Uneconomic Imperialism, California (1966) p. 247ff. gives an account of the Anglo-Portuguese negotiations.
B.D.I. No. 65. Memo by Mr. Bertie on England and Portugal in Africa May 1, 1898.

2 G.P. XIV Nr. 3801 cf. Garvin p. 311.

3 Rich II pp. 575 - 586. According to Mary E. Townsend, The Rise and fall of Germany's Colonial Empire 1884 - 1918. New York (1966) 2nd Edition, p. 179, the Kaiser was in an acquisitive mood towards the end of the 19th Century. His speech to the Colonial Society at the 25th Anniversary of the Franco-Russian War : "Colonial policy is only a branch of world policy which the German Empire must follow for the protection of its continental position. The time of Germany's philistinism is over when she was oblivious to whatever went on in the world" seems to have identified him publicly with the Colonial groups in Germany. See also Brunschwig, L'expansion Allemande outre - mer, p. 150.

Transvaal. Moreover, there was the strong suspicion, not withstanding Salisbury's reassurances, that the loan was a camouflage and that it was Britain's intention to partition the Portuguese colonies at some future date. If so, Germany must also stake a claim, by participating in the loan, in readiness for the disintegration of the African colonies of Portugal. It was also decided to bring in other territorial questions between Britain and Germany to make a comprehensive colonial bargain. Thus, Bulow's shopping list of June 8, 1898 contained several areas in which Germany had interests ; for example, Naval Stations in the Cape Verde Islands or the Canaries, Fernando Po, the Volta down to its mouth as the frontier between Togoland and the Gold Coast Colony, Angola, including the southern part of Mossamedes and Benguella, Walfisch Bay ; in East Africa : Zanzibar with Pemba, the Zambezi and Shire as southern frontier of German East Africa ; in Asian Portuguese Timor, the Sulu Archipelago, one of the Philippine Islands ; and in the Pacific : the Caroline and Samoan Islands. [1]

For Africa the list suggests that the map was not yet final. It was still capable of adjustments in which German land hunger would be satisfied for some co-operation in Europe or elsewhere.

When Hatzfeldt met Salisbury on June 14 and 21 he began to probe about the Anglo-Portuguese transactions. He also dropped broad hints that a loan to Portugal secured on her colonies was a political question and Germany would have to be consulted. Salisbury refused to admit such a principle, though he was prepared to listen

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1 G.P. XIV (1) Nr. 3806 ; Rich II, pp. 586 - 588 ; Beazley, op cit, p. 872 ; Dubois, op cit. pp. 234 - 235.

to the German proposals.[1] These were presented on June 23,[2] after the Germans had taken the necessary precaution of threatening the Portuguese King with dire consequences if the Anglo-Portuguese deal went through without German participation. The Germans aimed at a parallel loan and a division of spheres which might fall under the sway of either party "in case of certain eventualities", for example, Angola and the north of the Zambezi to Germany and the rest of East Africa to Britain. Salisbury demurred, and it was not until July 9 that he came round to accepting German participation in the loan, though he insisted that Portuguese Sovereignty must not be infringed. The difficulty was a form of note which should not look like cutting up Portugal while still alive.[3] The subsequent negotiations were restricted to the loan to Portugal. Agreement on the other territorial questions was not reached. Salisbury refused, out of hand, to cede the Shire highlands.[4] It was British territory and both he and Chamberlain disliked ceding "any portion of actual British territory."[5] The Germans were equally unwilling to give up Togoland, which was regarded as an equivalent by the colonial office, for the cession of Walfisch Bay. In any case, colonial opinion in South Africa was opposed to the cession of British territory to Germany.[6]

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1 B.D.I. No. 66, Salisbury to Gough, June 14, 1898; B.D.I. No. 67 Salisbury to Gough, June 21, 1898; G.P. XIV (1) Nr. 3817.

2 B.D.I. No. 68, Salisbury to MacDonell, June 22, 1898; B.D.I. No. 70 Salisbury to Gough, June 23, 1898; G.P. XIV Nrs. 3818 and 3819.

3 B.D.I. No. 74 Salisbury to Gough, July 9, 1898 cf. Beazley, p. 878.

4 B.D.I. Ibidem.

5 Garvin, pp. 246 and 314.

6 B.D.I. Nos. 75, 78, 79 and 80; Garvin, 314. See also Beazley, pp. 879-880.

Australian opinion was also against concessions to Germany in Samoa. Thus, as in the negotiations of 1912 - 1913, when actual areas of territorial exchanges came up for discussion, difficulties, apparently insurmountable cropped up and recourse had to be found in dealing over the territory of a third power.

In this regard it will help to understand Anglo-German relations if we look at the views of one senior member of the Foreign Office who was to play an active role in the relations between the Entente p powers and Germany. It will also help to appreciate how the Foreign Office viewed African questions as part of a wider global policy which included European politics. For Bertie was to develop his analysis of German policy in Africa in a memorandum in 1907, which impressed the Foreign Secretary deeply. [1]

In June 1898, Francis Bertie, the Assistant Under Secretary in the Foreign Office suggested a deal with Germany for the sake of "political reasons". Two months later he was questioning the wisdom of such a deal. He asserted that Britain could get what she wanted without Germany's help ; besides the Portuguese government would resent such a co-operation. Furthermore there was no guarantee that after signing this agreement Germany would support Britain elsewhere in Europe, the East, the Far East or the Pacific and she might even go on to demand concessions in Liberia, Gandu, Volta etc. [2]

Bertie might not be an admirer of Germany but his diagnosis of future German behaviour was confirmed by the actions of the latter in subsequent years, for example, in Samoa. But to say that Bertie's diagnosis was good enough reason to reject such a deal would miss the point. Portugal dropped her request for a loan on July 13, [3]

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1 See p. 3. note 3.

2 B.D.I. No. 72, Memo by Bertie June 30, 1898 ; B.D.I. No. 81. Memo by Bertie August 10, 1898.

3 B.D.I. No. 76 Salisbury to MacDonell July 13, 1898.

normally this would have taken off the 'raison d'être' for an Anglo-German loan, but for reasons already discussed London continued the talks. The intervening period between German intervention and the signing of the agreement saw the unattractive sides of German diplomacy. Bulow hovered between co-operating with France to hit at Britain on a sensitive spot, Egypt (he was not really serious and it is debatable whether France would have welcomed such a co-operation), and in threatening London with unpleasant consequences if she did not show some accommodation to Berlin. [1] Salisbury, on the other hand dragged his feet and quibbled over phrases all designed to postpone the deal over the Portuguese Colonies. He was relieved when the doctor ordered a rest. His departure from the Foreign Office on August 11 brought his nephew, Arthur Balfour, to the negotiations. The Wilhelmstrasse thought Balfour a more flexible and accommodating Statesman than Salisbury. On Aguust 19, the Germans showed their hands. They proposed that they wished to abandon the Boers and that this concession and the agreement on the Portuguese colonies "would be the starting point for..... a common colonial policy." [2]

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1 For Bulow's overtures to France see G.P. XIV (1) Nrs. 3812, 3813, Ministère des Affaires Etrangeres, Documents Diplomatiques Français 1871 - 1914 Paris (1936) hereafter cited as D.D.F. 1st Series Vol. XIV Nos. 228 - 232. For French reactions see D.D.F. 1st Series XIV Nos. 220, 223 and 230 cf. G.P. XIV (1) Nr.3814. On June 14, the Méline Ministry, in which Hanotaux was Foreign Minister fell from power and the latter acted as interim foreign minister. Though he was angry with Britain at this time his reactions to the German overture was cautious and evasive. On June 30, the German Ambassador to France, Count Munster, reported that Delcassé, Hannataux's successor was not sanguine about Franco-German co-operation. In any case, Bülow merely used the threat of Anglo-French co-operation to frighten Salisbury, for he was convinced that Germany would obtain more by negotiation with Britain and that it was better not to combine "our South African interests with those of France." See Sanderson, op cit pp. 329 - 331. The Kaiser's mother even wrote to Queen Victoria complaining about the inconsideration of Salisbury and his frustration of their efforts to live in peace with Britain. CAB41/24/40 June, 21, 1898.

2 G.P. XIV (1) Nrs. 3854 - 3858 ; B.D.I. No. 85. Balfour to Lascelles August 19, 1898.

The Kaiser followed this up in his interview with Sir Frank Lascelles, the British Ambassador in Berlin (1895 - 1908). He told him that though Britain had always frustrated his efforts at friendship and had shown "absolute want of consideration for the interests of Germany" he was ready for a good understanding or even an alliance ... "he must have some document to go upon."[1]

We need not take the Kaiser's exuberance too seriously. But the promise of abandoning the Boers impressed the British negotiators. Chamberlain's letter to Balfour sums up the position "...The only advantage to us is the assurance of Germany's abstention from further interference in Delagoa Bay and the Transvaal - in other words, we pay blackmail to Germany to induce her not to interfere where she has no right of interference. Well! It is worth while to pay blackmail sometimes..."[2] It could be seen then, that even Chamberlain who had strongly advocated a German alliance a few months ago, was being sobered by what appeared to him as German cynicism. But having gone so far with the talks, it was thought it would be best to carry it through loyally.[3]

On 30th August 1898, the Anglo-German convention was signed providing for a joint loan and the reversion of spheres to the two parties in certain circumstances.[4]

Balfour defended his agreement with Germany on the grounds that the latter had abandoned the Boers and had approved of British control of Delagoa Bay (which was the important thing) and more vaguely it

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1 B.D.I. Nos. 87 and 122. Lascelles to Balfour, August 22 and 23, 1898. On this question of 'an alliance', see Grenville, pp. 173-176 and Rich II p. 589.

2 Quoted in Garvin, p. 315.

3 Ibidem.

4 Texts in B.D.I. pp. 71-75.

would "be the beginning of a new era of Anglo-German co-operation in the other parts of the world....." [1]

Subsequent events proved this hope rather hollow. For one thing Portugal did not borrow a loan from Britain and Germany, which was the sine qua non for the successful implementation of the terms. Britain did not support Berlin in bullying Portugal to seek a loan from the two powers, rather by discreet and judicious suggestions London enabled Lisbon to satisfy her creditors. Secondly, when the war with the Boers broke out it was realised that London would still have to reach an agreement with Lisbon to block the supply route of The Transvaal at Delagoa Bay. Salisbury who never liked the August convention, was only too willing to sign an agreement with Portugal on October 14, 1899 which confirmed the relevant articles of their ancient alliance of 1642 and 1661 in return for the Portuguese not proclaiming neutrality in the Boer war and the temporary occupation by Britain of the Portuguese port. The terms of the alliance which provided for the protection of the Portuguese Empire contradicted both the spirit and the terms of the Anglo-German convention. I shall refer to this later. [2]

In Samoa the promise of Anglo- German co-operation was rather the reverse. The disintegration of the 1889 condominium between Britain, U.S.A. and Germany following a civil war between the native rulers in September 1898 resulted in an international crisis. There seemed to have been a duality in German policy. According to Rich, Holstein wanted to co-operate with Salisbury, a natural progression of his policy of co-operation on specific issues, to solve the dynastic question in Samoa.

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1 Grenville, pp. 196 - 197.

2 Dubois, pp. 242 - 246.; Beazley, pp. 883 - 887. For the relevant documentation see B.D.I. pp. 77 - 99. See also pp.271-273.

The Kaiser, probably pressed by Naval circles, wanted a partition of Samoa ; for he was desirous of acquiring Opulu as a coaling station. [1] Other questions for example, the neutral zone in West Africa could be thrown in to make another comprehensive deal. But Salisbury was opposed to the partition of Samoa because Australia and New Zealand were hostile to a German presence near their territories. The old problem repeated itself. German sentimental attachment to Samoa was stressed, London was threatened of possible complications in her international position. Berlin even threatened to break off diplomatic relations and to call off the projected visit of the Kaiser to London.

Salisbury remained unimpressed, but a desire not to alienate the U.S.A. who supported Germany's demand for a division and Britain's involvement in the Boer War which began 9th October, 1899 induced the Prime Minister to acquiesce in the German demand. Chamberlain, also appreciating the importance of the Boer War, offered concessions in West Africa to break the deadlock. [2]

Eventually agreement was reached on November 14, 1899 by which Germany received Opulu and Savaii in the Samoan Islands and Britain got Tonga and Solomon Islands. The Neutral zone which had caused a lot of friction for a decade was partitioned, though Britain retained the Volta triangle, much coveted by Germany. Six days later the Kaiser and Dulow left Berlin for their visit to London. It was a

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1 For a background account see Rich II pp. 589 - 600 and Grenville pp. 274 - 277.; B.D.I. Chapter III; G.P. XIV (II) p. 567ff.

2 Grenville Ibidem ; Rich II ibidem ; Garvin, pp. 335 - 343 Chamberlain wrote to Salisbury on Sept. 18, 1899 : "The Policy of the German Empire since Bismarck has been always one of undisguised blackmail .... But I have to consider the general policy of the government, and I cannot doubt that at the present time the Transvaal question is of much greater importance than any other.."

public and formal demonstration of Germany's neutrality.

The Anglo-Portuguese agreement did not lead to any immediate practical results, but it portended a future understanding on the disposal of African territories. Moreover, it justified the broader assumptions of the policy which led Balfour to conclude it. For when the clash between France and Britain took place at Fashoda, the latter was assured of German neutrality.[1] And the Kaiser remained generally faithful to his promise not to help the Boers though German public opinion advocated an intervention in the Boer War.[2] It did not stop the Wilhelmstrasse, however, from making the most of British difficulties, as the Samoan episode illustrates. The African and Samoan agreements were the last areas where any fruitful Anglo-German 'understanding' was reached until the negotiations of 1912-1913.

Nevertheless efforts were once more made for general and specific understandings between Britain and Germany in 1900-1901. Lansdowne, who now succeeded Salisbury as Foreign Secretary, (October, 1900-December, 1905) was much more open minded about considering feelers for an alliance with Germany, and was much more aware of Britain's military weakness (involved as she was in a great military effort in South Africa, pressed by Russian advances in China, Afghanistan and Persia - all areas of the highest strategic importance to British imperial security in India) and more ready to take steps to remedy it than Salisbury who was prone to have an almost irrepressible confidence in British ability to maintain its own against all odds,

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1 Sanderson, pp. 377-380; B.D.I. No. 238, Monson to Salisbury, Dec. 8, 1898.

2 On the two overtures from Muraviev, the Russian Foreign Minister, for a Continental intervention in November, 1898 and March, 1900 see Grenville, pp. 268-274 and pp. 284-290. Though the Kaiser had grounds for being hostile to Britain, for example, German ships were seized by the Royal Navy at Delagoa Bay, he remained strictly correct on his promise to be neutral.

which was not justified by the existing situation.[1]

Feelers for an understanding or an alignment of interests were put out by both sides; discussions took place, but no fruitful results emerged. A lot had happened since 1898 to erode the confidence London had for Berlin and vice versa. Berlin's hope that the Portuguese agreement would be put into execution was left in permanent suspense and there were indications that London had no enthusiasm for hastening the demise of the Portuguese Colonies.[2] Similarly in 1899 during the highly successful visit of Willhelm II to Windsor, Bülow's conversations with Chamberlain encouraged the latter to suggest at Leicester on November 30th, an alliance of the Teutonic and Anglo-Saxon races (i.e. U.S.A., Britain and Germany).[3]

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1 For Lansdowne's biography see Lord Newton Lord Lansdowne: a biography London, (1929). P.J.V. Rolo, Entente Cordiale, London (1969), pp. 110-114 has an interesting section on Lansdowne cf. Gronville, p. 327ff. for an analysis of Lansdowne's 'New Course'. His view on British foreign policy, which in some way was a criticism of Salisbury was summarised thus: "I think, however, that we may push too far the argument that, because we have in the past survived in spite of our own isolation we need have no misgivings as to the effect of that isolation in the future." He appreciated the obstacles to an alliance but he would not "for these reasons refuse all further discussion of the question." B.D.II No. 92, Memo by Lord Lansdowne, November 11, 1901.

2 For example, the Naval visit of Admiral Rawson to the Tagus in December, 1900. B.D.I. pp. 96-99; See also D.D.F. 2nd Series Vol. II/ No 123 Cambon to Delcasse, Oct. 5, 1902; Ritch II p. 629.

3 Corvin III p. 49 ff. Bülow himself noted that Anti-German feeling was less sharp in Britain than Anti-British feeling in Germany, and he observed "that Germany's future will be, whilst possessing a strong fleet and maintaining good relations on the side of Russia as well as England, to await further developments of events patiently and collectedly." Hatzfeldt endorsed this view in his remarks on Chamberlain's desire for an alliance "... as long as he clings to this hope, he will be accommodating to us in the colonial questions which will probably turn up and he will try to influence the Cabinet and Lord Salisbury." G.P. XV(1) Nrs. 4398 and 4401.

But in Berlin where public opinion was seething with rage over the Boer War (which was later exacerbated by the British detention of the German ships Bundesrath, General and Herzog on charges of carrying contraband) Bülow, who had the task of defending the new Naval Bill in the Reichstag, found it politically expedient to ride with the tide, and he coldly rejected Chamberlain's offer.[1]

Another unfortunate incident was Bülow's interpretation of the Yangtse agreement of October 16, 1900. His declaration in the Reichstag on March 15, 1901 that the fate of Manchuria was of "absolute indifference"[2] to him made an unfortunate impression on London and fully justified Salisbury's unwillingness, at this time thoroughly suspicious of Germany, to negotiate the agreement. Yet it is curious that Britain should have felt betrayed when it was obvious during the negotiations that both sides were working at cross purposes. Berlin did not want the agreement to have an anti-Russian edge while London wanted it to be so. In the end it was a compromise in which their different objectives were cloaked in vague phrases.

The Agreement arose out of the Far Eastern crisis which erupted during the Boxer rebellion of June, 1900. Russia capitalised on the situation to entrench herself in Manchuria, and thus once again raised the possibility of a partition of China to which Salisbury was opposed. The Wilhelmstrasse was afraid of its commercial prospects not only in Shantung, but also in the Yangtse Valley and therefore

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1 Grenville, pp. 281-285.

2. B.D.II No. 59 Lascelles to Lansdowne, March 15, 1901; B.D.II No. 77, Lansdowne to Lascelles, March 18, 1901.

made overtures to London to maintain the "open door". The latter responded, or rather the pro-German elements in the Cabinet saw this feeler as an opportunity for an Anglo-German co-operation against Russia, who was scoring signal successes in areas vital to the Empire. [1]

Salisbury was not sanguine about the project, but pressured by his colleagues he agreed to negotiate. Both powers agreed to the principle of free trade "for all Chinese territory as far as they can exercise their influence" and they promised "to maintain undiminished the territorial condition of China and to come to a preliminary understanding to protect their own interests if another power threatened the status quo."

When the opportunity came(arising out of the Alexev-Tseng agreement of Nov. 30, 1900 which virtually made Manchuria a Russian province, and Russian aggressive actions in Tientsin) [2] for putting the agreement into action, Berlin excused itself, not wishing to pull Britain's"chestnuts out of the fire".

Undeterred, Eckardstein, the first Secretary at the German Embassy, who was still ambitious to effect an Anglo-German alliance, arrived on the scene and endeavoured to promote his pet scheme with the result that he misinterpreted each side to the other and created general mistrusts. [3] Certainly, there were groups on both sides who wanted an alliance. They were however widely apart on the scope

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1 See Grenville Chapt. XIV, Rich II, p. 623ff.; B.D. II, pp. 21 - 57 for background account.

2 Grenville, pp. 329 - 332 ; B.D. II No. I Memo respecting the relations between Russia and Great Britain 1892 - 1904 by J.A.C. Tilley, January 14, 1905.

3 This can be followed in Lord Newton, Lord Lonsdowne, p. 199ff.; Julian Amory, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain MacMillan & Co. Ltd. (1951) Vol. IV (cont G.L. Garvin) P. 142ff.; B.D. II Chapt. X G.P. XVI Chapt. CV and XVII Chapt. CIX ; Eckardstein, Ten Years at the Court of St. James, pp. 132 - 151, pp. 184 - 221.

and emphasis of such an alliance. Lansdowne wanted one specifically for the purpose of resisting Russia in the Far East. [1] In Berlin there were some divergences in policy. [2] Bulow, now Chancellor, believed that in the long run Britain would have to come to Berlin and be ready to pay the price of the latter's friendship. Thus, the correct policy was to "wait and see". He also had his misgivings about a general alliance, and being mindful of the vocal pressure of the colonialists in Germany he would prefer to have specific understandings, thus leaving scope for blackmailing Britain into making colonial concessions.

Holstein agreed with Bulow's "wait and See" policy but he was becoming concerned about the differences Germany had with her Alliance partners and the possibility of her being isolated. And so, though he had advocated a policy of specific agreements as a prelude to a general understanding, he now proposed a general alliance with Britain. He was sceptical though, so long as Salisbury was Prime Minister, whether there could be such an arrangement. For that matter he had instructed Eckardstein not to take the initiative in the alliance question. The first Secretary did just that he had been instructed not to do. [3]

Eventually, what the German proposal amounted to was a defensive alliance between the Triple Alliance and the British Empire. Lansdowne feared that such an agreement would hamstring British policy since "each of the allies would have a right to claim a voice

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1 Koch, History Vol. LIV (1969) p. 388., George Monger The End of Isolation : British foreign policy 1900 - 1907 Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd., London (1963) p. 30.

2 Rich II pp. 634 - 642 cf. Eckardstein, pp. 184 - 221. See also Rich & Fisher, Holstein Papers IV pp. 218 - 220.

3 Rich II p. 637ff. cf. Eckardstein pp. 200 - 211.

in guiding and controlling the external policy of the others." [1] He however instructed Sir Thomas Sanderson, Permanent Under-Secretary in the Foreign Office, to draw up a memo which was largely experimental and a guide to the shape it would later take. [2]

Sanderson's memo made no reference to the Triple Alliance ; it merely envisaged an Anglo-German alliance whose casus foederis would be that if one power attacked one of the two parties, the other should remain neutral ; if two powers attacked, both should combine to resist them, but Lord Salisbury's memo with all his masterly argument brought its full weight against the alliance. He declared that the alliance would mean binding Britain to the Triple Alliance. His objections were that there was no advantage to Britain, that the liability of defending "the German and Austrian frontiers against Russia (is) heavier than that of having to defend the British Isles against France." He denied that Britain was isolated - "a danger in whose existence we have no historical reason for believing." He might have had his tongue in his cheek when making this last objection; however, his other objection was far more valid, i.e. the reaction of public opinion in both England and Germany, and the fatal circumstance was that "neither we nor the Germans (are) competent to make the suggested promises." [3]

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1 B.D. II No. 82. Lansdowne to Salisbury May 24, 1901. and Memo by Lansdowne.

2 B.D. II No. 85. Memo by Sir T.H. Sanderson May 27, 1901. By this time however, the withdrawal of the Alexev Tzeng Agreement in April, 1901 had reduced the need for an alliance against Russia. See Koch, History Vol. LIV (1969) pp. 388 - 389.

3 B.D. II No, 86. Memo by Lord Salisbury May 21, 1901. See Gronville pp. 353 - 354 for an analysis cf. Rich II p. 656.; B.D. II No. 82. Salisbury did not seem to appreciate the fact that the alliance would have covered the British Empire and so the German proposal was not so unequal. It would have created a global alliance.

Salisbury's memo clearly demonstrated the gravamen in the question of Anglo-German relations. Both countries were too suspicious of each other; the seeming irrationality of German policy made it suspect and unpredictable and Britain could not tie her hands in advance of any contingency. This was Salisbury's attitude. Lansdowne, on the other hand, though he objected to an "identic foreign policy" was willing to go one step further, since he believed that the Continental Alliance system and the declining power of Britain advised a newer approach to foreign policy.

By the end of 1901, however, Lansdowne who had been prepared to "mark time" in June of that year had despaired of reaching an agreement with Germany. Anglo-German differences on the indemnity question and the slanging match between the Kaiser and Chamberlain on the respective merits of their armies helped to make the Foreign Secretary's task difficult, and to poison relations.[1]

Lansdowne's search for an Eastern policy led him to switch to Japan in October 1901, who had been making overtures since the previous year for co-operation or even an alliance against Russia, whose actions in China threatened Japanese interests in Korea. While there was hope for an Anglo-German alliance, Lansdowne kept Tokyo at bay and he also kept the line to St. Petersburg warm. The failure of the alliance moves and Russia's recalcitrant attitude decided Lansdowne's next move. Talks continued with the Japanese Minister

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1 B.D.II No. 69. Lansdowne to Lascelles, June 9, 1901. For accounts of the indemnity question and the Kaiser-Chamberlain feud of late 1901 see B.D.II Nos. I, 149-170; J. Amery, Life of Chamberlain IV p. 166ff.

through the rest of the year. [1]

On January 30, 1902 an Alliance Treaty was signed specifically to protect their interests in China. They maintained the fiction of supporting the integrity of China and solemnly declared that they harboured no aggressive designs in China or Korea. They were to take measures, however, to safeguard their interests should they be endangered. In such a case one party should observe strict neutrality if the other were attacked by one enemy, but if attacked by two or more then the other should join in. The agreement was to last for five years. [2]

Almost certainly Lansdowne carried the treaty through, against Salisbury's typical opposition, with the help of certain members of Cabinet who had now reorientated their attitude on foreign policy. And the Selborne Memo of September 4, 1901 which urged an understanding with Japan to balance British Naval weakness in the Far East, thus enabling Britain to strengthen her position in the Mediteranean and the Channel, tipped the scale in favour of the alliance. [3]

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1 Lord Newton, Lord Lansdowne, pp. 219 - 225.; Zara Steiner, "Great Britain and the Creation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance." Journal of Modern History XXXI (1959) pp. 27 - 36.; Ian Nish, The Anglo-Japanese Alliance : the diplomacy of two Island Empires 1894 - 1907 Athlone Press (1966) gives a good analysis of the undercurrents of the policies which led to the alliance ; B.D. II Chapt. XI.

2 B.D. II pp. 102 - 121.

3 Grenville, pp. 411 - 416 for Salisbury's objections ; Steiner "Great Britain and the Creation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance" J.M.H. XXXI (1959) p. 29ff.; Nish, The Anglo-Japanese Alliance p. 204ff. For the Admiralty's view and analysis of the Naval development of the powers in China, see A.J. Marder, British Naval policy, pp. 428 - 429.

The immediate political significance of the alliance, apart from its reception by other governments,[1] was that Britain had abandoned the policy of what she called "entangling alliances." It was a unity reversal of Salisbury's policy. But one should not overestimate the importance of the alliance. It was specifically intended for and restricted to the Far East, and though it enabled Britain to employ her resources elsewhere, it could not give effective help to her in tion other matters arising from Europe, Africa or other parts of Asia. fleet

For this reason Lansdowne once more made an attempt to reach an understanding with Germany on the Mediterranean and the Balkans. Metternich, the new Ambassador (1901 - May, 1912), did not encourage him.[2] Still further incidents and misunderstandings, such as the Venezuela fiasco of December 1902, and the insensate public hostility against co-operation with Germany on the Bagdad Railway project, ent helped to create a wall of antagonism between the two powers.[3] A new factor which was to dominate Anglo-German relations during the avant decade before the war was the growing fear that "the great new German Navy (is) being carefully built up from the point of view of a war with us."[4]

naval ... also influenced the opinion of Hagenow and the German ... Kaiser's speculation in November 1902, that "it

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1 International reception was mixed. Germany who had been given prior information on the insistence of Edward VII officially received it with "satisfaction". Italy greeted it with favour. Russia and France resented it, and demonstrated this by a declaration on March 19 that they would consult together if their interests were threatened. Paul Cambon deplored the méfiance which existed in Britain against Russia. See B.D.II Nos. 128, 129, 131, 139 and 145.

2 B.D.II No. 93, Memo by Lord Lansdowne, Dec. 12, 1901, B.D.II No. 94, Lansdowne to Lascelles, Dec. 19, 1901.

3 B.D.II Chapter XII, parts II and III.

4 Quoted in Monger, The End of Isolation, p. 82

... of the endeavours of the German ... Marder, British Naval ... See also E. L. ... Oxford (1938) passim.

Towards the end of the '90s Germany decided to have a Navy. It was argued that Germany had an expanding trade and that she was now a colonial power whose colonies must be protected. But the necessity for a Navy went beyond such modest objectives as far as Von Tirpitz, the founder of the Imperial Navy, was concerned. Germany must have a strong fleet so that when the non-European countries which had not been partitioned came up for division, she would be in a strong position to assert her rights. This was not an end in itself. With a strong fleet her alliance value would be enhanced and it would make the strongest Naval power hesitate to attack Germany.

Much literature[1] has been written on the German Navy critising Tirpitz 'risk theory' and asking whether it was wise of the strongest military power to have embarked on a Naval programme when it was obvious that Britain, being the strongest Naval power, would resent it and would feel that her security was being threatened.

I am not qualified to add more, but for my purpose it is relevant to note that Germany's bid for naval power coincided with her acquisitive mood at the end of the Nineteenth Century. Certainly Naval circles influenced the seizure of Kiao-Chow and the German demand for Samoa. The Kaiser's revelation in November 1902, that "it was absolutely necessary for the development of Germany that she

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1 Alfred von Tirpitz, My Memoirs, (1919) Vol. I (English Translation), defends his Naval policy. He claims that the German battle fleet was not evolved with any idea of a war with Britain, p. 67; Jonathan Steinberg, Yesterday's Deterrent: Tirpitz and the Birth of the German Battle Fleet, London (1965), argues that the first Navy Law of 1893 had a distinct anti-British bias, but he also suggests that the German Navy was an embodiment of the endeavours of the German peoples to have a unified state, pp. 20-32. Marder, British Naval Policy, p. 292ff. deals with the German Navy Law. See also E. L. Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, Oxford (1935) passim.

should have coaling stations, [1] strengthened British suspicion of Germany's Naval policy, and her efforts to secure coaling stations on the African coastlands, were seen as part of German Naval policy. Such an attitude led Britain to block German efforts to obtain coaling stations in the African possessions of Spain and France near the Mediterranean. [2]

The foregoing discussion has sought to show Anglo-German differences in Africa as well as elsewhere during the period of "splendid isolation". Difficulties in many areas however led Salisbury to settle differences with France and more reluctantly with Germany. These men such as Chamberlain who were perturbed by Britain's friendlessness saw in these small understandings a bridge work for a general agreement with Germany.

In Berlin too, there were men like Holstein, whom Dr. Rich has done much to rehabilitate, who desired some sort of understanding with Britain, but they placed too high a price on their friendship and antagonised even Chamberlain by demanding colonial concessions. Nevertheless pourparlers were held in which the wide divergencies in policies were revealed and some of the assumptions each held about the other were proved false. Mistrust and public antipathy in both countries ensued, and the naval issue later contributed to the estrangement. [3]

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1 B.D. II No. 164. Landdowne to Buchanan Nov. 14., 1902.

2 The Mediterranean agreement of 1907. This attitude can be detected in the correspondance between British Ministers in Lisbon and the Foreign Office and the reactions of German activities in Madeira in 1903 - 1906 eg. (Grey Papers) FO 880/91.; (Bertie Papers) FO 800/176. Bertie to Mallet April 14, 1906.; Mallet to Bertie April 5, 1906.; Hardinge to Bertie May 11, 1906.

3 Unofficial moves by Holstein to improve Anglo-German relations at the end of 1901 had the opposite effect of sowing more distrust in the minds of policy makers in London. See The History of the Times : The Twentieth Century Test 1884 - 1912. Printing House Square London, (1947) Vol. III pp. 324 - 353. for an account of the Chirol - Holstein correspondance, Rich II, pp. 663 - 669. Rich and Fisher, Holstein Papers IV, pp. 237 - 243.

Salisbury did not seem particularly worried by the growing estrangement between Germany and Britain neither did he care for an alliance with any one. But he was an old man and sick. His appreciation of British foreign policy was not borne out by facts. Times had changed ; though Britain was able to defeat the Boers, it was at a great cost, and a Continental alliance was partly averted by the Kaiser's decision to remain neutral. His departure from the scene in July 1902 made way for men who gave an intelligent reading to the growing awareness of Britain's weakness.

In December 1902 the Committee of Imperial Defence met for the first time. There ensued a greater liaisonbetween the Cabinet and the Service Chiefs. By 1904 the C.I.D. had been reorganised with the Prime Minister being made a permanent member. A Secretariat was also created. [1]

What these developments meant was that there was now a Cabinet of which , recognizing that it was now virtually impossible to reach an understanding with Germany in view of past experiences and that Britain's resources were inadequate to secure her global interests, was less reluctant to enter into an agreement with a Continental power should the need arise. This need arose partly out of complications in the Far East and the partner chosen was France, the power with whom Britain almost went to war in 1898.

It was to be expected that when Marchand and Kitchener confronted

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1 Zara Steiner, The Foreign Office and foreign policy 1898 - 1914 C.U.P. (1969) pp. 50 - 55. gives an analysis of the development of the C.I.D. and the changing attitudes of the Foreign Office Staff towards Germany.

each other at Fashoda in September, 1898 and both Britain and France made warlike plans for a possible clash, Anglo-French relations would remain, as the Germans hoped, permanently on a hostile footing. Indeed, Théophile Delcassé, the French Foreign Minister, made certain arrangements, for example, various military and strategic plans with Russia, all designed to strengthen the Dual Alliance and equip France for a possible war with England.[1] Yet, within a couple of years feelers for an understanding were being put from both sides and in six years France and Britain were closer than they were ever before.

The reasons for this change could be summarised thus: Once France had acknowledged British rights to the Nile basin, Salisbury was persuaded to make things easier for Delcassé. The frontiers of French Equatorial Africa and Anglo-Egyptian Sudan were adjusted with the result that France was excluded from the Nile. Though some bitterness remained and there were some anxious moments, the solution of this crisis paved the way for more fruitful negotiations.[2] In any case Delcasse realised that France would come off worse if there was a

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1 These included support for the Orensburg-Tashkent Railway, which was being built with the aim of threatening British position in India, and military talks with Russia 1900-1901. For background see C. Andrew, Théophile Delcassé and the Entente Cordiale, London (1968), pp. 124-125; "France and the Making of the Entente Cordiale", Historical Journal, Vol. X No. 1 (1967) pp. 89-105; "German World Policy and the reshaping of the Dual Alliance", Journal of Contemporary History, Vol. I (July, 1966), pp. 137-151.

2 B.D.I Chapter IV for the relevant documents; Grenville, pp. 218-234; Brown, Fashoda Reconsidered, p. 96ff. For relevant works on the move towards an Anglo-French Entente see Monger, The End of Isolation, p. 126ff; cf. Ian H. Nish, The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, pp. 286-287. A.J.P. Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, London (1954), pp. 404-430; E.W. Edwards, "The Japanese Alliance and the Anglo-French agreement of 1904" History, Vol. 42 (1957), pp. 19-27; C. Andrew, Théophile Delcassé and the Entente Cordiale; Articles by the same author in Historical Journal Vol. X No. 1, (1967) and J.C.H. Vol. I, July, 1966; P.J.V. Rolo Entente Cordiale (1969) is mainly narrative though having one or two interesting points.

war ; her French Navy was not in a position to fight the Royal Navy and the Army was unprepared.[1] Though he had done something to remedy the situation, non support from Russia during the crisis had had a disturbing effect on French opinion.

Secondly, German actions at the turn of the century became more and more suspicious, especially in the Mediterranean where France had always been sensitive. In the long run Germany replaced Britain as the bitter enemy. An understanding with Britian could serve as one more guarantee against Germany.[2]

Thirdly, at the beginning of the Twentieth Century the French began to concentrate their efforts on absorbing the Moroccan Empire. The latter had coterminous borders with the French protectorate of Algeria. The last strong ruler Mulay Hassan, had died in 1894, leaving a young and impressionable boy on the throne. Under his weak rule there was disorder, corruption and anarchy which often overspilled to the French protectorate. The French arrogated to themselves the right to introduce reforms in the Empire on the pretext of securing peace on their frontier.

By various agreements he squared things with Italy and Spain, two other Powers, who ~~alleged~~ claimed to have interests in Morocco.[3] Britain had large trading and strategic interests in the Sherifean Empire.

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1 Marder, op cit. pp. 320 - 322.

2 C. Andrew, J.C.H., pp. 137 - 151. Rolo, pp. 81 - 82. quotes him as telling Paleologue that England was "certainly not the enemy"; Brown, Fashoda Reconsidered, pp. 120 - 126.

3 C. Andrew, Delcassé and the Entente Cordiale, pp. 154 - 157. for French policy in Morocco.

She also had a traditional interest in shoring up the Moroccan Monarchy.[1] If France was to have a free hand, Britain would have to be brought in. This consideration had been pressed on Delcasse by the Comité de l'Afrique Française as early as 1898.

A fourth factor which helped to facilitate negotiations was the eruption of the Far Eastern crisis in 1903. Russia put new conditions for withdrawing its troops from Manchuria, who had been there since 1900, and began to show interests in North Korea, which was a preserve of Japan. As things worsened it became clear that war would result between Japan and Russia. Britain and France, allies of Japan and Russia respectively, did not want to be drawn into the war. An understanding between the two could restrain both from supporting their respective allies.[2]

On the British side response was slow; though Chamberlain, always the first to discern the trend of things, had considered a colonial entente as early as 1901, and Cambon, the French Ambassador (December, 1898-December, 1920), had dropped broad hints to Salisbury about a colonial entente, e.g. on Zanzibar and Madagascar, those had been little more than exploratory moves.[3] In the talks Lansdowne had with Cambon on Morocco he made it plain that Britain was not anxious to 'liquidate' Morocco, though by the end of 1902 he was thinking of examining more closely the proposition to exclude Germany

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1 A.J.P. Taylor, "British policy in Morocco 1886-1902", English Historical Review, Vol. 66, (July, 1951) pp. 342-374 for an analysis of British policy.

2 See note 1, p. 42, esp. Monger, op. cit. p. 126ff; B.D.II No. 259. Lansdowne to Monson, Dec. 11, 1903. For an account of the crisis leading to the Russian-Japanese war, see Nish, op. cit. Chapters XII and XIII.

3 J. Amery, Life of Chamberlain, IV, pp. 162 and 180-182; Monger, pp. 39-40; B.D.I. No. 240, Salisbury to Monson, January 11, 1899.

and other powers from participating in a possible partition of the Sherifean Empire. [1]

Britain was,however,interested in gaining French recognition of her de facto occupation of Egypt. French men still resented the occupation and were,among other things,obstructive to Cromer's financial reform.

The two countries therefore had interests in two arens which could be reconciled. But on more general terms Lansdowne hoped that an understanding with France would serve as a bridgehead to an agreement with Russia. It was now being realised that since British resources could not hope to contain her forward movement in Persia and the Indian frontier,it was best that some arrangement was reached with her. [2]

Furthermore, though he himself might not have seen it this way, the distrust and hostility towards Germany, which had now crystalised in the Foreign Office played some part in the change of attitude towards France. [3] Considerations of colonial and general policy therefore brought the two sides together.

The realities of political factors were not enough, a climate of opinion conducive to such an understanding was necessary. In both Paris and London there were elements working towards this end. King Edward VII made it generally known that he was for a rapprochement. [4]

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1 B.D. II pp. 260 - 275. Rolo, pp. 125 - 128.; pp. 146 - 148.; Monger, pp. 38 - 40.

2 For the Analysis of this aspect see Monger, pp. 95 - 99, pp. 108 - 111.

3 Viscount Grey of Fallodon, Twenty-five Years 1892 - 1916 London (1925) 2 Vols. Vol. I p. 36ff. For the attitudes of the permanent staff, see Monger, pp. 101 - 103.; Zara Steiner, The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, passim.

4 Rolo, pp. 158 - 162.

Chamberlain, stung by the rejection of his alliance feelers by Germany, put a plan for a comprehensive colonial deal which included certain territories in Africa and Asia; and in December 1902, on his way to South Africa he left a note for the French Charge d'Affairs in Egypt virtually *proposing an entente. He also thought of the idea* of the King asking the French President to visit Britain.[1]

In Paris some colonialists circles, which included Eugène Etienne, once a bitter opponent of Britain, and Anglophil Statesmen such as D'Estournelles and Baron de Courcel worked with Sir Thomas Barclay, former President of the British Chamber of Commerce in France, for an arbitrationtreaty and improved relations between the two countries.[2]

The activities of these men led to State visits by Edward in May, 1903 to Paris, President Loubet and Delcasse to London in July. Etienne himself met Lansdowne on July 2, 1903 and they spoke on various colonial problems in Morocco, Newfoundland etc.. Lansdowne reported that "M. Etienne dwelt at greater length and with considerable earnestness upon the necessity of a rearrangement of the frontier in the region of Sokoto."[3]

While Morocco and Egypt provided the basis of the Entente other areas were involved, including some in tropical Africa. Compared to Morocco and Egypt they were not very important. Indeed, in the negotiations they merely served as makeweights to balance the

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1 Rolo, pp. 155 - 156.; J. Amery, Life of Chamberlain IV, p. 160ff.

2 B.D. II Nos. 352, 353, 354, 360, 362 and 371. An Arbitration Treaty was signed on Oct. 14, 1903.

3 B.D. II No. 356. Lansdowne to Monson, July 2, 2903.; B.D. II No. 357. Lansdowne to Monson July 7, 1903 for Lansdowne's accounts of talks with Etienne and Delcassé ; C. Andrew, Delcassé, p. 103ff. for a discussion.

gypt/Morocco deal. But this is not to say that they were not erious enough to merit a solution. The point which has frequently een overlooked by historians is that the Gambia and Northern igerian have always been of some importance to French colonial plans. he regular recourse to discussions on these areas, even after 1904, uggests a continuation of the partition of Africa to which adjustments ould be made when necessity arose.

This aspect will be discussed in Chapter II. Here it is sufficient o point out the reasons why adjustments were necessary and why they erved as useful pieces of bargain. The Gambia was a small British erritory, almost surrounded by the French protectorate of Senegal, he Gambia River, which was the natural economic outlet for Senegal, as in British territory. The economy of the Gambia depended on trade ith the French territory ; in some ways the economics of the two olonies were interdependent. Hostile actions by either administrations ould harm the other's trade. One way of solving the problem was to ncorporate the Gambia into Senegal. To this end efforts had been ade by the French and responded to by the British in the 1860's and 870's., but these had failed owing to parliamentary and interested roup opposition. When Lansdowne and Cambon had their exploratory nd informal talks in 1901, Cambon asked for the cession of the ambia. It was refused. [1]

As we have seen, Anglo-French rivalry in the Niger had been rought to an end by the Convention of June 14, 1898. But the

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J.D. Hargreaves, Prelude to the Partition of West Africa, London (1966) Chapt. IV discusses the Nineteenth Century efforts to exchange the Gambia for French Territories ; C.O. 87/98 Memo on the Gambia by Sir F. Sandford (1870) ; Monger, p. 39. Le Temps in an obviously inspired ballon d'essai discussed an exchange of the Gambia for French rights in Newfoundland, Cited in The Times January 12, 1901.

modification of the Say-Baruwa line about 100 miles around Sokoto created an inconvenient situation whereby the French had to make a detour through desert land to reach their provinces. [1] The French wanted this boundary rectified - a process which did not mean merely the redrawing of lines but which also would involve large pieces of territory. The importance they attached to this question can be gauged from the interview between Lansdowne and Etienne, already referred, to, and a letter by Paul to his brother Jules Cambon complaining that the indiscretions of the Matin, describing French interests in this area would make the British demand some compensations from France. [2]

Chamberlain, who never liked the 'enclaves' on the Niger ("they will be a source of trouble to us in the future," he told Lansdowne) [3] was also desirous of rectifying the frontier in Northern Nigeria. Eventually, adjustments were made on the frontier as part of the pay off for the cession of French rights in Newfoundland.

After the meetings Lansdowne had with Deloasse and Etienne in July 1903, negotiations on the questions discussed, Egypt, Morocco, Sokoto, Newfoundland etc. began to get headway in October. By December both parties were substantially in agreement on Egypt and Morocco. British occupation was recognised and Britain gave a free hand to France to obtain a permanent position in Morocco so long as British treaty rights, freedom of commerce and no preferential differences, the neutralization and the non fortification of the

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1 J.C. Anene, The International Boundaries of Nigeria 1885 - 1960 : the framework of an Emergent African Nation, Longmans, (London) (1970) pp. 277 - 281.

2 Paul Cambon, Correspondance 1870 - 1924 Editions Bernard Grasset Paris (1940) 3 Vols. Vol. II p. 53.

3 Quoted in J. Amery, Chamberlain IV p. 163.

Moorish coast and Spanish territorial and political rights were guaranteed.[1]

Negotiations, however, bogged down on the relatively minor questions of Nigeria, the Gambia and Newfoundland. His Majesty's Government were willing to compensate the French for the loss of their rights in Newfoundland, but the price offered was not deemed enough. The French asked for the Gambia as an adequate compensation but were refused:[2] "...jamais le colonial office n'abandonnera la Gambie" reported Cambon to Delcassé. Lansdowne asked the French to give up the 'enclaves' in the Lower Niger, Badjibo and Forcados. The French were prepared to concede this if a triangle on the right bank (about 10,000 square miles), which included Ilo and Bussa, two places which the British had fought to retain in 1898 would be ceded to them. The British refused. They contended that the area had been under British administration for some years and the inhabitants had been assured of British protection. Lansdowne offered rectification in Sokoto but this only brought back the memory of Salisbury's taunt of "a light land".[3] The altercations resembled those of 1898, though not in the same strained atmosphere, and indeed they revealed still latent French designs on the Niger territories.

Perplexed and angered by what he interpreted as British intransigence

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1 The chronological detail of these negotiations can be followed in Rolo, Entente Cordiale, p. 181ff; B.D.II, p. 311ff; D.D.F. 2nd Series Vol. IV, part II.

2 B.D.II No. 369, Lansdowne to Cambon, Oct. 1, 1903; D.D.F. 2nd Series IV, No. 30. P. Cambon to Delcassé, Oct. 22, 1903; D.D.F. IV Cambon to Lansdowne, Oct. 26, 1903; cf. B.D.II No. 373 forwarding French counter-proposals.

3 B.D.II Nos. 378, 382, 383, 384, 388 and 389; D.D.F. IV Nos. 120, 158, 178, etc. Paul Cambon Correspondance II pp. 101 and 113. A War Office memo described the Gambia as of considerable strategic importance, but not vital to British interests. It was, however, an asset of considerably more than sentimental value. FO37/3765 Memo on Lord Lansdowne's proposals of Oct. 1st and Cambon's reply of Oct. 26th, by the Intelligence Dept., War Office, Dec. 11, 1903.

Cambon went through a devious way to bring pressure on Lansdowne.[1] M. Corgodan, Political Chief at the Quai D'Orsay wrote to Boulinière, Chargé de l'agence in Egypt, hinting that the talks would break down because of British intransigence on the territorial compensation.[2] As was expected Cromer reacted almost in a panic.

The next day he telegraphed Landdowne imploring him to give concessions for Newfoundland or settle the Morocco/Egypt deal separately : "The former is by far the best solution, but the latter is preferable to doing nothing. To allow negotiations to break down now would in my opinion be little short of a calamity, whether from the general or the Egyptian point of view."[3]

This telegram, however, had no influence on the subsequent results : The Cabinet decided not to cede the Gambia or the triangle on the right bank of the Niger. Adjustments were made on the Sokoto frontier which enabled France to get a practicable route to Zinder and about 9,750 sq. miles of territory. Further rectifications in the Chad area earned France another 7,000 sq. miles. Navigation facilities were given to France on the Gambia.[4]

This should have ended the negotiations but each side began to throw in one area or another as counter weight to balance the gains of the other. Lansdowne asked for French acquiescence in a British protectorate over the New Hebrides.[5] They refused, but they pressed

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1 D.D.F. IV No. 184. Delcassé to Cambon 16th January 1904.; D.D.F. IV No. 196. Cambon to Delcassé 18, January 1904. Paul Cambon, Correspondance II p. 101.

2 D.D.F. IV No. 198. Corgodan to de la Boulinière 19, Jan. 1904.; D.D.F. IV No. 201. Boulinière to Delcassé 20, January 1904.

3 B.D. II No. 387. Cromer to Lansdowne 21 January 1904.

4 B.D. II No. 388 and 389.; Monger, p. 157 cf. Rolo p. 237.

5 D.D.F. IV No. 217. Delcassé to Cambon 26, Jan. 1904.; B.D. II No. 389. Lansdowne to Cambon Feb. 5. 1904. cf. D.D.F. IV No. 240.

for the cession of the Isles des Los, a strategic islands "admirably adapted for a coaling station", opposite the French Colony of Guinea. To emphasise that this colonial deal portended immense possibilities, Delcassé pointed out that though "he believed that in certain branches of the British administration there (is) not found sufficient spirit of Entente Cordiale"..... the cession of the islands would serve as "a tangible manifestation of the real dispositions of the two governments."[1]

Eventually the Isles des Los were ceded, France got Maradi, which she pressed for in March 1904, and suitable frontier rectifications on Sokoto and Lake Chad. There was however a possibility of further adjustments since the Boundary Commission which was demarcating the boundary at this time had not yet finished its work. The Sokoto boundary was tentative. Account was to be taken of trade routes and the present political divisions of territories in such a way as to leave all those tribes belonging to the Sultanates of Tessawa, Maradi and Zinder to France and those of the English Zone to Britain. This was to cause further demands for territory which were settled in 1906.[2]

ANGLO-FRENCH AGREEMENT

The ~~entente cordiale~~ signed on April 8, 1904, comprised three instruments - a Convention on West Africa and Newfoundland, Declarations on Egypt and Morocco ; Siam, Madagascar and Zanzibar.

Article IX and the Secret Articles I - V were important in the Egypt/Morocco declaration. In the former, it was stipulated : 'The two governments agree to afford to one another diplomatic support in order

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1 D.D.F. IV No. 263. Cambon to Delcassé 11th Feb. 1904.; B.D. II No. 390 Cambon to Lansdowne Feb. 18, 1904. cf. D.D.F. IV No. 287.

2 B.D. II p. 351ff. Texts, ibidem pp. 402 - 407. See also Anene, The International Boundaries of Nigeria, p. 280.

to obtain the execution of the clauses of the present Declaration regarding Egypt and Morocco. The Secret Articles provided for recognition of each other's measures to change the political conditions in Egypt and Morocco.[1] It was article IX's operation after the German intervention, which transfomed the agreement into a diplomatic instrument which later had the most momentous effects on the relationships of the Powers.

The press generally welcomed the agreement, much more warmly in Britain than in France. The Times took the lead in warning its readers (April 2) : "It is of the essence of a fair and lasting international bargain that the bargain should not be one sided, and we and the French both mean this bargain to be fair and everlasting." And thus it asked its readers to be prepared for the disatisfaction of chauvinists on both sides. On the 9th the London daily praised Delcassé, Cambon and Lansdowne "whose skilful handling of threads of diplomacy leading to a result any former British Foreign Secretary might have legitimately envied."

> "Its importance (the agreement) and its worth are really of a deeper kind. it is a landmark in the policy of the two nations, because it represents for the first time a serious attempt to see their world wide relations steadily and see them whole..... transcending its significance in this respect is the value it must possess and the weight it must carry as a

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1 B.D. II pp. 404 - 406. See Monger, op cit. p. 159. for an interpretation. It seems lame to me though. If Lansdowne recognised the agreement's significance in extra African affairs (when he told Paul Cambon, with reference to the coming Russo-Japanese War "It seemed to me in these circumstances that it was the duty of our two governments, which were, I rejoiced to think, at this moment in such friendly relations, to do all in their power to keep the peace" B.D. II No. 259. Lansdowne to Monson Dec. 11, 1903) he ought to have thought about its European significance, especially since Germany had an interest in Morocco.

> substantial pledge of its essential unity of our interests and desires. That value is a great factor in the peace of nations we believe it will retain, because it gives expression to the general and heartfelt wishes of the two great democracies whom it concerns." [1]

French Newspapers echoed these sentiments. Petit Republique enthused.... "but what gladdens us the most is the disappearance of all cause of disputes between France and the United Kingdon....." [2] In Germany, the press remarks were invariably cautious. Most of them speculated on a possible Anglo-Russian Entente. [3]

In The House of Commons, Sir Edward Grey welcomed the agreement not as a bargain, (almost repeating the very words of The Times) but "from the point of view of general policy." For him it was the spirit of goodwill which was important. The 9th Article he said was vague and that everything depended on the spirit and not the letter, "but it is precisely because so much does depend on the

> spirit that there are, in that clause alone, great opportunities, looking to the probabilities of future politics, for the two nations using the agreement, by the liberal interpretation of that article to draw closer to each other. [4]

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1 The Times April 2nd and 9th 1904. The 'Leader' almost gives the impression of a preview of Grey's speech two months later. The Morning Post, the Saturday Review, the Daily Chronicle followed Rosebery in criticising the arguement. The Daily Mail, Daily Telegraph, Westminster Gazette followed the Times lead. Rolo p. 271.

2 Cited in The Times for April 11th 1904.

3 Cited in The Times April 11, 1904.; History of The Times pp. 391 392.

4 Edward Grey, Speeches on Foreign Affairs 1904 - 1914 (Ed.) Paul Knaplund, London (1931) p. 17ff.

The course which Grey's foreign policy ran was too much like the one described in his speech to justify one in asserting that he based his foreign policy on the entente with France. And if one is searching for the reason for Grey's unwillingness to make a positive relationship with France by transforming the Entente into an alliance, this quotation helps to find an answer. He was interested in the substance of the agreement and not in phrases, the spirit was the determining factor and so long as this was consistently held in sight, no matter whether there was an alliance or not, British interests were tied with those of France. And in this repsect it was logical that, so long as Britain felt her interests were being threatened by Germany, the entente would have an anti-German edge. If it came to the crunch as it almost did in Agadir, the Entente would transform itself to an alliance overnight.[1]

The more one studies the colonial entente the more one is inclined to believe, despite the disclaimers by historians, that the colonial understanding had a political objective. After all such an understanding had been attempted with Germany for clearly political objectives and attempts were to be made again to use a colonial anchor sheet for a détente. Moreover, in the diplomatic configurations at this time Britain could not have got any closer understanding with Germany for the reasons already discussed. Austria and Italy were

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1 See Byron Dexter, "Lord Grey and the problem of an alliance," Foreign Affairs, (January, 1952), pp. 289-309. His arguments fall in three main lines: Grey did not want to co mit Britain before the eventuality of a war; he did not want to bring a head-on collision with Germany by transforming the Entente into an alliance; and lastly, because of Russia's many commitments in the Balkans, Asia, etc. he did not want to increase British obligations. These are plausible explanations, but the fact that British thinking was that Germany was the greatest threat to Europe and that the defeat of France would render Britain vulnerable established a common interest; and when the opportunity came the entente would be transformed into an alliance to defend that interest. This point was underscored by the Military and Naval discussions Britain had with France in 1906 and 1912-1913.

make weights. Russia seemed unapproachable, and France served as a bridgehead. Lansdowne's letter to Monson said as much. [1]

The Germans certainly thought that the agreement was more than a colonial Entente. They appreciated the potentials it had ; for example, it could be used to draw Britain and Russia closer and it might even have an attraction for Italy (often prone to flirtations), a member of the Triple Alliance. Hence Berlin subsequently tried to break the Entente Cordiale. [2]

What possibilities the Entente had was demonstrated when Delcasse's mediating influence restrained Russia and Britain from going into war over the Dogger Bank incident and the Tibetan Mission of 1904. [3] But the greatest test for the new arrangement was the first Moroccan crisis.

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1 G.P.Gooch, Before the War : studies in Diplomacy Longmans and Greene (1936) Vol. I p. 49., cf. Rolo, op cit p. 273.; Monger, p. 160. See also B.D. II No. 416. Lansdowne to Monson April 8, 1904.

2 N. Rich and M.H. Fisher (Eds.) The Holstein Papers IV pp. 262 - 265.; Rich, Holstein II, p. 682ff. Holstein lamented that he and others had persuaded Bulow three years previously to oppose the excessive hostility against Britain, but the Chancellor preferred to go with the tide : "Now we are reaping the harvest. England and France will hardly attack us .... but we are incapable of getting any overseas territory" for which a lot of people were clamouring for and wondering why Germany was not getting any. "Well, how could we?" he asked. "No overseas policy is possible against England and France. We could have supported England and today be in the position of France, that is, be the friend of both England and Russia. But we missed the opportunity, and Delcasse has shown himself to be the cleverer."

3 The Russian fleet under the command of Admiral Rodjestwenski was sailing to the Far East to engage the Japanese Navy, but on the North Sea it fired on some fishermen off Hull, believing they were Japanese ships. There were some casualities. The British Cabinet demanded an apology. The advance of Younghusband into Tibet in May 1904 threatened to bring a clash of Anglo-Russian interests in that region. For background account see Monger, op cit. p. 168ff.; Paul Cambon, Correspondance II pp. 165 - 170.

Bulow, suave and nimble as ever, oscillated between Holstein's hard line and the Kaiser's more subtle approach to detach France from the agreement by friendly overtures and diplomatic pressure. The nebulousness and absence of consistent direction in German policy ultimately denied Berlin ~~of~~ success, and when the Conference on Morocco, which she had demanded met, she was to find herself isolated.

Before this however, opportunities arose for putting some of the facets of German policy, for what it was, into action. Expecting an Anglo-Russian war to arise from the Dogger Bank incident, the Kaiser tried to effect a defensive alliance between Russia and Germany which would later incorporate France. It was to operate if one of them was attacked by a European power. The deal failed. Russia insisted on consulting France before concluding the Alliance, which was one way of rejecting it, since France would never consent to the Alliance. What all this led to was an embitterment of Anglo-German relations and there were wild talks of the British Navy "copenhagening" the Kaiser's fleet - a consideration which cooled the Kaiser's ardour. [1]

Berlin had a more limited success in asserting the principle of her right to be consulted in arrangements on extra-European territories. Germany asked for specific privileges, eg. freedom of commerce, continued liberty for her schools, special posts for her Nationals in

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1 See note 1. p. 55. See Rich Holstein II pp. 688 - 689 for a discussion of the Treaty. For British reaction, see A.J. Marder, British Naval policy, pp. 313 - 340 and p. 483ff.; Monger, p. 175ff. Admiral Fisher, the 1st Sea Lord (1904 - 10, 1914 - 1915) who was said to have wanted to have 'a go' on the German Navy seemed to have a curious side to his character. In October 1911 he wrote to Spender : 'It may surprise you, but since 1886 when I first went to the Admiralty I was an out and out advocate for friendship with Germany and I am dead against the French Entente (really it is an alliance). If my humble advice had been taken in 1816 I don't believe there would have been a German Navy. They so relied on us then but the Tories (like the d.....d fools they always are !) would not see this and of all the damnable sily things they ever done the Naval defence Act beat everything. Spender Papers, Vol. V 46310 Fisher to Spender Oct. 25, 1911.

in the Egyptian Academy. All of which were substantially met by London. Berlin gave her consent to the Khedival Decree and promised not to ask for a time limit for British withdrawal from Egypt.[1]

German intervention in Morocco, which was immediately inspired by the French Mission to Fez early in 1905 and possibly by the desire to capitalize on the situation created by the defeat of France's ally at Mukden in February, was much more momentous. The Times, described the speech as a provocation so exaggerated that it "palpably overshoots the mark", and accused the Kaiser of making an overt demonstration against the Entente. French newspapers, though naturally astonished by Germany's action, generally advocated some treating with that power.[2]

Lansdowne did not seem particularly worried by the Tangier speech, neither did he seem to have been giving much help to France. In March he had rejected Delcassé's plea for mediation to save Russia from further defeat.[3]

Within months, however, certain considerations induced him to take a more positive reaction to the Tangiers demonstration. The analysis of these considerations show how much influence the permanent staff of the Foreign Office had now possessed and demonstrates the hardening of Anti-German prejudices. Furthermore they foreshadowed

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1 B.D.III Nos. 16 - 22. Rich II pp. 682 - 683. Bülow tried to bring in other questions, e.g. German claims resulting from the Boer War, Samoan disputes, preferential duties, etc., to make a comprehensive bargain. Lansdowne rejected them and restricted the talks to Egypt. Lord Newton, Lord Lansdowne, pp. 329-330.

2 For French reaction see E. M. Carroll, French Public opinion and Foreign Affairs 1870 - 1914, London, (1931) New Edition (1967) p. 209ff; History of The Times, pp. 414 - 416.

3 Monger, p. 186.

the subsequent relationship of France and Britain with reference to Germany which Agadir was to dramatize.

Demands for privileges or rights of territorial or commercial nature became involved with considerations of general policy. Thus a demand rightly or wrongly, alleged or actual, made by Germany was seen as an attempt to break the Entente Cordiale. For in forcing France to yield it might strain the Entente unless Britain was prepared to support France. This was the kind of reasoning the Germanophobes in the Foreign Office, Mallet, Crowe, and Bertie put to Lansdowne and which he himself was coming round to by April 9. [1]

Crowe, Assistant Clerk in the Foreign Office told Lansdowne in March that he had heard from good authority that Germany proposed to reach some understanding with Britain's friends in the Far East, Japan and the U.S.A. This was rather a sensitive spot on the British armour and later, when the idea which originated from Mallet got around that Germany might demand a port on the Moroccan coastline, another area of vital strategic importance, Lansdowne took a more combative attitude. This was strengthened by the fear that the Rouvier Ministry, which was known for its leanings towards a conciliatory policy with respect to Germany, would not be over scrupulous in jettisoning Delcassé, who had suffered strong attacks from his colleagues for failing to treat with Germany; Rouvier might even sacrifice British interests in order to please Berlin. [2]

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1 Lord Newton, Lord Lansdowne p. 334. The Foreign Secretary told Lascelles : "I am afraid that we can hardly regard this Tangier ebullition as an isolated incident."

2 Monger, p. 186ff. C. Andrew, Delcassé p. 256ff. for an account of the French Foreign Minister's policy ; J.D. Hargreaves, Anglo-French relations 1900 - 1905 Unpublished M.A. Thesis Manchester University (1948) pp. 23 - 46.; pp. 70 - 73.

For this reason Lansdowne telegraphed Bertie on April 22 suggesting that the two powers should offer 'strong opposition' to a German demand for a port, and asking for full consultation between the two countries if the demand was made. Though the telegraph in itself carried overtones of joint action Bertie gave it a stronger meaning by changing the sequence of ideas. [1]

This British support, however, did not save Delcasse from falling from power. His attempts to flaunt this assurance merely increased the suspicion of Rouvier, already under German diplomatic pressure to dismiss Delcassé, that Britain was pressing France to war with Germany As he succinctly put it, the 'British fleet had no wheels' and hence would not be of much use to France. [2]

Suspicion was not only on one side. Reports had been coming in of the interests Germany was showing in various parts of the world eg. in China, coaling stations in Fernando Po, Las Palmas, Liberia etc.. The Service Chiefs pressed Lansdowne for more committment to France to foil German designs. The Foreign Office and Diplomatic Staffs feared France would make concessions prejudicial to British interests. Thus Bertie wrote to Lansdowne in May: [3]

> "If there are any points in Africa other than Morocco and Egypt where the French might throw bones to the German watchdog to gnaw to our detriment you ought to indicate I think to Cambon what concessions - which we know the Germans want - we should particularly object to."

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1 B.D. II No. 90 Lansdowne to Bertie April 22, 1905. cf. B.D. II Nos. 91 - 93., Menger, pp. 188 - 191.

2 Paul Cambon, Correspondance II pp. 184 - 191; 193 - 195; 197 - 198 for an account of the rift between Delcassé and Rouvier; Rich, Holstein II pp. 705 - 707 for German pressure on Rouvier.

3 Menger, pp. 194 - 197; (Lansdowne Papers) Foreign Office 800/127. Bertie to Lansdowne May 1, 1905.

The statement Lansdowne made to Cambon on May 17th was, therefore, a compromise between his advisers' urgings for an alliance and his own cautious approach, as well as a warning to France for making "concessions of a kind which we were not likely to regard with favour, in other parts of the world." Cambon misinterpreted it as an offer of alliance, though Lansdowne tried to correct this misapprehension on May 25th.[1]

These moves did not affect the course of the crisis, what they illustrate is the way the Entente was developing, and they indicate the attitude His Majesty's Government (read Foreign Office) were to adopt in terms of general policy, to meet ~~d~~ German territorial aspirations.

Germany successfully won its point and a much disillusioned Rouvier acquiesced in the demand for a conference on July 8, 1905.[2] Britain and Germany capitalized on the result of the Russo-Japanese war to strengthen their diplomatic blocs. The Anglo-Japanese Treaty was renewed on August 12, 1905 and was extended to cover India. The Kaiser's attempt to block this development by meeting the Tsar 'as simple tourists' at Bjorko and concluding a treaty with him (July 24, 1905) failed.[3] ~~Rather, Russia adroitly used the French adhesion to the treaty as a lever to extract concessions from Germany.~~

On September 28, 1905 Berlin signed an agreement with Paris, which

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1 B.D.II Nos. 94 - 95. Cf. D.D.F. VI Nos. 443, 455, 465, 480 and Annex 1, p. 804; Monger, ibidem.

2 For a good concise account of the Algeciras Conference see S. L. Mayer, "Anglo-German rivalry at the Algeciras Conference" in P. Gifford and R. Louis, Britain and Germany in Africa, pp. 215 - 244; J. D. Hargreaves, Anglo-French Relations, p. 272ff.

3 See Rich, Holstein II, p. 714ff; Monger, p. 199ff; Fredric Whyte (trans.) Letters of 'Prince von Bülow' Hutchinson & Co. London (1930), pp. 150 - 175. The omission of an article which would extend the alliance to cover extra European countries, where Britain was vulnerable, rendered the Treaty harmless.

recognised the French rights to reorganise the police on their frontier; other issues were to be decided by the Conference. [1]

The latter which opened in January, 1906 at Algeciras in Spain, coincided with the change of government in Britain. The Unionist government had suffered serious criticisms in its handling of imperial affairs, notably the South African War, which became a major bone of contention between factions in Britain and wrought havoc amongst the leadership of the Liberal party. The Unionist's Education Act, which alienated non-conformists, its coolie immigration policy and above all Chamberlain's tariff reform programme combined to increase the hostility towards a government that had overstayed its welcome.

On December 5, 1905 Balfour's government resigned hoping that the Liberals, torn to factions by the Boer War issue, would not be able to form a government, and if a Unionist government was returned it would have demonstrated confidence in the Unionists. [2]

Campbell-Bannerman, the undeclared leader of the Liberal party was able to form a government. As a recent study showed, he had no qualifications of leadership, charisma or outstanding administrative competence, but he was popular in the Commons and party for his honesty, good humour and freedom from rancour. Thus despite the Relugas Compact of September, 1905 signed by Grey, Haldane and Asquith, three noted inperialists in the Liberal party, who intended to force Campbell-Bannerman into the Lords so that power should be

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1 B.D. III No. 184. Lansdowne to Bertie Sept. 30, 1905 encl. agreements on programme of the conference.

2 Bernard Porter, Critics of Empire : British Radical Attitudes to Colonialism in Africa 1895 - 1914 Macmillan, London (1968) passim for an invaluable account of party strife on Imperial matters.

in Asquith's hands, C-B (as he was called) was able to assert himself and to assume the premiership.[1]

On the 11th December, Sir Edward Grey, former Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in Rosebery's government, received his seal as Foreign Secretary. A fond lover of nature, he has been variously described as a pacifist, an introvert, a rigid or weak statesman. He certainly had strong streaks of obstinacy, firmness and unrepentant conviction of his views, such as he demonstrated in 1895 and on many occasions. Apart from his visits to the West Indies in 1897, and France in 1914, he seldom, if ever, travelled abroad. His French was poor yet he had a tolerable relationship with Paul Cambon, and between them they strengthened the Entente and gave it some intimacy. He abhorred war, but by his rigid adherence to the Entente, especially after the agreement with Russia, which the Germans believed were pointed against them, he had some responsibility for the Great War.[2]

Before the change of government the French were nervous about the continuity of policy by a Liberal government; and Rouvier's conciliatory policy towards Germany, which included territorial compensations in the Congo, having failed, the French were showing alarm about German policy. Hence their concern about a Liberal government. They need not have worried. Already, towards the close of the century Grey had begun to be suspicious about German policies in different parts of the

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1 Jose F. Harris and Cameron Hazlehurst, "Campbell-Bannerman as Prime Minister," History, Vol. 55, No. 185 (Oct., 1970) pp. 360-383; Peter Rowland, The last Liberal Government: the promised land, 1905 - 1910. London (1968), pp. 15 - 21; Grey of Fallodon, Twenty-five Years, pp. 62 - 86.

2 Algernon Cecil, British Foreign Secretaries, 1807 - 1916. London (1927), pp. 317 - 319; Z. Steiner, Foreign Office, p. 83ff. Keith Robbins, Sir Edward Grey, passim; See also pp. 49 - 54.

globe eg. Samoa and South Africa (where for some sentimental reason Grey seemed to have a special interest) and these were crystalised at the turn of the century. In 1903 he remarked : "Germany is our worst enemy and our greatest danger....." [1] And before his speech on October 20, 1905 assuring the public that the Entente was a cardinal principle of British foreign policy, he confided in Spender : [2] "I think we are running a real risk of losing France and not gaining Germany who won't want us, if she can detach France from us." Similar utterances of the continuity in British policy by Lord Fitzmaurice, Lansdowne's younger brother and Campbell-Bannerman seemed to have assured the French. [3]

Nonetheless in meetings with Grey on January 10th, 15th, and 31st Cambon sought to have the British government further commit themselves. With the approval of C-B, Haldane and Ripon (though not the Cabinet as there were elections going on and the members were scattered in different parts of the country) Grey agreed to the continuation of Naval talks between France and Britain without any binding obligation on the British government. Cambon was impressed by Grey with the fact that no government could commit their country to a war with Germany over Morocco, but he opined that if Germany threatened war or forced one on France because of the terms of the Morocco agreement which England was bound by treaty to support, public opinion would not allow Britain to stand aside, it might force her to go to the aid of France. Here the arrangement was left until it was taken up again

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1 Quoted in Robbins, p. 131. See also p. 54. ibidem.

2 (Spender Papers) Vol. IV 46389 Grey to Spender Oct. 19, 1905.; also quoted in Robbins, p. 133.

3 Hargreaves, "Anglo-French relations" pp. 229 - 230.

in 1911.[1] The German Ambassador was told the same thing on January 9th, 1906.

The Algeciras Conference pressed for by Germany ended in the isolation of that power, mainly because of its seeming inconsistencies, bullying tactics and its oblique objectives. Britain consistently supported France with the result that the Algeciras agreement signed on April 7, 1906, gave recognition to French rights for reforming Morocco. At the same time Berlin made good its claim that powers could not make arrangements which might affect the interests of third powers without consulting her. Morocco was divided into sections where French and Spanish police officers were to maintain law. A Swiss Inspector-General was to supervise them, and a State Bank was created to which interested powers could subscribe.[2] It was a hollow victory for both sides. The Morocco problem was to continue to plague the relationship of the three powers until it was finally settled in 1911.

One aspect, of direct relevance to tropical Africa, which emerged from the first Moroccan crisis, was the idea of using territories in Africa as a form of appeasement to Germany. The idea could even be extended as one way of reaching a rapprochement. But in the diplomatic situation after 1904 such a policy raised objections from various quarters. Apart from surrendering material things, concessions might be regarded as a sign of weakness and would reduce the confidence of an ally. This was the line of reasoning which dominated the

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1 B.D. III Nos. 210 - 220.; Grey of Fallodon, pp. 77 - 90.; For different interpretations of the talks see Robbins, p. 144ff.; Monger, 239ff.

2 Harold Nicolson, Lord Carnock : A study in the Old Diplomacy, Constable & Co., London, (1930, p. 170ff.; Monger, p. 257ff.; S.L. Mayer, "Anglo-German rivalry at the Algeciras Conference," Gifford and Louis, Britain and Germany in Africa, pp. 215 - 244.; B.D. III, p. 204ff.

advisers of Grey.

The idea of some colonial deal arose in the months of April and June when Rouvier, in his effort to avoid a conference on Morocco, proposed a comprehensive colonial deal with Berlin which would have included the Bagdad Railway, Morocco and the Cameroons.[1] A second proposal was made in November, in which Germany was offered territorial compensation in the French Congo, French pre-emptive rights in the Congo and certain concessions in Morocco in return for a free hand to the French in Morocco. Apparently this second proposal originated from conversations between Richard Kühlmann, first Secretary of the German legation in Tangier, M. Vaffier - Pollet, a Comité du Maroc representative in Tangier and Comte de Cherisey, former Secretary of the French legation in Tangier.[2]

It was not put officially, but it had the backing of the French government who had not been sure of British commitment and hence were disposed to settling their differences direct with Berlin. Nothing resulted from it, (though at one time Bülow was in favour of such a deal), because some of the German Officials were sceptical about its genuineness, and above all Holstein was afraid that Germany's acceptance would compromise her attitude vis-à-vis Morocco.[3] In short it was another example of impreciseness of objective and instability in the direction of policy in Berlin. What the episode indicated was that African territories could be used to soothe relations between the European powers. Kühlmann was to play the

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1 Otto Hamman, p. 153; Mayer, op. cit. pp. 217-218.

2 Mayer, op. cit. pp. 220-222; Rich and Fisher, Holstein Papers IV p. 376; Hargreaves, Anglo-French relations, pp. 220-222; Jacques Willequet, Le Congo Belge et la Welt-politik, 1894 - 1914, Brussels (1962) p. 277ff.

3 Mayer, ibidem.

e some role in 1911.

Grey himself was not opposed to concessions to Germany, his ew being that now that Africa had been divided up : "our business s) to develop what we have got, wisely and with discrimination."[1] ılike Lansdowne who was prepared to oppose the German bid for a rt in Morocco, Grey was accommodating. But his permanent staff ıd the service chiefs opposed him on strategic as well as political rounds.[2] By July 1906 he had been so transformed to a less ıaritable view of German actions that when France began to be rvous about rumours of an Anglo-German entente he went to great ıins to explain "that there was nothing in the nature of an entente tween the two countries," nor "anything out of which an entente ght be made". Though it was desirable that France, Britain and rmany should be in good terms yet, if occasion should demand the king of sides "we must take sides with France, as at Algeciras".[3]

This declaration was made at the time when some radicals and men posed to good understanding between England and Germany were changing visits and forming Anglo-German friendship/ societies. ese visits irritated and annoyed the Foreign Office Staff, notably rowe, who asserted that there was nothing between England and rmany which needed removing (cf. France) and that German wooing as either for securing British neutrality or to demand something om Britain.[4]

Quoted in Robbins, Edward Grey, p. 135.

Grey of Fallodon, Twenty-five years, p. 117.; Hargreaves op cit. pp. 237 - 262.; (Grey Papers) FO800/87. Memo by L. Mallet 26/2/06.; Lord Tweedsmouth to Grey 25 Feb., 1906.

B.D. III No. 420. Grey to Bertie July 9, 1906.; printed in Grey of Fallodon, pp. 113 - 115.

Howard S. Weinroth, "The British Radicals and the Balance of Power 1902 - 1914", The Historical Journal Vol. XIII No. 4 (Dec. 1970) pp. 653 - 682. The Times March 6, 1906 also reported resolutions in Munich to promote friendly relations.; Minutes by Crowe, Barrington and Grey in B.D. III No. 416. Lascelles to Grey May 24, 1906.

In 1906 Grey explained to the French that the only questions between Britain and Germany were the trouble on the South West African frontier, an insignificant boundary question in some other part of Africa and the German concessions in Madeira. [1] The fact that he had to explain that nothing more than boundary questions were under consideration between the two governments underlines the point which will be discussed in Chapter II of how African territorial questions, even, in some cases frontier rectifications, were becoming intricately involved with considerations of general policy.

The next chapter will show how the treatment of these questions was, at least until 1912, governed by the new Foreign Office appreciation.

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1 Grey of Fallodon, p. 114.; B.D. III No. 420. Grey to Bertie July 9, 1906.

CHAPTER II

Residuary questions of the Partition and their treatment

1905 - 1911

"The smallest disputes lead to mature complications in Africa"

(Sir Thomas Upington, Premier of Cape Colony, April, 1887.)

"Britain has enough tropical territory without adding Liberia. It is better to develop what she has....."

(Sir Edward Grey, January, 1907.)

In the Nineteenth Century the European Great Powers scrambled to stake their claims on the African Continent. After they had arbitrarily partitioned Africa they found themselves in possession of large pieces of territory.

The result of all this was that in the process of consolidating and administering their respective colonies, questions which had escaped their attention or rather questions which they had not foreseen foisted themselves on the powers at a time when they were engaged in more important questions such as the balance of power in Europe, the Balkan problems and Anglo-German rivalry.

Certainly, some of these African questions originating from disputes over trade routes, frontier lines and border raids on either side, were trivial. But they had to be solved. And Colonial Administrations, for various reasons such as a desire for a pacified border, a nicely demarcated boundary or pieces of territory for railway development, generally put pressure on the Colonial Office to get favourable solutions. Though Downing Street invariably supported

and defended the claims of its Administrators, it refused in certain instances, for example in Liberia, to extend British responsibilities. [1]

Other problems raised wider issues which were liable to affect relations with other powers, and so they were of interest to the Foreign Office. When dealing with these issues, the attitudes of the Foreign Office seemed to have been influenced by the political relationships Britain had with the respective power. [2]

Geographical ignorance was partly responsible for the situation which is now being discussed. Knowledge of African geography was meagre despite epic discoveries of Livingstone, Speke, Stanley and others. *Geography was still a drawing-room exercise in the* Nineteenth Century. European Statesmen in their Chancelleries mapped out Africa on the table with unclear geographical data to guide them. Prof. Roger Louis clearly demonstrates this point in his treatment of the Mfumbiro - Kivu question.

Efforts were however made to remedy this situation. In August, 1905 a Colonial Survey Committee was created, at the instance of the Colonial Secretary, [4] to advise him in matters affecting survey and exploration of British colonies and protectorates especially in tropical Africa. One of its avowed objectives was to define exact

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1 See Ronald Hyam, "Elgin and Churchill at the Colonial Office 1905 - 1908 : the watershed of the Empire and Commonwealth. MacMillan, London, (1968) for a discussion of the colonial policy of the Liberal government, especially pp. 195 - 203, p. 285ff.; CO879/88/21071 Elgin to Prºbyn, July 13, 1906. CO879/88/25115 CO to FO July 31, 1906.

2 See Chapter I.

3 Wm. Roger Louis, Ruanda - Urundi 1884 - 1919, Clarendon Press, Oxford, (1963).; See also Sir Thomas Holdich, Political frontiers and boundary making, MacMillan & Co. Ltd., London, (1916) p. 54ff.

4 Accounts and Papers Cd. 2684 - 46 Vol. LXXIII (1906) Colonial Reports, Annual, "Colonial Survey Committee Report August 1906" pp. 3 - 17. The Committee comprised a representative from the C.O.; the Director - General of the Ordnance Survey; and Officer in Charge of the Topographical Section of the General Staff. By August, 1906 British boundary Commissions had surveyed 9,081 miles of International frontiers.

limits of national territory. And so in August 1906 the Committee reported that there were no "hinterlands" in British Africa : "The partition of the continent is complete and the boundaries are with a few exceptions well defined." It made two interesting disclosures, however. It was found out that Lake Chad was not a great navigable inland sea but two large shallow pools never 5' deep and surrounded by swamps; while, in East Africa it was established that the 30TH Meridian did not pass through Lake Albert Edward. In other words the international agreements on these areas had been based on erroneous data, and they would therefore have to be adjusted. [1]

This growing awareness of the importance of geography was illustrated by an interesting incident which occurred in 1906. Sir Edward Grey stated in the House of Commons that geography was to be excluded from all diplomatic and Foreign Office entrance examinations "in order to attract men of general education who might preferably have taken honours at the university in classics, history, maths." "Although knowledge of geography (is) no doubt very useful it (is) a subject with which men of general education (are) generally acquainted and which (is) generally acquired after entry into service."

Such a statement provoked angry retorts from Sir Taubman Goldie, founder of the Royal Niger Company, who claimed that he had stopped an Anglo-French territorial arrangement based on faulty geography. It was a matter of notoriety that some of Britain's most serious international disputes of recent years had arisen from such geographical ignorance. The Times took Grey to task and called his

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1 A.C. McEwen, International Boundaries of East Africa (Clarendon Press) Oxford, (1971) Chapt. III, especially p. 47ff. for a discussion of the adjustments of faulty geographical data; Holdich, Political frontiers, p. 186.

statement "astonishing." [1]

Goldie and Major-General Frank S. Russell, another angry correspondent, might well lament the ignorance of British negotiators, but even where geographical limits were agreed upon and endorsed by treaties, disagreements often occurred when it came to interpreting the terms as to their intention and spirit. This was especially so where inadequate or ambiguous wordings characterised them. Local political exigencies, for example, established and autonomous colonial communities in South Africa, often added their weight to the dispute and compromise was difficult to achieve. The Walfisch Bay, Orange River and Caprivi Zipfel questions illustrate such situations.

British occupation of small areas like the Gambia and Walfisch Bay during the pre-scramble period and the failure to extend British influence over the surrounding territories, through vacillation or impreciseness, resulted in these territories becoming enclaves in the possessions of France and Germany respectively. Efforts to bring about their cession in the late Nineteenth Century had failed. The importance of their inclusion in the territories of France and Germany was fully recognised by all parties concerned, and so we find that they came up regularly for discussion in the period under review. The failure of these talks in itself illustrates the unwillingness of governments to abandon territories however much the merits of a particular case might advise a disposition towards cession. [2]

Those African territories such as Morocco, Tripoli, Ethiopia and Liberia which had not been partitioned during the scramble began to

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1 Reported in The Times Nov. 24th, 29th, and Dec. 3rd, 1906.

2 Sir Charles Lucas, The Partition and Colonization of Africa, Clarendon Press, Oxford (1922) pp. 77 - 116.; Holdich, op cit. pp. 241 - 242.

receive increasing attention from Europe. It did not seem right that these 'weak' states should stand in the way of 'progress'. And here we may include the African territories of weak powers like Belgium (officially the Congo Free State was the sovereign power of the Congo territories before 1908) and Portugal who seemed to have been unequal to the burdens of empire. As a prelude to the possible annexation of these territories the powers resorted to arrangements that were designed to reduce the possibility of clashes of interest, dividing these territories into economic and political spheres of influence. Ostensibly they guaranteed the territorial integrity and sovereignty of these territories but it was always understood that if they disintegrated, the spheres earmarked for each power would fall to her.

In this way Britain and France disposed of Morocco and Egypt; Britain and Germany the Portuguese Colonies ; [1] Britain, France and Italy the Ethiopian Empire. There were no formal bilateral or tripartite agreements on Leopold's Congo or Liberia, but the attacks on the Congo Administration led by British philanthropists and humanitarians were suspected by Congolese and Belgian Officials as preliminary moves to partition the Congo. [2] Grey might have wistfully

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1 See Chapt. I. pp. 20 - 27; pp. 47 - 52.

2 On the Anti-Congo reforms and the policies of the Great Powers towards the Congo Free State see Willequet, Le Congo Belge et la Weltpolitik (1962) and his article in P. Gifford and R. Louis, Britain and Germany in Africa, (1967) pp. 245 - 273.; S.J.S. Cookey Britain and the Congo Questions 1885 - 1913 Longmans, London (1968); Wm. Roger Louis and Jean Stengers (Ed.) E.D. E.D. Morel's History of the Congo Reform Movement Oxford (1968). This trend did not escape the attention of some Liberians. McCant Stewart, a lawyer in Monrovia, originally from the West Indies, who had been opposed to British influence in Liberia warned his compatriots who were continuing to oppose British reforms that, "under the new diplomacy the affairs of weaker nations are sometimes administered by the stronger nations without reference to their will or consent" as was demonstrated by French actions in Morocco, England in Egypt and Russia in Persia and U.S.A. in Cuba. He therefore urged them to co-operate with Britain. SeeFO367/160/4005 Wallis to Grey Jan 15th, 1909 encl. note by Stewart.

thought of dividing the Congo with Germany and confirmed critics of Leopold's Congo such as E.D. Morel, founder of the Congo Reform Association, and Lee Strachey, Editor of the Spectator, might have had vague plans for its partition, but they were not seriously followed.[1] Certainly the increased economic drives of Germany in the Congo in 1913 - 1914 exercised the Belgians and the French. It was feared that demands for economic privileges and concessions were pretexts for eventual territorial appropriation. This was a crucial factor, especially in the case of the Portuguese colonies, recurring during the period under review.[2]

The intermittent notes of the United States warning about her "special relations with Liberia" and both Salisbury's and Grey's disinclination to relieve the republic of its sovereignty helped to put off a possible division of this territory. They did not however prevent France from harbouring designs on Liberia.

In one of the arrangements mentioned above, the Moroccan agreement between France and the other powers, one Great Power, Germany, was not properly consulted and her reaction to this slight (though there were other reasons) resulted in a crisis of first magnitude. It left an impression on the Councils of Europe. And thus it was not surprising that fear of German intervention in Ethiopia, where the three powers limitrophe (ie. powers with adjoining frontiers) were settling their differences, remained in the thoughts of the negotiators.

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1 Strachey outlined his plans in his letters to Lord Cromer. See (Cromer Papers) FO633/21, Strachey to Cromer July 15, 1912; Strachey to Cromer Sept. 27, 1912. Also quoted in Wm. Roger Louis "Great Britain and German expansion in Africa, 1884 - 1919", Gifford and Louis, Britain and Germany in Africa p. 36. See also pp. 34 - 35.

2 See Chapters IV and V.

British interests in Ethiopia were to ensure the safety of the Nile head waters, so vital to Egypt to maintain peace on the borders, and to develop trade. The French were primarily interested in the port of Djibouti and their railway complex from that port into the interior. Italy was the only power which had obvious political and territorial aspirations in Ethiopia. In order to avoid a clash of interests in the event that Ethiopia, torn by internal disorder and factious rivalry, disintegrated, the three powers came to an agreement partitioning Ethiopia into spheres which coincided with their territorial, political and economic interests. [1]

The negotiations, started in 1904 on the initiative of Paul Cambon, were long and haggling. [2] The French made many objections, eg., to the land connection between Eritrea and Somaliland promised to Italy, and they refused to internationalise the railway. Italy made difficulties, and hesitated in signing the agreement. The French were afraid that Germany might intervene and cause a second crisis. On the other hand the bogey of German intervention was used to hasten on negotiations which ended in July 1906. [3] The agreement was signed on December 13th, 1906.

Britain had no territorial aspirations on Ethiopia and she

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1 For a full treatment of the Tripartite agreement and British policy in Ethiopia see Andrew S. Caplan "British policy towards Ethiopia, 1909 - 1919" Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, London (1971); J.D. Hargreaves, "Anglo-French relations" pp. 40 - 46. Since Dr. Caplan has dealt so effectively with the Ethiopian question, it will not be treated in detail in this study.

2 P. Cambon, Correspondance II pp. 195 - 196. For the course of the negotiations see D.D.F. 2nd Series Vols. VIII and IX.

3 This can be followed in Confidential Print FO401/8 Nos. 8 - 72.; FO 371. Political Series (Abyssinia) Vol. I; (Bertie Papers) FO800/160 Bertie to Mallet April 12, 1905; Bertie to Grey May 29, 1906; Hargreaves, op cit. pp. 45 - 46. Text of agreement can be found in Accounts and Papers Vol. XCIX Cd. 3298. (1907)

consistently maintained this policy (even though there were pressures from some quarters to partition Ethiopia) up to the outbreak of the Great War. [1] Germany did not intervene, though a mission led by Dr. Rosen, was sent to AddisAbaba in February 1905 where it was warmly received by Menelik, the Emperor. Dr. Rosen stressed that Germany's only interest was to secure a fair share of the commerce of Ethiopia. [2] The tripartite agreement assured the 'open door' to all nations.

The Ethiopian episode demonstrated, as the Moroccan crisis did, the new co-operation between France and Britain and the prejudices against Germany. Two examples can be given of the attitude of the British foreign office. Grey did not want a quarrel with Germany over Ethiopia, but he was sceptical as to whether a railway agreement with her would disarm her hostility. He would rather tell the Germans "since they (are) not and (cannot) become limitrophe powers with Abyssinia" that the agreement assured them freedom of commerce and that it was not directed against them. The alternative was a bold course : "to make a clean job of the whole matter by signing now without consulting Germany." Bertie preferred the second alternative : "to give explanations to Germany would be almost tantamount to an admission to her that she is to be consulted by us in regard to matters which in no way concern her. It would encourage her to consider

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1 FO371/1572/31574 Minutes by Langley on Inter-Departmental Committee meeting, to consider British interests in the event of a breakup of Abyssinia, held on July 2, 1913 and Grey to Thesiger July 24, 1913 ; FO371/1572/50659 Grey to Derring Nov. 4, 1913 ; Caplan, "British policy towards Ethiopia", p. 70ff.

2 Reported by The Times of Feb 24th and March 25th, 1905; Conf. Print FO401/8 No. 72. J. Harrington to Lansdowne March 7, 1905. German influence seemed to have increased in 1909 when it was aired about that Dr. Alfred Zintgraff, formerly of the German Mission in AddisAbaba was to be appointed as Adviser to the Emperor. Nothing resulted from this, but it appeared the British representative would have welcomed such an arrangement. See Conf. Print FO401/12 Nos. 49, 60 and 95. See also Caplan, op cit. p. 39.

herself as the Arbiter of the World. France may be reduced by fear of Germany, to not doing anything of any importance in any part of the globe without German acquiescence....." [1]

So much had the entente changed the relationship of the two powers, that France who was the arch colonial foe of Britain was now regarded with sympathy. Both had a common interest to resist what they regarded as the inadmissible claim of Germany. The Entente Cordiale had blunted the Egyptian baton so often used by Germany to frighten Britain. But this is not to say that irritations did not continue between Britain and France. Indeed some of the actions of France in Ethiopia and Muscat, [2] and her attitudes to the frontier rectifications on the northern Niger boundary and the Gambia question elicited angry and waspish comments from members of the permanent staffs in the Colonial Office and Foreign Office and even from confirmed Francophils like Bertie. These aberrations however never got out of hand. The Entente was a good shock absorber.

Things were different with Germany. She was regarded as an intruder in the colonial field and the strident clamours of some German colonial enthusiasts for a 'place in the sun' merely strengthened the deep suspicion, held not only in Britain but also in the metropolis of the other European colonial powers, that Germany was looking for an opportunity to absorb the colonies of her neighbours. The interests shown by Germany in ports or coastlands in Africa roused fears of paranoic dimensions in Whitehall. The latter

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1 (Bertie Papers) FO800/160 Grey to Bertie June 1, 1906; Bertie to Grey, June 3, 1906. The Germans did not create any difficulties. They recognised the just preponderance of the limitrophe powers. FO371/1/22194 Whitehead to Grey June 27, 1906. FO371/1/25547, Grey to de Graz July 22, 1906; FO371/1/43463 Grey to Cambon, January 1, 1907.

2 Caplan, op. cit. passim.

was convinced that the German Navy was being built to fight the Royal Navy, and the acquisition of coaling stations by Germany on certain coasts, eg. in Southern Africa, would affect the commercial and strategic life lines of Britain. [1] It was British policy, not always strictly followed, therefore, to deny Germany access to coaling stations.

In what follows, British policy with reference, on the one hand, to the Anglo-German secret treaty on the Portuguese Colonies and those boundary questions between France and Britain, and on the other hand, the disputes between Germany and Britain which went beyond merely local rectifications will be considered. Such questions raised more major issues like territorial exchange, and indeed much wider political and diplomatic matters. In South Africa, for example, there was a strong hostility against any idea of an increase of German power in Africa or the extension of the borders of German territories adjacent to those of South Africa. This further raises the question of British policy visá-vis German territorial aspirations. German newspapers claimed that "not a swallow can fall to the ground but some British interest is affected and Great Britain must have her say in the matter." [2]

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1 This fear continued even after the Great War, and it was one consideration which strengthened British resolve not to hand the German colonies back to Germany. See R. Louis, Britain and Germany's Lost Colonies, pp. 2 - 5. A.L.C. Bullock, Germany's Colonial Demands, O.U.P. London (1939) pp. 142 - 143. See B.D. VIII No. 33. Villiers to Grey June 28, 1906 transmitting assurance of Portuguese Prime Minister not to grant concessions to a hostile power on her Atlantic ports (eg. Cape Verde, Azores etc.) Regular requests of such assurance were made by Britain. See B.D. VIII Nos. 35, 38 and 39; CO551/32/11789 F.O. to C.O. 17, April, 19

2 FO371/1169/47977 Goschen to Grey Nov. 29, 1911 encl. excerpts from the German Press.

Whether Great Britain did in fact act as if she were arbiter mundi is perhaps part of the wider and more basic question about the extent to which African questions affected European powers in this period and what impact they had on European diplomacy. A consideration of this question, too, will be implicit in the discussion which follows.

I: The Legacies of the Entente Cordiale:

The Nigerian Frontier and the Gambia 1905-1911

The negotiations of 1904 ended with Britain giving concessions to France in Northern Nigeria and in the Gambia. There were difficulties, however, in putting the terms into effect, and the postures assumed by both powers threw some doubt on the efficacy of the colonial entente.

The Nigerian boundary question will be dealt with summarily since the necessary adjustments on the frontier were made within a coupld of years. It was not until 1911 that this area came up again for discussion. The Gambia will be treated in greater detail because on the one hand it was the subject of regular conversations between London and Paris for its inclusion in the Senegal protectorate, and on the other hand, it became a subject of exchange for French rights in other parts of the world. Secondly, the Anglo-French negotiations on the Gambia give an insight into how the entente was working in Africa.

After laying down the boundary which would give the French access to Zinder, Article VIII of the accord of April 8, 1904 went on to say: "In order to avoid the inconvenience to either party which might result from the adoption of a line diverting from recognised and well established frontiers, it is agreed that in those portions where the frontier is not determined by the trade routes, regard shall be had to the present political divisions of the territories so that the tribes belonging to the territories of Tessawa-Maradi and Zinder shall as far as possible be left to France, and those belonging to the territories of the British zone shall, as far as possible, be left to Great Britain."[1]

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1 B.D.II p. 383; CO879/89/18483 Memo on Articles relating to West Africa in the Anglo-French Convention of April 8, 1904. C.O. May 23, 1906.

The problem was which tribes were under which Sultan, for example, were Daura and Machena tributaries of Zinder? The Nineteenth Century jihads and the conquests of Rabeh, the adventurer from the Sudan, had made the political boundaries of this area obscure. In the fluid state in which the native political frontiers were, as distinct from those laid down by the European powers, it was fashionable for the Sultans to make claims, based on tenuous grounds, of suzerainty over less powerful states. [1] Thus in adjusting the frontier, though at times they made some effort to verify the validity of the claims made, the powers were inclined to base their interpretations of the frontier lines on those claims which conveniently fitted with their colonial interests. The French insisted that 'le tout Zinder' was guaranteed to them by the 1904 agreement. [2] To the British this claim was prententious, it could be taken to mean the inclusion of territories such as Machena (which the French claimed had once been a vassal of Zinder) Daura and Komadugu. [3]

Already Lugard, the High Commissioner of Nigeria, had complained about the cession of Machena to France because it contained most of the large trading centres which were the principal towns of the district and which were chiefly in the British sphere. There were also valuable salt deposits in this territory which supplied the whole

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1 Anene, International Boundaries of Nigeria, p. 235ff. for a discussion of the northern boundary; Capt. Tilho, Documents Scientifiques de la Mission de Tilho 1906 - 1909, Ministère des Colonies, Paris (1910-1911) 2 vols. Vol. II passim.

2 FO367/6/1946 Notes from M. Binger and M. de Manneville 9th and 12th January 1906.; FO367/6/6605 Memo communicated by Cambon, Feb. 21, 1906. Actually the phrase was "so that the tribes belonging to the territories of Tessawa - Maradi and Zinder shall as far as possible be left to France."

3 CO446/39/23186 Lugard to Lyttleton 31, May, 1904 encl. a report by Capt. Moll, member of the French boundary commission, which stated that Zinder's control extended to Komadugu. After the defeat of Rabeh by the French in 1900 Machena stopped to pay tribute to Zinder, under whose protection she was during Rabeh's rule in Bornu. See Anene, p. 282ff.; Tilho op cit. p. 450.

Northern Nigerian protectorate and from which he had hoped to derive considerable revenue by the imposition of excise duties. Thirdly, the boundary would throw a portion of one tribe into French territory.[1] He further objected to concessions being given to France in the north of Sokoto, especially in that part inhabited by the Asbenawa Cattle herds, which would deprive the protectorate of transport animal and stock. His main difficulty was to explain to the Sultan of Sokoto "whose dominions I (have) recently pledged the good faith of England to protect, as reported to you last year, that my promise (is) broken and that a very considerable portion of his territory (is) to be ceded to France. British prestige (will) suffer."[2]

The Colonial Office thought his complaints were a nuisance. R.L. Antrobus, the permanent Under Secretary, tartly remarked that Lugard was aware that this cession would take place "and with his knowledge of our colonial history he should in any case have been on his guard against giving any pledge that territory would not be given up."

Another Official minuted: "We quite anticipated that the revision of the boundary, not only within the arc but throughout, would give rise to difficulties of this kind and Sir F. Lugard must do his best to reconcile the Sultan of Sokoto and other chiefs to what is inevitable."[3]

Happily, the Sultan "took the matter philosophically,"[4] but Lugard won some of the points which he pressed on Whitehall. For example,

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1 CO8791/86/21638 Lugard to Lyttleton, May 20, 1904; CO879/86/29168 F.O. to C.O., August 19, 1906; CO 879/86/6406 Lugard to Lyttleton, January 12, 1905.

2 CO446/39/21638 Lugard to Lyttleton, May 20, 1904.

3 Colonial Office minutes on above. See also minutes on CO446/52/7723 Lugard to Elgin, January 27, 1906.

4 CO446/39/28446 Lugard to Lyttleton, July 15, 1904.

he stressed that for military reasons (and Lansdowne impressed this upon Cambon) it was not advisable to have the frontier of Zinder near Kano, a place of considerable strategic importance to Northern Nigeria. [1] A Colonial Office memo of July 1904 included some of the areas such as Machena, Daura and Zango which Lugard had urged should remain British. [2]

A conference met in October 1905 to consider the necessary adjustments. The French delegates claimed all of Demaggarem (ie. those territories which were supposed to be under Zinder). [3] The British refused and they asserted that if France wanted concessions south of the line laid down in 1904, she should also give concessions to Britain north of the line. France posed as a defender of the principle of keeping one tribe under one power which was based on the thesis that 'le tout Zinder' was a political entity. The British retorted that there was a proviso "as far as possible" and that tribal lines could be deflected if they interfered with strategic trade routes. And in this case Machena was an important trade route. The conference ended in deadlock and there was talk of putting the dispute to arbitration. [4]

Nevertheless there was a disposition towards "reaching an entente" and avoiding recourse to arbitration which would be long, costly and would not be justified by the importance of the difference. Agreement

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1 CO879/86/38943 F.O. to C.O. Nov. 1, 1905 ; Anene, Boundaries of Nigeria, p. 278.

2 CO446/39/23186 Memo on areas in which Britain was interested. (C.S.)July 1, 1904.

3 CO879/86/2258; CO879/86/28254; CO879/86/31184; CO879/86/36267 C.O. to C.O. Oct. 11, 1905. The British representatives were : Sir Eric Barrington, Under-Secretary of State in the F.O. W. Erskine (F.O.) Charles Strachey (C.O.) Major F. Close (War office) and Capt. G.R. Firth. France was represented by M. Binger, Director of the African dept. in the Ministry of Colonies, Count de Manneville, Counsellor in the French Embassy and Capt. Tilho. See Tilho, Documents Scientifiques, pp. XXII - XXIII.

4 CO879/86/38943 F.O. to C.O. Nov. 1, 1905; FO367/6/1946 Clerke to Manneville January 24, 1906.

would also enable their respective administrations to co-operate in pacifying their domains. Such a co-operation could be enhanced by a clearly demarcated boundary. [1]

Thus Paul Cambon suggested that France would agree to the division of the southern part of Demaggarem if Britain would cede Mauri and Konni and the right bank of the Komadugu. The cession of the latter as well as that of Konni was objected to by the British because they did not want to cede any more territories from the Sultan of Sokoto's Empire. Further adjustments were made in which the French gave up part of Demaggarem thus drawing the frontier of Zinder farther from Kano, and they withdrew their claim on the Komadugu. [2] As finally agreed, the western boundary of Sokoto was moved eastward to leave Marui to France, and in the North Birni N'Konni was left to that power. Sokoto remained British, and the latter also acquired Sabbon Birni, Machena, Zango and Gummel. The boundary line to Lake Chad was deflected in order to give France access to the water in the lake. Free navigation was guaranteed to the subjects of both powers. Inhabitants of both sides of the boundary were free within a stipulated time to move to whichever side they preferred. The agreement was signed on May, 29, 1906. [3]

Grey and his staff were obviously relieved when agreement was reached. The foreign secretary enthused : [4] "It is very satisfactory

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1 F0367/6/6605 Confidential Memo by Paul Cambon 21, Feb. 1906.

2 Ibidem, F0367/6/8706 F.O. Memo for Cambon March 27, 1906.; F0367/6 Minutes by W. Erskine on the boundary conference April, 9, 1906.

3 Accounts and Papers Vol. CXXXVI (1906) "Niger - Lake Chad Convention May 29, 1906" Cd. 3158. Tilho I pp. XXIV - XXVII ; C0897/86/15052 F.O. to C.O. April 28, 1906 encl. copy of agreement. See Map, Appendix II.

4 F0367/6 Minutes on Erskine's report May, 29, 1906.

that a settlement has been come to and very creditable to the patience and tact of the commissioners over these troublesome details."

The boundary was demarcated on the ground in 1907 - 1908. How troublesome and contentious these frontier rectifications could be was illustrated by the bickerings and squabbles which followed when the Anglo-French Boundary Commission found that some of the lines agreed on cut across chiefdoms and threw some villages to one side or the other. In one instance, Capt. Tilho, the French Commissioner, requested the deflection of the boundary which would give France 20 kilometres of a band of territory. [1] E.A.W. Clarke, Senior Clerk in the African department of the Foreign Office thought it was too much for the French to expect Britain to agree to such a rectification after all the concessions she had made. [2] In another instance the deflection of the line around Kaura which added 10 sq. miles to French territory drew the petulant comment from Clarke : "it is curious that all the deflections are in favour of the French never in ours!" [3]

These rectifications did not cause any major changes of the boundary as agreed in 1906. London and Paris were able to restrain local officials who were inclined to pose extravagant claims, [4] and

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1 Voluminous correspondance on this question can be found in FO367/40. See especially FO367/40/7650 C.O. to F.O. 8th March 1907 encl. tel.from Major O'Shee, the British commander of the Anglo-French boundary commission and Capt. Tilho, the French commander ; FO367/40/12420 Grey to Bertie April 29, 1907 ; FO367/40/19049 Bertie to Grey June 7, 1907 forwarding Pichon's reply.

2 Minutes by Clarke on FO367/40/10861 Bertie to Grey, April 4, 1907. See map, Appendix I.

3 Minutes by Clarke on FO367/40/23722 C.O. to F.O. July 16, 1907.

4 For instance notes were sent by London and Paris ordering local officials not to administer frontiers already demarcated until the agreement had been approved by the two governments. FO367/40/28169 Bertie to Grey 21 August, 1907 encl. copy of note to Pichon ; FO367/40/33876 Bertie to Grey 11, October, 1907 encl. note from Pichon.

agreement was reached laying down the boundary of Northern Nigeria on February 19, 1910.[1]

The Gambia is an enclave of French Senegal. It is divided in the middle by a large river 300 miles long whose meandering length is only navigable for 288 miles up to Yarbutenda.

Since 1857 Britain, who controlled Bathurst, MacCarthy Island etc. was the only European power with rights to the navigable stretch of the river.[2] In the Nineteenth Century, following general disenchantment with her tropical African colonies, the British government became receptive to proposals for the exchange of the Gambia for certain French stations on the coast. The Gambia was an important factor in the grandiose plans of Faidherbe, Governor of French Senegal (1854 - 61 and 1863 - 65) to create a huge French empire embracing the Senegal and Niger basins.[3]

Talks on these exchanges came up at regular intervals between 1866 and 1880.[4] For example, a comprehensive deal was suggested by

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1 Accounts and Papers Vol. CXXI (1912-13) Niger - Lake Chad Convention Feb. 19, 1910 Cd. 6013 ; FO367/171/9382. C.O. to F.O. 17th March, 1910; Capt. Tilho, Documents Scientifiques II pp. 539 - 552 gives a description of the adjustments made.

2 The Gambia has since become independent on February 18th 1965. The Gambia river itself takes its rise from the Futa Jullon plateau 12 miles from the town of Labe in French Guinea. During its course towards the sea, the river is impeded by many obstacles eg. rocks and falls. Towards Bathurst however, the river widens to about 12 miles and the depth is 5 fathoms. Vessels of 12' draught can go to MacCarthy Island 150 miles from Bathurst and also Kuntaur, but only launches and canoes can reach Koina 292 miles up the river. See J.M. Gray, A History of the Gambia C.U.P. (1940) pp. 1 - 3 ; R.J. Harrison Church, West Africa, Longmans, Green & Co. London (1957) p. 215ff.

3 Background on British disenchantment with her West African colonies and the negotiations on the Gambia can be read in J.D. Hargreaves, Prelude pp. 62 - 78. pp. 174 - 194.; J.M. Grey, p. 434ff.; for Faidherbe's plans, see J.D. Hargreaves, West Africa : The former French States Prentice Hall, New Jersey (1967) p. 95.

4 CO879/29 Af. No. 357. Memo by A.W.L. Hemming, Nov. 1888.

which France would renounce all claims between the Benin river and a point north of Sierra Leone and Britain would renounce hers from the latter point to the Moroccan border.

There were however strong protests against cession of the Gambia. It was feared that British trade in that region would decline once the French imposed tariffs. [1] There was also the moral and humanitarian objections oftransaferrring the native people to a foreign administration. A Francesaconced in the strategic harbour of the Gambia might even be a threat to British maritime supremacy. [2] The strong representations of indigenous Gambians and the lobbying efforts of those parliamentarians interested in the Gambia were such that Gladstone had to declare that "there was never (sic) had been the slightest intention of taking any proceedings of the kind without the consent of parliament." [3] The French broke off negotiations in 1876 and when Salisbury suggested a deal (1879 - 80) which included the Gambia, the Colonial Office objected and the proposal was dropped. [4]

Still this was not the last word. In the period under review there was a revival of French interest in the Gambia and proposals were once more made for an exchange. It could have been expected that with the scramble at an end and an entente with France in existence

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1 Ibidem, Harry A. Gailey Jr. A History of the Gambia, London (1964) pp. 80 - 90.

2 "C.O. Library African pamphlet Collection" (uncatalogued) The Gambia in M.F.73. King's College Library, Aberdeen : "The Gambia and its proposed cession to France" by C. Fitzgerald, Oct. 25, 1875 and "Report of the Council of the Royal Colonial Institute on the Gambia Question" 1876. cf. CO87/98 Memo by Sir F. Sandford (1870) : Petition of Natives to Governor Kennedy 6th May 1870.

3 Hargreaves, Prelude pp. 150 - 153; FO367/40/6996 C.O. to F.O. 24, May, 1907. referring to negotiations of 1870.

4 Hargreaves, Prelude pp. 174 - 194; CO879/29 cf. No. 357 Memo by Hemming, Nov. 1888. The boundary of the Gambia was delimited. By the agreement of August 10, 1889 Britain gained 10 kilometres of strips of land on either side of the Gambia and the river itself was recognised as British. See Sir E. Hertslet, The Map of Africa by Treaty Frank Cass & Co. Ltd. (1967) 3. Vols. 3rd Edition Vol.II pp. 729, 734 and 742 and map facing p. 730.

an exchange would have been much easier. But this was not the case; in fact both parties put extravagant conditions for an exchange.

The serpentine shape of the river created immense technical difficulties in demarcating the boundary between the Gambia and Senegal. Several joint commissions were sent out between 1891 and 1906 but no agreement was reached because of squabbles over the exact position of one small town or another. [1] The Soninke-Marabout wars also hindered the working of the commission. When agreement was in sight the French procrastinated and did not ratify the treaty. [2] Eventually the reason for this procrastination was revealed when the French asked for the cession of the Gambia. As noted in Chapter I, Lansdowne refused this request but he offered the French access to the navigable part of the river.

Article V of the Anglo-French agreement of April 8, 1904 provided that : [3]

> "The present frontier between Senegambia and the English colony of the Gambia shall be modified so as to give to France Yarbutenda and the lands and landing places belonging to that locality.
>
> In the event of the river not being open to maritime navigation up to that point, access shall be assured to the French government

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1 CO879/89/18483 Memo on the Articles relating to West Africa in the Anglo-French Convention of April 8, 1904. (C.O. May 23, 1904). On the question of differences on the boundary and French procrastinations. See FO27/3771. Cambon to Salisbury Nov. 11, 1899 FO27/33107 Memo by R.R. Llewelyn 19th July 1900; F.O. to Geoffray, Sept. 25, 1900; FO27/33107 F.O. to Cambon, April 23, 1901. F.O. to Cambon 27 May, 1901 ; F.O. to Monson, Nov. 23, 1901.

2 FO27/33107 F.O. to Monson Nov. 23, 1901 ; Monson to Lansdowne Nov. 26, 1901 ; Monson to Lansdowne 28 Nov. 1901. Af. No. 128. (most confidential) See also Chapter I.

3 B.D. II. pp. 402 - 407.

at a point lower down on the River Gambia, which shall be recognised by a mutual agreement as being accessible to merchant ships engaged in maritime navigation.

The conditions which shall govern transit on the River Gambia and its tributaries, as well as the method of access to the point that may be reserved to France in accordance with the preceding paragraph, shall form the subject of future agreement between the two governments.

In any case, it is understood that these conditions shall be at least as favourable as those of the system instituted by application of the General Act of the Africa Conference of the 26th February, 1885, and of the Anglo-French Convention of the 14th June, 1898 to the English portion of the basin of the Niger."

Administrators now had to interpret this legacy of the Entente Cordiale. Wide divergencies soon appeared. French Officials made it known to local British officials that they were not satisfied with the conditions of the treaty. Roume, the Governor-General of French West Africa, declared that Yarbutenda was useless to France since maritime ships could not reach that place. The French wanted access to that part of the river which a ship of 15' draught could navigate. [1] Since the treaty provided that if Yarbutenda was found inadequate a point would be chosen in the lower part of the river such as would give the French access to their territory, Roume now asked for that point to be chosen. The governor of the Gambia, Sir George Denton, was not

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1 F027/33107 Capt. Cowie (Dakar Consulate) to Lansdowne 28, Feb. 1905; C.O. to F.O. 14th Oct. 1905 forwarding letter from Acting-Gov. Griffith reporting conversation with M. Merlin, Acting-Governor to Senegal.

unwilling to concede a point of access to the French (higher up the river). He appreciated the fact that the French desired the shortest possible route to transport materials for the construction of the Thies-Kayes railway. [1] The latter was part of the railway complex planned by the French authorities to penetrate the Sudan and facilitate commerce between French territories. [2]

He was, however, surprised when, in a meeting arranged by the two governments so that details of the execution of the agreement could be thrashed out between the two Administrators, Roume asked not only for the point of access but four recognised routes on both north and south banks through which France would be at liberty to send merchandize and produce to its Senegal territory.

The French governor-general also demanded that the point chosen should be ceded not leased. French Law must rule it. Kuntaur, Niani Marou, Badan Sha were mentioned as possible sites. [3]

These towns were just on the middle of the Gambia near the rich groundnut belt and were strategically placed to draw the trade of the surrounding area since vessels of more than 10' draught could navigate up to that point. Denton therefore urged Elgin, the Colonial Secretary (Dec. 1905 - April 1908) not to accept Roume's claims; for this would

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1 CO879/89/33868 Denton to C.O. Sept. 29, 1904; CO87/173/19799 Denton to Lyttleton 23rd May, 1905. Denton began his West African career in Lagos, June, 1888 where he became Colonial Secretary and then Lt. Governor. He took up appointment as Governor of the Gambia in January 1901. He retired on pension in Sept. 1911. See G. Denton "Twenty-three years in Lagos and the Gambia" Journal of the African Society Vol. XI No. XLII (1911 - 12) pp. 129 - 138. Francis Bisset Archer, The Gambian Colony and Protectorate : an Official Handbook, Frank Cass & Co. Ltd. London (1967) p. 90.

2 See Frederic Rambau, De Dakar au Niger Augustin Challamel (Ed.) Paris (1908); Hargreaves, Prelude pp. 253 - 255. The Thiès-Kayes line was completed in 1923. See Hubert Deschamps (Ed.) Histoire Générale de l'Afrique Noire de Madagascar et des Archipels, Presses Universitaires de Paris (1971) Vol. II. p. 388.

3 FO27/33107 Cambon to Lansdowne Feb. 8 1905; FO367/274/23154 Memo by G. de Bernhadt June 4, 1912. Minutes by Rend on CO87/172/35419 Admiralty to C.O. 12, Oct. 1904, FO27/33107 F.O. to Geoffray 16, Oct. 1905; Cambon to Lansdowne 22 Oct. 1905; FO27/3698 C.O. to F.O. 8, Dec. 1905.

mean actual ruin for the Gambia. The colony was not a rich one and the establishment of a French enclave on the lower river would seriously injure the Gambia's import and export trade. He himself was prepared to concede a road not more than 30' wide and he insisted that ships drawing 10' draught could easily reach Yarbutenda. This was adequate for French needs. Elgin and Grey agreed that the convention did not justify the claims of Roume. [1]

Nonetheless, Cambon forwarded a note a few months later proposing that the two governments should determine what regulations must govern the enclave which was to be ceded. [2] Cecil Hurst, (Assistant Legal Adviser to the Foreign Office 1902 - 1918) after going through a mass of legal angles pointed out that Britain could not refuse to give an access to the French. Since this was a pay off for the renunciation of French rights in Newfoundland, (which had no time limit), the French enclave should be permanent. It would mean a large permanent bonded warehouse for transmission of goods and passengers free from British Customs dues and free from any right on the part of the British government to prohibit its use. British Law should, however, prevail and if French goods were introduced into British territory, they ought to be subjected to customs duties. [3] In other words, Hurst was putting across almost the same arguments

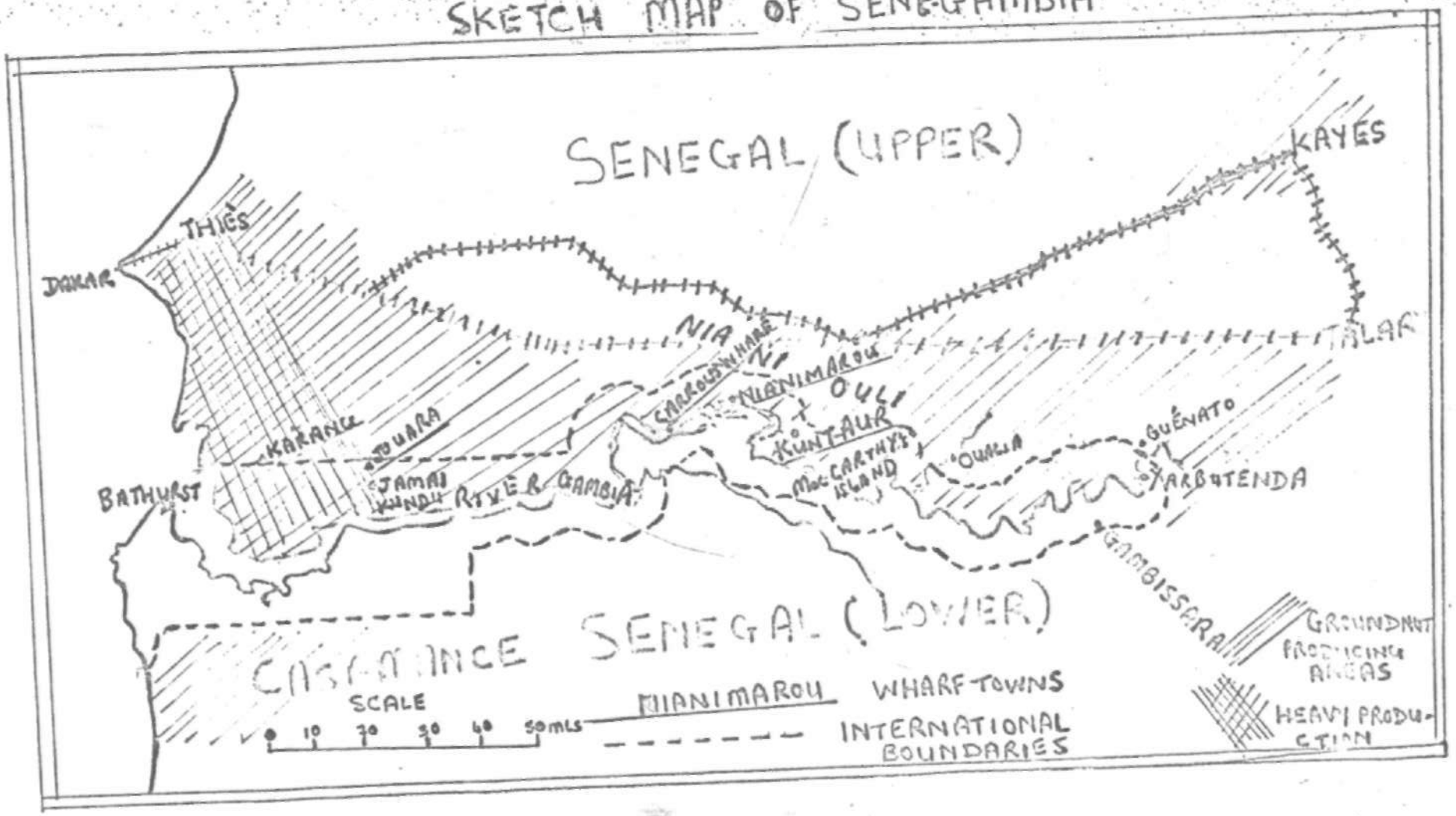
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1 F0367/6/1188 F.O. to C.O. January 12, 1906; F0367/274/23154 de Bernardt's memo June 4, 1912. See map on page 92.

2 F0367/6/15046 Cambon to Grey 3, May, 1906.

3 F0367/6/15046 Memo by Hurst on Cambon's note of May 3, 1906. Hurst represented Britain at the 2nd Hague Peace Conference in 1907 and the London Naval Conference 1908. He was appointed Legal Adviser (F.O.) 1918 - 1920. He became Judge of the Permanent Court of International Justice at the Hague in 1929.

SKETCH MAP OF SENEGAMBIA



as Roume.

Such a proposal, which no doubt would have affected the Gambia adversely since she would have lost a great deal of revenue, could only be explained by the fact that the Foreign Office invariably held a less rigid attitude to French policy on the Gambia, than the Colonial Office. This factor is underlined by the subsequent development of the question. Grey agreed with Hurst's analysis and he promised to take the matter up with the Colonial Office, but he did not seem 'to have followed it up'. [1]

The French made the next move. This time Roume proposed the cession of the Gambia for French rights in New Hebrides. He complained that there was too much delay in executing the terms of the 1904 treaty. He admitted that the Gambia was very valuable to Senegal and its possession would save that administration about £1,000,000. Instead of building the projected railway from Thiès to Kayes, a line would be constructed from the head of the Gambia navigation to a point on the Senegal - Niger Railway which would halve the length of the Thiès - Kayes line. On the other hand, if the latter was constructed, the Gambia, in which in any case British trading interests were not large, would lose much of its value to Senegal. He further warned that he would have to put Customs posts along the whole frontier to stop smuggling from British territory, and this might result in friction. For good measure he observed that the Gambia and New Hebrides were dark spots which would eventually bring friction between the entente partners

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1 According to De Bernhardt's Memo there was no reason given for not pursuing the matter. FO367/274/32154 de Bernhardt's Memo June 4, 1912.

and it was best to obviate this.[1]

The Foreign Office, at least, was more receptive to this feeler than the Colonial Office, because of the Anglo-French entente and because the deal offered an opportunity of securing British interests elsewhere, for example in the Pacific, Zanzibar and Muscat.

The Admiralty began to show an interest early in 1905 in the French Islands of Mangarova in the Pacific Ocean. The Board believed that these islands could adequately be used as coaling stations for ships plying New Zealand and Panama. Lansdowne was therefore asked to take advantage of the recently signed entente cordiale to secure the Islands from the French. Lansdowne was, however, unwilling to do this for fear that the French "who even if they were willing to entertain it, might not improbably bring forward counter proposals of a very embarrassing character." And there the matter ended.[2]

In New Hebrides, Britain and France, the two powers with paramount interests, had an uneasy relationship arising from claims and

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1 FO367/40/7954 Cowie to Grey, Feb. 20, 1907. The five European firms trading in the Gambia were:- The Bathurst Trading Company (Br.); The French Company (Cie Française); Messrs. Maurel Frères; Messrs. Maurel and H. Prom (Fr.) and Messrs. T. Waelter & Co. (German). See F. B. Archer, The Gambia Colony, p. 126. See Riembau, De Dakar au Niger, pp. 54-5 6 where he urged that the Gambian question must be solved as soon as possible in order that railway development could get under way. Roume, who retired in October, 1907, as Governor-General of French West Africa, devoted a great deal of his administrative skill to the problem of creating a good transport system for the French West African territories especially in Senegal. During his tenure of office several railway schemes were pushed forward. Since the Gambia was strategically placed, both in terms of commerce and communications, in relation to the projected Thies-Kayes Railway, the acquisition of the Gambia was of primary importance. See Auguste Terrier and Charles Mourey, L'Expansion Française et la Formation territoriale, Paris (1910) pp. 510-519.

2 FO367/227/37069 F.O. Minutes and annex. Sept. 23, 1911. The need for coaling stations arose because the U.S.A. assumed exclusive control over the Panama Canal. Its construction was begun in 1904 and was finished in 1914. The Canal was supposed to reduce the distance between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans by 8,000 miles. For story of Canal see, Encyclopaedia Britannica, William Benton, Publisher, London (1964), Vol. XVII pp. 172-173.

counter claims of their nationals. The Commonwealth States of Australia and New Zealand, who were near the Islands were pressing London to assume a protectorate over the territory. The French refused to give up their rights and thus the situation was left in a state of suspense. Fear of German intrusion induced the two powers to proclaim a condominion in February 1906, but the situation was far from satisfactory. [1]

In Muscat and Zanzibar, Anglo-French differences rose out of old treaties which both powers had signed with the native rulers. By the treaty of 17th November, 1844 the French secured rights to import arms into Muscat. The Anglo-French declarations of 10th March, 1862 forbade either power to infringe the sovereignty of the Sultans of Zanzibar and Muscat. By the beginning of the period under review these treaties had become irksome for British policy. French arms were being used to cause trouble on the Indian frontier and on the borders of British Somaliland, and Britain could do nothing except with the consent of France. She also wanted to get rid of French extra territorial privileges in Zanzibar in order to regularise her protectorate over that territory. The French appeared unwilling to give up these rights except for a compensation. [2]

The solution of these problems would be very welcome to the Foreign Office. This was one of the considerations which made the Roume feeler attractive to the Foreign Office. A.W. Clarke welcomed the gesture but he warned that they must make sure Roume was backed in

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1 R. Hyam, Elgin and Churchill at the Colonial Office, pp. 291 - 312 for background story.

2 FO357/227/37669 Memo on French proposals by A. Parker, Sept. 1911. Voluminous correspondence on the Muscat Arms question can be found in Case 622. FO357. Africa (New Series) P.R.O. See also Caplan, British policy towards Ethiopia, p. 63ff.

Paris. At the same time he deprecated the Colonial Office's recalcitrant attitude as regards the colony. A. Law, a Senior Clerk, enthused that such a deal might soothe Australia and New Zealand who were angry at Whitehall's failure to secure a British protectorate over New Hebrides. The other senior officials, Sir Eric Barrington, Assistant Under-Secretary, Sir Charles Hardinge, Permanent Under-Secretary (1906 - 1910) and Grey himself echoed the views of the others.[1]

The Foreign Secretary sounded the Colonial Office pointing out that such a deal would be comprehensive and would include questions affecting New Zealand, Australia and Zanzibar.[2] The Colonial Secretary was not impressed. His reply was discouraging. Lord Elgin observed that the suggestion was informal; it did not come from the French government and it was the result of a conversation between local officials.[3] He declared that from the political point of view: "His Majesty's Government cannot lightly enter upon a negotiation to sell or exchange a British colony, and that if the storm of criticism and misrepresentation which would be aroused by such a proposal is to be faced, the propriety of the transaction must be clear and well defined."

In view of past experiences in negotiations, the interests of the natives and the trade of the Gambia, Lord Elgin was of the opinion "that the elements for making an arrangement which would be both

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1 Minutes by Clarke, Law, Barrington, Hardinge and Grey on FO367/40/7954 Cowie to Grey, Feb. 20, 1907. Cf. Gailey, History of the Gambia, p. 104ff. argues that the F.O. never seriously reacted to these feelers for an exchange.

2 FO367/40/7954 F.O. to C.O., March 19, 1907.

3 FO367/40/16996 C.O. to F.O., May 24, 1907.

the two powers vis a vis the Gambia was, however, in favour of France because of the overwhelming dominance of the groundnut trade in the economy of the colony. Several factors such as weather, prices, accessibility to markets and the political boundary, also affected Gambian trade. When there was a bad season there was a fall in the yield of groundnuts ; in a good season, for example in 1909, the yield was vastly increased. The fall in value of cotton goods and a huge reduction of imported rice in 1908 lessened the value of imports by £50,000. [1]

Though there was only one British firm trading in the Gambia, a lot of trade was carried on by the indigenous people and it appeared that there was much fluidity of movement between Senegal and the Gambia. Senegalese farmers ("strange farmers") trekked across the boundary every year to grow groundnuts in the Gambia. In certain French trading centres in Ouaillia, Guenoto etc. on the north bank of Upper Gambia, traders from the British colony seemed to have enjoyed a few privileges. English was spoken, the currency and even the weights and measures were English. In other words, the Gambia was exercising an influence which was greater than its size. [2] The Senegal authorities tried to stop this trend by imposing restrictive measures occasionally, for example, prohibiting the export of rubber across the frontier from Cassamance. Customs posts were also erected behind British Gambian wharftowns eg. at Karang behind Dumingi in Lower Nuimi ; behind Malai Durami and between Jouara (an important

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1 Accounts and Papers Vol. LVII (1909) Colonial Reports (Annual) The Gambia Cd. 4448 - 18. See P.H.S. Hatton, "The Gambia, the Colonial Office, and the opening months of the first World War," Journal of African History Vol. VII, I (1966) pp. 123 - 131 for a short analysis of Gambian trade.

2 Riembau, op cit. p. 40ff.

Gambian trading station) and Jamai Kundu in Lower Baddibo.[1] These measures were intermittent, but when they were followed with vigour as was in the case in 1907, the trade of the Gambia was affected.[2] Yet Senegalese authorities incessantly complained of the inconveniences which the non implementation of the clause granting them access in Lower Gambia was causing them. It was feared that the Thies-Kayes line would divert trade from the Gambia, but it did not seem to have had much adverse effect on Gambian trade according to a despatch of February, 1912.[3] On the other hand it was appreciated that the line would have an attraction for traders in the Gambia since it would enable them to transport their produce more quickly and more cheaply.

What this passage has attempted to illustrate is the interdependence of the economies of the two colonies. Both could harm each other, perhaps Senegal more so, by prohibitive measures. One point to note is that the Gambia was self supporting financially. The reports for 1907 - 1911 showed that the revenue exceeded the expenditure. The revenue rose from £43,726 in 1901 to double that amount in 1911 and for the same period trade increased from £486,313 to £1,499,154.[4]

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1 FO367/40/25827 C.O. to F.O. August 1, 1907. The erection of Customs posts was discontinued because the French authorities found out that this drove people into English territory and the cost of enforcement was heavy. FO367/40/27389 C.O. to F.O. August 15, 1907 See map on p. 92.

2 Accounts and Papers, Vol. LVII (1909) Annual Report The Gambia No. 609. Cd. 4448 - 18.

3 CO87/189/7343 Governor to Secretary of State 25th Feb. 1912 cf. Riembau, p. 53ff. He argues however, on pages 54 - 55 that the railway and river systems were about evenly balanced.

4 Accounts and Papers Vol. LVII (1912 - 13) Annual Report, The Gambia No. 718 Cd. 6007 - 18 ; Sir George Denton, "Twenty-three years in Lagos and the Gambia," Journal of the African Society Vol. XCII (1911 - 12) pp. 129 - 138.

There was no doubt about it then that if the Gambia was not terribly valuable, it certainly did not add any burden on the Imperial exchequer. Grey did not appear to have taken any action after he got the 1906 trade reports, but his request for the report signified that Elgin's veto was not the last word. On the other hand one wonders whether the information Grey received made him less ready to agree to exchange ; or rather made him raise his terms for the Gambia when the French put a formal proposal in 1908. The treaty of 1844, already referred to, under which French merchants or traders flying French flags were importing arms, which were smuggled into Afghanistan, was beginning to irritate the British government. The traffic in arms caused endless worry to the India office who were alarmed that these arms would be used to stir up trouble in India. The resources of the Royal Navy Squadron in India was taxed to the limit in their efforts to stop the arms flow. [1] When the British government asked France to give up these rights and to restrict arms smuggling, that power asked for nothing less than the cession of the Gambia for the surrender of these 'obsolete rights.' [2] The passions roused throughout the protracted negotiations put a big question mark on the working of the entente in Africa. At the same time the talks illustrate the willingness of His Majesty's Government to consider using the rectification of the partition to adjust their interests elsewhere.

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1 For the India office pressure on the F.O. to settle the arms question see Case 622. FO367 Africa New Series (P.R.O.) eg. Vol. 267; FO367/266/28477 India office to F.O. July 19, 1911.

2 Phrase used by an angry correspondent in his letter to the Editor of The Times, July 25, 1911 filed in FO367/266. See also Chapter III.p. 333.

During the Arms Conference, which was called in Brussels in 1908 to agree to the extension of the area of arms prohibition in Africa up to the Red Sea, France's unco-operative attitude caused a deadlock. The Conference was adjourned in order that France and Britain, who were the main interested powers, could reconcile their differences. In the interval the French delegates proposed : (1) giving a free hand to Britain in Muscat i.e to proclaim a protectorate or establish direct political control; (2) to agree to extend the zone of prohibition for traffic in arms and ammunitions along the shores of Arabia as far as the southern limit of Muscat; (3) that they were ready to consider favourably the revision of the treaty with Zanzibar. For all this they asked for the Gambia. [1] It was made clear that the success of the Conference depended on the British reply. Grey was not opposed to cession in principle but he wanted to give mature consideration to the proposals before replying. Walter Langley, Assistant Under-Secretary (1907 - 1918) who suspected that the move was inspired by the French Colonial Office, was angry with the French for bringing the Gambia question into the conference.[2]

The British delegates, however, discussed the proposals. Their deliberations were governed by two considerations : (1) the value of the French offer (2) the price to pay. As regards (1) the political advantages which could accrue to Britain were not insignificant. By controlling Muscat she might be able to frustrate the intrigues of Germany and Italy who had lately shown some interest in the Persian Gulf.

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1 CAB 37/93/P5 Memo on the Arms Conference at Brussels, circulated to the Cabinet on June 23, 1908. British delegates to the Conference were : Arthur Hardinge, A.W. Clarke and H.J. Read (C.O.)

2 Ibidem, Minutes by W. Langley, June 16, 1908.

A sub committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence had stressed that control of Muscat was vital if Britain was to maintain her ascendancy in the Persian Gulf. Economically, Muscat was not badly off. With an area of 81,000 sq. miles and a population of 1. million her trade for 1905 - 06 was £550,000 and it showed promise of expanding. Britain controlled 83% of this trade and 92% of the ships which called at her excellent harbour flew British flags. It was clear that British interests were stronger than those of France ; and if little incidents were to be avoided and acrimonious correspondence between the two powers on these ancient treaties were to stop, His Majesty's Government must consider the deal worthwhile. [1]

On the question of compensation to France the delegates appreciated how valuable the Gambia was to that Power, especially since she regularly made proposals for its cession. This value might cease if the French succeeded in constructing their railway, and if Britain refused cession France would insist on the implementation of Article 5 of the 1904 Treaty. They then went on to catalogue some of the factors, which, in a way, illustrated how difficult it was for one power to cede a territory to another :- the fear that France might impose preferential tariffs which would injure British trade; the interests of officials employed by the Colonial Administration and those of the missionaries had to be considered; there was the moral responsibility to the indigenous Gambians who were hostile to French rule; [2] and lastly Britain was ceding real tangible property for

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1 Ibidem.

2 Ibidem. It was estimated that there were 160 white and native officials whose salaries totalled £26,000.p.a.. There were 23 pensioners who had to be paid £1,000.p.a..

intangible rights. Against these factors was the practical fact that the Gambia was a thorn in the flesh of the French and that Muscat was a great nuisance to Britain. It would be best to get rid of both.

The Cabinet decided not to refuse the proposal to cede the Gambia which "(is) of little value to this country," but they thought the French offer "quite inadequate."[1] An Inter-departmental Committee meeting under the chairmanship of Charles Hardinge was called to consider this question; and other areas where French and British interests might clash were brought in to make a comprehensive deal.[2] This method of settling differences in far flung corners of the world became the vogue and the Gambia was to feature in almost all of them. As late as 1913 and 1914 the British representative in Ethiopia suggested an exchange of the Gambia forDjibouti, another area where French arms trade affected British interests seriously. The Colonial Office was not keen on the deal.[3]

The Inter-Departmental Committee went over the same grounds which the delegates had gone, but they emphasised the points more sharply. For example, it was necessary to safeguard the interests of the inhabitants of the Gambia and to prove to parliament and public opinion that an adequate <u>quid pro quo</u> had been obtained. The question of an adequate <u>quid pro quo</u> loomed very large and one

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1 CAB 41/51/160 Report of the P.M. to the Sovereign June 24, 1908 ; F. Hyam, <u>Elgin and Churchill</u> at the Colonial Office, p. 202.

2 CAB 37/94/99 Report of the I.D.C. Conference held on July 9.1908. The committee comprised Sir Charles Hardinge; Sir W. Lee Warner and Sir R. Ritchie (I.O.); Antrobus and C. Strachey (C.O.); Major General Ewart (W.O.); Capt. Slade (Admiralty); Wilson Fox (B.O.T.).

3 Caplan, <u>op. cit.</u> pp. 70 and 104 - 108.

suspects that if the British demands,which were submitted later,had been accepted by the French the interests of the inhabitants of the Gambia would have been of secondary issue. It is necessary to point out that in all the deliberations which took place the principle of ceding the Gambia was not rejected, but the British felt that the Gambia was too valuable a price to give up for the concessions the French were willing to make.

The abrogation of French treaty rights in Muscat was not enough. Britain might have to face other powers for example, Germany, who might object to Britain taking complete control of Muscat and who might not improbably ask for compensation. An Independent Sultan released from French pressure might raise his terms for co-operation with Britain. To make up for this discrepancy France was to be asked :- to renounce her extra territorial rights in Zanzibar which were of no value to her except as an embarrassing instrument; to agree to the extension of arms prohibition to the southern most limit of Muscat; to acquiesce in the British claim for an undivided possession of New Hebrides (later changed to undivided authority); to cede the Island of Mangareva (a suitable coaling station in the Pacific was substituted); and lastly to give up certain residuary rights in Newfoundland. The proposals were submitted to Cambon on August 24, 1908. [1]

The British were certainly demanding their pound of flesh. If they wanted an equitable quid pro quo for the Gambia the proposals were excessive. As M. Louis, Political Director at the Quai D'Orsay

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1 CAB 38/91/99 Report of I.D.C. Conference (July 14, 1908); CAB 37/99/58 August 24, 1908.

told Bertie, they "had opened their mouths too wide." [1] The French also had to think of public opinion. The French Colonial Office, under M. Milles - Lacroix, was hostile to suggestions for ceding French rights or territory anywhere in the world. The French emphasised that the arms trade was a lucrative one from which French merchants derived considerable income. These men also had members in parliament who looked after their interests. They would therefore have to be compensated and parliament would have to be satisfied. There was also the fear that French influence in that region would be reduced, if they consented to giving up these rights without protests or compensation. [2]

The long delay in solving this question caused tempers to fray; harsh words were said about French obduracy. The Francophil Bertie even suggested putting an article in The Times, not too harshly worded, but saying enough to illustrate how French obstruction was injuring British interests. Montgomery, a clerk in the Foreign Office, however, advised against such a step; for it might endanger the Entente "which we (do) not want to do on this one question however important it (may) be." [3]

This remark is interesting, for in 1908 - 9 Anglo-French co-operation was at a very low ebb. [4] In economic questions British and French interests seemed to have clashed and it appeared that France

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1 (Grey Papers) FO800/50 Bertie to C. Hardinge Oct. 31, 1908.

2 (Grey Papers) FO800/51 Bertie to Grey Oct. 7, 1909; Bertie to Grey Oct. 30, 1908; (Grey Papers) FO800/52 Grey to Bertie May 19, 1910; (Grey Papers) FO800/53 Bertie to Grey Nov. 14, 1912 encl. report of conversation between Saunders 'Times Correspondent' and M. Poincaré, Prime Minister of France.

3 (Grey Papers) FO800/51 Bertie to Grey Oct. 8, 1909; Minutes by Montgomery.

4 The History of the Times Vol. III, pp. 678 - 683.

valued her financial interests more than the friendship with Britain. Not only that, Clemenceau, Prime Minister of France (1906 - 1909), was anxious about the military strength of Britain. He believed that the British Navy, though powerful was not adequate enough (without a strong army) to defend France if Germany was to pounce on her. Thus, though he had no love for Germany, he felt that because of the rather insecure position of France, there was no need to antagonise Germany, especially when there were differences between them on certain questions, eg. Morocco. This line of thought led France to co-operate in certain areas with Germany eg. in Morocco.[1] This trend in French policy exercised the British Foreign Office just as moves for an Anglo-German Naval agreement worried the French. In short an atmosphere of edginess was created. Grey had to assure the French that the visit of King Edward to Berlin in February 1909 did not mean a change in British foreign policy. He did not "want any special co-operation which would alter the present grouping of the powers."[2]

Valentine Chirol, The Times Foreign Editor, was so anxious about the effect which French policy of financial co-operation with Germany and her policy on the Muscat arms question would have on those "professional pacifists" and "Liberal idealists" who wanted rapprochement with Germany, that he decided "to talk very seriously"

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1 Ibidem, p. 684.; E.W. Edwards, "The Franco-German Agreement", English Historical Review (July, 1963) Vol. 78. p. 483 - 513. On British concern about Anglo-French relations see B.D. VI Nos. 35 and 45.; B.D. VII No. 91. Minute by Crowe on White to Crowe, Feb. 23, 1908. See also Chapt. III p.311note 1.

2 (Bertie Papers) F0800/171 Grey to Bertie January 9, 1908; See also (Grey Papers) F0800/51 Bertie to Grey Oct. 30, 1909; F0800/51 Bertie to Grey, Nov. 11, 1909; F0800/52 Bertie to Grey January 3, 1910 for British assurances to France that there would be no change intheirNaval policy.

to the French about their attitude. [1] What this passage and the following discussion illustrate, is that when relations were cool, there were those on both sides who endeavoured to inject more warmth and confidence in each other, and for reasons of general policy to advocate a less rigid attitude to colonial policy.

M. Pichon, the French Foreign Minister (1906 - 1911), did not care about Muscat and he would have liked to settle the matter, but he had to consider the interests of the arms dealers and the commercial interests of the Colonial department. The influence of parliament could not be ignored. [2] Britain, however, could not have had a more persuasive advocate than Paul Cambon. He saw F.A. Campbell, Assistant Under-Secretary (1902 - 1911) on the 15th September 1908, and urged that Britain should moderate her demands in order to reach a settlement. To Pichon the Ambassador confessed his anger at the Colonial Minister. He believed that the Minister's attitude would lead to the rupture of the negotiations for the exchange of the Gambia. The abandonment of French rights in Muscat and Zanzibar might not be enough; it was necessary to give "une soulte" to satisfy and calm public opinion in Britain. Furthermore the cession of French rights would not constitute a British protectorate, and in any case these rights were incomprehensible to the majority of Englishmen and certain members of parliament. The value of the rights might even lessen with time and disappear by default. As a hint to general policy, he observed that a liberal minister whose foreign policy never inspired entire confidence in England was obliged to set great store on the exigencies of public opinion.

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1 History of the Times III pp. 678 - 684.

2 (Grey Papers, FO800/51 Bertie to Grey Oct. 30, 1909.

Therefore,it was necessary to justify the cession of the Gambia with real and very apparent gains. [1]

As far as the British memo of August was concerned,he felt that it could serve as a basis for discussion. He had no interests in other areas,such as the Loges in India, nor in Newfoundland, but in the Gambia which was "enfermée en plein coeur de nos colonies." [2] The various attempts by France in the Nineteenth Century and especially in 1903 - 4 and the letters of Roume showed how important the Gambia was to France. The latter ought to concentrate its efforts in Africa instead of dispersing uselessly on "tous les points du globe." In conclusion,he warned Pichon and M. Milliès - Lacroix that they would incur responsibility if the talks failed,and he stressed that the two should view the question "au point de vue actuel et non à un point de vue historique" which could only interest "les érudits." Much as Cambon wanted the Gambia and much as he was a strong advocate of close friendship with Britain, he was too much of a diplomat and a Frenchman who was loyal to the republic, not to put the French counter proposals as forcefully as he did when he argued in favour of continuing the talks with Britain.

The French did not accept the demands of the British, rather they re-stated their conditions. When Cambon presented the French counter proposals on Feb. 18, 1909 he pointed out that the initiative on the arms question did not come from France. It was against its interests that the matter was discussed in Brussels and after he had expatiated

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1 D.D.F. XI No. 510. Cambon to Pichon, Oct. 28, 1908.

2 Ibidem, He regarded French possession in the Pacific as "ne sont susceptibles d'aucun avenir". A departmental annotation tartly pointed out : "Nous irions à un échec devant les chambres si nous tenions cet intérêt pour négligeable."

on French rights of 1844 and 1862 he pointed out that for France to renounce them, it was equitable that she should demand in exchange the sacrifice of British rights in places where they constituted "une gêne pour les interets francais." In this regard the Gambia, which was an anomaly and an anachronism in that part of West Africa, would be an adequate compensation. France could impose tariffs whether or not the Gambia remained British. Though its acquisition would "epargnerait" the budget of French West Africa, once the railway was completed it would lose its value. [1]

Neither the Inter-Departmental Committee which was set up to discuss the counter proposals, nor the Cabinet was impressed. The old arguments were repeated, viz. the French concessions did not constitute a territorial gain to Britain (though the French argued that by withdrawing their treaty rights, Muscat ~~would become~~ in effect/become/ British protectorate/A/; and Britain's position in Zanzibar would be strengthened); even if the territorial quid pro quo was met His Majesty's Government could not overlook the fact that by a "stroke of pen" the Gambia became a French colony, while Muscat would remain a Sovereign State :-

> "His Majesty's Government are, therefore, reluctantly constrained to consider that the offer of the French Government does not contain that adequate territorial or equivalent material compensation, without which they feel it is hopeless for them to expect the approval of Parliament to the proposed change".

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1 D.D.F. XI No. 593. Pichon to Millies - Lacroix Dec. 26, 1908; CAB 37/99/50 Memo from Cambon Feb. 18, 1909. The only addition to the previous offer was that whereas they had said formerly that they would consider British proposals on Zanzibar, they now agreed to cede their extraterritorial rights on the Island.

In this way, negotiations were suspended "for the time being at any rate."[1] Both sides put impossible conditions and used convenient arguments. Cambon rejected the idea of looking at present prblems from a historical perspective, but in a conversation with Grey on French factories in India, which were thrown in later to make a comprehensive deal, he spoke of French sentimental attachment to India and he even recalled the name of Dupleix.[2] Grey also stressed the sentimental attachment Britain had for the Gambia. The Gambia was Britain's oldest colony in West Africa. Both sides claimed that public opinion must be satisfied. But it is doubtful whether this counted for much in practical politics. References were made to it as a factor merely to strengthen their hands. The following passage demonstrates the Foreign Office's attitude.

The Bathurst Trading Company, an amalgamation of several British firms which had been in the Gambia for 80 years, with assets totalling £100,000, as a result of rumours of these talks requested an assurance from the Foreign Office that "this valuable territory" would not be ceded to France. They feared that French rule would injure their trade. It is not known what percentage of trade came in the way of the Company; they might possibly have been pushing their case, but the John Holt and Company episode in French Congo was a glaring example of what could happen when France imposed fiscal control. The Foreign Office did not take their complaint seriously. G. R. Clerke, a Foreign Office Clerk, suggested that they tell the company that from

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1 CAB37/99/58 I.D.C. meeting on 24th March, 1909 to consider French counter proposals; CAB 41/32/14 Report of the P.M. to the Sovereign, April 30, 1909.

2 D.D.F. XI No. 510 Cambon to Pichon, Oct. 28, 1908 cf. FO367/264/10375 Grey to Bertie, March 14, 1911 reporting conversation with Cambon.

time to time the French government had shown desires in the Gambia. If His Majesty's Government considered ihs cession necessary in the imperial interest, the Company's interest would be fully safeguarded, before any agreements were concluded. [1]

Fear of French economic policy also moved other firms to seek an assurance. The Bank of British West Africa feared that France would neglect the interests of British traders. The Bank wanted to be assured that it would get another field (possibly Liberia) which was free from competition, if it was squeezed out of the Gambia. [2] The African Trade Section of the Incorporated Chamber of Commerce of Liverpool also wanted a statement issued denying that the Gambia was to be ceded. [3] The Aborigines Protection Society deprecated the cession on the grounds of breach of faith with the natives. It was better not to discuss cession at all. [4] According to Tilley, the Secretary of State did not normally make statements on matters of policy which were hypotheses under consideration; a non comital answer was therefore given to all these queries, i.e British interest would be secured if the Gambia was ceded. [5]

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1 FO367/132/9572 Memorial of the Director of the Bathurst Trading Co. Ltd. to Grey, March 11, 1909 and G.R. Clarke's minutes; FO367/132/9572 FO. to C.O. March 22, 1909; FO367/132/20855 C.O. to F.O. June 3, 1909.

2 FO367/263/204 B.B.W.A. (signed by Leslie Cooper) to Langley Dec. 30, 1910. Langley minuted that the Bank would like Britain to annex Liberia (see section on Liberia).

3 FO367/263/1226 African Trade Section of the Incorporated Chamber of Commerce of Liverpool (signed Thomas H. Barker, Secretary) to Sir Edward Grey, January 10, 1911.

4 Minutes by Langley on FO367/263/1226 January 20, 1911.

5 Minutes by Tilley on FO367/263/1226 January 20, 1911.

Though the interests of the indigenous people were often put forward as a factor which had to be reckoned with in ceding the Gambia it does not appear from the evidence available that this factor would have prevented a deal going through. Even the Colonial Office who were less inclined to cede any British territory, and who were more prone to emphasise the native interests, did not rule out the possibility of ceding the Gambia.

Apart from the occasional leakage these talks were secret. Though formal negotiations ended in 1909, because of the pressure on the Foreign Office from the India Office to solve the arms question and Cambon's own desire to acquire the Gambia informal talks took place between the French Ambassador and Grey and his senior staff. During these talks compensations were sought in Nigeria and elsewhere for the renunciation of French rights in India and Muscat. The old arguments were gone through all over again. Each side was accusing the other ~~their whole time~~ of holding on to possessions that only ~~merely~~ had sentimental value. Britain insisted that the French rights did not constitute a territorial gain for her, and France retorted that only the Gambia was adequate compensation for the cession of its valuable rights.[1] Harcourt, the new Colonial Secretary (Nov. 1910 - 1915), hovered between rejecting the French demand for the Gambia and considering the possibility of ceding the territory "for a big price".[2] In the

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1 A record of these talks can be found in FO367/266/28477 I.O. to F.O. July 19, 1911; F.O. to I.O. July 29, 1911; FO367/263/29409 Memo of P. Cambon to Grey July 25, 1911; D.D.F. XII M. Trouillot to Pichon 9th May, 1910. According to minutes signed by Langley and C.T the African department only knew of these developments in July 1911. See Minutes on FO367/263/29409.

2 In March 1911 (Grey Papers) FO80/91 Harcourt to Grey March 7, the Colonial Secretary strongly deprecated the cession of the Gambia since such an action would raise a lot of trouble out of all proportion to its importance. The following month he told Grey that he wanted a big price for the Gambia (Grey Papers) FO800/91 Harcourt to Grey, April 3, 1911. See also Chapt. III.

end no agreement was reached, though the Gambia was to feature once more in a comprehensive deal later in 1911.

While these talks were going the French made one more move, in case the deal for the acquisition of the Gambia did not go through, to get the British to implement the terms of Article V of the 1904 agreement. M. Hardel, an Engineer in the Senegal Public Works department was sent on an hydrographic mission in 1910 to ascertain the navigability of the Gambia. Hardel did not furnish any details of his findings, but during a conversation with the Governor of the Gambia he hinted that the Senegal authorities might ask for Carrol's Wharf and Mianimaru on the north bank as the points d'accès. The administration might also want to build a rail connection from these points into the interior of Senegal. It may be wondered what would have happened to the Gambian economy if these two places had been given up. Happily, the matter does not seem to have been carried further. [1]

In all this it must be stated that the Foreign Office and even the Colonial Office in some way, were not opposed to the cession of the Gambia, but they wanted adequate material returns. True, Britain was attached to the territory, but there seems little doubt that if the price had been right His Majesty's Government would have braved the wrath of public and parliamentary opinion. In any case, save for the odd question there did not seem to have been any great interest shown by parliament in the affair. The Pall Mall Gazette did in fact try to sugrest in January, 1911 that the Foreign Office might

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1 CO87/184/25679 Denton to Sec. of State August 3, 1910 forwarding report of conversation with Hardel.

consider ceding the Gambia after all. [1]

What this discussion has shown, however, is that even with an entente partner governments did not necessarily cede territories willingly. The accord of 1904 was supposed to have settled these IRRITATING ~~colonial~~ colonial questions, but they did in fact continue (though they might not reach the scale of the Niger of Fashoda confrontation) to irritate the two governments. French attitude was likened to that of Germany in demanding territory for the surrender of 'obsolete rights.' [2] Yet these occasional aberrations were smoothed over because of the special relationship of the two powers. Even in the local scene where it could be expected that disputes could get out of hand, the administrations of both territories seemed to have got on well. For example, an important enclave (Gambissara Kunta) on the Gambia-Senegal border was claimed by the Sengalese authorities as French territory. Tax had been collected in the greater part of this piece of territory by British authorities since 1905. The two heads of Administration agreed to settle the matter in a friendly way. A joint boundary commission delimited the territory in dispute, and the boundary was adjusted giving Senegal a 4 mile strip of land. The matter was arranged so sensibly that Walter Langley commented : "The entente seems to be working in that part of

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1 Apparently the only question asked about the proposed cession of the Gambia in parliament for the period 1908 - 1911 was one by Sir William Bull (M.P. for Hammersmith) who asked what measures were being taken to safeguard British interests, on Feb. 9, 1911. He was told H.M.G. could not contemplate measures to safeguard British interests since no proposal for the Gambia's cession was before them. Parliamentary Debates 5th Series H.C. Vol. XXI (31st January - 24th February 1911); press cutting from Hull Mail Gazette January 11, 1911 filed in FO367/263/2206.

2 "The French have always treated the Lundest Arms traffic in much the same way as the Germans are now treating Agadir - as a means of extracting from us concessions of territory the value of which is out of all proportion to what they themselves intend to give up!" Minute by C.T on FO367/266/28477 L.O. to C.O. July 19, 1911.

the world." [1]

There was an endeavour to make the entente work in another area in West Africa, where Anglo-French interests and policies were in opposition. The next section will show how this worked out.

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1 CO87/187/11366 Acting Gov. to Sec. of State for the Colonies Dec. 16, 1911; CO87/187/818 Same to same Dec. 18, 1911; FO367/226/13653 C.O. to F.O. April 11, 1911; FO367/226/17067 F.O. to C.O. April 20, 1911 and Langley's minutes. See also George Denton, "Twenty-three years," Journal of the African Society Vol. XI (1911 - 12) p. 133 for his comment on Senegambian relationships.

II: Anglo - Liberian Frontier rectifications and British Policy, 1904 - 1912

Before the scramble of the 80's Britain was well disposed to support the young black Republic of Liberia with the hope that she would fulfill the role of an ally against the slave trade which was plaguing the coast of West Africa. The decline of the slave trade reduced this need and the general scramble by Europeans to stake claims on the African continent led to a modification of British bienveillance. [1]

Thus, British merchants like J.M. Harris, a Jewish tailor from Clapham, who had capitalized on the weakness of the Liberian government and the resistance of powerful indigenous chiefs, such as Prince Manna of the Gallinas to pose territorial claims of dubious validity, were supported by colonial authorities in Sierra Leone and Whitehall.

The Gallinas, a piece of territory on the west of the Liberian frontier with Sierra Leone, was supposed to have been bought by Liberia with money subscribed by English philanthropists in 1850. Prince Manna denied having ever ceded his territory. The London government equivocated. [2] It neither recognised Liberia's claims nor entirely rejected them. In 1869 and 1871, the Liberians took vigorous actions to levy duties on the British traders who resided in the Gallinas.

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1 I have relied on the following works for the background study of the 19th Century and the early part of the 20th Century : D.M. Foley, "British Policy in Liberia 1862 - 1912" unpublished Ph. D. thesis London, (1965); J.D. Hargreaves, Prelude pp. 45 - 46; 85 - 88 and pp. 240 - 243; Harry Johnston, Liberia London (1906) 2. Vols. Vol. I pp. 193 - 241; E.J. Yancey, The Republic of Liberia, London (1959) pp. 1 - 53 give the history of the Liberian purchases.

2 For the discussion of frontier rectifications in the 19th Century, see Hargreaves, Ibidem; Christopher Fyfe, A History of Sierra Leone London (1962) pp. 307, 320 - 321 and 384; Foley, op cit. pp. 9 - 58; Yancey, Ibidem.

These were resisted by the traders who sought the help of the Sierra Leone government. The result was that the Freetown government, partly because of the agitations of the traders and partly because of fears of the French in that area, claimed the disputed territory. After attempts to settle the question by arbitration had failed the Liberians were compelled to accept the Mano River as their western frontier in November, 1885.[1] The boundary was vaguely defined, and when tribes from Liberia began to raid the tribes on the Sierra Leone frontier, the boundary question came up again and it continued to be an issue between the two governments until agreement was reached in 1911.

The French, who had also had some territorial disputes with Monrovia, began to take an active interest in the frontier with Liberia at the close of the '80's. In 1889 G. Binger, an officer in the French Army who later became a renowned explorer, reached Grand Bassam after his historic journey through the Kong and Ouagadugu in the Sudan and showed that the French Colony of Ivory Coast had the possibility of being linked with the Sudan. Etienne, the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies who had been prepared to accept Liberia's claims on the coast between the San Pedro and Cavally rivers, now instructed Treich Laplene, French resident at Grand Bassam "to pay special attention on the prior interests of France and to use every means to establish relations with the indigenous people in the regions lying west of our possessions." As a result of this instruction, several French missions were sent to sign treaties with Native Chiefs. By 1891, the French claimed suzerainty on all the coast from Cavally to Newton.[2]

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1 Ibidem; Hertslet, Map of Africa III, pp. 1130 - 1133.

2 Paul Atger, La France en Cote - D'Ivoire de 1843 à 1893 : cinquante ans d'hésitation politiques et commerciales. Dakar (1962) discusses the French disenchantment with their Ivory Coast settlements and the renewal of interest after Binger's journey: pp. 123 - 126; pp. 151 - 158; Auguste Terrier et Charles Mourey, L'Expansion française, pp. 110 - 122; pp. 137 - 145; pp. 263 - 267.

Since Britain was apathetic, and the U.S. government showed only occasional interests in her affairs, the weak Liberian government had to acquiesce in French pressure. [1] The Franco-Liberian Convention of Dec. 8, 1892 gave a sizeable stretch of coastland to France and the thalweg of the Cavally was recognised as the eastern limit of Liberian territory. The French renounced all claims to the west of that river. One article, however, left an opening whereby France could claim further pieces of territory from Liberia, if, for example, the black republic rectified her boundaries, which involved some loss of territory, with Britain. [2] It was an invidious article and it hamstrung British frontier rectifications with Liberia in subsequent years.

One of the main factors underlying Liberia's problems was funds. She needed money to build a strong administration capable of extending its influence into the interior. For this reason President Roye had raised a loan of £100,000 in London at usurious rates. It did not help the Liberians. It was soon dissipated; but it provided a small group of British investors with a possible pretext for intervention in Liberian affairs. [3]

To offset this loan and to hopefully get the diplomatic support of Britain (it was thought that concessions to British concerns would get the backing of the Foreign Office who, within limits, still recognised Liberian independence) against France, the Monrovian government decided

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1 For American policy towards Liberia, see Raymond W. Bixler, The Foreign Policy of the United States in Liberia, Pageant Press, New York (1957), 1st Edition, Washington knew about the 1892 treaty in 1893, but it could take no action since Monrovia maintained that the treaty was "concluded voluntarily" pp. 18 - 20.

2 Hertslet III pp. 1134 - 1135, Article 5. recognised the frontiers of Liberia as agreed in the Convention, but France was at liberty to renegotiate the treaty "in the event of this independence being violated or in the event of the republic of Liberia abandoning any portion of the territories recognised as pertaining to her under the present convention."

3 Lawrence A. Marinelli, The New Liberia, Pall Mall Press, London (1964) p. 40; Hargreaves, Prelude, p. 87; R.C.F. Maugham, The Republic of Liberia, London, (1920) pp. 92 - 93. See also J.D. Hargreaves

to induce British financiers to get concessions in Liberia.

One such group which took an interest in the rubber industry of Liberia included Arthur Ponsonby, brother of the 8th Earl of Bessborough and Lord Raglan, Ponsonby's brother-in-law. This syndicate bought the concessions of a monopoly to gather and export rubber from the original concessionaire on payment of £20,000 in 1890. [1]

Ponsonby, encouraged by some Liberians for example, Hayman, Liberian Consul-general in London and Dr. E.W. Blyden, an eminent scholar, tried to press the idea of a protectorate on Lord Salisbury, to counteract French inroads on Liberian Sovereignty. Both Salisbury and Rosebery (who preferred co-operation with the U.S.A.) were not disposed to a more formal relationship with the republic in the form of protection or alliance; Salisbury, however, disapproved of attempts by other powers such as France and Germany to bring her under their control. [2]

Germany had no contiguous territories with Liberia, but she had important trading interests. The famous Woermann Shipping Line had established business in the republic in the 1850's and other German firms had since set up business there, eg. Wiechers and Nelson. In the late 80's German interest had increased tremendously and German financiers held nearly half of the bonds of the Liberian debt. [3]

When the German Consul in Liberia made threatening demands on the

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1 CO879/53 Af (West) No. 558. Memo on the present position of Liberia by G. Grindle March 25, 1898; CO879/80/35395 Memo by H.J. Streatfield, April, 10, 1901; Foley, British policy in Liberia, pp. 80 - 92.

2 Ibidem.

3 Ibidem. Adolf Woermann, Head of the Hamburg shipping line had shares in the rubber syndicate but he withdrew them in 1898.

republic for compensations for some German ships which were wrecked on the coast, it was feared that Germany might use her economic interests to pose political claims. Milner reported from South Africa that the annexation of Liberia was talked of openly in official circles in German South West Africa. [1] Salisbury warned Hatzfeldt, when the latter told him of a possible German démarche on behalf of German bondholders against Liberia, not to repeat the Kiaochow episode. Britain would "look with the greatest possible aversion upon any proceding tending to diminish its independence or the area of its territory." In December 1898, Britain and the U.S.A. by exchange of notes expressed their interest in the independence of the republic after which the German Consul was disavowed and Berlin disclaimed any ambition on Liberia. [2]

Apart from these intermittent caveats Salisbury did not commit himself deeply. His successor, Lord Lansdowne, however, pursued a more active policy in Liberia and he showed much more readiness to resist French and German incursions by encouraging greater British economic involvement in the republic. [3]

He was fortunate in having an enlightened politician to work with. Arthur Barclay, Barbadian born, was State Treasurer in the Gibson government during the first years of Lansdowne's foreign secretaryship, and he later became President. He believed British capital and economic activity would help to regenerate Liberia, buttress Monrovia's

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1 Harry Johnston, Liberia, pp. 290 - 291; Bixler, American policy in Liberia, p. 20; CO879/51/15446 Milner to Chamberlain June 22, 1898 encl. report from J.J. Cleverly, Resident Magistrate in Walfisch Bay.

2 B.D. I No. 70. Salisbury to Gough, June 23, 1898; CO879/80/35395 Memo by Strantfield April 10, 1901; Bixler, op cit. p. 20. The warning was repeated in 1899. B.D. I No. 105 Salisbury to Lascelles, January 11, 1899.

3 Foley, p. 123.

hold over the indigenous people and strengthen her title to the territory. British support and friendship would also help Liberia's position at the conference table when her boundaries with France came to be settled. [1]

For these reasons Barclay led a delegation which was favourably received in London by the British government. Briefly, the Liberians asked for the delimitation of the Anglo-Liberian boundary as fixed by the Blyden - Havelock agreement of 1882; British help on the delimitations of the Franco-Liberian border, i.e. with a qualified surveyor and financial aid to meet expenses; a resident British Consul in Liberia; loans to cover expenses in the Anglo-Liberian boundary plus a British surveyor to represent Liberia; finally they expressed a desire for closer union with Great Britain "in the event of the present government being unable to maintain its position." [2]

If the Foreign Office were having qualms that this last request might have great implications, the Liberians had a strong advocate in Joseph Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary. [3] He urged Lansdowne to agree to the request for the appointment of a British Consul in Monrovia and to accommodate the Liberians in a loan to delimit their frontiers. His main concern wasthat the unsettled state of affairs on the Liberian frontiers with her neighbours might lead to confrontations and clashes between French and British forces as they had in Waima in 1893. [4]

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1 Foley, p. 108ff; Johnston, p. 300; Marinelli, p. 42.

2 FO47/38 Notes by Sir M. Ommaney on interview with the Liberian delegates at the Colonial Office August 14, 1901.

3 FO47/38 C.O. to F.O. August 20, 1901.

4 See Fyfe, op cit. pp. 490 - 520 for story of the Waima incident.

Chamberlain's concern was justified by the reports from the Governor of Sierra Leone about raids across the border by the Kissis from Liberia. For the reason already stated, Sierra Leone troops could not pursue these raiders into Liberian territory as provided by the 1896 treaty. An undelimited frontier also gave the French, who were making forward moves into Liberia, a free hand to absorb more territory. [1] These considerations probably helped to induce the Foreign Office to accept the Liberian proposals almost in entirety.

A Consul was appointed, the loans were approved of and a surveyor was lent to Liberia. The Liberians were also asked to keep open 13 specified ports for commerce. His Majesty's Government did not conclude an alliance or treaty of protection, but they promised to confer "with the government of the republic as to the best means of securing its independence and the integrity of the territory if at any time the Liberian government shall have reasons to think they are endangered." [2]

The practical implementation of this agreement, which was designed to define and fortify Liberia, had some unfortunate results. The joint Anglo-Liberian Boundary Commission appointed in January, succeeded in demarcating the Sierra Leone-Liberian boundary in June, 1903. The boundary was defined thus....."Commences at Beacon No. 1., erected on the right bank of Ulofu (Uldofu) River at the point where the 13th Meridian West of Paris (10° 33' - 46.5 West of Greenwich) cuts the

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1 CO879/80/35395 Memo by Streatfield April 10, 1901.

2 The agreement was signed on August 29, 1901 and ratified on July 15, 1903; FO47/39 Anglo-Liberian agreement of August 29 1901; Foley, pp. 103 - 114; FO403/350 F.O. to C.O. June 4, 1904. The first Consul was ErrolMacdonell, son of a British diplomat; see Sir Harry Johnston, The Story of my Life, Garden City, New York (1923) p. 373.

river, and follows this meridian in a southerly direction till the Birwa (Bewa) at low water becomes the boundary till the coast is reached." The Commission also proved that certain areas such as Kanrelahun 'just on the border, with whose chief, T.J. Allridge, Travelling Commissioner in Sierra Leone, had signed a treaty on April 7, 1890) which were hitherto thought to be in British territory were within Liberian territory. [1]

The Sierra Leone authorities did not like this situation. They had earmarked these areas for the possible extension of the colony and now they were to give them up to an administration which had shown itself incapable of pacifying the unruly tribes in her hinterland. What rankled more was the fact that the French, whose activities in the western border of Liberia posed a threat to the economic plans of Sierra Leone (who hoped to establish a railway terminus at Baiima which would tap the trade of the Liberian hinterland), appeared to be in a stronger position, because of the undelimited state of their borders with Liberia, to absorb more of the republic's territory. [2]

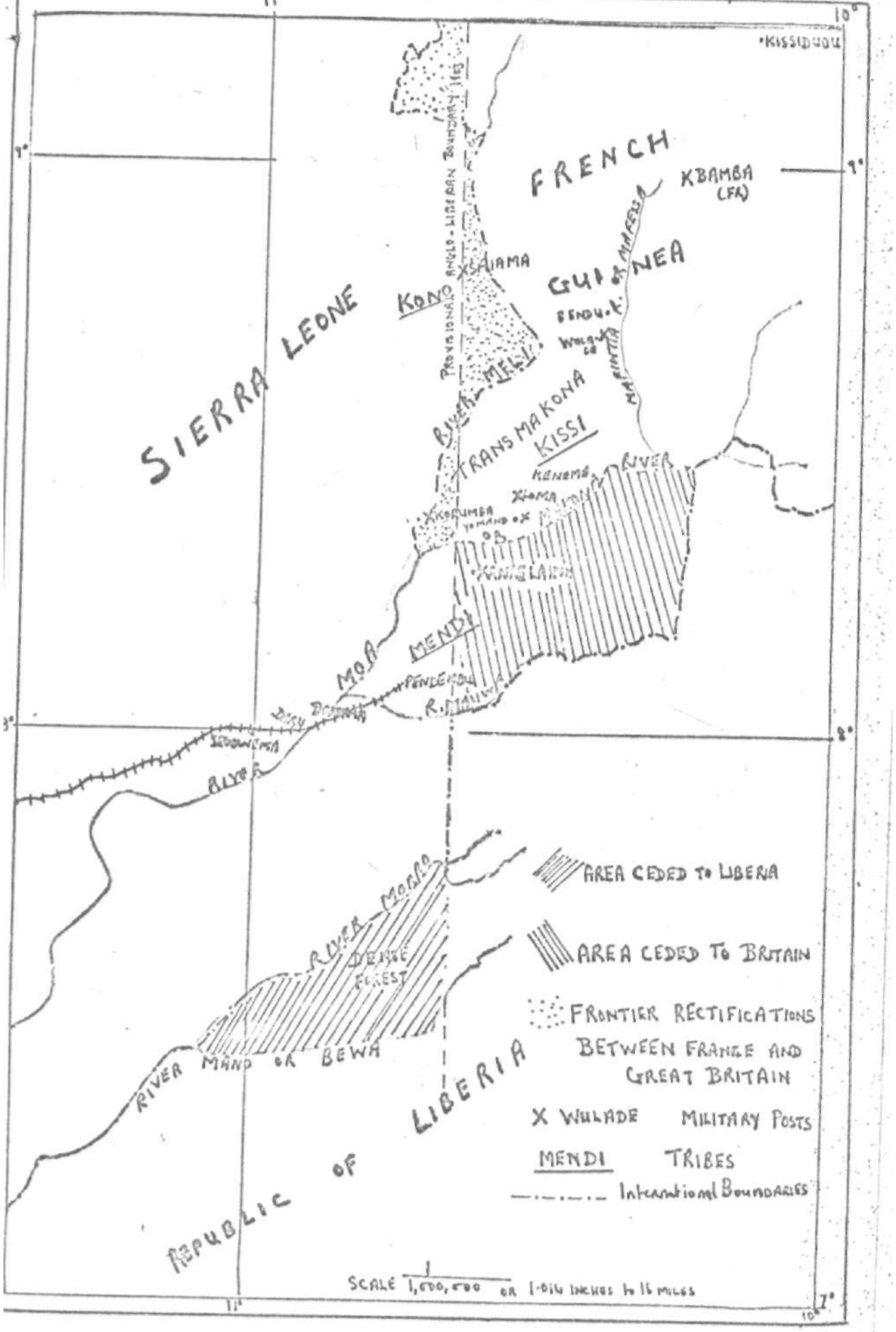
Probably this resentment, and the resurgence of the Kissi raids in 1903 - 1904, which resulted in damages and losses suffered by natives under British protection totalling £5,660, moved the Freetown government to pursue its own brand of "frontier imperialism" - a policy

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1 The Boundary Commissioners were ; J. Macarthy, a retired Surveyor-General of Siam and formerly of the India Survey Dept.; P.A. Talbert and J.P. Milne (Liberia); Capt, H.D. Pearson, R.E.; Lt. E.W.Cox, R.E.; Lt. R.A. Cockburn; Sgt. A.R. Briscoe and Lt.Cpl. Dillon (Britain). See E.W. Cox, "The Anglo-Liberian Boundary Commission 1903" The Professional Papers of the Corps of Royal Engineers (R.E.I. occasional papers) (1904) Vol. XXX pp. 35 - 49.; Foley, pp. 108 - 114; FO47/39 F.O. to Macarthy January 1, 1903; C0879/80/30868 C.O. to F.O. August 12, 1902. Bewa is the other name for Mano River. For the history of Kanrelahun see Arthur Abraham and Barry Isaac, "A further note on the history of the Luawa Chiefdom", Sierra Leone Studies, (Ed.) E.W. Blyden III New Series No. 24. (January 1969) pp. 69 - 74.; Fyfe op cit. pp. 540 - 541. See Map on page 124

2 C0879/80/12887 Gov. King-Harman to Chamberlain March 13, 1902; His other letters can be found in C0879/80/18615; C0879/80/18511/5; FO47/39 C.O. to F.O. Jan. 16, 1904 forwarding letter from governor; Minutes by Farnell; C0879/80/11299 King-Harman to Lyttleton Mar.9,1904

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which did not often get the warm approval of Whitehall. His Majesty's Government tended to view the inability of Liberia to extend her control over the interior tribes with sympathy; and they did not want complications with France arising out of the Franco-Liberian treaty of 1892.[1] Moreover, Lansdowne believed that the economic development of Liberia by a British Company would enable Monrovia, whose economic strength would have improved, to assert herself in the interior. For these reasons Lansdowne rejected Governor King-Harman's request that the Anglo-Liberian boundary report should not be accepted until Liberia had established her authority in the North-East frontier.[2]

Lyttleton, the Colonial Secretary, was uneasy about Sierra Leone troops pursuing Marauders into Liberia; and even when he gave his approval, as a result of the governor's incessant requests for permission, it was with the clear warning that the governor should get the consent of Liberia and that "His Majesty's Government (are) not prepared to sanction a permanent occupation of Liberian territory."[3] Despite all this, such was the situation, i.e. the need for a pacified frontier, that the pursuit of Marauders ended in the occupation of Liberian territory and the execution of political acts by British agents. The Kissi raiders led by Kaffura, an important Kissi Chief, were defeated in March 1905 and their leader became a fugitive. The

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1 CO879/88/43723 Probyn to Lyttleton Dec. 16, 1904. Probyn was a lawyer by profession. He began his West African service in Nigeria where he was Secretary to the Governor of Southern Nigeria. He took up appointment as Governor of Sierra Leone in July 1903.

2 FO47/39 F.O. to C.O. Feb. 9, 1904.

3 CO879/88/336 C.O. to F.O. January 9, 1905; CO879/88/6771 Probyn to Lyttleton Feb. 18, 1905; CO879/88/6919 Lyttleton to Probyn March 8, 1905 tel.

tribes over whom Kaffura had held sway, elected chiefs under the auspices of the Colonial forces. [1] Lyttleton had not wanted to prolong British occupation in Liberian territory, but when Governor Probyn argued that it was necessary to build posts, which would enable the new Kissi chiefs to establish their authority, he acquiesced. And the Foreign Office assured Liberia that these outposts would be withdrawn as soon as possible; their presence did not mean any designs on Liberian territory. [2]

The occupation lasted for about six more years. The reasons are understandable. Although Governor Probyn, who had advocated occupation in 1905, was equally insistent on withdrawal in 1906 because of the cost of occupation (calculated to amount to £10,000 in 1906), there were difficulties in deciding to withdraw. If the troops withdrew there was a possibility that the raids would continue and the absence of an effective authority in the area would encourage lawlessness which would overspill to Sierra Leone. [3] Secondly, the chiefs who had been elected under British auspices needed time to consolidate their power and to be strong enough to resist a return of Kaffura, who was reported to be intriguing with the French. [4] Monrovia was also unable to establish its authority in the area. On the other hand, withdrawal of British troops or an understanding with the French government, i.e. if the occupation continued, might reduce the

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1 CO879/88/7540 Probyn to Lyttleton March 8, 1905 tel; CO879/88/10414 Lyttleton to Probyn March 13, 1905; CO879/33/10427 Probyn to Lyttleton, March 18, 1905; CO879/88/13290 Probyn to Lyttleton April 20, 1905.

2 CO879/88/18910 Probyn to Lyttleton May 17, 1905; CO879/88/21028 F.O. to C.O. June 17, 1905.

3 CO879/88/4608 Probyn to Elgin January 26, 1906; CO879/88/8321 Probyn to Elgin Feb. 21, 1906.

4 CO879/88/32349 Probyn to Elgin August 30, 1906; see also CO879/88/29190; 34004; 38237.

possibility of a local Anglo-French clash.[1] The French did not however, appear to be perturbed by the unsettled state of the frontier; indeed they freely admitted it enabled their troops to occupy more Liberian territory. It was even suggested that they were capitalizing on the entente with Britain to advance further into the hinterland of the republic, where the Sierra Leone authorities did not want French power to be established.[2] The solution was to have a clearly defined Anglo-Liberian boundary and a Franco-Liberian boundary. This was the object of the colonial government of Sierra Leone and the Colonial Office. It was not without some pressure and agitation from these two that the Foreign Office under a foreign secretary who was less sympathetic to Liberia, induced the French to agree to a delimitation of their boundary with Liberia.[3]

The 1892 Franco-Liberian Convention left the frontier inland unsettled and the territory was not very well known. Liberian inability to open up the hinterland was taken advantage of by the French who, after a series of explorations found certain errors in the geographical data on which the treaty had been based, now posed further claims on Liberia.[4] For example, the Duobe, west of the river Cavally was now claimed as the boundary. The Liberians were willing to settle the question and they assured Paris that Macarthy (who was appointed to

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1 CO879/88/21937 Probyn to Lyttleton June 8, 1905. See Map on p.124.

2 FO367/13/37358 H.H. Johnston to Clarke Oct. 27, 1906; Johnston, Story of my Life, p. 376.

3 CO879/96/923 Major E.C. Palmer D.S.O. to Staff Officer, W.A.F.F. Memo of conversation with Antrobus, January 7, 1907; CO879/96/5523 Probyn and Palmer to C.O. Feb. 12, 1907 Joint Memo suggesting frontier rectifications with France giving her the entire control of Kissi country.

4 FO47/39 de Bunsen to Lansdowne July 19, 1903; Auguste Terrier et Charles Maurey, L'Expansion francaise, pp. 404 - 411.

represent Liberia in the Franco-Liberian Boundary Commission and against whom the French had protested because he was British) was not assigned to that post with the intention of giving territory to Britain or to dispute French claims. Lansdowne was prepared to afford advice to Liberia "should (they) desire it..... which it may be in their (i.e. H.M.G.) power to give", when he heard about the French demands. [1]

In offering this help Lansdowne was doing no more than implementing the Anglo-Liberian treaty of 1901; yet in 1904 when Johnson and Dossen, the Liberian delegates to the Paris talks, called at the Foreign Office to ask for British assistance, they were told that Lansdowne could not interfere, but he would be glad to know the progress of the talks. [2] This volte-face might have come as a result of the new colonial entente with France which perhaps advised against giving too open a support to Liberia. But it was more likely that Lansdowne hoped that a strong Liberia, pumped with British capital, might be able to resist French encroachment by establishing its authority in territories beyond all dispute. Hence the emphasis was economic support for Liberia. The Colonial Office's proposal of May 1904, for an Anglo-French protectorate over the Liberian hinterland was rejected on the grounds that British aims would be achieved by working through Powney's chartered privileges and by giving them such "an official encouragement and support as was possible" to stabilize the republic. [3]

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1 FO47/39 F.O. to de Bunsen August 23, 1903.

2 FO47/39 F.O. to Macdonell June 22, 1904.

3 FO403/350 C.O. to F.O. May 17, 1904; F.O. to C.O. July 14, 1904; Foley, p. 135. An additional reason for Lansdowne's rejection of the C.O.'s proposal was the fear of international complications with other powers viz. U.S.A. and Germany.

"Powney's chartered privileges" were successors of mining concessions which Colonel Cecil Powney, an ex-Guards officer and investor, had bought from the original holders T.H.Marling's Union Mining Company for £[illegible] in 1904. By 1905 he was encouraged enough, after he had had talks with Liberian officials, to reorganise his business. The Company's name was changed from West African Gold Concessions Ltd. to the Liberian Chartered Development Company. Sir Harry Johnston, about whom more will be heard later in this study, was appointed as Manager of the new company. An ex pro-consul and a firm believer in the development of "backward races" by the "more advanced European Nations," Johnston advised Powney to invest in rubber, of which there was abundant supply in the lush vegetation of Liberia. Powney succeeded in getting concessions in both the rubber and mining industries. The rubber sector was under the control of the Monrovia Rubber Company.[1] Johnston became Managing Director of both concerns. Between July 1904, and December 1905, Johnston successfully concluded negotiations with Liberia which established two British syndicates, the Monrovia Rubber Company and the Liberian Development Company, which had extensive privileges.

The Liberian Development Company was the more important. For as it turned out it acquired something like the powers and responsibilities of a Chartered Company. The Co pany was given exclusive rights to search for minerals in specified areas; extensive though not exclusive, concessions to open a bank and issue paper money, to build railways,

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1 Roland Oliver, Sir Harry Johnston and the Scramble for Africa, London (1957) pp. 89 - 103; 258, 339 - 342; R.C.F. Maugham, The Republic of Liberia, London (1920) p. 69ff. Maugham was British Consul-General in Monrovia Dec. 1912 - 1913 on an acting capacity. It was made permanent on April 1, 1913; Johnston, Liberia, p. 300; My Life, p. 372ff; Foley p. 133ff.

to construct roads, gas and electric works, to construct telegraph and telephone communications, and to build docks etc. [1] The company itself had not enough capital; this was provided by D'Erlanger and Co., an important banking house in the City of London. D'Erlanger offered a loan of £100,000 on condition that the British government lent some official support and that the Liberian government agreed to have their customs organised by men nominated by the Foreign Office. The latter having already decided to use the company as an instrument of policy were prepared to oblige. Even the treasury department under Austen Chamberlain, Chancellor of the Exchequer, rendered some help in securing the loan. [2]

The L.D.C. subsequently became an agent for the D'Erlanger loan. The Foreign Office agreed to nominate the British officers for the Liberian customs though it was made clear to D'Erlanger and the L.D.C. that this support was unofficial. French and German intrigues were weathered and agreement was signed on December 29, 1905. In addition to financing development projects already referred to, the loan was to pay off internal debts (e.g. the redemption of Liberian bonds in German hands). [3]

While Johnston was concluding these negotiations, he was asked by the Liberians to negotiate on their behalf a favourable boundary with France. At first he was welcomed, but Paris later changed its attitude.

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1 FO367/13/15111 Memo by Sir Harry Johnston May 2, 1906; Oliver, op cit. p. 343; Johnston, My Life, pp. 374 - 376.

2 FO403/350 Memo by A.A. Clarke Dec. 1904. Clarke was the Official responsible for the Liberian question; Johnston, My Life, p. 375; Alex. Johnston, The Life and Letters of Sir Harry Johnston, Jonathan Cape, London (1929) p. 254.

3 FO371/187/1745 Wallis to F.O. January 13, 1906; Johnston, My Life pp. 375 - 376; Oliver, p. 343; Foley, p. 141ff. T.J. Allridge and J.M. Hamilton were the first Britons to be nominated to the Customs post. Allridge resigned soon, on the grounds of illness, and he was replaced by W.J. Lamont.

For one thing, Johnston was suspected because of his interested position as Director of L.D.C., an organisation the French never wholly accepted since it was presumed the company would thwart their ambitions and would increase British influence.

Nevertheless through informal meetings with M. Baillard of the French Colonial Office (African department)and Col. Binger, Under Secretary in the Hotel de Pavillon, Johnston contrived to reach preliminary agreement on the Franco-Liberian boundary in December, 1905. The French agreed to renounce their claims west of the Cavally river in return for the trans Makona territory, already under occupation by French posts, in the north west of Liberia. [1]

Here the matter ended for some time. The French refused to accept Johnston as Liberian plenipotentiary. M.Crommelin, a former Dutch diplomat, was appointed in Johnston's place. This did not make any progress. Monrovia delayed in sending instructions to Crommelin to sign the agreement and the French made excuses though it was becoming obvious that they preferred the uncertain situation. [2]

Anticipating the successful conclusion of the Franco-Liberian boundary dispute, the governor of Sierra Leone began to press the Colonial Office to agree to the withdrawal of British forces from Wulade since the expense of keeping them there was becoming unbearable. If the forces could not be withdrawn, an alternative proposal was to lease from Liberia that part of her territory which was near the railway terminus of Sierra Leone. The development of trade under a strong

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1 FO47/38 Minutes by A.W. Clarke May 23, 1905; FO367/13/15111 Memo by Sir Harry Johnston May 2, 1906; FO47/38 Memo by H.H. Johnston on conversation with M. Binger (N.D.).

2 Ibidem; Foley, pp. 198 - 220; Johnston, My life, p. 376. FO367/13/34105 Johnston to Clarke Oct. 6, 1906; FO367/13/37358 same to same Oct. 27, 1906.

rule would increase revenue which would help to pay for troops who would maintain peace on the border. [1]

It was a sensible arrangement, if Liberia could agree in the first place, but it would also raise complications with France who might want to invoke article 5. of the 1892 treaty, thus Lord Elgin pointed out that : "It is the object of His Majesty's Government to secure that Liberian territory should be respected by other Powers, and if a lease of a territory such as you suggest were granted to His Majesty's Government there is little doubt that some of the other powers interested would insist on a similar arrangement being made in their favour. The resulting state of affairs is one which can not be contemplated with equanimity and I trust that you will agree with me in thinking that it is therefore impracticable to proceed with your proposal."

At the same time the Colonial Secretary refused to withdraw the troops, since it was vital to maintain peace in that area. In short, the Colonial Office preferred a maintenance of the status quo until efforts had been made to put matters on a more satisfactory basis. [2] For that matter Elgin declined to give protection to Chief Fabunda of Kanrelahun; though he approved, confidentially, Probyn's assurance to Fabunda that if the troops were withdrawn he would be given ample notice to strengthen his frontier against hostile chiefs. This promise was not

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1 C0879/88/10108 Probyn to Elgin March 3, 1906; C0879/88/13137 Probyn to Elgin March 28, 1906.

2 C0879/88/11103 Elgin to Probyn May 22, 1906; C0879/88/8321 Elgin to Probyn April 4, 1906 tel. forbidding the withdrawal of Sierra Leone troops from Liberia; see also R. Hyam, Elgin and Churchill at the Colonial Office, pp. 200 - 201.

enough for the Chief and in November, 1906 he removed his headquarters to a spot within the portion of his chiefdom which lay in Sierra Leone.[1]

Liberia also tried to induce the Foreign Office to take a more active interest in her frontier dispute with France. She wanted the Foreign Office to represent her interests in the negotiations, to supply her with a qualified surveyor to act as commissioner who would study the geographical features of the frontier in the event that there was no delimitation, for the establishment of Liberian posts.[2] The Foreign Office, however, did not want to excite French suspicion of their action. Recalling French objection to MacCarthy in 1903, they rejected the Liberian requests and warned her not to place outposts on the frontier, emphasizing that the unofficial Binger-Johnston agreement had established clear boundary features on the Cavally and Makona. This attitude was certainly unsympathetic, but even Harry Johnston endorsed it; there was no need to send a costly expedition until the French refused to honour the 1905 agreement.[3]

Johnston changed his tune when he learned from Binger and Roume that France was content to have an undefined frontier.[4] In the letters which arrived at the Foreign Office at regular intervals, Johnston catalogued French insincerity on the agreement. He also suggested ceding certain British territories, such as "some of our thousands of square miles of unproductive steppes in Northern Nigeria" and the Gambia, to France, in order that the latter might give up the 1892 treaty.

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1 CO879/88/28828 Probyn to Elgin July 21, 1906; Elgin to Probyn August 10, 1906; CO367/44/129 C.O. to F.O. January 1, 1907.

2 FO367/13/14623 Wallis to Grey April 12, 1906; F.O. to Wallis May 15, 1906.

3 FO367/13/15111 Memo by Johnston May 2, 1906.

4 See Note 2. page 122.

She might be inclined to agree for the sake of the entente! In gratitude for this help, Liberia would cede some territory on the frontier with Sierra Leone. [1] Naive and visionary as some of Johnston's suggestions might look, they were by no means beyond the realms of practical politics, for as this study seeks to show arrangements like these were considered at some time or other to settle conflicting interests and preserve peace. In this instance the Foreign Office not only made a friendly démarche to Paris but also put a proposal in January 1907, which amounted to a suggestion of an Anglo-French pressure on Liberia. [2] Clarke suggested to Binger that the two powers should press on Barclay, who was expected to visit Europe, especially France, in order to expedite the negotiations on the frontier, to agree to the appointment of a European treasurer and the establishment of a police force under European officers. The Foreign Office hoped that this arrangement could be used as a lever to induce the President to carry out the wishes of London. The latter might also promise to offer her good offices in the boundary talks if the Liberian President acquiesced in the arrangement. [3]

Although Binger showed himself disposed to such a co-operation, the French later withdrew from their promise for fear of antagonizing Germany who might resent such a co-operation. At any rate the visit

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1 FO367/13/18109 Johnston to Erskine Sept. 1, 1906; FO367/13 Johnston to Clarke August 30, 1906; FO367/13/43105 Johnston to Clarke Oct. 6, 1906; FO367/13/37358 same to same Oct. 27, 1906; FO367/44/9717 Memo by H. Johnston March 25, 1907; FO403/390 Memo respecting Liberia by T.A. Spring-Rice (F.O. Dec. 31, 1907).

2 FO367/13/41470 Johnston to Clarke Dec. 9, 1906; F.O. Minutes; CO879/88/47766 F.O. to C.O. Dec. 27, 1906 reporting Grey's interview with Cambon; Minutes by E. Barrington and E.A.W. Clarke on FO367/44/129.

3 FO403/390 Memo on Liberia by Spring-Rice, Dec. 31, 1907.

of President Barclay to Paris in the autumn of 1907 helped to reach a settlement on the frontier question. By the agreement of September 8, 1907 France renounced her claims for the Trans Makona territory.[1] This opened way for the settling of Britain's own frontier problems with Liberia as well as adjusting the new frontier with France. Hitherto, it had been an Anglo-Liberian boundary, the new agreement replaced it with an Anglo-French frontier. The Moa or Makona became French closing free access to Sierra Leone to trade with part of the Liberian interior. The Colonial Office now began to press the Foreign Office to renegotiate with France for a new boundary which would divide the Mendis and Konos of Sierra Leone from the Kissis and to give special consideration to the case of Kanrelahun. Negotiations dragged on till 1911 because the Liberians did not ratify the 1907 treaty and the hostile attitude to European powers after 1907 made any chance of an agreement hopeless.[2]

Meanwhile the expected rejuvenation of Liberia by economic means through the agency of the L.D.C. was not being realised. In October 1907, negotiations were started by the President of Liberia to abrogate the L.D.C.'s middleman position in the D'Erlanger loan of 1906. On November 8, 1907 an agreement was signed by which the Monrovian government assumed full and direct responsibility for the loan.[3] The reasons for this rupture and their discussion need not

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1 Ibidem; F0367/44/31234 Bertie to Grey Sept. 18, 1907 (tel.)

2 F0367/44/31322 Grey to Bertie Sept. 17, 1907; F0367/44/32996 Minutes on Franco-Liberian agreement Oct. 4, 1907; F0367/44/36248 C.O. to F.O. Nov. 1, 1907.

3 Foley, p. 166ff; Marinelli, p. 42; Oliver, p. 344.

detain us. The causes put forward by writers were: that the Company was believed to have misappropriated funds assigned to it for banking and construction and when Barclay asked Johnston to account for 200,000 dollars expended, he refused.[1] Johnston himself blamed W. J. Lamont, the British Inspector of the Liberian Customs and B. Wallis, the Consul, for spreading rumours of a misuse of funds.[2] Foley, on the other hand, argues that among other things, the hostility of some of the members of the ruling True whig party to a British concern coupled with the shaky foundation of the company brought about the breakdown. Within two years the company had only constructed 15 miles of dirt road in Careysburg district and had expended 163,882 dollars.[3]

Perhaps other reasons for the failure of the L.D.C. were Grey's own lack of interest in Liberia and the rather unfortunate choices of the men who were to assist the company.

Grey reluctantly continued Lansdowne's policy in nominating British officers to oversee the Liberian customs. In 1912 he admitted: "I did not at all like the Liberian matter and would not have it done had it not been in fulfillment of a pledge given by a previous government."[4]

According to his estimate Liberia was of dubious value and he did not want to extend British interests nor get involved with the other powers interested in the republic, especially since one of them was an entente partner. When it was suggested that a gun boat would enable

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1. Marinelli, p. 42 cf. Oliver, p. 344.

2. FO367/113 (Case 611) Johnston to Clarke Feb. 3, 1908; same to same Feb. 7, 190[illegible] Johnston resigned his Directorships on January 31, 1903 being "not particularly anxious to die for Liberia ..."

3. Foley, p. 166ff.

4. Minute on FO367/239/22213 Memo by Sir Eyre Crowe, May 23, 1912; printed in B.D. X 11 No. 295.

Lamont to move more freely between the different ports of Liberia and that it would cut down smuggling thereby increasing customs receipts which would swell the revenue of the republic and incidentally consolidate British position, Grey, though he was prepared to consider the proposal, would not fight the treasury to give this gun boat on easy terms. [1]

In the Foreign Office E.A.W. Clarke, when not exasperated by the ineptitude of the "wretched herd of negroes" was almost alone in advocating strengthening British position and bolstering up the republic by such support in terms of men and materials, for example, a gun boat, as would prevent it from falling under the sway of France or Germany. In his memo of January 1907, Clarke urged that for the sake of trade and influence as well as the interests of Sierra Leone, Britain must help the republic. [2]

While admitting the logic of Clarke's arguments Grey's minutes on the memo clearly defined his policy towards Liberia : I do not object to risking an old gun boat in the venture and I should like it done, but the case of asking the Treasury to make a grant is too weak. Britain has enough tropical territory without adding Liberia. It is better to develop what she has. Liberia will never be worth anything until some strong power annexes it, and then that power will spend more than it got out of it. An independent Liberia assures an open market, but I do not believe we shall succeed in doing more to make Liberia lean increasingly

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1 Hyam, pp. 200 - 201; FO367/44/3228 Wallis to Grey January 28, 1907; FO367/44 Memo by E.A.W. Clarke January 21, 1907.

2 Ibidem.

on Britain. That means responsibility and eventually annexation or abandonment by Britain. There is an off-chance Liberia will stand on its own feet and that may mean an old gun boat, but I cannot fight the treasury. [1]

This view on Liberia became almost axiomatic. Whenever enquiries were made by other interested powers, such as the U.S.A., about British policy towards Liberia, Grey gave them the same answer; viz, Britain harboured no designs on the republic and she did not want to extend her obligations. [2]

While he did not intend to extend British authority he was at the same time not prepared to have a quarrel with Germany just a year after the first Moroccan crisis. In the early part of 1907 a German company from Cologne acquired a concession to lay cable from Liberia to Europe. [3] A British company, the African Direct Telegraph Company also angled for this concession. They wanted to establish a cable station at Monrovia to connect with both Freetown and London thereby shortening times of communications. An annual subsidy of £2,000 was asked for. Harry Johnston urged the Foreign Office to support the British company, since the scheme was of great importance. [4] Some members of the Foreign Office were disposed to giving support since the rejection of the German scheme by Liberia would wreck the hopes of an all German cable from Europe to German South West Africa. Grey

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1 Ibidem, Minutes by Grey.

2 FO367/44/4885 Grey to Howard Feb. 11, 1907.

3 FO367/44/6857 Wallis to Grey March 2, 1907. It later transpired that the legislature had only empowered the President to conclude an arrangement for laying down the cable. FO367/44/9819 Johnston to F.O. March 25, 1907.

4 Ibidem.

on the other hand was of the opinion that it rested with the Treasury and the Colonial Office to decide; the Foreign Office could have no responsibility for a monopoly : ...."if Liberia gives it she will rely upon our support to maintain it against German protests and it is really too weak a case on which to have another quarrel with Germany." [1]

Nonetheless Grey did make a move when the Director of the A.D.T.C. explained that the German scheme was part of their projected cable complex stretching from Europe to South America. Since the Colonial Office and other bodies such as the L.D.C. had agreed to pay a percentage of the £1,000 p.a. subsidy later asked for by the British company, the Foreign Office now found it easier to ask the Treasury, emphasizing British interests, to agree to pay the remaining sum of £200. [2] The Treasury were not impressed by the arguments and they turned down the request : "There is no precedent for subsidizing a cable to the territory of a foreign power.... do not consider that there is anything in the circumstances of the present case to justify them in departing from the established practice." [3]

Other commercial concerns found themselves unable to subscribe and the Germans were given an opportunity of pushing their negotiations through. [4] The cable scheme was to feature again a couple of years later and this time concern came from the U.S.A. What these two

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1 Ibidem, F.O. minutes.

2 F0367/44/9867 A.D.T.C. to F.O. March 26, 1907; F0367/44/14498 F.O. to Treasury, May 8, 1907.

3 F0367/44/26338 Treasury to F.O. August 5, 1907. A minute by Clarke noted :"bring up on April 1, 1908; on July 23, 1908 he minuted : "The question can be allowed to drop."

4 F0367/44/17005 letter of Liverpool and Manchester Chambers of Commerce to F.O. May 23, 1907.

episodes illustrate is that though Grey could not ignore British interests within limits, as put to him by those concerned, he was unwilling to get into complications with other powers and to increase British support for Liberia.

Unfortunately this unwillingness actively to support measures which would presumably enable the L.D.C. to carry out its programme did not help those officials seconded to the Liberian government, under the terms of the loan, who, by their high handed and ineptly magisterial attitude to the Liberian government, engendered hostility among certain circles in the republic towards the company which ended in the abrogation of its charter.

The D'Erlanger loan still had to be paid; and since the reorganisation of the customs by two officials nominated by the Foreign Office, remained a condition the latter had to undertake more direct obligations; the medium of the L.D.C. no longer existed. Apart from this, reports of Liberian justice, which Assistant Legal Adviser Kenrich of the Foreign Office said were such as to warrant a demand for extra-territorial jurisdictions, were causing the Foreign Office some concern. Extra-territorial jurisdiction was one step nearer to the eventual partition and Foreign Office's policy was opposed to this. The need to regularise the arrangement under the D'Erlanger loan after the demise of the L.D.C. and also the desire to reform Liberia's judiciary as an alternative to a demand for extra-territoriality led to the Foreign Office informing President Barclay in June 1907 that the Secretary of State would like to see him if he visited Europe. [1]

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1 FO403/390 Memo on Liberia by T.A. Spring-Rice Dec. 31, 1907.

On his way to Paris, Barclay visited London where he was received by Clarke and Sir Harry Johnston. Of the issues discussed with the President, the administration of justice was the most important. The Foreign Office had a long list of complaints of Liberian injustice, but the following cases were the most important[1] : E.A. Ditchfield, Manager of Ditchfield Ltd. and Lloyd's Agent at Cape Palmas complained in January 1906 to the President of a false claim against Lloyd's for the loss of some logs. The letter was copied and a libel charge was filed against Ditchfield by J.J. Dossen, the vice President of the Republic and a member of the Cape Palmas Mahogany Company. Ditchfield was subsequently fined 15,000 dollars, which was reduced on appeal, but he was arrested again. He died on 11th December, 1907. His assistant, Blenkinsop, was accused of preventing a Customs Officer from executing his lawful duty after an argument had arisen between him and Gibson, a Liberian Customs Officer. The latter had struck him. After several appearances in court he refused to pay a bond of 758 dollars, and he was put in gaol where he died on September 11th, 1907, in mysterious circumstances.[2]

D. Attia, a Moorish Jew, but a British subject, trading in Lower Buchanan, had been deprived of his property by the action of certain agents working for a Liberian syndicate. He fought the case in Court and won, but compensations were not forthcoming.

Hunt, a British subject from the West Indies and an ex-Army Sergeant, who allegedly murdered his wife while he was suffering from brain fever, was chained in a small cell. The Monrovia Government denied that he was a British subject.[3]

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1. FO403/390 Memo on conversation with President Barclay, E.A.W. Clarke Sept. 2, 1907.
2. FO367/83/3283 Wallis to F.O. January 7, 1908; FO403/403/9386 Conf. Print on Liberia, Dec. 31, 1908.
3. Ibidem.

Clarke discussed all these cases with Barclay and the latter promised to look into them, for instance, he secured the release of Ditchfield from prison. Before the President left he and Clarke reached an agreement on a programme of reforms which was nothing more than the plan Clarke and Binger had discussed earlier in 1907. These were :- 1. The increase of customs staff by three more Europeans i.e. British; 2. Appointment of Lamont as financial adviser to the government with substantial powers and a seat in the treasury; 3. Creation of a frontier force under a European officer and 4. Reform of the judiciary. They soon proved to be inadequate or incapable of working.[1] For one thing Wallis's despatches tended to show that there had been no improvement in the dispensation of justice, rather judgements were a travesty. The death of Ditchfield raised a clamour for compensation and vigorous actions by the British government against the Liberians. The African Trade section of the Incorporated Chamber of Commerce of Liverpool urged the Foreign Office to cause "full investigations to be made into the circumstance in which both gentlemen had died and if necessary to demand satisfaction and compensation."[2] Wallis pressed Grey to claim extra-territoriality. Though some of the staff were inclined to swing with public opinion the senior members

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1 FO403/402/9386 Confidential Print on Liberia Dec. 31, 1908; FO403/390 Memo by Clarke Sept. 2, 1907.

2 FO367/83/7446 African Trade Section of the Incorporated Chamber of Commerce to F.O. March 2, 1908; F.O. to Chamber of Commerce March 11, 1908; FO367/83/10224 London Chamber of Commerce to F.O. March 24, 1908; F.O. to Chamber of Commerce March 31, 1908. In both cases they were told that the British Consul was making enquiries, as soon as full facts were before H.M.G. they would decide whether to claim compensations.

including Charles Hardinge were anxious lest such an action would impair Anglo-Liberian relations, and in any case Liberia would not be able to pay the claims. [1] Monrovia, however, denied a miscarriage of justice in the Ditchfield and Blenkinsop cases, but Barclay wrote a pathetic letter to Clarke assuring him that he would put British advice into action : "Those who are placed at the head of administration during periods when reforms are the vogue have a rough time and occupy a difficult position. We must persuade, we must soothe. We must not threaten. Why parade the big stick. Everyone knows that it is within reach if you decide to use it." [2]

This virtue was what was sadly absent in the men who were to execute British policy on the spot. The reforms in themselves were well intentioned, but they embraced the most important arms of government. This appeared to men, who were either resentful about the attack on their sovereignty or who were frustrated because these do gooders would thwart their own plans to profit from their country's weakness, as an attempt to subvert the authority of Liberia. The actions of Wallis and Lamont strengthened their suspicions of British altruism.

Both men had held responsible posts in the neighbouring colony of Sierra Leone and they appeared to have transposed their "District Commissioner mentality" to the Liberian scene. Wallis's correspondence with Liberian officials were more like edicts than communications to an independent sovereign state. Words like "must", "promptly", "immediately" characterised the tone of his letters. His extreme

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1 FO367/83/9652 Wallis to Grey March 20, 1908 (Decipher); FO367/83/9735 Wallis to Grey March 2 (?) 1908; F.O. to Wallis April 6, 1908; Minutes on FO367/83/30662 Memo forwarded by Liberian Consul-General Hayman Sept. 2, 1908.

2 Ibidem; FO367/83/26473 Barclay to Clarke July 16, 1908; Clarke to Barclay August 22, 1908; FO367/83/30662 F.O. Memo on Liberia Oct. 5, 1908.

negrophobia was perhaps counter balanced by his neurosis about German intrigues. His assessment of the character of Liberians depended on a great deal on their reaction to British policy of reform. Thus Barclay, who supported the scheme had some really fine qualities even for a negro. Blyden was an 'able man' whose ideas on African questions relating to the negro race were sound. Those who opposed the scheme like Dossen and Howard were black-guards or ignorant, corrupt and conceited individuals.[1] The Consul had to bully the executive to accept the British reforms in February 1908.[2]

Lamont was no better than Wallis. At one point he suggested pensioning off the President and Executive and so-called heads of departments on £3,000p.a. and reducing Liberia to 100 sq. miles. By their excessive zeal and high handed actions these two men portrayed to the Liberians a picture of British policy which Grey did not intend and the unfulfilled threats of Wallis raised a feeling of hatred towards the British government, whose policy came to be held in contempt.[3]

It was scarcely surprising therefore, that in 1908 and 1909 Wallis began to flood the Foreign Office with alarmist reports of Anti-British feeling in Liberia as well as French importunities and German intrigues.

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1 Braithwaite C. Wallis F.G.S., F.R.G.S. educated at Eton and attended Military College, Oxford. Commissioned as Lieutenant 1895 and promoted Captain 1897. Appointed Asst. District Commissioner in Sierra Leone 1901. Confirmed as Consul in Monrovia on Feb. 1, 1906. Promoted Consul-General Nov. 18, 1908. W.J. Lamont - Supervisor of Customs, Gold Coast 1891. Acting Collector of Customs in Sierra Leone 1902 and seconded as Chief Inspector of Customs in Liberia April, 1905. Wallis's most damning critic was his successor Major Baldwin who relieved him in April 1909 after Monrovia had asked for his withdrawal. See FO458/24 Baldwin to Grey May 8, 1909. For some of Wallis's views on Liberian officials see FO458/21/13640 Wallis to Grey March 28, 1908 on Blyden; FO367/160/3874 Wallis to Grey January 8, 1909 on Barclay, Dossen and Howard etc.

2 FO367/113/7905 Wallis to Grey Feb. 20, 1908. Though Grey thanked him he reprimanded him for exceeding his orders. It was not H.M.G.'s intention to dictate to Liberia FO367/113/7905 Grey to Wallis April 6, 1908; Foley, p. 249ff.

3 FO367/113/7300 letter enclosed in Wallis to Grey Feb. 12, 1908.

An Anti-British faction headed by J.J. Dossen; Daniel E. Howard, the State Treasurer and Minister of War; F.E.R. Johnson, State Secretary; R.B. Richardson, Principal of the Liberian College and Associate Judge of the Supreme Court, backed by the German Consul began to press Barclay to pursue an anti-British policy and to dismiss all foreign employees, especially British, from the service of Liberia. Fear of British policy also resulted in a delegation of Gibson, Dossen and Dunbar to the U.S.A. in June 1908 to secure their assistance in guaranteeing Liberian territorial integrity and to helping her negotiate treaties with other powers. Berlin was also visited. [1]

Eventually, Barclay succumbed to the pressure of the legislature and on December 17, 1908 Cadell, the British Commander of the Liberian frontier force was dismissed. The act which created the force was repealed and replaced with a Reconstruction Act which provided for French officers in place of Britons. At a stroke the reform programme was destroyed. Grey's reaction was remarkably cool as opposed to Wallis' excitable pleas that Britain should intervene. [2]

The French and the Germans probably noting the anti-British feeling in Monrovia endeavoured to exploit the situation. The French pressed the republic to employ French officers in the customs and frontier force and an Inspector of Health. Fresh territorial claims were posed once more. In all this Grey was unwilling to intercede on behalf of Liberia. Because of the entente Grey was not prepared to

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1 FO367/160/3874 Wallis to Grey January 8, 1909; FO367/113/25946 de Salis to Grey July 24, 1908; Bixler, op cit. pp. 23 - 26.

2 FO367/160/4005 Wallis to Grey January 15, 1909 and Grey's minutes; Foley, 291ff. R.M. Cadell, Captain in the 4th Battalion East Surrey Regiment was seconded to Liberia as Commander of the Liberian police force. He was commissioned on January 1, 1908 with the rank of Major as Commandant and Inspector-General of the Frontier Force. FO367/83/7906 Wallis to Grey Feb. 20, 1908.

antagonise France nor did he want to incur responsibilities for Britain. Thus, Barclay was simply told that His Majesty's Government did not claim monopoly of appointments, though it would be unreasonable for France to demand the dismissal of British officials already employed. The President was not expected to acquiesce in such unreasonable demands.[1]

British reaction to alleged German intrigues was characteristically less generous. Wallis, Lamont and M. Rowell, agent of the B.B.W.A. in Liberia reported that Lange, the German Consul and agent of Woermann in Liberia had succeeded in getting resolutions passed by the Liberian legislature to create a State Bank supplied by German Capital of £30,000 with a charge of 3% on the total revenue collected in the country. In 1908 an act was passed implementing this. Herr Lange, who brought an autographed letter from the Kaiser to the President, was appointed financial adviser and manager of the bank. Dinklage, the Liberian Charge d'Affaires in Berlin, was said to be colluding with various elements backed by German agents to overthrow Barclay and supplant him with Dossen who was pro-German.[2]

All these reports might have been exaggerated, though it was possible that the German Consul tried to push German interests. The B.B.W.A. were anxious lest a German Bank should become a stiff competitor in an otherwise monopolistic(in West Africa, hence their extreme concern. The Auswartiges Amt did not seem to be willing to pump money into

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1. F0367/160/8021 Wallis to Grey, Dec. 5, 1908 and F.O. minutes; F.O. to Wallis January 27, 1909. Grey further rejected a suggestion by Wallis to appoint a British Inspector for the Liberian hinterland, which would amount to a virtual protectorate. F0367/160/806 Wallis to Grey, Dec. 22, 1908; F.O. to Wallis, Feb. 22, 1909; Terrier et Mourey, p. 410.

2. F0367/160/2692 Wallis to Grey, January 12, 1909; F0367/160/3174 Wallis to Grey, January 8, 1909; F0367/160/3875 January 9, 1909; 3998 January 12, 1909; 3999 January 13, 1909. All arrived at the F.O. on January 30, 1909; F0367/160/4460 Messrs. Woodin and Co. to B.B.W.A. January 16, 1909, memo handed to Langley.

Liberia and a rumour that Berlin had offered £10,000 to Liberia if she would not accept money from Britain was later denied by Von Schoen, German Foreign Secretary (Nov. 1907 - June 1910). It was stressed that the Imperial government was interested only in the German firms (2) which did business with Liberia. [1]

These despatches however, arrived at the time when Wallis had frantically told the Foreign Office that trouble was brewing and that this might lead to the overthrow of Barclay; and since Germany had unfortunately attached to itself the reputation of making brutal intervention in defence of her nationals' interests, the Foreign Office thought it expedient to send a memo to Metternich on February 11, 1909 explaining British policy. The memo urged Berlin to instruct the German Consul to help Barclay in his reforms. If chaos should result, Britain would have to support Barclay diplomatically (and this Grey did not want to do since it might mean a quarrel with another power.)[2]

On the other hand Grey seemed to be at one time speculating on an Anglo-German understanding in Liberia (?). The German Consul suggested in March 1908, what amounted to an invitation, that though His Majesty's Government had not informed Berlin about her reform programme, the German government would not oppose a programme of reforms provided they did not come from France and that German trading interests were not ignored. [3] The Foreign Office staff reaction is interesting since it adequately illustrates how the political relationship of the

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1 FO367/113/26842 de Salis to Grey, July 28, 1908; FO367/160/3999 press cutting from The Times, January 26, 1909.

2 FO367/160/2692 Minutes by Clarke and Langley, and British Memo to Metternich Feb. 11, 1909.

3 FO367/113/7298 Wallis to Grey, Feb. 10, Recd. March 2, 1908.

two powers influenced their attitude on the questions which emerged in Africa during this period. Clarke thought it was better not to bring Germany into the business. Langley was gratified by the gesture but he did not think there was any need to ask for help for which they would have to pay! Grey observed : "Another reason for being very careful about Liberia, if a re (sic) if a real political map would be made by following up this suggestion of the German Consul. The more responsibility we (take ?) for Liberia the more trouble we shall have and the return will be very small." [1]

It was now clear that Grey did not want Liberia; his staff was distrustful of German policy, but he did not want to quarrel with Germany or to jeopardize British relation with France, who was less inhibited in her ambitions on Liberia, by too open a criticism of her actions. At the same time, Grey did not want Liberia to fall under the sway of either power. The renewal of interest by the U.S.A. therefore came as a relief to the Foreign Secretary.

This late interest arose from the Gibson delegation already referred to, but the immediate impulse was the rumour of German intention to use Liberia as a jumping off base to Brazil, starting with the establishment of a cable line. On October 21, 1908 Sir Harry Johnston arrived in Washington on the invitation of the President who wanted to discuss Liberian affairs with reference to the Gibson mission and his projected visit to East Africa; he also went there to discuss educational matters with the American Colonization Society. The Foreign Office and Barclay knew of his mission and he became some sort of unofficial envoy for these two. [2]

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1 Minutes by Clarke, Langley and Grey on FO367/113/7298.

2 FO367/160/756 Bryce to Grey, Dec. 21, 1908 encl. letters from Johnston ; Johnston, My Life, pp. 377 - 378; Bixler, p. 25ff.

While in Washington he had talks with President Roosevelt, Secretary Root and Mr. Bacon and explained British policy to them. Johnston pointed out that the rumour about a German coaling station and cable lines in Liberia and the assumption of the General Manager of the L.D.C. by a German were without foundation. The Americans agreed; but they explained that because of their natural sympathy for the country which they had founded, they were going to help the Liberians by first sending a fact finding commission to Liberia and a Consul who would work with Britain. [1] Next they would set up a quadrilateral arrangement comprising U.S.A., France, Britain and Germany which would "limit Germany's influence and thwart her intrigues."

Grey was almost enthusiastic in his welcome of this American initiative. For the peace of Sierra Leone, the recovery of British capital lent or invested and the curtailment of British obligations Grey "welcomed any efforts of the U.S. government" which would improve the state of things in Liberia. These minutes were incorporated in a memo sent to the American Ambassador on Feb. 4, 1909. [2]

This windfall came not a moment too soon. The rising feeling of hostility towards Europeans, especially Britons, reached a climax in January 1909 when a group of soldiers from the Liberian frontier force, allegedly led by Col. Cadell mutinied, on account of arrears of pay, and threatened the Liberian government. Perhaps encouraged by the advice of Blyden, who believed Britain should take vigorous actions in Liberia ("inter arma leges silent") and frightened by the

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1 Ibidem. Paul Cambon enquired of Clarke in February 1908 whether it was true that the chairmanship and management of the Rubber Company and the L.D.C. were to pass to Schneider and Woermann; FO367/113/5347 Memo by Clarke, Feb. 14, 1908.

2 FO367/160/756 Grey to Whitelaw Reid, Feb. 4, 1909.

hostile attitude of the Anti-British elements in the government, Wallis began to send frantic despatches warning of revolution. [1] On January 26, he telegraphed : "British lives in danger, will no help be sent?" [2] His despatches were of such nature as to alarm Grey of the implications of the chaotic situation. The 'Mutiny' was sent and troops were asked for from Sierra Leone. Happily the troops were not sent; for the governor knew from a steamer coming from Monrovia on February 4th that there had been no riot and Wallis' despatch of the 1st had not asked for troops. The destroyer arrived in Monrovia on February 10 and found the situation serious but tending to improve. The Captain reported strong Anti-British feeling. By April - May things had quietened. [3]

A series of despatches giving the background story to the reaction to British reforms which arrived in Whitehall on January 30, 1909, afforded an opportunity to the Foreign Office to review its policy towards Liberia. [4] Various suggestions were considered, for example, working with France (who would not be willing since such a co-operation would prejudice its schemes) or Germany, whose honesty was doubted. Finally it was decided that it would be best to work with the U.S.A. first and the two could then approach France together. Thus on February 10, the American Ambassador Whitelaw Reid was told of British action in the fracas which occurred in Monrovia. It was

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1 FO458/21/13640 Wallis to Grey, March 28, 1908 encl. Blyden's letter; FO458/24 Blyden to Antrobus, January 30, 1909.

2 FO367/160/4773 Wallis to Grey, January 26, 1909 (a despatch and a telegram were sent on the same date).

3 FO367/160/5388 Grey to Bryce, Feb. 10, 1909; FO367/160/6657 Grey to Reid, Feb. 19, 1909; FO458/24 Wallis to Grey, Feb. 20, 1909; FO458/24 Baldwin to Grey, May 8, 1909.

4 See Note 2. page 146.

stressed that Britain would withdraw altogether if the situation became untenable. She would be prepared to co-operate with other countries viz. the U.S.A. and France for she did not want unilateral responsibility. Three days later another memo was submitted cataloguing British interests, namely, the recovery of the £100,000 D'Erlanger loan and to see that order was maintained in the republic so that disturbances did not spill over to neighbouring French and British colonies. The U.S.A. was asked to join a trilateral representation. Washington declined because of its special position as founder of Liberia. The American Consul was however, instructed to make a strong individual representation to Liberia to reorganise her affairs. [1]

Having failed to get the U.S. to make a joint representation Grey urged France to join Britain to make one. Germany was pointedly left out.

1909 saw the gradual withdrawal of British involvement in Liberia, henceforth Grey's policy was strictly limited to defending British interests. [2]

The U.S.A. was, however, showing more interest in Liberia. The new administration under Taft, angling for prestige and a field to work out its "dollar diplomacy" gave this new interest a boost. After initial opposition from certain quarters a Commission of enquiry was

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1 FO367/160/5838 Grey to Bryce Feb. 10, 1909; FO367/160/3874 Grey to Whitelaw Reid Feb. 13, 1909 cf. Bixler, p. 38.

2 FO367/139/10763 F.O. to Baldwin March 23, 1909; FO367/160/8337 Grey to Crommelin March 25, 1909. Like Wallis, Baldwin was an Army Officer. He attained the rank of Major in 1902. He had been Consul in Lourenco Marques and Consul-General in French West Africa before he was transferred to Monrovia.

sent to Liberia in May 1909; by October it had presented its report to the Secretary of State.[1] Grey was in possession of the American plan in June 1910. They intended to float a loan, in which British, French and German banks would participate, to pay off Liberia's foreign and domestic debts. A general Receivership to supervise the finances of Liberia would be set up. An American would be the general receiver and the other powers would have representatives as assistant receivers. A U.S. government Director of Agriculture and an officer to drill a frontier force were to be appointed. Washington also promised to help Liberia to settle her boundary disputes. Save pointing out that D'Erlanger ought to participate in the U.S. loan, Grey was prepared to accept the plan. He overrode his subordinates' misgivings, resentful perhaps of the replacement of Britain by the U.S., about the plan. He asserted that the Americans should do things their way if they were to take over Liberia.[2]

France on the other hand viewed the American intervention with suspicion and resentment. Her main fear was that, though she did not want to impair relations with the U.S., the latter's intervention might lead to an awkward situation in which France's ambitions, especially in the frontier question could seriously be curtailed.

Of course French fear of American involvement in Africa was nothing new. The fear that the U.S. might aspire to become a Mediterranean power in 1898 during the Hispano-American War, inspired a French colonial to predict: "Tomorrow they may decide to become

> involved in Morocco, in Liberia, or in Southern China. If so

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1 Bixler, p. 29ff. For Negro influence on the Washington Administration see Louis R. Harlan, "Booker T. Washington and the White Man's burden" reprint from the American Historical Review Vol. LXXI No. 2. (January 1966) pp. 441 - 467.

2 FO367/210/22670 Bryce to Grey, June 23, 1910 and Grey's note on it; Bixler, op cit. pp. 27 - 33.

we shall find ourselves faced with very delicate problems and have to deal with a nation made dangerous by its ardour, by its presumptuous ignorance of international implications and by its latent power." [1]

This prophecy proved accurate in 1910. Grey, exerted all his energy to prevent French resentment from wrecking a scheme which would enable him to withdraw British influence in Liberia. Cambon saw Grey on July 27, and ascertained that London would not obstruct the scheme. Five days later in what was obviously an inspired article, Le Temps (August 1) hinted that the American plan was political and Britain with France should object since the U.S. would have done the same if a European Power had interfered in San Domingo. It hastened to add that "this did not necessarily destroy Franco-American friendship. [2] The Dépêche Coloniale quoted trade figures after Johnston's since 1904 to show the small commercial interests of the U.S. in Liberia : Britain £132,000 ; Germany £105,000 ; Holland £10,000 ; U.S.A., France and Belgium together accounted for £100,000. [3]

Grey therefore hastened to assure the French that the Americans did not want to proclaim a protectorate over Liberia. He thought the American Scheme was the best way to reorganise Liberian finances and he hoped the French would co-operate. [4]

M. Louis, the political director at the Quai D'orsay, who received Bertie in Pichon's absence, accused Britain that she had apparently

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1 Quoted in C. Andrew, Théophile Delcassé and the Entente Cordiale pp. 79 - 81.

2 F0367/210/27627 Grey to Carnegie, July 27, 1910; F0367/210/28071 Bertie to Grey, August 1, 1910 encl. article from Le Temps.

3 F0367/210/29103 extract from Dépêche Coloniale August 9, 1910. Probably these figures referred to the value of the import and export trade.

4 F0367/210/29404 Grey to Bertie August 18, 1910.

accepted the proposals which France had intended to reject. Personally Louis felt that the employment of American officers in the Liberian frontier force and the presence of the U.S. in the boundary questions might cause embarrassment and would give rise to discussions which Paris wished it would be desirable to avoid. [1]

Grey became worried when this letter reached him. Louis' observations smacked ~~too much~~ of an accusation that Britain had acted without consulting her partner, and indeed it revealed some of the divergencies and irritations in Anglo-French relations in matters of financial and economic co-operation outside Europe. He had to explain that he supported the U.S. scheme to annul the disappointment of that power when Britain withdrew support for an Anglo-American railway in Manchuria because of an old Anglo-Russian agreement. Furthermore : British money had been lent and invested in that country and it was clear that unless Liberia was taken in hand by some outside influence all the money would be lost. I don't want to increase our responsibilities by incurring the control of Liberian affairs ourselves, and when the Americans came forward with a scheme for putting Liberian finance in order I welcomed it ..... Liberia left to itself is a disorderly and impossible neighbour. The frontiers will remain in a constant state of disorder and we shall be compelled to encroach more and more on Liberian territory in order to keep

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1 FO367/210/30682 Bertie to Grey Aug. 22, 1910. Indeed in Sept.1909 the French had put claims on the Duobe-Cavally Valley of territory totalling 1,400 sq. miles and which would have brought French territory 75 miles nearer the coast. See FO367/139/37896 Acting Consul Parkes to Grey Sept. 15, 1909.

order on our frontier. This state of things would suit us very well if we desired territorial expansion : as we do not desire expansion, it does not suit us at all.

"I see in the American scheme some risk of friction in settling boundary questions, but I should not anticipate serious difficulty in getting the boundaries settled with the U.S.A. on behalf of Liberia and once settled the friction would cease. In any case some temporary diplomatic friction would be small price to pay in return for decent administration in Liberia and consequent order in our frontier. The American intervention would also put an end to German schemes, which might give rise some day to friction with Germany. But I am not pledged to details of the American scheme as regards administration and am quite ready to discuss them with the French if they desire..... How far we and the French can work together will naturally depend upon whether they approach the American project in the same single minded and unambitious way that I do. I think we might all very well agree to let the Americans lead, but there will be jealousy and trouble if either England, France or Germany were to get a position of superiority .... more especially no doubt if that position went to Germany who has less natural interest in Liberia than France or ourselves."[1]

Grey supported the scheme hoping that British interests would be secured without much cost to Britain; secondly American intervention would serve as a means of minimizing possibilities of clashes with France and Germany; thirdly German desires could be contained. Grey was bringing the new world to balance the old. French and

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1 F0367/210/30682 Grey to Bertie August 28, 1910.

German ~~ambitions~~ could be neutralized by America without Britain running the risk of being charged with obstruction.

On the other hand, though Grey welcomed the programme for these reasons, neither ~~he~~ nor Bertie would risk London's good relations with Paris; hence Pichon was told that although London would support the project his Majesty's Government were not yet pledged to details on administration and they would be glad to hear French government opinion on them. Bertie urged Grey to wait until the French had discussed details with him before proceeding further. The French would have liked Britain and France to sit back and allow Germany and the U.S.A. to fight among themselves, but Bertie warned the Quai d'Orsay about possible complications, for example they might settle their differences and France and Britain would be left out in the cold.[1]

Grey saw the American Ambassador and explained the French fears about the scheme. He was assured that Washington would consider those and try to allay them. Reid added that if Germany objected to the scheme she would be left out.[2]

Eventually, probably as a result of Grey's pressure and the knowledge that Germany had accepted the project, the French Cabinet acquiesced in the scheme on condition that there was economic liberty, that the Franco-Liberian boundary as agreed by the boundary commission would be confirmed and that France would participate in the financial organisation of Liberia.[3]

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1. F.O367/210/30683 Grey to Bertie, Sept. 8, 1910; FO367/210/32534 Bertie to Grey, Sept. 6, 1910; FO367/210/33265 Bertie to Grey, Sept. 10, 1910.

2. FO367/210/34007 Grey to Mitchell Innes, Sept. 14, 1910.

3. FO367/210/34975 Bertie to Grey, Sept. 24, 1910; FO367/210/37297 Grey to Mitchell Innes, Oct. 11, 1910; FO367/210/38948 Grey to Bertie, Nov. 5, 1910.

Once the French conditions had been met, the way was opened for negotiating the financial future of Liberia. U.S.A., Britain, France and Germany being the powers interested, agreed to the participation of their banks in an international loan secured on the customs of Liberia. Despite attempts by Gustav Lange, the German Consul, to disrupt the negotiations by threatening that the Berlin government would not accept the project, since he was not included in the Debt Commission under Dr. Ronald R. Faulkner negotiating on behalf of the U.S. government, and the obvious divergencies and rivalry for concessions among the powers, the scheme went through.[1]

An International Receivership was set up with the U.S. representative as the General Receiver and Financial Adviser to the republic (Reid Paige Clarke), and representatives of the three powers as Assistants - ultimately M. Frederic Wolf (France); Gustav Lange (Germany) and A. Sharpe (Britain). The loan floated was 1,700,000 dollars to be used to pay off the 1870 and 1906 loans and some internal debts. The Liberian legislature approved the loan on November 13, 1901, and by November 14, 1912, D'Erlanger was satisfied enough to approve the new arrangement. On the 28th Clarke proclaimed the General-Receivership.[2]

As a reward for supporting the U.S. Scheme, the French got their 1907 boundary agreement with Liberia recognised by the latter on January 13, 1911.[3] This cleared the way for the settling of the Sierra Leone-Liberian boundary and the adjustments in the Guinea-Sierra Leone-Liberian boundary/

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1. FO367/257/8359 Baldwin to Grey, Feb. 17, 1911; FO367/257/11606 Baldwin to Grey, March 13, 1911.

2. Bixler, pp. 32-36; Foley, p. 359ff. George W. Ellis, "The Political Importance of the International loan in Liberia" Journal of Race Development, Vol III (1913) pp. 109-116; FO367/278/530 Bryce to Grey, Dec. 26, 1911; FO367/278/17562 D'Erlanger to Grey, April 24, 1912; FO367/278/455110 D'Erlanger to Grey, Oct. 24, 1912.

3. FO367/210/4576 Carnegie to Grey, Dec. 17, 1910; CO879/107 F.O. to C.O., January 19, 1911.

1911, not without some difficulties from France who was reluctant to agree to some minor frontier rectifications. Clarke was moved to say that the French were consistently pursuing a policy "through Africa of making themselves disagreeable to us" as they could. Langley even offered the opinion that the French wanted to tie in this question with the Gambia-Muscat negotiations.[1] However, the two powers reached agreement which did not involve much loss of territory on either side. The boundary followed the source of the Uldafu River to its junction with the Meli, and the thalweg of the latter to the thalweg of the Moa. The French promised to protect the chiefs in the Trans Makona area whom the Colonial Office had assured protection during Kaffura's terrorism. On July 6, the protocol was signed and on November 10, 1911, the British troops withdrew from Wulade.[2]

Having secured the essential objectives of his policy after 1907, viz. a guarantee for the repayment of the D'Erlanger loan, a settled frontier between Sierra Leone and Liberia, aided by a neutral power/

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1. FO367/113/24944 Cambon to Grey, July 17, 1908. Minutes by Clarke and Langley.

2. Correspondence on this question can be found in FO367/227 files 17679, 26306; Cambon to Grey, July 5, 1906; 50864 C.O. to F.O. Dec. 18, 1911.

power who would ensure that Liberia did not fall under France or Germany, Grey withdrew British influence from Liberia. His attitude was to welcome a situation where there was equilibrium among the interested powers, but with the scale slightly tipped in favour of the U.S.A.

Several incidents, however, threatened to disrupt this equipoise. The demarcation of the new Anglo-Liberian frontier sparked off unrest reminiscent of that in the earlier period. The boundary had divided the Kissi territory of Fabunda leaving Tengoa as part of Liberia. The natives of this chiefdom resented Liberian control; at the same time they did not want to lose their semi-independent status by being part of Fabunda's chiefdom. This somewhat uncertain situation raised the question whether Tengoa Chiefdom was part of Liberia or Sierra Leone. Disturbances began, which were sharpened by the personal animosity between Lomax, Commander of the Liberian frontier force, and Major Le Mesurier, Commander of the W.A.F.F. contingent stationed on the frontier. A clash between Sierra Leone and Liberian troops ended in the death of four Liberians. The governor of Sierra Leone claimed that the Liberians were encroaching on British territory; the Liberians denied this.[1]

We need not go into details of this episode; what can be said is that this minor frontier problem threatened to start a land grab and to disrupt Grey's carefully established equipoise. The usual arguments were put forward, viz., Liberia was not able to assert herself/

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1. F0367/279/795 C.O. to F.O., January 5, 1912; CO379/110/391 Governor of Sierra Leone to Secretary of State, January 3, 1912; F0367/279/4213 C.O. to F.O., January 29, 1912.

herself in the interior and disorder would affect Sierra Leone.[1] The Colonial Office would have liked to take a firm step against Liberia, e.g. to claim compensations for damages and incidental expenses arising from the unrest and the suspension of the work of the boundary commission, and even to annex Liberian territory.[2] Grey would have none of it. He told Harcourt that, among other things, he did not want to appear to be seizing a pretext for demanding further territory from Liberia. He agreed that claims for expenses were justified, but a claim for a piece of territory might re-open the whole frontier question. To avoid this, Grey suggested that natives who were being illtreated in Liberia could go over to Sierra Leone as was provided by a clause in the Anglo-Liberian boundary agreement.[3] The dispute did not end here, it continued beyond 1914; but Grey's veto prevented the question from becoming a large one which might have had international complications. For no doubt France, which was also having clashes with Liberia on her borders, would have seized the opportunity of making further territorial demands on the republic.[4]

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1. The story of the frontier question can be followed in FO367/279 files 5136, 9140, 10907, 11917 C.O. to F.O. March 20, 1912 encl. letters from Sierra Leone; F.O. to Parkes, March 20, 1912 (tel.)

2. FO367/279/27561 C.O. to F.O. June 28, 1912; FO367/279/28928 F.O. to C.O. July 19, 1912; FO367/279/32088 C.O. to F.O. July 27, 1912; FO367/333/29439 C.O. to F.O. June 26, 1913; FO367/333/26499 Memo by F.O. June 23, 1913. Minute by Langley.

3. FO367/333/29439 F.O. to C.O. June 22, 1913.

4. FO367/333/35168 C.O. to F.O. July 29, 1913; FO367/333/42506 C.O. to F.O. Sept. 15, 1913; FO367/333/52270 C.O. to F.O. Nov. 15, 1913. Langley was angry with the Sierra Leone government for raising the frontier question and he feared that the U.S. would support Liberia if Britain pressed claims. She might be accused of land grabbing, "in this case with some justice."

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increased, presumably because of temporary loss of U.S. interest in Liberia. In December 1912, three German warships Bremen, Eber and Panther made a "naval demonstration" off the port of Monrovia - an event which recalled the Agadir incident. The ostensible reasons for the demonstrations were: that the Liberians had shown disrespect to the Imperial Navy (a German officer was even arrested at River Cess); and that the factories of German traders on River Cess had been destroyed by rampaging Liberian natives (damages estimated at £5,000), resulting in a demand for a guarantee for the future security of German traders in remote parts of the coast. The Germans demanded an apology for the insult on their Navy, and reparations for the losses suffered by the German traders. Until they were satisfied, they threatened that the ship would not leave the Liberian coast.[1]

In actual fact it was reported that the Germans had contravened port regulations, which forbade communications between ship and shore after 6 p.m., hence the arrest of the German Officer. Also, the Naval Officers, who were in direct communication with their Navy office in Berlin and the Pan Germans, appeared to have been the willing tools of German traders who wanted to capitalise on Liberia's situation to press their claims (Maugham reported that German trade in River Cess had declined) backed by force, on the government. Lastly, the demonstration seemed to have been a reaction to the accusation of German arms smuggling, the failure of the Lange loan and the rejection of the German scheme, for a railway to the Boporo falls to tap the resources of the hinterland, at the end of/

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1. FO367/332/1965 Maugham to Grey, Dec. 28 1912; FO367/332/1963 Maugham to Grey, Dec. 31, 1912.

of 1912.[1]

The Tagliche Rundschau regarded the accusation of arms smuggling as an insult to Germany: "The country would never be settled until one of the Great Powers annexed this rich land. This task devolves on Germany whose subjects have already succeeded in monopolising ⅔ of the Liberian trade," cried the paper.[2]

The French were worried by these developments. By 1911, the Germans had established telecommunications by direct cable between Emden and Monrovia by way of Teneriffe, which was extended to Pernambuco in South America. Of the ships which cleared the Monrovia port in 1912, 249 with a net tonnage of 568,592 came from Germany while 178 of 391, 304 tonnage flew British flags. Furthermore, the Germans were angling for agricultural and economic concessions in the form of rubber and railway developments.[3]

The attitudes of the Foreign Office staff are interesting to note. On Baldwin's annual report, which argued that German position was becoming stronger and that Britain and the others would have to resist her if they did not want Liberia to fall into her hands, Tilley noted: "If/

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1. Ibidem; FO367/332/4952 Memo by J. Langley on conversation with Crommelin, Liberian Minister, Jan. 30, 1913; FO367/332/3053 Col. Powney to Langley, Jan. 16, 1913 ref. to his conversation with Harry Johnston and encl. newspaper cuttings from Evening Standard on article printed by Tagliche Rundschau forwarded by its Berlin correspondent. Baldwin had reported the German railway scheme in his Annual reports on March 2 and Sept. 30, 1911. See FO367/233/10370 and 40671; Sir Harry Johnston "The Aftermath of Agadir: suggestion for a resettlement of territorial ambitions," The Nineteenth Century and After, Vol. LXXI (1912) pp. 191-200.
2. Ibidem
3. FO458/85 encl. in File No. 3, Maugham to Grey, June 14, 1914. Conf. report for 1912; Johnston, op. cit. pp. 196 and 199.

"If Germany must have some outlets I myself see no great objection to Liberia being one of them. In fact, Liberia might in time be useful to divert Germany from other less convenient outlets. With regard to the future of the Liberians I do not see the use of considering whether the establishment of a republic was wise. We cannot send them back to U.S.A. We must, therefore, do what we are doing or allow the annexation of Liberia by some European (Power) or U.S.A. ... to keep things quietly with as little trouble to ourselves as is strictly consistent with British interests." For these same British interests, Langley preferred to work through the American scheme; for it would prevent French encroachment as well as Liberia from going under German influence: "This is desirable; for whatever view Britain took politically, the extinction of our trade would be resented by British subjects in West Africa." The Assistant Under-Secretary hardly believed Germany would venture to annex Liberia, for even if she counted on the indifference of the U.S.A., public opinion in the latter country would not tolerate it.[1]

M. de Fleuriau, French Charge d'Affaires in London (1904-21), in what was obviously a ballon d'essai went to the Foreign Office to ask what they knew and thought of the German actions. In France, he said, they believed that the U.S.A. had lost interest in Liberia and that Germany was taking advantage of the situation. He was told that Britain could not object to the Germans' demand for compensation, if their property had been wantonly destroyed. Grey commented: "We must keep out of this as much as we can. Interest in U.S. will probably revive when the new government is in power, if there is trouble in Liberia."[2]

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1. Minutes by Tilley and Langley on FO367/233/40071 and 1965 Annual Report for 1911, and Maugham to Grey, Dec. 28, 1912.

2. Minutes by Langley and Grey, Ibidem.

Happily, the episode was settled without any international furore. The Liberians apologised for the disrespect shown to the Imperial Navy and the official who had arrested the German Officer was dismissed. An International Commission was set up to investigate the German claims for compensation which totalled £18,750, but they were reduced to £1,041. Monrovia agreed to pay, and the German claimants appeared to have acquiesced in the decision, though the German Commissione was disgusted and left without signing the award. The Eber and the Bremen left Liberia on January 12, 1913.[1] The Panther stayed for some time before it was withdrawn. By May, things had settled down.[2]

It is pertinent to note that at the time when discussions were going on about accommodating Germany in its desire to get colonial outlets, no serious consideration was ever given to the possibility of allowing her to take over Liberia. Grey's rather illegible minute of 1908 seems to suggest that he considered effecting some understanding with Germany on Liberia. Tilley's readiness to allow Germany to find an outlet in Liberia was not inspired by mere altruism. A piece of the African cake was one way of diverting Germany from more harmful pursuits in Europe. In the last resort he preferred U.S. intervention. It is possible that the British Naval base in Freetown made the Germans an unwelcome neighbour, but France would also have probably objected to German presence in that area. The U.S.A. might not be willing to allow Germany to acquire Liberia. The question was fraught with international complications.

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1. FO367/332/5129 Maugham to Grey, January 13, 1913; FO367/332/14641 same to same, March 7, 1913.

2. FO367/332/23301 F.O. to Goschen, May 29, 1913.

In retrospect British policy towards Liberia seems to have been dog-in-the-manger. Grey did not want Liberia, but he did not wish France or Germany to have it. When British efforts at reforms broke down in 1909, and the U.S. demonstrated their interest in the Republic, Grey welcomed U.S. intervention not only as a means of neutralizing French and German ambitions, but also to fill the role abdicated by Britain.

III: German Interests in Walfisch Bay

Walfisch Bay, a small territory of 450 sq. miles on the coast of South West Africa, was annexed on behalf of Britain by Capt. Dyer on March 6, 1878. Not much effort was made to extend this territory into the interior, and in 1884 the Germans established themselves on the Angra Pequena coast and its hinterland. Consequently, Walfisch Bay became an enclave in the German Colony; and as events were to show, it was the key to the development of German South West Africa.[1]

The boundary delimitations which followed the establishment of the German protectorate revealed certain discrepancies in the frontier between the British territory of Walfisch Bay and the German Colony. Capt. Dyer had pronounced Walfisch Bay's boundary as "on the south by a line from a point on the coast 15 miles south of Pelican Point to Scheppmansdorf; on the east by a line from Scheppmansdorf to the Rooibank (Rooikop) including the plateau, and thence to 10 miles inland from the north of the Swakop river."[2] The term "Plateau" was vague, and when Walfisch Bay was proclaimed a British territory in 1884 and the Admiralty drew its map, it based the frontier on Dyer's description and thus left Ururas, a rich and fertile stretch of land, outside British territory. After collecting evidence from inhabitants and those who knew the area, the British authorities in Cape Colony

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1. The following works adequately deal with the subject of the German establishment on the South West African coast: W.O. Aydelotte, Bismarck and British Colonial Policy: the problem of South West Africa 1883-1885, C.U.P. (1937); Raymond W. Dixler, Anglo-German Imperialism in South Africa, Baltimore (1932); J. H. Esterhuyse, South West Africa 1880-1894: the establishment of German authority in South West Africa (1968).

2. CO879/27/3940 C.O. to Sir Thomas Upington, April 12, 1887; Hertslet I, pp. 175-176.

claimed that Ururas was the plateau to which Dyer had referred ; other land marks which could have fitted Dyer's description were waterless, and more importantly, this area had been used by the Natives of Scheppmansdorf/Rooibank as grazing lands for cattle even before the establishment of British and German authority in that vicinity.[1] It was unthinkable, it was argued, that an area on which the inhabitants depended for their livelihood should have been cut off from them when Dyer annexed the territory. Rooibank, Scheppmansdorf and Ururas were interchangeable names!

When Wrey, the Cape's Land Surveyor, drew a map of Walfisch Bay in June 1885 he included Ururas, hitherto presumed to be German, into the British section. The German Counsul-General Bieber protested against Wrey's maps on the grounds that the new boundaries included areas which had not been part of British territory during the annexation or proclamation and that they blocked communications with the interior of German territory.[2] The British retorted that the triangular piece, about 5 square miles, was worthless without the road and moreover this area was an appendage of British subjects in Rooibank and Scheppmansdorf.

From this disagreement on the interpretation of place names and grazing lands for natives, the boundary question mushroomed into one of wider political import. Walfisch Bay was the only good harbour on the whole coast and therefore the natural outlet of German South West

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1 Ibidem cf. CO879/27/12787 F.O. to C.O. June 29, 1887 encl. Krauel's memo. It argues that the natural features of the strip could not have been the 'plateau' of Dyer's description. Rooibank and Ururas were not the same place. See also Esterhuyse, op cit. pp. 56 - 58.

2 CO879/27/2327 F.O. to C.O. Feb. 5, 1887.

Africa; but from the British and South African point of view its acquisition by Germany could transform it into a naval base which could threaten British strategical interests. Conflicting claims on boundary lines were interjected by requests for the cession of Walfisch Bay to Germany and their refusal by South African politicians who were hostile to further increase of German power in the Southern hemisphere.

Salisbury, in line with his general policy of colonial détente with Germany after the Berlin West African Conference, did not want to be accused of thwarting the colonial drives of Germany in "those regions with regard to which a definite understanding had been arrived between His Majesty's Government and Germany."[1] He therefore instructed Sir Edward Malet, the British Ambassador in Berlin, to ascertain unofficially, the Berlin government's view on the objection raised by Dr. Bieber. Count Bismarck, the German Foreign Minister, knew nothing about the matter, but he suggested that Dr. Krauel of the colonial department in the Auswärtiges Amt and Mr. C. Scott, Counsellor in the British Embassy, should discuss the question.[2]

The two negotiators met on March 26, 1887. The British case was that the inhabitants of Scheppmansdorf or Rooibank had been in the habit of using the disputed strip of land as commonage and that it

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1 CO879/27/13325 F.O. to C.O. July 6, 1887 forwarding from Malet. This statement probably referred to the various territorial agreements between Britain and Germany in different parts of Africa, but more especially to the agreement on claims in South West Africa. See Hertslet, Map of Africa III, pp. 877 - 879 for the agreement on claims in South West Africa 15th July, 1886, pp. 868 - 890 for the other agreements.

2 CO879/27/2327 F.O. to C.O. Feb. 5, 1887; CO879/27/3940 F.O. to C.O. Feb. 22, 1887 forwarding Malet's letter.

it was the only land in the otherwise arid neighbourhood suitable for that purpose. It was, therefore, an indispensable appurtenance of these places and of positive value to the villagers.[1]

Krauel explained that the German government *per se* had no direct interest in contesting the boundary except in protecting the interests of the German South West African Company, which had petitioned the Chancellor to intercede on its behalf, and which was expecting to utilize with considerable profit, "the exceptional fertility of the pastoral ground in question." Secondly, the trade routes between Biogios (a place on the coast a little to the north of Sandwich harbour which was in the German protectorate) and the land at the back of the British settlement passed through the point C (in sketch map) severing the bed of Khuiseb at a point close to the South East corner of Scheppmansdorf. Wrey's line would thus effectively block this communication with the interior.[2]

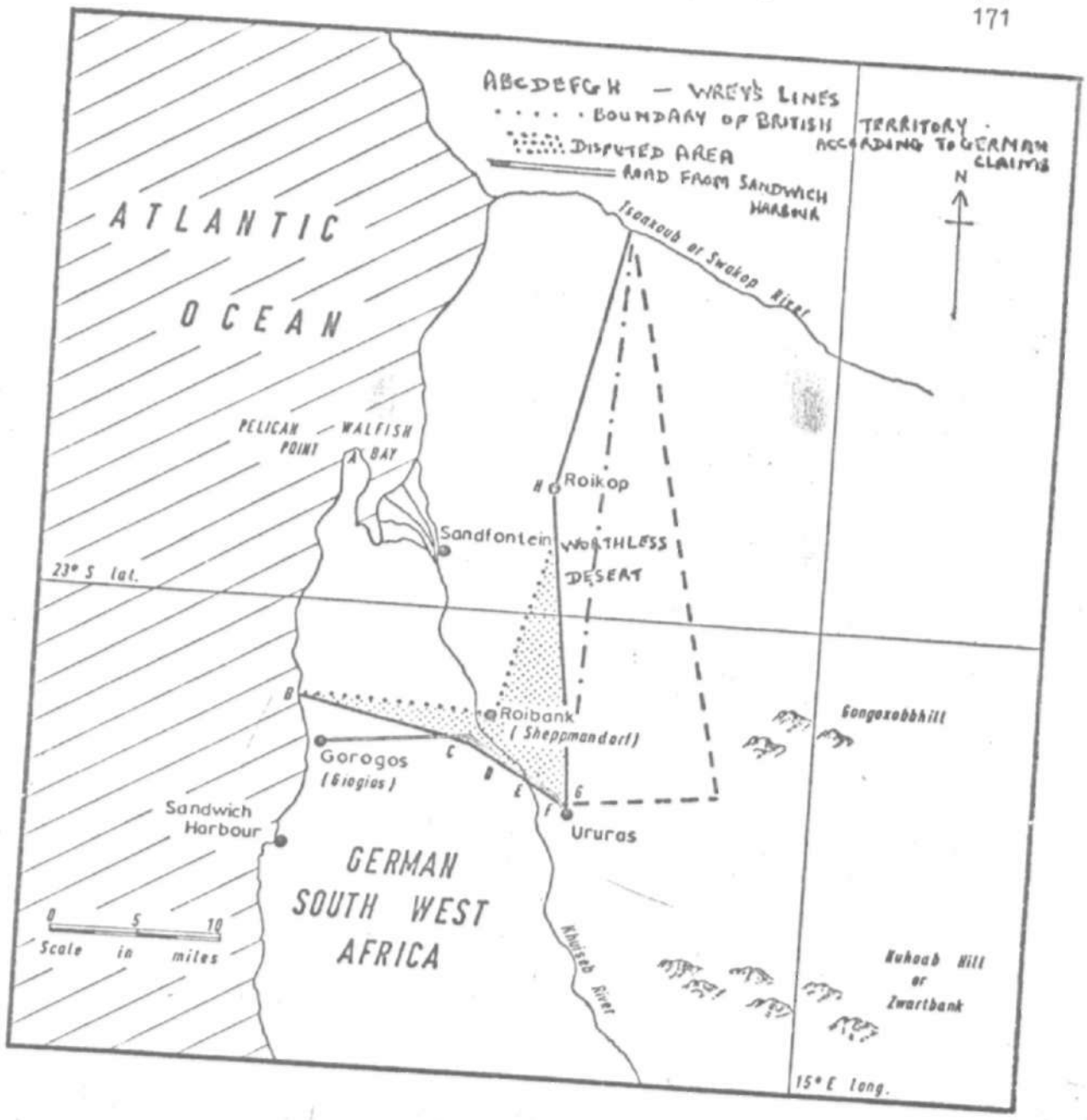
Nothing resulted from this interview except that Krauel impressed Scott as being ready to favour some alternative which might possibly succeed in securing the German Company's right of way without depriving the Schoppmansdorf people of any right or land enjoyed by them. Incidentally, Scott also got the impression, the first of many to come, that the Germans cherished the hope of acquiring Walfisch Bay - a hope he tried to dispel.

The Colonial Office was not sure of its case. All relevant papers were sent to Sir Thomas Upington, Premier of Cape Colony, who happened to be in England, asking him for his opinion.[3]

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1. CO879/27/5935 F.O. to C.O., April 11, 1887.
2. Ibidem, encl. memo of German case and also memo of German South West African Company's petition to the Chancellor; CO879/27/5320. W.O. to C.O. March 14, 1889 encl. report by H. Purvis, R.E. This officer agreed that the only road from Sandwich harbour into the interior was along the coast to Walfisch Bay. See map on p. 171.
3. CO879/27/3940 C.O. to Upington, April 27, 1887 encl. relevant papers.

SKETCH MAP OF WALFISCH BAY



Upington, an immigrant from Ireland and a lawyer by profession, had fought for an active expansion policy in South Africa. His government came into power too late to forestall German acquisition of South West Africa, and he was never reconciled to German presence on the borders of British territory. His views, therefore, were of particular importance since they generally reflected those of South African politicians.[1]

His arguments fell into three parts. The interests of the natives were put first. He insisted that Dyer's intentions, although vague, were to include the grazing lands and water places of Scheppmansdorf extending to Ururas into British territory, otherwise he would not have impressed upon the natives that they were British subjects while leaving outside that jurisdiction grazing lands upon which they practically depended for existence.[2]

He warned against the suggestion of dual control; natives did not understand such an arrangement and such a condominium could lead to disputes between Cape Colony, Her Majesty's Imperial Government and the German Empire: "The smallest disputes lead to mature complications in Africa," he sagely remarked.[3]

Next, he developed his arguments, in which the natives' rights were soon lost sight of, into one of politics and trade. He would not be responsible for native unrest if Ururas was ceded. He strongly believed that the reason for German desire for the piece of land was to give a road/

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1. Anthony Nutting, Scramble for Africa: the Great Trek to the Boer War, London (1970) p. 115.
2. CO879/27/7108 Upington to C.O., April 13, 1887.
3. Ibidem.

road way to the interior from Sandwich harbour, which if opened would ruin "our trade at Walfisch Bay." He complained that he had tried to keep public feelings quiet at the Cape: "Possibly the necessity of maintaining friendly relations with Germany in the interests of the Empire at large will free Britain to give way" but he implored Her Majesty's Government "to support the Cape in the boundary question."[1]

It is difficult to assess the proportions of bluff or earnestness in Upington's letters, but they certainly helped Holland (later Lord Knutsford), the Colonial Secretary, who had observed that the "Colonial Office cannot vary a boundary long since laid down and published in Admiralty charts as boundary claimed by British government without sufficient grounds; even if the small addition of territory included in Wrey's line were of more considerable value than it appeared, it would not be worthwhile for the sake of it to appear claiming as an afterthought land which was now (sic) under German jurisdiction," to feel more confident.[2] On May 23, he told the Foreign Office that it was "of vital interest to South African trade that in further negotiations strenuous endeavours should be made to obtain this disputed triangle as British without reference to the road, and that a right of way should only be conceded if the territory cannot be acquired with it."[3]

Assuming that Upington and Holland were referring to the same trade, what did it amount to? No exact figures can be found for 1887, but it appeared that there was a lucrative trade in cattle stock and ostrich feathers in the early 19th century between the German colony and Walfisch Bay. There was a depression in the 1880's because of the Herero-Nama conflict/

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1. CO879/27/7103 C.O. to F.O., May 23, 1887 encl. second letter from Upington dated April 13th.
2. CO879/27/3940 C.O. to Upington, April 12, 1887.
3. CO879/27/7103 C.O. to F.O., May 23, 1887.

conflict and the depredations of the Swartbooie along the Swakop river.[1] By 1893, Cape exports to Walfisch Bay had decreased from £5,758 (1896) to £2,819, while those from German South West Africa had, at a higher figure, decreased also.[2] Rinderpest and the competition of the railway the Germans were building at Swakop mouth, which saved farmers and traders from trekking through desert to the coast, were the causes. Generally, trade fluctuated depending on access to markets and natural causes like rinderpest.

The Foreign Office, on lines of general policy and because "Great Britain and Germany (were) in amity" was prepared to concede the right of way to Germany, considering how vital the road was for communications with the interior.[3] Free transit on both sides was suggested by the Foreign Office and the Germans even offered to protect the private rights (i.e. for grazing etc.) of the natives.[4] The Cape government, who, Scott suspected, were not indisposed to making the Germans hold in South West Africa untenable by blocking the "only practicable route that Germany could get into the interior of her protectorate," posed a completely uncompromising stand - a position stiffened by Dyer's letter of September 27, 1887, which affirmed that his principal desire when defining the boundary was to include the grazing lands in the bed of the Khuiseb river.[5]

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1. Esterhuyse op. cit. pp. 10-32. For a general picture of trade between German South West Africa and the Cape, see W.O. Henderson, "British Economic Activity in the German Colonies 1884-1914," Economic History Review Vol. XV (1945) pp. 56-66.
2. CO879/51 Milner to Chamberlain, Jan. 27, 1899 encl. report from the Resident Magistrate, Walfisch Bay for 1898.
3. CO879/27/13325 F.O. to C.O., July 6, 1887 encl. letter from Malet and memo by Scott.
4. CO879/27/20723 F.O. to C.O., Oct. 14, 1887 cf. CO879/27/23168 Hercules to Holland, Nov. 5, 1887 encl. Cape's objections to suggestion; CO879/27/1130 F.O. to C.O. Jan. 17, 1888, forwarding memo from the German F.O.
5. CO879/27/13325 F.O. to C.O., July 6, 1887; CO879/27/18668 Capt. R.C. Dyer to C.O., Sept. 14, 1887; CO879/27/17168 Robinson to Holland, Aug. 3, 1887.

An effort to settle the boundary question by a joint commission in 1888 ended in the German and British Commissioners disagreeing as to what constituted the 'plateau'. The Cape re-emphasised its position on the boundary.[1]

In spite of the unyielding attitude of the Cape, backed by the Colonial Office, Salisbury, who desired to avoid clashes with Germany, made one more effort to settle the dispute by including the question in his package deal with Berlin - the Heligoland Treaty of July 1, 1890. Article III provided that "the delimitation of the southern boundary of the British territory of Walfisch Bay is reserved for arbitration, unless it shall be settled by the consent of the two Powers within two years from the date of the conclusion of the agreement."[2]

Subsequently, the British government suggested arbitration in February, 1893, but Berlin preferred to avoid arbitration, since this might lead to a greater political importance being attached to the questions in dispute than it possessed, at least, for the German government. An international jurist might not be the most suitable person to decide a question which was primarily of a geographical nature.

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1. CO879/27/13369 Robinson to Knutsford, July 5, 1888 (tel.) See also files 16660, 2101 and 21416.

2. Hertslet III pp. 949-956. The treaty was strongly resented by the Cape. Unsuccessful lobbying efforts were made in October, 1890, by Sir Gordon Sprigg, a former Premier, to change the treaty. In Cape Town, the parliament passed a series of resolutions: 1. That this House regrets that the government of the country were not directly represented in the recent arrangements entered into between the British government and the German Empire in so far as those arrangements affected the territories south of the Zambezi, and is of the opinion that the government of this colony should have a voice in any future proposed rearrangement of boundaries south of the Zambezi; 2. That in any proposal to interfere with the direct control of the parliament of this colony over Walfisch Bay will be deeply resented by the people of this colony; 3. That this colony strongly deprecate any departure from the boundaries of Walfisch Bay; 4. That it is desirable that the attentions of the Government be directed to the question of levying customs at Walfisch Bay. See CO879/31/19460 Loch to Knutsford, Sept. 15, 1890.

It was, there fore, suggested that the dispute be settled by compromise than upon a question of principle; for example, by dividing the disputed territory.[1]

The ploy of minimising the importance of the question and depreciating the value of Walfisch Bay, and at the same time making suggestions for its acquisition by Germany became a well tried tactic of Berlin. In January 1894, Dr. Paul Kayser, Head of the new German Colonial Department, told Gosselin that the reason why the Cape was pressing for arbitration was "to raise the price of the settlement in the colonial market by advertising it as a place worthy of a grand international arbitration." He went on: "Rhodes is a clever man; he knows Germany had (sic) a good landing place at Swakopmouth, north of Walfisch Bay and that when the place is dredged and a pier is built, it will undoubtedly divert British trade, which now flows into German South West Africa through the British port, and thus will lose much of its importance." Rosebery saw this as a ballon d'essai and he authorised Gosselin to tell Kayser that there was no question whatever of the Cape government parting with the territory. Marschall's suggestion for dividing the territory was also rejected.[2]

The possible cession of Walfisch Bay to Germany, however, remained much in the air between 1894 and 1913. In 1896, George Cawston, a South African Director of the German South West African Company, favoured the idea of ceding Walfisch Bay for compensation of a "strip of land north of the Orange River."[3] As we have seen, the exchange of Walfisch Bay was considered during the Anglo-German negotiations on the Portuguese Colonies.

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1. CO879/34/21630 F.O. to C.O., Dec. 23, 1893; CO879/34/1472 F.O. to C.O., Jan. 24, 1894; CO879/34/2390 F.O. to C.O., Feb. 6, 1894; FO367/133/40301 Minutes on Walfisch Bay arbitration (F.O. 1909).
2. CO879/34/2390 F.O. to C.O., Feb. 6, 1894 forwarding report of Kayser-Gosselin conversation and Rosebery's reply; CO879/34/21630 F.O. to C.O., Dec. 23, 1893.
3. (Lascelles Papers) FO800/9 Gosselin to Lascelles, Nov. 17, 1896.

Again in 1899 moves were made to cede the Bay so that Germany would allow Britain a free hand in Delagoa Bay to prevent arms from being smuggled to the Boers.[1] Nothing resulted from these feelers, but the Resident Magistrate in Walfisch Bay, J.J. Cleverly, was much exercised by strong rumours of the cession of the British territory to Germany. One such rumour in 1904 said that the Bay was on the point of being purchased for 55 million marks[2]

Dr. Kayser's boast was not really borne by facts. The Germans werealways having difficulties with landing facilities for their colony and they made several efforts in the period before the war to get an outlet on the coast. When the Germans wanted to land troops at Walfisch Bay in 1890, during the Herero-Nama feud, they encountered some difficulties with the Cape government.[3] The episode inspired Capt. Kurt von Francois, the German Commander, to find a suitable landing place on the coast. After several attempts the warship Falke succeeded in 1893 in making landings with surf boats and some Kroo boys from West Africa.[4] But it was a risky business. When the weather was fine there was little danger; at other times there was great danger to life and property, there being no shelter from the strong south west gale winds which struck the rock-bound shore.

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1. G.P. XV NR 4404; Dugdale III, p. 117; Rich II, p. 615.

2. CO879/80/26059 Acting Gov. Brook to Lyttleton, June 29, 1904.

3. Esterhuyse, pp. 144-156; cf. Mary Townsend, Rise and Fall of Germany's Colonial Empire, p. 183. During the Herero War (1904-7) Lansdowne refused permission to the Germans to land troops at Walfisch Bay, on the grounds of the bad effect such an action would have on British natives; CO879/80/25548 F.O. to C.O., July 18, 1904.

4. Esterhuyse, pp. 170-171.

Walfisch Bay, on the other hand, had good holding ground and deep water and was sheltered from the gales. Lying on the centre of the Atlantic seaboard of the German colony and opposite the fertile Damara country, where the capital Windhoek was just at the point where the desert was narrowest, the Bay was of great advantage to the Germans.[1]

The latter tried to reduce the edge Walfisch Bay had over Swakopmund, which was rapidly silting up, by building a mole and negotiating for an outlet through Portuguese territory (1895-1903). The mole, 375 metres long with a steam and hand crane of 5 and 1½ tons lifting power, at the head of a 2' gauge railway connecting Swakopmund and Windhoek, was begun in 1899 and was finished in 1903. It did not work for long; a heavy sea smashed part of the structure in May of that year.[2] There was no success in the Portuguese angle either. The Portuguese gave the railway concession to a British concern in 1902, and domestic disagreements in Germany as to whether Swakopmund or Tiger Bay (in Angola) was the practical outlet, reduced whatever chances of success the negotiations had.[3]

While these moves were going on and the Cape was involved in the Boer War the boundary question appeared to have been put in the background until 1903 when the Cape signalled its intention of locally delimiting the disputed area. Once more the joint Commission failed to reach an agreement.

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1. CO879/51/393/S D.M.I. to C.O., Oct. 28, 1897 encl. letters from Cleverly; FO367/42/4544 Lascelles to Grey, Feb. 6, 1907 encl. report by Col. French, Military Attache, Berlin.
2. CO879/51/393/S D.M.I. to C.O., Oct. 28, 1897; CO879/80/9862 F.O. to C.O., March 14, 1903 encl. despatch from Lascelles of. CO879/80/28530 Hely-Hutchinson to Chamberlain, July 14, 1903 encl. report by Cleverly.
3. CO879/80/13019 F.O. to C.O., May 15, 1903; Horst Drechsler, "Germany and South Angola 1898-1903", Presence Africaine, Vol. XIV/XV pp. 51-69.

Rather, new arguments and positions were taken by the disputants.[1] The German Commissioner took exception to Wrey's survey in which it was mentioned specifically that the Atlantic coastline should be 15 geographical or nautical miles. He insisted it should be reduced to 15 miles. This would have left the vital road inside German territory. The Cape Surveyor-General, Max Jarisch, appeared to have agreed with the Germans' argument according to a memo which he later composed.[2]

The German Commissioner further argued that Scheppmansdorf and Rooibanks were two names for the same place. Cleverly denied this was so; Scheppmansdorf was the name given to the mission station in a tract known as Rooibank which included the bed of the triangle. So the argument went on in circles.[3]

Consequently, the Cape felt itself constrained "in view of the failure of the Commissioners to agree to a definitive settlement of the question at issue "to ask for arbitration. The proposal was made in December 1905, and Berlin replied a year later. It maintained that the question was "purely of local nature" and "of comparatively small importance." On the plea of expediency also the two disputants should "settle such insignificant differences of opinion in some other way." However, Berlin agreed to arbitration and nominated the King of Sweden as arbitrator. London objected to his nomination because he had shown bias against Britain in one dispute.[4] Eventually, the King of Spain was chosen and both Powers agreed to go to arbitration in 1909.

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1. FO367/133/40101 Minutes on Walfisch Bay Arbitration (1909)
2. Ibidem; CO879/80/28526 Hutchinson to Chamberlain, July 11, 1903 encl. memo by Surveyor-General Max Jarisch. He pointed out that Point B on Wrey's Map was 736.44 Cape roods south of Pelican Point i.e. a distance of 17 miles, while the proclamation fixed the point as 15 miles from Pelican Poin
3. Ibidem, cf. p.168, note 1.
4. FO367/12/31389 Lascelles to Grey, Sept. 13, 1906; see also FO367/133/40101

Before this development a renewed interest in Walfisch Bay was shown by Germany, under the Colonial Secretaryship of Bernhard Dernburg, a financial genius, who was a Director of the Bank for Trade and Industry. Appointed Interim Director of the new Colonial department in September 1906, he gave a new lease of life to German colonialism. After the harrowing experiences in colonial venture (scandals in Togo and the Cameroons and costly colonial wars with the Hereros) there was a waning enthusiasm for colonies in Germany. Bülow, for various domestic reasons, which need not concern us here, capitalised on this disillusionment. He accused the government's opponents and critics of its colonial policy, of prejudicing Germany's status, of which the possession of colonies was a hallmark, as a world power, and of obstructing her path towards the goal of weltpolitik. An intensive propaganda whipped up a fervour of nationalism which resulted in a resounding victory for Bülow's bloc and an endorsement of the government's colonial policy. In practical terms this vote of confidence enabled Dernburg to devise plans for the development of the colonies. An era of scientific colonialism was initiated, i.e. the well planned and carefully directed development of the colonies, especially in the economic sphere.[1]

German South West Africa had been more or less a white elephant, it had potentials whose development partly depended on a good communications system. The possession of a good harbour was the first pre-requisite. In this regard Walfisch Bay became an important objective for Dernburg.[2] In May 1908, the Colonial Minister visited British South Africa and had talks with the various officials on Walfisch Bay. A stream of despatches

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1. The Colonial Ministry was created in May, 1907; See M.E. Townsend, op, cit. pp. 159-248; H. Pogge von Strandmann, "The Kolonialrat, its significance and influence on German politics from 1890-1906," Unpublished D.Phil. thesis, Oxford (1970), Chapter VIII.

2. Diamonds were discovered in Ludewitzbucht by a German geologist, Herr Range, on June 25, 1908. F0367/30/22609 de Salis to Grey, June 27, 1908.

from Berlin preceded Dernburg's visit. There were rumours about a proposed exchange of the Bay for a piece of German territory near Lake Tanganyika and Dernburg had to deny them.[1] Colonel Trench, the military attaché in Berlin, who forwarded these reports, offered the opinion that German interests went beyond the legitimate desire to get a good harbour. Already, Naval Officers had gone to Swakopmund to investigate possibilities for a coaling station in South West Africa. The depreciation of Walfisch Bay by German officials together with schemes for a port at Swakopmund suggested that the German government now realised that in retaining the Bay, the British had kept what was "practically the key of the protectorate." Possession of Walfisch Bay was a must if Germany wanted to develop her vast colony. But she could also establish a coaling station and a naval base in that area. The value of Walfisch Bay would, therefore, increase as ships and railways were constructed.[2] The Attaché's long but interesting despatch elicit d equally interesting minutes from the Foreign Office Staff which showed some of the nuances which now underlay British policy. W. A. Erskine, Assistant Clerk, enthused that Walfisch Bay was "clearly a most valuable asset in any future bargain with Germany." A. W. Clarke, Head of the African department, recalled that previously the idea of cession had been rejected by the Cape: "I have no doubt the constant irritation which the Germans must feel at seeing the only good harbour of their huge colony in our possession has a good deal to do with their unfriendly attitude towards us in South Africa."[3]

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1. FO367/42/4544 Lascelles to Grey, Feb. 6, 1907.
2. Ibidem.
3. Ibidem. Minutes by Erskine and Clarke.

Sir Edward noted: "The War Department should see this, as its real importance is the effect it may have upon the relation between England and Germany. If we ever cede Walfisch Bay it must be in return for a quid pro quo which is substantial and also acceptable to the Cape."[1]

Two senior officials, Charles Hardinge and Eyre Crowe, however, deprecated a deal on Walfisch Bay. The former observed: "... possession of Walfisch Bay by Germany would greatly facilitate any operation that they might intend against us in South Africa. If Germany had possessed that port during the Boer War we should have had as much difficulty as at Delagoa Bay."

Crowe, belligerent and combative whenever Germany was concerned, pointed out: "... if the Cape refuse to cede they are wise." He saw no reason "why we should go all out of our way to suggest the cession ... it is not for us under any existing circumstances to make any offer to Germany, and the history of former transactions should make us chary of entering upon any bargainings with her..." Moreover, he did not see anything in which "we are seeking concessions from Germany to set off against counter concessions on our part." But if there was any concessions "it should be for some really important and valuable counter concession in the general political field on Germany's part."[2] One wonders what political concession Crowe would have liked Germany to give!

The views of these two officials represent the growing suspicion of German policy by the British Foreign Office. There was a hardening of attitude towards Germany and every step taken by her, be it in Africa or Europe, was seen by permanent officials like Crowe as an advance towards world hegemony.

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1. Ibidem, Minute by Grey.
2. Ibidem, Minutes by Hardinge and Crowe. Some of these minutes are also quoted in Roger Louis, "Great Britain and German Expansion," in Gifford and Louis (Eds.) Britain and Germany in Africa, pp. 32-33.

Crowe developed and enunciated this attitude in his famous memo of January, 1907. He saw Germany as a restless power determined to expand into a world power, clamouring for more colonies, fleet and coaling stations. Though he would not advocate any restriction on the legitimate expansion of Germany territorially, or her building of ships, care must be taken that this benevolent attitude should be replaced by determined opposition at the first sign of infraction of British and allied interests.[1]

The argument was illogical (and certainly the minutes of Crowe in many instances could be interpreted as a desire to restrict German expansion), but it was in itself reflective of the world wide interests of Britain. In this case, acquisition of Walfisch Bay was a legitimate expansion of Germany, but it also infringed on British and allied interests. In other words territorial changes involved complex issues and did not merely depend on good will.

The whole question revolved on the effect the continuing partition of Africa in the 20th century had on European diplomatic relations or vice versa. European Powers had scrambled to stake claims on portions of Africa only to find in after years that there was need for rectification, in the process of which certain problems arose. In the case of Britain and Germany political antagonism, owing to the entente, was sharpened by the naval rivalry. Thus, how could a potential enemy be given access to a strategic point of the British Empire?

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1. B.D.III Appendix A, p. 397. Memo by Eyre Crowe ref. the present state of British relations with France and Germany, January 1, 1907; William Roger Louis, Great Britain and Germany's Lost Colonies, 1914-1919 (1967) pp. 30-31.

These were the considerations which the Foreign Office Staff's views mirrored. While Grey, because he was worried about Anglo-German relations, and the African Department were prepared to consider a deal on Walfisch Bay as a means of improving relations, the senior officials in the western department were more concerned about the diplomatic and military aspects of the question.

Goodwill was a rare commodity among the powers especially at the time when Europe was gradually consolidating into two opposing blocs. Nevertheless, efforts were made to limit the possibilities of collision between the powers. Britain, under Campbell-Bannerman, took a leading role in calling for a Second Hague Conference and arms limitation, especially on naval build up, between the powers. The efforts floundered because the Kaiser thought it was an infringement of his sovereignty (and that of other countries) to restrict the amount of military force which he considered necessary for the protection of his nation's interests and the maintenance of its position; secondly, because Britain insisted in remaining predominant on the sea. The upshot was that Germany, already deeply suspicious of the recently concluded Anglo-Russian Convention, accelerated its naval programme in the Autumn of 1907, and the British replied by increasing their Navy estimates the following year.[1]

However, there were moments of détente, even if transitory, in the relations of the Great Powers.

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1. See (Austen Chamberlain Papers) AC13/1/1-6 Correspondence with F. D. Acland "Anglo-German Negotiations 1898" ref. to limitations of armaments and cognate matters. For background account, see Peter Rowland, The Last Liberal Governments 1905-10, London (1968) pp. 185-186; E.L. Woddward, Great Britain and the Germany Navy, p. 121ff.

In November, 1907, the Kaiser, accompanied by his Foreign Secretary, Herr von Schoen (Nov. 1907-June, 1910), made a successful visit to England where he and Haldane almost reached an agreement on the Bagdad Railway.[1] Von Schoen made use of this amity to suggest to Grey at Windsor that Britain should come to some arrangement with Germany whereby the latter could use the facilities of Walfisch Bay.[2] Elgin, the Colonial Secretary, feared strongly that the Cape would be reluctant to accommodate Berlin.[3] Grey had not committed himself on this "vague and informal request", he had only promised to consult the Colonial Office and the Cape. He had taken care to warn Schoen that the Bay belonged to the Cape government, who was more of an ally than a colony.[4]

The strong opposition of South African opinion to any concession to Germany during the Merriman-Dernburg talks, to be discussed presently, throws some light on the curious and peculiar relationship which existed between Britain and her self-governing colonies. The Imperial government was responsible for defence and foreign affairs. Since Durham's report of 1838 and its provision for ultimate responsible government, with certain reserved powers to the Imperial government, and the evolution of that system, London had never been able to coerce the white dominions in their domestic affairs; and even in foreign affairs and settlement of territorial boundaries, which were the preserves of the Imperial government, they could still resist the pressure of the metropolis. Chamberlain's grandiose plan for economic and imperial unity had made no impact. The dominions preferred to be unfettered and free from control.

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1. (Haldane Papers) 5919. Memo of events between 1906-1915 part II
2. F0367/42/37816 Grey to de Salis, Nov. 13, 1907; F.O. to C.O., Nov. 18, 1907.
3. F0367/42/38967 C.O. to F.O., Nov. 25, 1907.
4. Minutes by Grey and Hardinge on supra.

By 1907, Canada was negotiating directly with France, though a British representative was still required to sign any agreement. In South Africa, the Liberal government was ensuring for the future loyalty of that country to the British Crown by transferring power into the hands of men who, I will show later on, were opposed to German presence on the borders of British territory.[1]

The German proposals for the sharing of facilities in the Bay came at an inopportune time when the four British territories were negotiating with each other for a Union. A united South Africa fitted well with British plans and needs. For "in time of war the Suez Canal might be closed to the shipping of Great Britain, in which case the Cape route would resume its former commercial and strategic importance and a friendly and united South Africa would be a vital asset." Hence on questions where South African opinion was strong, the British government tended, as, for example, in the native question, to give way in order to secure a larger aim of a friendly and united South Africa.[2]

What chance then did Dernburg have of getting facilities at Walfisch Bay? How did the Cape government and South African politicians on the one hand, and the British government, i.e. the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office, on the other, react to the German proposals? Dernburg left Berlin in May 1908 amidst much speculation about the purpose of his visit.

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1. G.P. Pyrah, Imperial policy and South Africa 1902-1910 (1955) pp. 2-11 See also p. 6 note 21; Keith Robbins, op. cit. pp. 167-168 for Grey's attitude to South Africa.

2. Quoted from Benjamin Sacks, South Africa; an imperial dilemma - non Europeans and the British Nation 1902-1914 (1967) pp. 198-200.

The Berliner Tageblatt, usually an unbiased and independent daily, guessed that one of the chief objects would be a discussion of the proposal for connecting British and German railways in South Africa. A question was asked in the House of Commons by Mitchel Thomas, M.P. (Lanark N.W.).[1] The Cologne Gazette, however, deprecated the importance of Walfisch Bay. It alleged that Germany would not willingly accept it as a gift; though the Cape would gladly give "this haven of malefactors and uncultivable land" to Germany, it was afraid of its political exploitation.

The view of the paper could be discounted. It was probably continuing the practice of downgrading the value of Walfisch Bay in order to reduce its price.[2] Swakopmund, which the paper insisted could serve a better purpose, was not without its own trouble. Work was stopped on the harbour in mid 1908, and the bulk of traffic was undertaken by a wooden pier. The Reichstag had voted no funds.[3]

These difficulties in harbour facilities were reflected in the proposals Dernburg put to Merriman, the Premier of Cape Colony, in June 1908:[4]

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1. FO367/80/14225 Lascelles to Grey, April 22, 1908, reporting Dernburg's visit to South Africa; FO367/80/18923; FO367/80/16944 Lascelles to Grey, May 15, 1908. An F.O. minute read: "...no question of making a bargain with Germany about Walfisch Bay, its strategic value in case of a war would render it in German hands dangerous for British South Africa." See Oron J. Hale, op. cit. p. 221 for political affiliation of Tageblatt.

2. In 1904 the Nation und Welt, a supplement of the National Zeitung pointed out that though the Bay was of very small value as a harbour, the fact that there was a foreign enclave in the middle of German territory was liable to lead to friction between the two governments. In other words it was advocating an acquisition of Walfisch Bay by Germany. See FO879/80/25751 F.O. to C.O., July 21, 1904 encl. letter from Whitehead.

3. FO367/80/16944 Lascelles to Grey, May 15, 1908.

4. FO367/80/24362 C.O. to F.O., July 14, 1908.

1. Britain should lease for 10 years to the German government or Company or to a company under German control the landing rights in Walfisch Bay; and rights which would include:
2. the erection and control of lighthouses;
3. the collection of dues;
4. the erection of harbour works and
5. the construction of a railway to the interior.

Such concessions, it seemed to the South African politicians, would have practically turned the Bay into a German possession. J. X. Merriman, who looked "on fears of German agression as more or less chimerical, though he feared inconveniences that might result from the introduction of another first class power in South Africa," had a better idea. He was opposed totally to a lease, but he saw no reason why the Germans could not be given facilities under the control of a British company. He therefore counter proposed that British capital should build the railway connecting Walfisch Bay with German as well as British territories and so impose moderate landing dues and railway rates. His plan was to practically occupy in the German hinterland the same position that Delagoa Bay had in the Transvaal, i.e. Walfisch Bay could become a German entrepôt and German South West Africa would become "an annex of British trade." This was the argument used by Merriman against the governor's fears that the port would be entirely German in trade. On the other hand, what Dernburg wished was to get a privileged and guaranteed position, such as that held by the Transvaal in Lourenco Marques, in Walfisch Bay which would facilitate communications between the German colony and the outside world.[1]

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1. F0367/80/22640 enclosed letter from Lord Selborne to Crewe, June 20, 1908; F0367/80/27593 C.O. to F.O., Aug. 8, 1908; F0367/80/19903 C.O. to F.O., June 9, 1908 encl. letter from Gov. Hutchinson to Crewe, June 4, 1908.

In any case the question was an academic one, there was no real chance of Dernburg succeeding in getting facilities in Walfisch Bay. Merriman was the only one who was even disposed to consider the proposals, but even on this point, he wished to turn the arrangement to the advantage of British South Africa. All the other South African politicians were opposed, even to minor concessions. The strong feelings evinced by Malan, Smuts and Botha made such an impression on Langley that he remarked: "...evident that the Dutch colonists do not like the Germans."[1]

Indeed Jan C. Smuts, the Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal and collaborator of Merriman in the movement for a Union of South Africa, wrote to the latter warning him that he was incurring hostility from others: "From the point of view of South Africa's future the German Empire is no desirable neighbour, and I think you would expose yourself to just and damaging criticism if you were ever to listen to the German proposals. Now that we are on the eve of closer union as we all hope it would be the very worst time to strengthen German position by making them use Walfisch Bay for the development of their territory."[2]

Louis Botha, ex-Boer General and the Prime Minister of the Transvaal, had a phobia about German power in Africa. He greatly feared that Germany would be the dominant power in Africa, and hence he was opposed to any concessions which might presumably aid her in attaining that position.[3]

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1. Minute by Langley on FO367/80/27593 C.O. to F.O., August 8, 1908.
2. W.K. Hancock and Jean van der Poel, Selections from the Smuts Papers C.U.P. (1966) Vol. III J.C. Smuts to J.X. Merriman, June 26, 1908, No. 386 p. 438.
3. (Haldane Papers) Vol. 5909 f 143 unidentified correspondent to Haldane, Sept. 7, 1911. See also FO367/80/24362 C.O. to F.O., July 14, 1908; Hancock and Poel, ibidem.

Lord Selborne, the British High Commissioner in South Africa, acting under instructions, told Dernburg, in his interview with him on June 19th, point blank that he would oppose the cession of Walfisch Bay steadily. It was a 'family jewel' and Britain could not part with it, and moreover there was no precedent for such a lease as Dernburg wanted in the relationship of two Great Powers.[1]

The Cape governor, Hely-Hutchinson, feared that money saved on Swakopmund would be used for enlarging the German Navy (to which Merriman rejoined that if the German government wanted money for the Navy it would get it, not by saving money on Swakopmund) and therefore he was opposed to cession or lease of the Bay.[2]

In Whitehall, the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office only agreed on one point, that is, general policy as regard Walfisch Bay "must obviously be directed from London" while final refusal on the railway question rested with the South African governments.[3] In practice, however, the two Secretaries viewed the question of ceding or leasing the Bay from opposite standpoints. Lord Crewe, the Colonial Secretary (April 1908-October 1910) was opposed to any concession at all, while Grey was not indisposed to consider some facilities, though he would not force the issue if the South Africans objected.

As early as May 1908, Crewe instructed the governor of the Cape that apart from its value to that dominion, naval strategy was important, therefore Walfisch Bay could not be treated as a matter for negotiations in South Africa.[4]

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1. FO367/80/34725 C.O. to F.O., Oct. 7, 1908 encl. letter from Selborne on his interview with Dernburg.
2. FO367/80/27593 C.O. to F.O., August 8, 1908.
3. (Grey Papers) FO800/91 Crewe to Grey, June 15, 1908.
4. FO367/80/18539 C.O. to F.O., May 29, 1908. Copy of letter to Governor of the Cape.

On June 16th, he sent a long despatch to Selborne outlining British policy, from the Colonial Office point of view. He believed the question of linking railways, on which local opinion was unfavourable anyway, was one to be decided by South Africa:[1]

> But apart from this, any measure whereby Walfisch Bay becomes available for German South West African trade would at once make possible economies in the expenditure at Swakopmund and so release funds which might be used, there is reason to fear, for increased naval expenditure. Moreover, if Walfisch Bay should be developed defence responsibilities, both imperial and local, at once become more onerous and since the trade of the post would be German almost entirely, whether the railway were or were not constructed or controlled by a British Company, it would be much more difficult later to decline to consider proposals for cessions outright on terms advantageous or otherwise. A minor difficulty is that in view of well-known principles of German policy, the position of a British Railway Company would be very delicate and there would be constant risk of complications better avoided. The discussions at Cape Town with Dernburg were, I gather, purely preliminary and you should steadily discourage any attempt to bring the matter to an issue. It should be clearly understood that cession or lease of Walfisch Bay to Germany or any other power is absolutely out of the question.

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1. F0367/80/22640 C.O. to F.O., July 1, 1908 encl correspondence with Selborne. Interestingly enough Crewe was one of the Ministers who advocated more generous colonial concessions to Germany after Haldane's return from Berlin. See Robbins, op. cit. p. 258.

Grey disagreed:[1]

> It seems to me that from the Imperial point of view it would be pushing things rather far for us to object to giving facilities at Walfisch Bay. Complete cession is out, but a lease of some outlet there and means of communications under proper conditions and in return for other advantages elsewhere is not a thing which I should personally wish to rule out without considerations. To object to everything unconditionally simply because it makes the Germans spend money at Swakopmund would be so churlish a policy that it would justify them in saying that we were really unfriendly and that their efforts to build a fleet against us must be increased.

Perhaps this flexible attitude of Grey, which was certainly more generous than that which he assumed with respect to German interests in Liberia or Portuguese East Africa, was intended to take the heat off the naval problem which had erupted once more. The Admiralty did not want Germany to have a footing in Walfisch Bay because of the latter's potentials as a first class naval base.[2] In Britain the hitherto smug confidence in British ability to outbuild the Germans in a naval race was being seriously questioned. Attacked by her liberal supporters (who, nevertheless, would not concede British Naval supremacy) for the increasing expenditure in the Navy programme, the British government made efforts in 1908 to reach an agreement about slowing down the rate of building of the two powers.

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1. (Grey Papers) FO800/91 Grey to Crewe, June 17, 1908; also quoted in R. Louis, Great Britain and Germany's lost colonies, p. 30.

2. FO367/42/23031 Admiralty to Under Secretary of State (F.O.) July 16, 1907 encl.memo from Edmund S. Poe, Vice-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief, Cape of Good Hope.

Lloyd George, the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1908-1915), concerned about rising costs and the deterioration of relationship as a result of the Naval race, saw Metternich twice in July 1908, and they discussed the burning questions between the two powers. The Chancellor suggested a slowing of tempo in the German rate of shipbuilding. Charles Hardinge followed up this British initiative in August 1908, when he accompanied King Edward VII on a visit to Schloss Friedrichsof. No tangible result was derived from these efforts because the Emperor was not willing to discuss the military requirements of his country.[1]

Though sceptical about their values, Grey grudgingly agreed to these feelers for a Naval agreement. In any case, Grey, like his colleagues, believed that British Naval superiority was a sine qua non of any agreement, since it was a matter of British independence and existence. He also had a confidence in British Naval supremacy which bordered on the disdain. In a letter to Crewe he pooh-poohed the idea of German intrigues in South Africa. They were futile since neither Briton nor Boer would entertain them: "Railway or no Railway the Germans can do nothing by force against a united South Africa and British command of the sea!"[2]

Yet, it seemed as though Grey was genuinely interested in giving facilities to the Germans not withstanding the possible complications. In 1909, he noted on despatch from Sir Edward Goschen, British Ambassador in Berlin (1908-1914): "Without a deal about Walfisch Bay I do not suppose Germany would be content." Up to 1913, he appeared to have been toying with the idea of a deal. Indeed, in his Memoirs, Walfisch Bay was picked out as one place in which Germany could have been accommodated.[3]

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1. E.L. Woodward, op. cit. p. 167ff; David Lloyd George, War Memoirs (1933) Vol. 1, pp. 11-32.

2. Robbins, op. cit. pp. 190-191; (Grey Papers) Crewe to Grey, June 22, 1908; Grey to Crewe, June 23, 1908.

3. Grey of Fallodon, Twenty-five Years, Vol I, pp. 120-121.

In the last resort, however, everything depended on South African opinion. He could not get over the genuine objections of men like Botha; and as long as these remained strong, even if Britain wished it, there could be no deal with Berlin.[1] In trying to reconcile his appreciation of the German need for a good port and the safeguarding of Colonial and Imperial interests, Grey could not help being inconsistent. And perhaps this further illustrates the peculiar relationship between Britain and her self-governing colonies and how difficult it was to explain it to foreign powers. On June 17th, he told Crewe that he would rather use the South African objections on their own merits than as a tactical move for refusing negotiations on Walfisch Bay. Six days later, however, Grey observed that local objections were sufficient for Selborne to refuse a deal, but he did not want the Germans to have the idea that were it not for colonial opposition "we should be willing to give them Walfisch Bay." At the same time, Selborne must not let Dernburg get the impression that it was the Imperial government who had forbidden the colonies to give way: "Our opinion as to what we should do if the colonies did not object should, I think, be reserved. Indeed, it cannot well be expressed without a cabinet decision."[2]

There is no evidence that the Cabinet decided on the question or that the matter was submitted to it for consideration.[3] It is debatable whether the Cabinet would have made any improvement. At the time when the Union was being created the Liberal government could not have afforded to put pressure on the South Africans in a question about which they had strong feelings.

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1. (Grey Papers) FO800/91 Grey to Crewe, June 23, 1908.
2. (Grey Papers) FO800/91 Grey to Crewe, June 17, 1908; Grey to Crewe, June 23, 1909.
3. The Cabinet Papers CAB37 and CAB41 do not say anything on Walfisch Bay for this year. It is possible that Grey did not think that there would be any likelihood that the Cabinet would change the Cape's attitude, so he did not bring the matter forward. Yet it seems odd that the Gambia question was before the cabinet in 1903 and 1909.

The arrangement for a lease to or facilities in the Bay for Germany was a sensible one if there was a genuine desire to help Germany in her difficulties on the part of Britain or the Cape or conversely if the Germans had a legitimate objective in using the port. A Foreign Office official admitted that the construction of a railway from the Bay to meet the Swakopmund-Windhook line would doubtless lead to a large importation of goods through British territory since the British port was superior to Swakopmund, but this would also facilitate a German attack on Walfisch Bay in the event of a war and if Germany gained control of the sea.[1] This point was a crucial factor, at least, from the South African point of view.

The Globe (Dec. 10, 1908), took up this question of strategy. It blamed "the slackness of our government" in allowing Germany to get South West Africa in the first place. Walfisch Bay was an inalienable British territory and Rhodes had seen it as a strategic centre of enormous value. In enemy hands it would strike at "British possessions further north (sic)." The Standard (Dec. 7), took Dernburg to task for "diplomatic solecism." In treating with South African Statesmen instead of Britain, argued the paper, the German Minister was trying to sow discord between the Boers and Britain, but the firmness of the South Africans had foiled him.[2]

It was not surprising, therefore, that after the failure of his talks and the hostile comments in newspapers, Dernburg had to deny that he had made any attempt to get facilities in Walfisch Bay. Rather, it was stressed that Swakopmund would be able to take all the traffic. The real situation was otherwise.[3]

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1. FO367/30/19908 C.O. to F.O., June 8, 1903. Minute by I.L(?).
2. FO367/30/43107 Press cuttings from The Globe and the Standard.
3. FO367/135/4131 Goschen to Grey, Jan. 26, 1909 encl. extract from Dernburg's speech of Jan. 22, 1909.

After the failure of the mission, 1909 saw both powers agreeing to settle the boundary dispute by arbitration. On January 30, 1909, Goschen and Schoen signed a declaration submitting the dispute to arbitration. The decision of the Arbitrator was to be accepted as final. The King of Spain appointed Senor Don Joachim Fernandes Prida, Senator and Chairman of International Law at the Law School of the Central University, to act on his behalf as arbitrator.[1]

The disputants presented their cases by the end of 1909 but Prida found it necessary to visit the disputed territory. He arrived in Swakopmund on December 29, 1910, and within the next few days he made his investigations.[2]

By May 1911, Prida had finished his report: 1. Germany was not bound by Wrey's survey of 1885 as she was not a party to it, but 2. "that in as much as the said survey fixes with accuracy the southern limit of Walfisch Bay, it must be accepted henceforth by virtue of the arbitral decision as the exact determination of the frontier under discussion, which, therefore, shall have its point of departure and terminus fixed by Mr. Wrey traversing between the one and the other, the remaining point at which he fixed the existing intermediary beacons."[3]

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1. FO367/133/5012 Goschen to Grey, Feb. 1, 1909 encl. copy of agreement. See also files 927 and 3495. The long delay in the German reply to the British request for arbitration was intentional. See FO367/79/4507 de Salis to Grey, Dec. 24, 1908 reporting conversation with Von Schoen. See Grey's minutes on it; q.v. B.D.VI No. 178, Goschen to Grey, May 7, 1909.
   FO367/133/9126 de Bunsen to Grey, March 6, 1909.

2. FO367/131/7032 Duff to Grey, Feb. 24, 1909; FO367/229/13649 C.O. to F.O., April 11, 1911; see also file 21662.

3. FO367/229/21731 de Bunsen to Grey, June 5, 1911. The award was given on May 23, 1911.

It is difficult to see why Prida made such a decision, since it seems to contradict his earlier contention that Germany was not a party to the 1885 survey and was not bound by it, except that, as a Foreign Office Minute suggested, Prida wanted No. 2 to supercede No. 1. But this was what the Germans had objected to, namely that Wrey's map included areas in British territory which Dyer's Proclamation of 1878, Robinson's Proclamation of 1884 and the Admiralty Map had not shown to be British.[1]

It was not improbable also that local officials, for example, Capt. Humphrey, Assistant Commissioner of Ordnance, C.W.N. Lansdowne, Law Adviser in the Department of Justice in the Union of South Africa, by their solicitous concern and their presence in the area of dispute influenced Prida's decision. At one point Lansdowne's pushful attitude aroused the wrath of the German member of the investigating party.[2]

The Berlin government appeared to have accepted the award and it agreed to its publication and to pay its share of the costs. Apart from honouring their promise to accept the arbitrator's decision as final, it was possible that Dernburg's experience and Metternich's letter of February 10, 1910, telling Bethmann Hollweg that Walfisch Bay was a delicate question and that England would probably lose South Africa if she pressed her to cede the territory, went some way to make the Germans accept the situation.[3]

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1. F.O. Minute on supra.

2. F0367/229/693 C.O. to F.O., January 6, 1911.

3. F0367/229/1275 de Bunsen to Grey, June 22, 1912. Senor Prida was paid £1500 after long correspondence between the F.O. and C.O. June 1911-June 1912. During the Bethmann Hollweg initiative of late 1909 Walfisch Bay featured as an issue for discussion, but Metternich warned the Chancellor that there was no chance of success. C.P.XXVII Nr.9995 of. B.D.VI No. 179 Goschen to Grey, May 7, 1909 and Minutes by Crowe, Langley and Grey.

The settlement was an anti-climax after all the claims and counter-claims, boundary commissions etc. One interesting point to note is that native rights were soon lost in the arguments which revolved around more important issues. The former were only put forward as argument for retaining the strip when the situation advised such a tactic, when it became inadequate other platforms were used.

The Bay, however, continued to feature in international politics after 1911. I shall say more about this in another chapter. Here it is only relevant to note that some public interest was shown in the question in 1912. Questions were asked in the House of Commons by Sir Charles Hunter and Mr. Arthur Fell on February 28, and March 12, 1912. Grey denied that there was any intention of ceding Walfisch Bay. The approval of both the British parliament and the Union government would be needed to confirm such a deal. In a minute on an Admiralty memorandum opposing the cession of the Bay, Grey, however, indicated that a deal on Walfisch Bay was not beyond a possibility.[1]

The truth was whatever chance there was for making concessions to Germany was lost in 1908 when the South African politicians strongly opposed any deal; e.g. Selborne, Botha, Smuts, Hely-Hutchinson; in London, the Admiralty and the Colonial Office. With the exception of Grey and perhaps Clarke and Erskine, the senior members of the Foreign Office staff were against giving concession to Germany. Apart from South African susceptibilities there were also imperial interests of trade and strategy. The creation of the Union on May 31, 1910, in which the balance of power was tipped in favour of ex-Boers who were vigorously opposed to further

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1. Parliamentary Debates, Vols. XXXIV and XXXV Feb. 14 - March 22, 1912. Both men were conservative M.Ps. Fell was interested in protection and foreign trade and wrote pamphlets on them. Neither of them spoke in the debate on Grey's statement of Nov. 27, 1911 and so no useful comments could be made on their interests. FO367/329/11526 Admiralty to F.O., March 8, 1913 encl. memo by Vice-Admiral P.W. Bush, M.V.O. late Commander-in-Chief, Cape Station. Minute by Grey.

extension of German power in Southern Africa, put a finality on the subject.

This last factor also influenced the treatment of the questions which will be discussed in the next section.

IV: The Orange River and Caprivi Zipfel frontier questions: the Boer factor.

As it was in the case of Walfisch Bay, British policy on the frontier rectifications on the Orange River and Caprivi Zipfel was influenced by the susceptibilities of the South Africans, especially by the Boer elements who had by 1909 concentrated power in their hands.

Article III of the 1890 Heligoland Treaty laid down the boundaries of German South West Africa and British territories as:-

To the south by a line commencing at the mouth of the Orange River, and ascending the north bank of that river to the point of intersection by the 20th degree of east longitude.

To the east by a line commencing at the above named point, and following the 20th degree of east longitude to the point of its intersection by the 22nd parallel of south latitude, it runs eastward along that parallel to the point of intersection by the 21st degree of east longitude, thence it follows that degree northwards to the point of intersection by the 18th parallel of south latitude, it runs eastward along that parallel till it reaches the river Chobe, and descends the centre of the main channel of that river to its junction with the Zambezi where it terminates.

It is understood that under this agreement Germany shall have access from her protectorate to the Zambezi by a strip of territory which shall at no point be less than 20 English miles in width.[1]

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1. Hertslet III, p. 902

To define the boundaries was one thing, to interpret them was another. The wordings were proved to be ambiguous or at best capable of more than one interpretation. Article VI had made provisions for rectifications by agreement between the two governments in accordance with local requirements. But when new geographical evidence argued in favour of rectification or the need arose for a definitive boundary, both sides postulated opposite interpretations of the clauses, designed to coincide with their own interests.

The question to be decided in the Orange River controversy was what was meant by the north or right bank of the river (i.e. high water or low water). The British or rather the Cape government, who was directly concerned, contended that the north bank meant the "top or crest of the bank" i.e. "the containing wall, the top of which the river scales when it is said to overflow its banks."[1] In other words the Cape was claiming sovereignty over the whole stretch of the river and the island left in the bed by the fluctuating river. The Germans argued that the boundary was not defined by a "river", in which case the boundary would have been regulated by the periodic variations of the stream, but by a line. Therefore, the boundary was not dependent on "the periodical variations of the height of the water but formed by that fixed line on the bank which is given by the usual water line."[2]

There could be no 'usual water line' because of the fluctuating character of the river. At some times it was miles wide and at others it/

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1. CO879/91/5041 C.O. to F.O., March 17, 1906; CO879/91/18024 Minutes by Attorney-General, May(?) 1906; CO551/9/98519 Colonial Office Minutes, Nov. 30, 1911. On sovereignty over rivers, see L.J. Bouchez, "The fixing of boundaries in International boundary rivers," International and Comparative Law Quarterly Vol XII (July 1963) pp 789-817; McEwen, International Boundaries of Africa, Chpt. VI.

2. CO879/91/18024 F.O. to C.O., May 29(?) 1906, encl. German note.

it ran a mere trickle in some places. It was, therefore, difficult to ascertain the water level which was a prerequisite to determine the boundary line. Perhaps Germany was right in the legalistic sense, viz. that the boundary was fixed by a line, but it counted for little in practice. The definition was vague and inprecise. What was meant by a line? The line was not identifiable by any physical features but was to follow an undetermined feature (the north bank) whose definition was in turn dependent on the fluctuating river. Moreover there was a treaty agreement on the use of the river between the two riparian states.[1]

The case of the Cape was weakened by the fact that the Proclamation of 1847 put the northern boundary of the Cape as the south bank of the river. Since the north bank was supposed to be the southern boundary of German South West Africa, a no man's land was, therefore, created in the middle.[2] The rivers and the islands were regarded as British, and eventually the Union government (as successor to the Cape government) expressed its wish to occupy them. As the dispute over the boundary progressed it became clear that the object of the Cape and later the Union government was to deny the German colony the use of the water in the river and to keep out German power as far ~~as~~ South African boundaries as was possible. The Germans, on the other hand, apart from navigational requirements, wanted to use the water to irrigate the arid waste of their territory.

Caprivi/

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1. CO551/19/98519 Colonial Office Minutes, Nov. 20, 1911; L. Bouchen, op. cit., pp 791-792.

2. CO879/91 Hely-Hutchison to Elgin, January 22, 1906 encl. various enclts correspondence; CO879/91/5041 C.O. to F.O., March 17, 1906.

Caprivi Zipfel was ceded to Germany to facilitate access to the Zambezi River. This concession was of little practical value to Germany because a large part of the river was not navigable. The Germans did not seem to have been in any great hurry to establish their authority in this 1500 square miles of rich ivory territory.[1] When they did establish an administration it was found necessary to delimit the boundary because the position on which the Anglo-German boundary of 1890 had been based was further south than was assumed, and it was imperative to have a clearly defined boundary to avoid friction arising from tribal unrest across a vague frontier. Here again divergencies in in-terpretation of the treaty arose. The British contended that they were obliged to give only a 20 mile strip of territory in rectifying the boundary, the Germans retorted that the terms did not preclude the cession of a territory more than 20 miles in length. The arguments went on and on in circles; neither side backed down. Though at a later stage efforts were made by Colonial Secretary Harcourt to reach a compromise, the two questions were still unsolved when war broke out.

Disputes on the Orange River began in 1899 when the German Consul-General at the Cape, Herr J. H. Focke, asked permission from the Cape government to establish a ferry near Rahman's Drift - a type of ford straddling/

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1. FO367/136/17181 C.O. to F.O., May 5, 1909 encl. report by Capt. H. S. Simon; FO367/1 1/35918 Goschen to Grey, Oct. 13, 1910 encl. German note; D.M.O. to F.O., June 18, 1910; FO367/181/22787 C.O. to F.O. June 24, 1910. There was some uncertainty about the value of the strip. Capt. Simon reported that the Germans claimed the strip had some mineral potentials. Another report gave a depressing description of the area. It was what Salisbury called "light land". There was hardly any water and it was highly improbable that minerals could be found in the territory. See FO867/181/382 C.O. to F.O. Jan. 3, 1910 encl. extracts from High Commissioners of South Africa, dated Nov. 15, 1909.

straddling the river. The letter stated that the north bank was the southern boundary of German South West Africa and that the course of the river fell within the boundary of the Cape. The Governor of the German colony, therefore, wanted to know the conditions for the Cape's consent. The letter by implication acknowledged the sovereignty of the Cape over the river.

The Cape was not unwilling to allow the plying of the ferry, but on its own terms. It asserted that the whole bed of the river belonged to it, but in view of the importance of traffic between the two colonies it was prepared to reach an arrangement for the control of the ferry. Briefly, the Cape government was to provide a ferry or port on Rahman's drift subject to certain specified conditions:- A piece of land of an area 50 yards radius from the centre of the landing site of the port was to be reserved within German territory marked by beacons; there was to be free and ready access to all persons in the surrounding German territory; Cape representatives could enter at any time to reside thereon for any lawful purpose of construction, working repair or maintenance of the port or its appurtenances, and if necessary to raise material from the soil for these purposes or to carry on any operations connected therewith without interference, free of charge, without liability for payment of charge or compensation of any description whatever.

The German colony was to guarantee that any licences which they might grant to occupy land or carry on business within the said area should ensure free and uninterrupted access to the port for all persons and all facilities required by the Cape government for its maintenance and working. No concessions or rights for the establishment of ferries, pontoons, etc. were to be granted by either government without the previous/

previous consent of the other, formally obtained, within a distance of 10 miles up stream and 10 miles downstream on either side of the ferry proposed to be established. Lastly any concessions or rights of that naturethen in existence under German authority were to be cancelled and all compensations satisfied by that authority,[1]

The Cape on its side agreed to compensate claims resulting from cancellation of concessions granted under its authority within the agreed area. It would maintain both approaches to the port, record all traffic, levy and collect all charges in accordance with a schedule of charges, the rates of which should be communicated to German authorities before final adoption. The Cape also agreed to convey for the German protectorate authorities; mails, government officers, all government employees travelling on duty, horses, mules, cattle, victuals, baggages, etc. If the employment of a pontoon was not feasible a suitable boat would be provided. Tariffs would be posted in English, Dutch and German. The Cape had the right to determine the agreement, to disestablish and to dismantle the pontoon at its discretion. The pontoon was to be moored permanently on the southern bank in Cape Territory.[2]

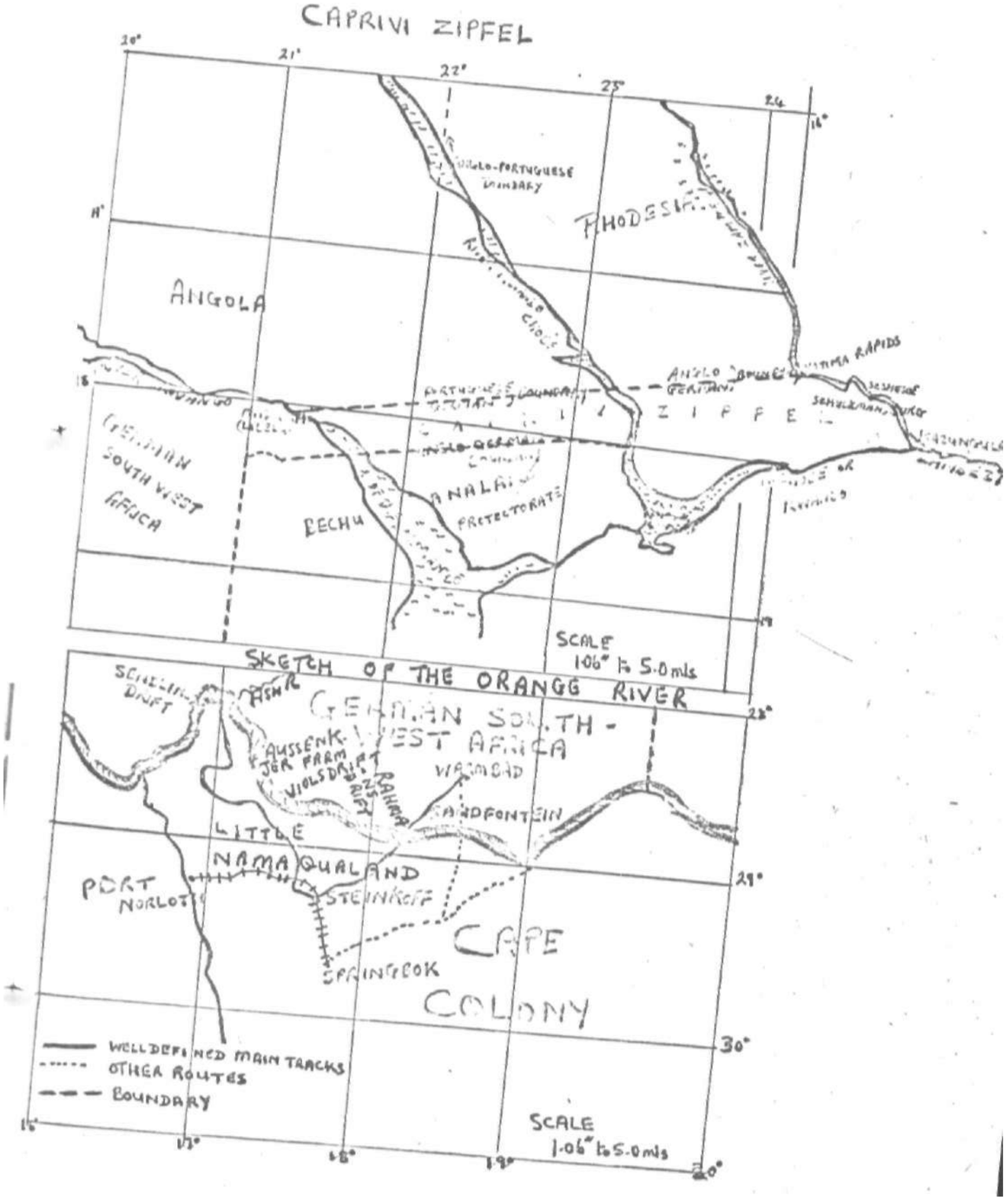
In other words the Cape intended to exercise quasi-sovereign rights on German territory, to control the commerce of the German protectorate and the latter's communication with the Cape, and above all to restrict its use of the river. Furthermore, the references to restrictions on a

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1. CO879/80/19156 Hely-Hutchison to Chamberlain, May 6, 1903 encl. correspondence between Cape Ministers and Governor, and between German authorities in South West Africa and Cape authorities. See Map on p.206.

2. Ibidem.


CAPRIVI ZIPFEL
20°
21°
22°
23°
24°
16°
17°
18°
19°
20°
ANGOLA
RHODESIA
ANGLO-PORTUGUESE BOUNDARY
ANGLO-GERMAN BOUNDARY
ZIPFEL
GERMAN SOUTH WEST AFRICA
BECHU
ANALAND
PROTECTORATE
SCALE 1.06" to 5.0 mls
SKETCH OF THE ORANGE RIVER
SCHELLIN DRIFT
ASHER
GERMAN SOUTH-WEST AFRICA
AUSSENK. JOR FARM
WIELSDRIFT
RAHAM
WARMBAD
KARDFONTEIN
LITTLE NAMAQUALAND
PORT NORLOT
STEINKOFF
CAPE COLONY
SPRINGBOK
WELL DEFINED MAIN TRACKS
OTHER ROUTES
BOUNDARY
SCALE 1.06" to 5.0 mls

10 mile stretch on either side of the river were levelled against one P. Sperlich who was given a monopoly right by the German authorities in April 1900 to ply a ferry, which was reported to be making a profit of £100-£300 per annum, and which had neutralised the ferry from the bank on Cape Colony, "satisfactorily run by members of the Steinkopf Mission community" for some years.[1]

Not unnaturally, the Germans were not very keen to come to an agreement with the Cape for the running of the ferry. The Cape's proposals were communicated to the Governor of South West Africa in October 1902; no reply was received. The German foreign secretary, von Tschirschky (January 1906 - November 1907) later claimed that the Germans had replied and there had been inconclusive talks with the Cape Prime Minister, Sir Gordon Sprigg.[2]

Matters dragged on to 1907. Before this date two things happened which made the definition of the boundary more urgent. During the Herero war the Germans chased fugitives into what was claimed as British territory. The local official, one Inspector Noon of Springbokfontein refused to allow the German authorities to collect rebel stocks from the islands which had emerged after the river had gone dry.[3] In 1906 the Germans attempted to build a road in the river bed from Rahman's drift to Hout's drift, and also to bore holes for water from Steinkopf to Rahman's drift.[4]

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1. Ibidem; CO879/91 Hely-Hutchinson to Elgin, Jan. 22, 1906 encl. relevant papers; CO879/91/2514 Hely-Hutchinson to Elgin, Jan. 22, 1906 (Telegram).

2. CO879/80/26731 F.O. to C.O., July 10, 1903 encl. despatch from Berlin. Von Mülberg of the German Foreign Office claimed that the Governor of South West Africa had been instructed to discuss the matter with the Cape; CO879/91/9619 F.O. to C.O., March 19, 1906.

3. CO879/80/46306 Hely-Hutchinson to Lyttleton, Dec. 8, 1903; CO879/80/1064 C.O. to F.O., Jan. 25, 1904; CO879/80/4754 F.O. to C.O., Feb. 10, 1904.

4. CO879/91/7703 Hely-Hutchinson to Elgin, Feb. 13, 1906; CO879/91/8026 same to same, March 6, 1906.

The Colonial Office, basing its views on a report by Captain H.S.P. Simon's reconnaissance party of December, 1905, which pointed out the advantages of the river to the Cape, refused permission to the Germans.[1] The Foreign Office backed the claim of the Colonial Office that the Germans were infringing on British territory. The British government claimed that the river bed was British territory irrespective of the amount of water it might contain at any one time between the banks.[2]

In both cases the need for a well defined boundary was obvious. In 1904 the Cape refused delimitation because it felt its definition of the boundary was unassailable and that Foche's letter of 1899 had recognised the Cape's sovereignty. But this was rather an unsatisfactory situation.[3] The river was subjected to periodic variation and its real depth could not be ascertained, and no treaty agreement regulated its use by the two territories. If the river was at high water mark then the north bank and all the islands in the river would be Cape territory, if at low water (though the Germans never used this term) the north bank and presumably the islands in the river would be German territory. The sensible alternative to this impermanent situation was to make the "medium filium aquae" (median line) or the thalweg as the boundary and thus ensuring the use of the river by both parties. Eventually this was/

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1. CO879/91/4904 and 5041 Hely-Hutchinson to Elgin, Jan. 22, 1906 encl. Simon's report and other papers; CO879/91/5041 C.O. to F.O., March 17, 1906.

2. CO879/91/12608 F.O. to C.O., April 9, 1906; CO879/91/12649 F.O. to C.O., April 10, 1906 encl. letter to Berlin. The refusal was based on the grounds that to give permission for the building of the road would prejudice British case. The argument is obscure. Permission would have implied the recognition of British sovereignty over the river bed.

3. CO879/80 Acting Gov. Brook to Lyttleton, July 13, 1904 encl. minutes by Cape Ministers.

was the proposal which the Cape made in 1900.[1]

Meanwhile the Germans rejected the British interpretation of the boundary and stated their own view, already referred to, viz. that fixed line on the bank "which (is) given by the usual water line." Both sides were appealing to an imaginary line, what this line was neither of them could say with certainty. The Argument could go on without reaching a solution.[2]

As regards the ferry, the Cape rejected moves for an understanding; for example, permission to use the Cape bank of the river was refused to the German authorities, a proposal for mutual control over private undertakings in the ferry working and its guarantee in accordance with tariffs fixed by mutual understanding was equally rejected.[3] On the other hand the Cape government set up its own ferry in March, 1907, in response "to German authorities' persistent demands for increased permits and to trading community pressing for greater facilities for trade with German territory." Ultimately, Sperlich's ferry was stopped by the Cape authorities at the end of March, 1907.[4] The German government regretted/

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1. L. Bouchez, op. cit. p. 792ff; Stephen B. Jones, Boundary Making: A Handbook for Statesmen, treaty Editors and Boundary Commissioners, Washington (1945) p. 113ff; McEwen, op. cit. p. 84ff. The terms "medium filum aquae" and "thalweg" are not exactly the same. The former is used on non-navigable rivers and it can establish a boundary line, while the latter is used on navigable rivers. Because of the difficulty of ascertaining the "line of deepest sounding" or "deepest channel", i.e. the thalweg, it denotes a boundary area, rather than a boundary line. See sources quoted for elucidation.

2. CO879/91/18024 F.O. to C.O., May 29, 1906., encl. German note.

3. On this issue, see CO879/91 Files 2514; 3546; 10579. Goldy-Hutchinson to Elgin, March 26, 1906; 15017 same to same, April 10, 1906.

4. CO879/94/9144 Governor to Sec. of State, March 4, 1907; CO879/94/9958 C.O. to F.O., March 27, 1907.

regretted this move and it threatened to take measures of reprisal. Nonetheless Berlin indicated its willingness to come to an understanding on the questions of the ferry and the boundary.[1]

Herr Friedrich von Lindequist, Under State Secretary of Reichs Colonial Office (1907-1910), met Dr. Jameson, the Cape Premier, and other officials in the Foreign Office, London on April 23rd and 25th to discuss the disputes between the two colonies. Both sides went over the same argument all over again. Jameson offered the opinion that the "stream" was the only proper definition that could be given to the river in view of its changeability, which being interpreted meant the high water mark. Eventually the two negotiators agreed to put the question to arbitration by Italy. Jameson promised easy facility for transmission of German supplies across the Orange River without permits.[2]

Later in the year the German government decided against arbitration and proposed local settlement of the dispute. The Cape rejected this and asserted that the normal water mark was the boundary which the negotiators of 1890 had intended. The Cape authorities believed their case was so strong that pressure in the ordinary diplomatic course or arbitration would get them the boundary they wanted, hence there was no need for a local discussion. Lord Elgin supported them for a different reason. Unless the two imperial governments were agreed on the meaning of the term "north bank" a local joint Commission would be useless, as was proved in the case of Walfisch Bay in 1905.[3]

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1. CO879/94/15458 F.O. to C.O., April 30, 1907 transmitting letter from Berlin.

2. CO879/94/16551 F.O. to C.O., May 9, 1907.

3. CO879/94/30930 F.O. to C.O., August 27, 1907; CO879/94/33378 F.O. to C.O., Oct. 31, 1907, encl. letter from Lascelles; FO367/30/12853 C.O. to F.O., April 11, 1908, enclosing relevant papers.

The Merriman government which succeeded the Jameson administration in 1908 appeared to have taken a more flexible attitude on the boundary question. It did not wish to quibble about whose sphere of influence the course of the Orange River fell, nor to labour the point whether the definition given of the southern boundary of the German sphere of influence inferred that the course of the river was regarded as British. Its desire was to avoid unnecessary expenditure on arbritration and constant friction. The government signified its desire to have friendly negotiations. The claim to the high water mark was abandoned and the Cape proposed to settle jurisdiction over the river on the principle of "medium filiam fluminis" or "thalweg", in other words, to reach an agreement whereby both territories could have rights to use the river. In return for this concession, the Cape demanded that the German government should explicitly grant landing facilities on the north bank and a monopoly of the ferrying trade on the Orange River between the Cape and the protectorate for a period of five years, subsequently to be placed under mutual control and a mutually determined tariff. The Cape should be confirmed in possession of any islets north of the "thalweg" it might have acquired rights to by occupation. Lastly a right of abutment, in respect of any weir or other work which it might be deemed thereafter to construct for the diversion of the water for the purpose of irrigation, was asked for.

This apparently substantial concession becomes less when looked at more closely. The terms for the ferry were virtually the same as those of 1902, i.e. they envisaged the complete control of communications by the South African Colony, except that they were restricted to five years. The acceptance of the thalweg as the boundary did not prejudice the/

the Cape's claims to islands north of it. The right of abutment to divert water might mean depriving the waterless hinterland of South West Africa of much needed water for irrigation purposes.[1]

Moreover, apart from wishing to avoid arbitration expenses, doubts were also entertained about the strength of the Cape's case. The Attorney-General, Henry Burton, explained that the proclaimed boundary of the Cape was the south bank, while the 1890 agreement implied that the north bank was the boundary. The river itself was excluded from either sphere of influence "so far as paper arrangement" went. But, "we have, however, performed several acts of occupation in fact on the north side of the stream with the consent of the Germans, for example, the islands." In arbitration much time would be spent on defining the bank - "a very vexed and confusing question." If the Cape asked for high water mark on the north side, the Germans would argue that high water mark on the south side was the Cape boundary. The last course was to claim the middle stream.[2]

The concession did not amount to much, but at least the thalweg would ensure and legalise the use of the water by the Germans. Furthermore the gesture suggested that there were South Africans who were now presumably reconciled to the presence of German power on their borders. Merriman seemed to have symbolised the policy of co-operation with South Africa's German neighbours.[3]

Before/

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1. F0367/80/12853 C.O. to F.O., April 11, 1908 enclosing relevant papers; cf. p.205.
2. Ibidem
3. See the Walfisch Bay Section

Before the new development was communicated to the Foreign Office in April, 1908, the latter received a suggestion from the Bechuanaland authorities to exchange a piece of this territory for the Caprivi Zipfel.[1]

The Barotse Award of 1905, which extended the Anglo-Portuguese boundary between Rhodesia and Angola to the Kwando replaced part of the German Portuguese Boundary of 1886 from Andara to the Katima rapids on the Zambesi river. The Anglo-German Treaty of 1890, however, had drawn the boundary between Bechuanaland and German South West Africa running eastwards along 18th parallel S. latitude to River Chobe or Kwando, descending down the centre of the main channal of the river to its junction with the Zambesi, where it terminated. As noted elsewhere Germany was promised a piece of territory not less than 20 English miles to give her access to the Zambesi, but the river was later found to be full of cataracts and so it was not of much use to Germany. But of more importance was the discovery by Sir H. Goold Adam's survey team of 1906-1907 that Andara from which the German Portuguese Boundary was drawn was farther south than it was believed to be in 1890.[2]

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1. FO367/79/8449 C.O. to F.O., March 10, 1908 encl. letters from Selborne. Before this, the Resident Commission had suggested a prompt delimitation of the Caprivi boundary. FO367/43/14757 C.O. to F.O., May 4, 1907.

2. For the various treaties see Hertslet II, p. 703; III pp. 1019, 1072-1073 1074-1076; FO367/80/12853 C.O. to F.O., April 11, 1908 F.O. minutes; FO367/181/22123 D.M.O. to F.O., June 18, 1910. It is a mystery why access was given to Germany and why the Germans insisted on it since as early as 1888 Salisbury, according to his daughter, was doubting the wisdom of declaring the Zambezi a "highway of nations when there (is) only one fathom of water in it and not always that." See Lady Gwendolen Cecil, Life of Robert, Marquis of Salisbury London (1932) Vol. IV pp. 240-41 R.I. Lovell, The Struggle for South Africa 1875-1899 (1934) for Rhodes' complaint pp. 243-244. See map on p.

This discovery necessitated the rectification of the northern boundary of Caprivi Zipfel (i.e. the Andara-Katima line on the Angola - Northern Rhodesian boundary) as well as the southern boundary of Caprivi (i.e. the boundary of Bechuanaland and German South West Africa). It would also mean ceding part of Bechuanaland in order to give Germany the 20 mile strip, and both sides of the boundary would have to be delimited together. On the other hand boundary delimitations might upset the tribes in that area. Bechuanaland authorities stressed that annoyance and irritations would be caused to the chiefs of the Barotse and Batwana. They feared that a deposed chief of the Batwana, Segkoma might seize the occasion of the delimitation to cause trouble.

The wedge of the Caprivi between the three British administrations caused administrative as well as political problems. The absence of authority and the undelimited state of the frontiers created an enclave where lawless characters both African and European lurked. The establishment of German administration in the strip could put an end to this, but (there was some fear that natives from German rule (for there was an assumption in certain British imperial circles that natives ipso facto were opposed to German rule) might use neighbouring British territories as bases to attack German officials. Neighbouring tribes might sympathise with the rebels, and a situation of permanent unrest might be created.

For these reasons Panzera, the resident Commissioner in Bechuanaland suggested the exchange. The area suggested was in the south of Bechuanaland between 20° longitude and 22° latitude at Nosop River. The Colonial Office was not very sanguine; for one thing the Colonial Secretary was afraid that the Germans might make counter proposals, for example, in Walfisch Bay.[1]

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1. FO367/79/8449 C.O. to F.O., March 10, 1908 and F.O. minutes.

The proposals on the Orange River and Caprivi Zipfel arrived at the Foreign Office when plans were being made for the Aka-Mfumbiro Conference, scheduled to take place on May 16, 1908. The Foreign Office thought it might be advantageous to make use of the presence of the German officials to discuss the South African question. Lord Crewe vetoed this fearing that Germany might likely ask for concessions in the Volta question, to which the Colonial Office was opposed, for acquiescing in the British proposals.[1]

Nevertheless the staff of the African department welcomed the proposals from the Cape and Bechuanaland. In a very long minute Langley tried to point out the advantages in the proposals and to allay the Colonial Office fears. He regarded the proposals from the Cape as a "considerable concession which may be useful in obtaining favourable terms for Caprivi Zipfel." He thought there were "obvious advantages of dealing with both questions together, but the Foreign Office cannot make a settlement of the Orange River dependent on the Germans making concessions respecting the strip, as the Cape government are the interested party in the former question and would not like their interest sacrificed because matters do not run smoothly about the latter, in which they have no interest at all."

Although the strip had no value to Germany as regards access to the Zambezi it might have potential value for railway development, and, in any case, it was worth to the Germans what its acquisition was "worth to us." Britain could reject any demands which were unacceptable, therefore H.M.G. should not be frightened to make the proposals to Germany. London could tell Berlin that she was ready to drop arbitration on the Orange River and that she would consider any proposal put forward for a settlement./

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1. FO367/78/15535 F.O. to C.O., April 30, 1908; C.O. to F.O., May 5, 1908. See Mfumbiro section.

settlement. She would also like to settle the "strip" question.[1]

Charles Hardinge endorsed Langley's views, while G. R. Werner in another long minute pointed out that the strip suggested for exchange was "useless to us." He added that a point which could carry weight was to tell Berlin that the establishment of German administration in the Caprivi strip might create difficulties with the natives, and in view of Britain's "friendly attitude in South Africa" it would be expedient to remove "a source of considerable future complication." The reference to German rule was decidedly clumsy and inelegant, but then it merely reflected the British view of German colonial enterprise.[2]

Happily, the draft letter, which incorporated these minutes, to the Colonial Office and to Sir Frank Lascelles, British Ambassador in Berlin, was much more refined.[3]

The attempt by the Foreign Office to combine the two questions was vetoed by Lord Crewe because the two questions affected different members of the Empire. If the negotiations failed the Cape (which was very confident about its case) would complain that its chance of settling the Orange River question on the lines it desired had been prejudiced by bringing the Caprivi question in which it had no direct interest.[4]

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1. Minutes by Langley, Hardinge and Werner on FO367/80/12853 C.O. to F.O., April 11, 1908

2. A report by Capt. H.S.P. Simon on German South West Africa described German policy as aimed at subjecting the natives to serfdom. The F.O. minutes are interesting. One noted: "Capt. Simon's report fully confirms all our information as to the brutal policy of extermination adopted by the Germans" (J.L.) Grey commented: "As bad as the Congo." Surprisingly Crewe's remarks were the most generous: "I am inclined to be sceptical as to the literal truth of the atrocities." See FO367/136/17181 C.O. to F.O., May 5, 1909, encl. Report on G.S.W.A. by Capt. Simon. For an extract of the report see W.R. Louis, Germany's Lost Colonies, p. 31.

3. FO367/80/12853 F.O. to C.O., June 15, 1908 encl. draft letter to Berlin.

4. FO367/79/23713 C.O. to F.O., July 9, 1908.

He insisted that the two questions should be separated and the Orange River question should be negotiated on the basis the Cape had outlined. The Colonial Secretary was certainly taking an extreme position. The British offer of territory was not exactly attractive by itself. As the German reply later pointed out, it was a waterless bit of territory in the south-western part of Bechuanaland and close to the German border. It could not have been expected that an administration struggling with irrigation problems would happily have accepted another piece of dry land. The Cape's basis for negotiation was not substantial either. The Cape could not have lost anything if both questions had been submitted together; if nothing was gained at least some compromise might have been patched up.

The attitude of the Colonial Office moved Werner to exclaim: "I can not agree with the C.O.!" He declared that the Orange River bed was not colonial but imperial territory, and the Germans had everything to gain on the Orange river controversy. T he Orange River was a distinct asset in the Caprivi negotiations, and he observed ..."since the F.O. is negotiating (they) should be allowed the best method." Langley gently remarked that the Foreign Office could not insist on its adoption if the Colonial Office found the project objectionable. "The fact is", he noted, "they are serving two masters. I do not think that the argument about the river bed would weigh with the C.O. The interests are those of the Cape, it is on their behalf we are negotiating."[1]

These minutes once more illustrate the position of Britain in relation to her self-governing colonies, and also the divergence of attitudes between the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office on certain questions. While Grey maintained the opinion that general policy must be conducted from/

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1. FO367/79/23713 C.O. to F.O., July 9, 1908 Minutes by Werner and Langley.

from Whitehall, he could not disregard the views of South Africa on particular issues.[1] Grey found the Orange River question troublesome and he appeared to have delegated authority when he suggested that the Orange River question should be discussed while Dernburg was in South Africa.[2] But then Merriman had told Dernburg that the Orange River question was in the hands of Grey, explaining that the boundaries of the colony were matters for the imperial government. The Imperial representative in South Africa, Lord Selborne, also told Dernburg, in discussing another matter respecting [the Caprivi Zipfel and Walfisch Bay] that he would oppose a deal.[3] This apparent dichotomy of policy left the foreign power to draw the worst possible inference. Perhaps Grey, in his discerning, though at times disingenuous way, appreciated this point and therefore regretted the opportunity lost by the Cape to settle the question with Dernburg. He told Crewe

> "... if Dernburg leaves South Africa there might be difficulties in concluding negotiations at Berlin owing to points raised by the Cape government on which their view and not ours is the deciding factor ... If so the Germans will have some reason to think themselves badly treated, if the negotiations have been suspended while Dernburg was on the spot..."[4]

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1. See p. 190 (Grey Papers) FO800/91 Crewe to Grey, June 15, 1908.
2. (Grey Papers) FO800/91 Grey to Crewe, July 24, 1908
3. FO367/80/34725 C.O. to F.O., Oct. 7, 1908 encl. letter from Selborne
4. See note 1. On this and the Walfisch Bay question Grey wanted Dernburg "to have first hand experience of colonialviews; for if the talks had been held in London, Berlin would not have believed him if he had told it that the Colonies would object. (Grey Papers) FO800/111 Grey to Selborne, Feb. 1, 1909; Selborne to Grey, Feb. 28, 1909.

At any rate the Colonial Office made its point and the two questions were separated. The British proposal on Bechuanaland was forwarded to the German Foreign Office on July 22, and the British note stressed that this piece of territory would enable South West African authorities to guard against the assembly of disaffected natives.[1] On August 5, 1908, the Wilhelmstrasse was informed that Whitehall would welcome friendly negotiations on the Orange river question.[2]

On August 14, Berlin replied to the first note. Herr Lindequist did not oppose the exchange in principle, but he considered that the British offer was not of any value. The territory was waterless.[3] On the other hand the Colonial Office could not find territory elsewhere to exchange for Caprivi, and Lord Crewe decided to leave matters as they were, hoping that the establishment of German authority in the strip would put an end to the irregular situation. He did, however, ask Selborne the following year what compromise could be made, but the High Commissioner was discouraging.[4]

The German reply to the Orange River proposal did not come until May/

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1. FO367/79/23713 F.O. to de Salis, July 17, 1908; FO367/79/25944 de Salis to Grey, July 23, 1908.

2. FO367/80/27687 Lascelles to Grey, August 6, 1908.

3. FO367/79/28495 de Salis to Grey, August 14, 1908 encl. German note. The piece offered was later changed before the German reply. There was uncertainty about part of the Nosop River, which was to be the southern part of the territory offered. The East-West line was changed and the 21st parallel changed. See FO367/79/27951 C.O. to F.O., August 11, 1908

4. FO367/79/34834 C.O. to F.O., Oct. 7, 1908 copy of letter to Selborne; CO879/102/45651 Sec. of State to High Commissioner January 2, 1909; CO879/102/7142 Selborne to Crewe, Feb. 8, 1909.

May 27, 1909. Though the Germans accepted the offer for friendly negotiations, they still maintained their view on the boundary, and they counterproposed that the negotiations should follow after a joint commission had studied the question.[1]

Before this development the Germans, who, Trench reported, had given up all hope of developing ostrich farming in South West Africa because of irrigation problems,[2] made some attempts by discreet suggestions to get the Orange River question settled. In February, 1909, Lord Crewe accompanied Edward VII to Berlin. Grey declined to go because he did not want to excite French opinion. He found it necessary, however, to explain to the sensitive French that the Colonial Secretary would only discuss frontier questions which were of purely local interest.[3] Crewe did discuss these questions with Schoen and Dernburg on 9th and 11th February. They restricted themselves to generalities, but Dernburg urged Britain to accept the line "medio flumine" as the correct one in the Orange River boundary. He feared that, as it was now possible, alluvial diamonds might be found in part of the disputed line and that there might be some difficulty in solving the dispute.[4]

Von Schoen also toldGoschen that Berlin was anxious to reach an understanding with Britain, inter alia, "upon all colonial questions." The/

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1. FO367/136/20322 Goschen to Grey, March 28, 1909 encl. German note dated May 27, 1909.

2. FO367/135/4131 Goschen to Grey, January 26, 1909 encl. Trench's report on Dernburg's lecture to the Emperor and the Kolonial-Gesellschaft, January 22, 1909.

3. (Bertie Papers) FO800/171 Grey to Bertie, January 7, 1909.

4. FO367/136/8462 Memo of conversation between the Earl of Crewe and Dernburg March 3, 1909.

The Foreign Secretary's suggestion for a colonial understanding as a prelude to wider and more general detente foreshadowed the efforts for an Anglo-German colonial entente in 1912 - 1913.[1] As was to be expected, this rather "oblique" proposal, coming at the time when the Naval race had once again become a lively issue, was received at the Foreign Office with a mixture of deep suspicion and curiosity. Crowe saw it as another move to ask Britain "to make some valuable concessions to Germany in return for the latter's friendship and benevolence coupled with an understanding that England will, generally, follow a German lead in European politics." Langley hazarded a guess that Schoen might have been referring to the Orange River dispute where much difficulty was not expected in solving it. Charles Hardinge thought Schoen had wider ideas upon which it would be useless to speculate:

"Germany wants a great deal from a colonial point of view which she might, under certain circumstances get from us. We, on the other hand, want nothing but to be left alone and to be allowed to develop our colonies in our own way. This will make any agreement on colonial affairs difficult to devise, but it is for the Germans to make suggestions." [2]

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1. B.D.VI No. 179 Goschen to Grey, May 7, 1909.
2. Minutes by Crowe, Langley and Hardinge on B.D. VI No. 179. See also p. 196.

Perhaps Crowe and the others were right to be suspicious; but during the last months of Bülow's chancellorship and certainly in the first few months of his successor Bethmann Hollweg (July 1909 - 1917), Berlin did make some moves for a naval as well as a general understanding with London.[1] In Africa the Auswärtiges Amt under the impulse of the Colonial Office appeared to be co-operating with Britain on the Mfumbiro dispute. The German reply to the British note on the Orange River question came a few days after the signing of the Anglo-German agreement on Mfumbiro. In other words this was part of the co-operative spirit of the latter part of 1909.[2]

Nevertheless the Colonial Office rejected the German view on the river. The old argument was dusted and restated. Crewe, however, conceded that His Majesty's Government would agree to a local commission if Germany accepted the Cape's proposals already referred to.

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1. On this question see R. B. Mowat, "Britain and Germany in the Early Twentieth Century", English Historical Review XLVI (July 1931) pp. 423 - 441; John J. Clark, "Anglo-German Naval Negotiations, 1898 to 1914 and 1933 to 1958", Journal of the Royal United Service Institution (1963) pp. 349 - 353; Robbins, op. cit. p. 205ff; E. L. Woodward, op. cit. Chapter XII.

2. See section on Mfumbiro.

It was rather fanciful for Crewe to have expected the Germans to accept this basis, since the concession was not much. A joint commission would have made little difference once the Germans had accepted this basis. In any case the question was put on ice to be dealt with by the Union government.[1]

The Germans took the initiative in July 1910, when Herr Von Haimhausen of the London Embassy told the Foreign Office that Berlin was ready to discuss the question.[2] Neither the Colonial Office nor the Union Government was in any great hurry to reopen negotiations; so it took about six months before the Union government expressed its views.[3]

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1. FO367/136/24706 C.O. to F.O., June 30, 1909 . At this time the South Africans were negotiating to create the Union and the Colonial Office and Harriman thought it would be better if the question was suspended until the Union had come into being. Berlin was informed. FO367/136/32314 C.O. to F.O. August 25, 1909. F.O. to Goschen, September 2, 1909.

2. FO367/183/28810 Minute by W. Langley, dated August 8, 1910.

3. Ibidem; FO367/183/29906 C.O. to the Governor-General, Lord Gladstone, August 13, 1910; F.O.367/183/43681 C.O. to F.O., December 1, 1910, enclosing letter from South Africa.

The Union Government after "careful consideration" withdrew the Cape proposal of 1908 and reverted to the extreme pre-1908 claim. The government's reasons were stated clearly: "... to allow the Germans to participate in the waters of the Orange River would not merely unnecessarily sacrifice the great advantage secured by the terms of the 1890 agreement to British South Africa, but might in the end prove seriously prejudicial to the interests of the Union. The extremely dry and desert nature of German territory immediately north of the Orange River makes it unsuitable for agricultural or industrial occupation at present, and it forms a natural barrier between the territory of the Union and the German settlement to the north of the Orange River. If, however, the Germans are allowed to participate in the waters of the Orange River, and to establish settlements along its northern bank, the buffer will cease to exist."

Although the Union was not anxious to go to arbitration, it was, however, prepared to accept it, if desirable, in order to define what "north bank" in the 1890 Convention meant, and in order to delimit in detail the boundary along the river. Not satisfied with restating the pre-1908 claims, the Ministers urged that the disputed territory be incorporated into Union territory "thus legalising the de facto jurisdiction which the late Cape government and the present Union Government have exercised and are exercising over the river and its ides."[1]

As noted elsewhere there were now men in power who were opposed to German presence on the South African borders and this despatch indicated their influence.

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1. FO367/183/47126 C.O. to F.O., Dec. 31, 1910 transmitting views of the Union government (paraphrased telegram). See other letters from South Africa FO367/229/1923 C.O. to F.O., January 16, 1911; FO367/229/10395 C.O. to F.O., March 20, 1911.

18°1' ~~south~~ of south latitude) than was assumed in 1890 the width of the strip would be affected. The note claimed that the boundary must be formed by a parallel of latitude between the 21st meridian and the Chobe lying 20 English miles south of the southern point of the German Portuguese boundary in the neighbourhood of Andara. On the other hand recent British maps showed an oblique line parallel to and at a distance of 20 English miles from the north boundary from Andara to the Katima Molilo rapids. This was contested. The Germans argued that according to Article III, paragraph 2, section 1 of the 1890 agreement a parallel between the 18th meridian and the Chobe was the boundary line; if, however, this "clearly defined line" proved "from geographical consideration unsuited for demarcation, because Germany would then have no access to her Zambezi territory or at least no strip of land of a minimum breadth of 20 English miles", then it followed logically and from consideration of analogy that another parallel of latitude should be chosen such as would fulfil the condition of access, but not an oblique line running parallel to the German-Portuguese border, "a line certainly not contemplated by the negotiating parties in 1890."[1]

No doubt the Germans were entitled to claim some territory as the result of rectification, but the strip did not fill the role that was presumably assigned to it, and the demand for a parallel (the agreement referred to "the parallel" not"a parallel") appeared to be/

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1. FO367/135/15902 Goschen to Grey, May 4, 1910 encl. German note. See also CO879/102/5643 C.O. to F.O., March 13, 1909; CO417/490/39020 F.O. to C.O., Dec. 21, 1910 encl. note from Germany and Colonial Office's memo. The memo asserted that the provision was made to satisfy the Germans in case the map mentioned i.e. a Portuguese map which showed Andara south of the 18th parallel, was wrong.

be an overstatement of their case. Dr. Dankelmann of the German Colonial Office did not believe they could win their case but they were anticipating an arbitration in which presumably a compromise could have been patched or a deal on the Orange River question could have been effected.

The Director of Military Operations to whom the German note was sent to, for him to express an opinion, considered that the simplest way of reading the article was that the 18th parallel must be taken as the southern boundary of the strip for such a distance as it did not come within 20 miles of the Andara-Katima line. On both British and German maps there was a portion of this parallel about 30 kilometres long to the west of the River Chobe which fulfilled this condition. Westward of this portion the frontier would be a straight 20 miles distance from the Andara-Katima line. In other words only a tiny piece of the southern line had to be rectified. The Colonial Office agreed.[1]

But the suggestion was absurd. The 18th parallel could not be taken as the southern boundary of the strip since it had been proved that Andara from which the southern boundary had been drawn to the Chobe was below the 18th degree south parallel. In rejecting the British proposal Berlin pointed out that the relevant clauses, already referred to, were intended, in case the map used at the time was proved incorrect, to prevent an encroachment of English territory on the German strip in so far as such an encroachment could make the strip of territory giving access/

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1. Minutes by Titley and Langley on FO367/135/15962; FO367/181/22123 D.M.O. to F.O., June 18, 1910; FO367/181/22787 C.O. to F.O., June 24, 1910.

access to the German Zambezi territory at any point narrower than 20 English miles. But then they spoilt their case by suggesting that Paragraph II was not meant to cancel or modify Paragraph I. It was also not intended "to prevent this strip in certain eventualities and according to the geographical conditions from being more than 20 English miles wide."

They further argued that since the Portuguese German boundary had been arranged (1886) before the 1890 agreement, paragraph 2 of No. 2 of the latter agreement would, if the British view was correct, have been omitted; and it would have been simply provided that from the 21st degree the southern boundary of the strip ran parallel to its northern boundary at a distance of 20 English miles from it. The fact that it was considered necessary to introduce a reservation in favour of Germany proved that a parallel of latitude only had been taken into consideration as the southern boundary. They proposed to go to arbitration if H.M.G. did not agree with their explanation.[1]

The suggestions that the provision did not preclude the strip being more than 20 miles seemed invidious, but perhaps the point illustrates how difficulties could arise from clumsy and imprecise wordings of boundary agreements. Though the Germans put an impressive case neither Tilley nor Langley, the two experts in African affairs, was impressed, but Werner was sufficiently intrigued to make an outburst: "We cannot be responsible for the clumsiness of the clause especially as we believed at the time that the River Okovango and Andara were much further/

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1. FO367/181/35918 Goschen to Grey, Oct. 13, 1910 encl. German note Cf Note 1 p. 226.

further north (approximately 30 miles north of parallel 18° S. lat. according to the map used by Sir Percy Anderson and Dr. Kraul (the negotiators of the Treaty) than Sir H. Goold Adams found them in 1906."[1]

As the Germans presented their case, it could have meant that a parallel so chosen would result in their claiming more than 20 miles of territory. The Foreign Office and the Colonial Office both thought the German case weak and so they agreed to arbitration.[2] The former department wanted the case submitted to a strictly juridical tribunal not to a foreign sovereign. Grey explained to Harcourt that some boundary disputes naturally lent themselves to decision by compromise; for example, where title to a particular area was in dispute, each party stated its extreme claims and the duty of the arbitrator was usually to strike a practicable line of compromise. This type of judgement was invariably given by Chiefs of State serving as arbitrators. In the Caprivi question it was a matter of which two interpretations of a particular sentence was correct, leaving no scope for compromise. The best course was, therefore, to submit the case to the Hague or three legal arbitrators. Berlin was informed in May, 1911 that H.M.G. had agreed to arbitration in the question.[3]

This was the position in the Caprivi question when the Foreign Office discussed the new stand of the Union government on the Orange River dispute. The Colonial Office wanted the other department to inform Berlin of the Union's/

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1. Minutes by Tilley, Langley and Werner on above.
2. F0367/181/35918 F.O. to C.O., Dec. 21, 1910; F0367/229/1921 C.O. to F.O., January 14, 1911.
3. C0417/504/4903 F.O. to C.O., Feb. 14, 1911; F0367/229/13637 F.O. to Goschen, May 5, 1911.

Union's views, but the Foreign Office demurred for reasons already discussed; there was also a growing awareness that the British position in the Orange River dispute was not a strong one.[1]

Harcourt was not unwilling to allow the Union to incorporate the disputed territory within its sovereignty, but some of the Foreign Office staff pointed out that this would look like provocation and it would not strengthen the Union's case. Here the matter stood in June, 1911.[2]

Possibly because of the Agadir crisis or perhaps more likely because the two countries were playing a waiting game, neither wanting to take the initiative the questions were left in abeyance. Local developments, however, forced H.M.G. to put proposals to the Berlin government. The report from Consul Müller in Luderitzbucht arrived at the Foreign Office on August 18, 1911. It told of plans by a Company to develop the Aussenkjer (Aussenkehr) on the north bank of the Orange River. Apparently, title to this land was acquired by a man called Dominius in 1885 from the Hottentots, which later passed on to one Peterson who disposed of several portions to some German Companies and the remainder to his daughter on his death. The Aussenkjer Land and Mining Company, Limited was formed with a capital of 440,000 marks of which 40,000 were called up, to develop its mineral and agricultural holdings on the estate.[3] Several other companies, for example, the Oudtshoorn Land Development Company (whose agent later/

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1. See p. 212.
2. F0367/229/15997 C.O. to F.O., April 27, 1911 and F.O. minutes on it.
3. F0367/229/31251 Consul Müller to Grey, July 12, 1911; C0551/18/27859 F.O. to C.O., August 24, 1911 encl. report by Müller.

later reported that the South West African administration had agreed to sell 2500 morgen of land near Rahman's drift on conditions that ¾ of the employees were German subjects and that the land was not resold to a non-German)[1] began to negotiate with the Aussenkjer Land and Mining Company to start irrigation schemes. One problem was the uncertainty about the sovereignty over the river. Müller reported that the extent of irrigable ground along the southern border was approximately 20,000 morgen and this could be increased, since the river was rapidly silting up, by proper irrigation and damming projects. Already, a farmer had 15 morgen of land in use.

The Consul urged that it would be unwise to allow Germany to get a foothold on the Orange River if it could be avoided "... Consideration of friendship need not debar us from cutting them off from the water, as the German colonial policy is avowedly a selfish policy." Without the water of the Orange river and the supplies which could be grown on its bed, the nearest possible military base of any importance which Germany could establish would be thrown back many miles to Keetmanshoop. Apart from this irrigable land in the river bed the country for many miles north of the river was of comparatively little value. Once Germany established herself on the river bank the benefit which South Africa could get from the river would be reduced or nullified and a large population which would be kept purely German and capable of active hostility at a moment's notice would be "attracted to our borders over a wide expanse of waterless veld."[2] This interesting despatch intrigued Tilley/

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1. FO367/229/50694 Consul Müller to Grey, Nov. 21, 1911.
2. FO367/229/31251 Consul Müller to Grey, July 12, 1911.

Tilley, who had imagined that the strip was "only a question of a road by the side of the river, not valuable land to farm", and he felt the new development called for a solution of the dispute.[1] The Governor-General of South Africa also urged that the two questions be solved. The Union government was concerned about the "developments which (are) proceeding along the northern bank of the Orange River in the shape of schemes to utilize its waters for agricultural settlement of the adjacent lands", and it pressed for a commission to delimit the "northern boundary of Cape Province." A German note of September 25, 1911 enquiring about the present position of the Orange River dispute finally moved the Foreign Office to take further action.[2] Langley, going over the history of the two questions, observed that the Germans were delaying on the Caprivi question (for they had not replied to the British note of May, 1911) in order that the two questions would be arbitrated together. The Foreign Office did not want this.[3]

The difficulty was to reconcile intercolonial interests and imperial considerations. The Foreign Office and the Colonial Office under their respective heads adopted different approaches to the questions. The handling of the Orange River and Caprivi Zipfel questions by Grey and Harcourt illustrates their attitudes toward the question of adjusting Anglo-German problems in Africa which began to be aired at this/

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1. Ibidem. Minute by Tilley. It was estimated that the Aussenkjei Estate extended to 265,000 hectares, and if fully developed it could produce ostriches to the value of £78,000 per annum. Tilley's comment shows how little informed the African department was on the Orange River.

2. FO367/229/35794 C.O. to F.O., Sept. 9, 1911 encl. letters from Gov.-General of South Africa; FO367/229/37740 German Embassy note forwarded to the F.O., Sept. 25, 1911.

3. Minutes by Langley on German note above.

this time. On November 29, Grey informed Harcourt that he was going to propose to Berlin the delimitation of the boundary of the Orange River on the basis of the Cape's pre-1903 interpretation, if Berlin refused, arbitration should be suggested. He regretted the colonial government's change of front but he considered that its attitude on the whole was defensible. The Foreign Secretary did not believe it was necessary to agree to submitting the two disputes to the same tribunal, since they were of entirely different character. It would be possible to convince the German government that a legal tribunal would not be suitable for the Orange River which needed one with technical knowledge.[1]

In a long minute reviewing the question J. R. W. Robinson, a clerk in the Colonial Office pointed out some of the weaknesses in the British case. Apparently the north bank rather than the thalweg of the river was chosen because it had been "convenu dans des arrangements antérieurs" (the State papers could not elucidate on this term). What this probably meant was that the term "north bank" was based on the German Proclamation of 1884 which defined the southern boundary of the protectorate as the north bank. But then the Proclamation of 1847 "which correctly defined the boundaries of Cape Colony" made the south bank of the river as the northern boundary of the Cape. "This point may tell heavily against us", lamented Robinson. The only avenues opened to Britain, and this was doubtful, were to rely on (1) the juristical arguments as to the meaning of the word north bank, which would be difficult, for there was no competent/

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1. F0367/229/37740 F.O. to C.O., Nov. 29, 1911.

competent reference to depend on; (2) evidence as to actual British occupation of the bed of the river; evidence could easily be adduced, but "Germany would bring up a great deal of material against us;" (3) argument that the British interpretation of the bank could facilitate a boundary marked on the ground while that of the Germans could not.[1]

On "On the whole" Robinson did not think the British case was very good and he feared that the Germans might make things worse by insisting on submitting the two questions to the same tribunal. In this way the Germans might get a better result on the Caprivi through a compromise such as the arbitral mind loved. He did not see why Grey should make a difference on the type of tribunal which should judge the disputes, for both the disputes arose from the same treaty and the same article. Moreover, the Foreign Office suggestion for an oral and written arbitration would be costly. But of more importance, was the type of judgement the arbitration would give. If it gave Germany access to the water the Union would resent it because it would contradict its policy of keeping Germany off its borders. On the other hand, if Germany was refused access there would afterwards be nothing but friction - "another case of barring legitimate expansion of fatherland and so on."[2] Eventually the Colonial Office reply to the Foreign Office which incorporated Robinson's minutes pointed all these factors out. Harcourt suggested that a note should be sent to Berlin stating the British view of the meaning of the "north bank" and stressing that only on this view could demarcation of the/

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1. CO551/19/98519 F.O. to C.O., Nov. 29, 1911. Minutes by J.R.W. Robinson, Nov. 30, 1911.

2. Ibidem.

the boundary be effected on the ground. Berlin should also be asked about its views on Caprivi Zipfel and the Pongbin Islands. If this last proposal was pressed there would be an opportunity for considering with the Union government some arrangement which might include a settlement of the Orange River.

On the other hand if Grey did not approve of the above suggestion it should be considered whether the attention of the Union government should not be drawn to the difficulty of attaining their main objective of excluding Germany from the river, and in view of the expense and delay of arbitration and the risk that one tribunal would have to be accepted for the Caprivi Zipfel and Orange river, it was not preferable to revert to the compromise proposal of 1908.[1]

In other words, in view of the weakness of the Union's case, the expenses which would result in arbitration and the political implications arising from a policy of excluding the use of the river by the Germans, the Colonial Secretary was proposing a comprehensive deal. This relative flexibility of Harcourt, considering that previous Colonial Secretaries had backed up the extreme claims of the Cape, and the reference to German views on Penguin Islands, would be more intelligently understood in another chapter. What needs to be said here is that the Colonial Office letter offered an opportunity to settle these questions by compromise. The Union's interest on the river might possibly be secured by concessions to Germany in the Penguin Islands.[2]

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1. FO367/274/732 C.O. to F.O., January 4, 1912; CO551/19/98519 C.O. to F.O., January 4, 1912.

2. See Chapter IV.

The Foreign Office, however, thought the other department did not have much confidence in its own case and the suggestion to give up the case was too great a compromise. The courses open to African department were (1) to try to see what Berlin had to say about the Orange River and Caprivi Zipfel (a proposition which implied a combination of the two questions); (2) to get the Colonial Office and the Union to accept the Foreign Office proposal for arbitration and (3) to go back to the German view of the north bank on the Cape's thalweg. The African department opted for arbitration, but Langley saw C. Lambert of the Dominions division in the Colonial Office, who admitted that the latter office was not anxious for the communications to be made to Berlin; the Colonial Office would be satisfied if the Foreign Office accepted their second view, which I took to mean the comprehensive deal. It was finally agreed to revert to the proposals of 1908.[1]

The Union government, however, rejected this suggestion and it refused arbitration. The compromise of 1908, the Ministers argued, would involve "unnecessary sacrifice of South African interests and even go further than the interpretation of the Anglo-German Convention which seems to be adopted by the German government." The Union preferred leaving the question in statu quo. This non possumus coming as it did three days before the German reply to the British note of May 8, 1911, which made no mention about arbitration, left both the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office powerless to take further action. The two questions, therefore, ended in a deadlock.[2]

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1. F0367/274/732 C.O. to F.O., January 4, 1912; Minutes by Langley.

2. F0367/274/7446 C.O. to F.O., Feb. 19, 1912 copy of letter to Gov.-General; F0367/274/14547 C.O. to F.O., April 4, 1912 encl. Union government's reply; F.O. minutes.

The need for water for German South West Africa remained unsatisfied. Reports continued to come in about the refusal of the Union to grant water rights to German as well as British concerns who wanted to irrigate and develop lands on the north bank. The Foreign Office staff noted these developments with smugness. One official minuted that the Germans were not entitled to the water. Right would be conceded one day, but only for a consideration. The minutes make one wonder whether it ever occurred to their authors, who were wont to regard German demands for concessions as blackmail, that their attitude could be given the same interpretation.[1]

When Dr. Wilhelm Solf, German Colonial Secretary (1911-18) visited South Africa in 1912 he had talks with Officials about the German protectorate's need for water. Nothing seemed to have resulted. Attempts were made to survey the Fish river, a tributary of the Orange River to start irrigation schemes wherever possible.[2] The bitterness felt by the Germans was expressed in a South West African Newspaper in January, 1914. It pointed out that if the British were endeavouring to bring about a lasting understanding with Germany and set aside all points of friction "then it will not refuse its consent to a rectification of the boundary so as to make the thalweg of the river the dividing line between German South West Africa and the Union." This would give Germany the right to use the water in the river, which a German official, who had made a thorough study of the character of the river, said was sufficient for both territories.[3]

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1. FO367/277/32450 Consul Müller to Grey, July 5, 1912; FO367/277/30894 Müller to Grey, August 22, 1912; F.O. minutes.

2. FO367/277/33120 Müller to Grey, July 13, 1912.

3. FO371/1987/6692 Müller to Grey, January 21, 1914; FO371/1987/6694 Müller to Grey, January 23, 1914 encl. articles in Luderitzbuchter Zeitung.

The relevance and significance of these two questions to the subject of this study is to illustrate the difficulty of amending frontiers agreed upon by treaties based on faulty data. This was complicated by the desire of one party, for political as well as strategic reasons, to keep off the other as far off its borders as was possible.

This colonial attitude was reinforced by the Imperial government's own attitude to Germany as well as the position of this self-governing colony vis-à-vis the mother country. For reasons already discussed London was sympathetic to South African susceptibilities.[1] Thus in the case of the Orange River dispute, though it was not colonial but imperial territory (i.e. if the British view was correct), London followed the lead of Cape Town. Whitehall took no initiative of its own. When Harcourt attempted an initiative in 1911 it was quickly scotched by the Union's intransigence and the Foreign Office's coolness.

The Foreign Office was not particularly exercised by the Caprivi question and would have settled it in its own time but its hands were tied because of the fear that if an initiative was taken on it the Germans would demand the treatment of both questions together.[2] It is an open question whether the Foreign Office would have successfully resisted a German proposal to combine the two questions, which after all rose from the same article. Interestingly enough Berlin never made such a proposal, but the fear that she would, continually exercised the/

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1. For example, Grey and Crewe were a bit wary about a suggestion by Pichon in 1909, for an International Conference on African natives, because South Africa was sensitive about this question. (Grey Papers) FO800/51 Bertie to Grey, Dec. 1, 1909; FO800/91 Crewe to Grey, Dec. 7, 1909; Grey to Crewe, Dec. 9, 1909.

2. F.O. minutes on FO367/274/14547 C.O. to F.O., April 4, 1912.

the Foreign Office and Colonial Office.

The Germans did have a case in the Caprivi Zipfel question in so far as new geographical evidence necessitated a rectification of boundaries to fulfil provisions of an old treaty, but they stretched their case to the extreme, and to an ever suspicious Foreign Office this was typical of the deviousness of the Wilhelmstrasse.

Although McEwen would argue that there is no law which forbids one riparian state from controlling the whole stretch of a river boundary, ~~but~~ for the sake of equity and good relations the Germans could have been allowed to participate in the water of the river to irrigate their territory.[1]

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1. McEwen, International Boundaries, p. 84

V. Mfumbiro: an essay in Anglo-German co-operation in Africa?

The Mfumbiro dispute between Britain, Germany and the Congo Free State (after November, 1908, the Belgian Congo) was a classic example of the controversies which arose during the rectification of frontiers whose adjustments had become necessary after new geographical evidence had proved that they had been based on faulty data. Much literature has been written on the Mfumbiro question and the related 30th meridian problem. Professor Louis has dealt adequately with the Mfumbiro controversy in a historical perspective.[1] I do not propose, therefore, to go over it in detail. What is being done in this section is to illustrate certain peculiar factors, such as the way European politics and diplomacy continued to impinge on frontier rectifications. The controversy also demonstrated the unwillingness of great and mediocre powers alike to abdicate their roles as imperial powers even over a few hundred square miles of mountainous territories.

The origins of the Mfumbiro dispute can be summarised thus: The Congo-German treaty of 8th November, 1884 recognised the boundaries of the International Association as shown by an annexed map which was not published. The map, however, had a loop to the north west of Lake Tanganyika which met the intersection of the 30th meridian. Lake Kivu was/

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1. W.R. Louis, Ruanda-Urundi, 1884-1919 (1936). Other relevant works are: Baron Pierre van Zuylen, L'Echiquier Congolais ou le secret du Roi (1959), pp. 381-410; Willequet, Le Congo Belge, passim ; McEwen, International Boundaries, pp. 22[illegible]-248. For first hand account, see E. M. Jack R.E., "The Mfumbiro Mountains" The Geographical Journal Vol. XLI (January - June 1913), pp. 532-55; Arthur R. Hinks, "Notes on the technique of boundary delimitation", The Geographical Journal, Vol. 58 (1929) pp. 417-443; Extracts from Lt. Col. Delmé-Redcliffe's typescript report on the delimitation of the Anglo-German boundary, Uganda 1902-1904; Off print from Uganda Journal Vol. XI No. 1 (March 1967) pp. 9-29. By courtesy of Dr. R. C. Bridges.

was placed within the German boundary. The Franco-Congolese treaty of February 5, 1885 followed the assumed line of the Russisi River, thus giving Lake Kivu (which was erroneously thought to be east of Russisi) to Germany. The western sweep of the loop was gone. The Declaration of Neutrality of August 1, 1885 gave a straighter line from the northern tip of Lake Tanganyika. The German-Congo boundary was now described as: "The 30th degree of longitude east of Greenwich up to 1°20' of South latitude; a straight line drawn from the intersection of the 30th degree of longitude by the parallel of 1°20' of South latitude as far as the northern extremity of Lake Tanganyika." The boundaries of the Declaration were different from those described in the Congo-German and Franco-Congolese treaties. Nevertheless Bismarck accepted the Declaration. He was ill at the time and there were no experts to scrutinise the discrepancy (though the German Foreign Office was aware of it) and besides the area was imperfectly known. Hence, there were no objections to the Congolese boundary lines inscribed in the Declaration.[1]

Still further agreements were signed between Britain and Germany and Britain and the Congo State on this largely unexplored area of Africa. The Anglo-German agreement (July 1, 1890) on spheres of influence of East Africa laid down the boundary thus "... to the point on the eastern side of Lake Victoria Nyanza which is intersected by the 1st parallel of south latitude; thence crossing the lake on that parallel, it follows the parallel to the frontier of the Congo Free State, where it terminates."

It/

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1. Hertslet II, pp. 551-553; pp. 562-565; pp. 572-573. See Note 1, p.240.

"It is, however, understood that, on the west side of the lake, the (German)sphere does not comprise Mount Mfumbiro; if that mountain shall prove to lie to the south of the selected parallel, the line shall be deflected so as to exclude it, but shall, nevertheless, return so as to terminate at the above-named point."[1]

The Anglo-Congolese treaty of May 1894, recognised the above frontier and it was agreed that "the sphere of influence of the Congo State shall be limited to the north of the German sphere in East Africa by a frontier following the 30th meridian east of Greenwich up to its intersection by the watershed between the Nile and the Congo, and thence following this watershed in a northerly and north-westerly direction."[2]

When in the course of a few years the country divided by these boundaries came to be explored it was found out that Mount Mfumbiro was a whole range of volcanoes, some of them active, which lay not only south of the first parallel of south latitude, but west of the 30th meridian, and so in presumably Congolese territory.[3] The 30th meridian turned out to be 12 - 13 miles further east than had been assumed. Britain was cut off from Lake Edward, the Katwe Salt Lakes and the Ruwenzori mountains. Germany also came to realise that, as a result of Von Gotzen's expedition of 1894, ~~that~~ Lake Kivu was further west and was not included in German territory as was previously believed. More importantly, the boundary lines in the Declaration of August 1, 1885/

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1. Hertslet III, Anglo-German Agreement on spheres of influence, July 1, 1890, pp. 899-906.
2. Hertslet II, Anglo-Congolese Agreement May 12, 1894, pp. 578-586.
3. Hinks, op. cit. pp. 419-420.

1885 did not coincide with those of previous maps and certainly not with the course of the Ruzizi, which the Germans believed was the natural frontier between their East African protectorate and the Congo State.[1]

These new discoveries put Britain and Germany at a disadvantage. If the new boundaries were accepted without adjustments, both powers stood to lose cherished pieces of territories which they had thought were in their spheres of influence when the treaties were signed. Subsequently, Germany, believing that the Congo Free State had fraudulently deceived her, demanded a rectification of the German-Congolese boundary on natural features, i.e. the Ruzizi-Kivu line. The Belgian King prevaricated and several incidents in the disputed territory led to its occupation by Congolese and German troops in 1898.[2] The British came to know about these developments in May, 1900. Apparently, London had forgotten all about what was Mfumbiro or whether it even existed. Salisbury called it a myth. The sensational reports of Dècle, Major Gibbons and Sir Harry Johnston, describing Mfumbiro and reports of alleged gold deposits in the supposed position of Mfumbiro reawakened the interests of the Foreign Office.[3] When all relevant information had been collected on Mfumbiro, the Foreign Office was/

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1. "Extracts from Delmé-Radcliffe's typescript", Offprint from Uganda Journal Vol. XI No. 1 (1967), pp. 9-29; F0367/175/18705 Memo by C.F. Close on Mfumbiro, May 24, 1910; Louis, op. cit. p. 3ff.

2. R. Louis, op. cit. p. 41ff; cf. Van Zuylen, op. cit. pp. 381-393.

3. For correspondence on Congo-German clashes in Kivu and the Foreign Office reaction, see F.O.403/354[B] Mfumbiro NO.1 Commissioner Sharpe to Salisbury, May 1, 1900 encl. report by Dècle; No. 4 M. Dècle to F.O., May 16, 1900; No. 5 Major Gibbons to Salisbury, Oct. 1, 1900. See also Nos. 6-8 memoranda by Clarke; Louis, op. cit. p. 44 ff

was faced with the problem of whether it could claim Mfumbiro from Berlin or from the Congo State. Baron Richtofen, the Under Secretary of State in the German Foreign Office, had assured Lansdowne in 1901 that Berlin would honour its obligation under the 1890 agreement.[1] There were fears, however, that Germany might not fulfil this promise, that she might sacrifice British interests in Mfumbiro if she could get a favourable frontier with the Congo. As the African department saw it, only the line from the north of Lake Tanganyika to Lake Kivu (the Russisi-Kivu line) was of real importance to the Germans. The line from Lake Kivu to the intersection of 1°20' South latitude with the 30th meridian (the area of Mfumbiro) was of secondary importance. If they lost the Rudzizi-Kivu line then the Germans would be interested in the second line; because of the straight line drawn from the north of Lake Tanganyika to the intersection of 1°20' south latitude with the 30th meridian (as shown in the Declaration of 1885) which had now been proved to be farther east, Germany would lose the whole of Lake Kivu and some territory. Since Britain was also interested in this line, the Germans might co-operate.[2]

Another alternative was to claim Mfumbiro from the Congo. The 1890 agreement willed this area to Britain and the Congolese administration recognised the Anglo-German sphere of influence in the preamble of the 1894 agreement. By recognising the 1890 agreement the Congolese recognised British claims to Mfumbiro so the Foreign Office argued. The Congolese could, however, argue (as they later did) that Mfumbiro was not/

1. F.O.403/354[B] No. 12 Lascelles to Lansdowne, April 27, 1901 enol note from Richtofen.

2. F0367/36/8709 Memo by V. Wellesley on Mfumbiro and Aka, and Minutes by Nicholas Ball on the memo, April, 1907.

not Germany's to give in the first place, if Britain wanted compensation, she should seek it from Germany elsewhere. The British case was weak because when the agreement of 1894 was signed it was already suspected that the meridian was further east than it was assumed in 1884 and, furthermore, that agreement had no map attached to it. In other words the Foreign Office staff began to realise that the British claim to Mfumbiro could be better sustained through Germany.[1] The Germans themselves suspected that Britain might make a deal with the Congo State at their expense. However, the German Colonial Office under Dernburg was coming around to the idea that co-operation between Britain and Germany might secure a more satisfactory frontier based on natural features and on the assumed position of the meridian at the time of the early explorations rather than its actual position.[2] During the Conference on Anglo-German boundaries East and West of Lake Victoria held in Berlin in July 1906, the Germans acknowledged the British claim to Mfumbiro, but they insisted on the term "Mt. Mfumbiro" as it was written in 1890 rather than Mfumbiro (which could mean anything from a hovel to a large territory). They also wanted an assurance from London that the latter would not oppose any future regulation of boundary between the German and Congolese territories south of $1^{\circ}20'$ south latitude. Eventually Grey conceded this point on condition that Berlin kept London informed about its negotiations.[3]

It can be inferred from the foregoing that there was a suggestion for an Anglo-German joint pressure on the Congo. Indeed, W. E. Erskine, one/

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1. Ibidem, F0367/36/5294 Hardinge to Grey, Feb. 15, 1907; Van Zuylen, L'Echiquier Congolais, pp. 396-397.

2. Louis, op. cit. pp. 54-55.

3. Ibidem; F0367/36/3607 Grey to Lascelles, Feb. 12, 1907.

one of the Foreign Office delegates to the Conference of 1906 recalled:[1]

> " Ben in Berlin I was approached by several members of the Colonial department with the suggestion that England and Germany should act together in attempting to get the rectification which they respectively desire in this district, on the ground that the Congo would be far more amenable to the combined pressure of two powers than to that of each acting seperately. The Germans are evidently afraid that we intend to place obstacles in the way of their negotiations respecting Lake Kivu, and if they find that far from wishing to do so we are willing to help them they will be the more ready to assist us to get what we want west of the 30th meridian, and also in any negotiations with the Congo respecting Mfumbiro. A settlement of this latter question would be much facilitated by joint negotiation between the two powers... I gather in general that the Germans are prepared to bully the Congo to any extent and that what they really would like would be a partition of the country between England, Germany and France."

This minute of Erskine is interesting because it illustrates the deep suspicion of double dealing which seemed to have ruled the thoughts of both London and Berlin. Even though a formal arrangement was come to later on for co-operation against the Congo, both powers continued to be suspicious of each other. Secondly, the reference to partition raised the question of the future of the Congo. This extensive territory in the/

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1. FO 7/1/24926 Minutes by W. E. Erskine, July 23, 1906; also quoted in R. Louis, op. cit. p. 55 infra.

the basin of the Congo River was established 1884-85 by the astute diplomacy of Leopold II, King of Belgians, a process which was helped by the disagreements between the great powers themselves. The great powers recognised the Congo Free State by their adherence to the Declaration of Neutrality of August 1, 1885. Until the Belgian annexation of November, 1908, the Belgian government had no locus standi in the Congo; the link between the Belgian King and the Congo was a personal one. But he was also king of a state which was important in terms of European politics and strategy. Belgium was a neutral country and she could not afford to antagonise the great powers who had promised to defend it, but the African policy of her King could alienate the powers as Germany never ceased to remind Leopold. At the same time Belgium's strategic position between France and Germany gave her some consideration.[1] Her attitude in a possible Franco-German conflict was of high importance to the military dispositions of either power. It was the conscious policy of France and Germany, therefore, not to antagonise Belgium. Neither wanted to drive her into the arms of the other. Thus during the Congo agitation of Morel and the Congo Reform Association against the inhuman practices of the Leopoldian administration, the Wilhelmstrasse ostentatiously refused to identify itself with the campaign against Leopold, though some important firms and/

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1. On the establishment of the Congo State and its subsequent history see Van Zuylen, L'Echiquier Congolais, passim; Willequet, Le Congo Belge; S. J. S. Cookey, Britain and the Congo Question, 1885-1913 (1968); Wm. Roger Louis and Jean Stengers, E.D. Morel's History of the Congo Reform Movement, (1968). See also Hertslet I, pp. 551, 552, 564, 572, 573 and 575. On the neutrality of Belgium, see Valerie Cromwell, "Great Britain's Treaty Obligations in March, 1902", The Historical Journal, VI, 2 (1963), pp. 272-279; Mary Elizabeth Thomas "Anglo-Belgian Military relations and the Congo Question, 1911-1913", Journal of Modern History, Vol. XXV (1953), pp. 157-175.

and bodies urged the government to join with Britain to press reforms on Leopold. For political reasons also the British Foreign Office (though Grey eventually came out openly for annexation of the Congo by Belgium) did not take vigorous steps against Leopold. Grey did not want complications with Germany nor did he wish to alienate Britain's entente partner, France, who had also begun to practice Leopold's concessionary system in the French Congo, and who also had territorial interests in the Congo State arising from her pre-emptive right, of ~~February, 1895~~.[1]

Because of the complications which might arise out of mixing the frontier question and general policy as the German feeler vaguely suggested, the Foreign Office received Erskine's information with caution. A. V. Clarke suggested that Britain wait until she knew for certain what line the Germans would take up with the Congo. Grey, however, thought the suggestion was worthy of consideration.[2] At least it would get around the inconvenience of arbitration on the Congo-Uganda dispute with the Congo State who had rejected London's proposal for boundary rectifications.[3]

Before the suggestion for an Anglo-German co-operation developed, several pieces of information were received in Whitehall which made the Foreign Office doubtful of the expediency of joining with Berlin. For one/

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1. ~~Ibidem~~.

2. FO367/1/24926 Minute by Clarke, circa August, 1906; FO367/1/27940 F.O. to C.O. Sept. 5, 1909.

3. FO367/1/5075 Barclay to Grey, Feb. 7, 190 ; FO367/1/[illegible] (Conf) March 21, 1906; FO367/1/17170 C.O. to F.O. (Conf) [illegible] FO367/1/19625 C.O. to F. ., June 7, 1906; FO367/1/2341 [illegible] Grey, July , 1906. The British proposal intended to secure for [illegible] the Semliki line, the Ruwenzori and part of Lake Edward. [illegible] Leopold's Chief Minister, rejected it on the grounds that the territ demanded was too large. Secondly, the agitation against Congo administration in England was resented by the King.

one thing, Sir Arthur Hardinge, British Minister in Brussels and the Foreign Office's expert in Congo Affairs, told Grey that it was possible that Germany might have her Russisi-Kivu boundary and this might reduce the need for co-operation with Britain. He also opined that probably Berlin hinted at a possible Anglo-German representation, and this had frightened Leopold into settling the Kivu question to the satisfaction of Germany.[1]

The reference to joint representation was ambiguous. It could mean representation on Congo reform or on boundary questions. Eric Barrington believed Germany would like to join Britain in the pressure on Congo misgovernment if asked, but this would be resented by the Belgian government. Grey commented: "Wait and see what the Belgian Chamber does in the autumn."[2] To clarify the situation Grey enquired from Berlin whether the information was true. The German note denied that any negotiations on the boundary had been started with the Congo State, but no difficulty was anticipated. There was no reference to joint pressure.[3] In September, 1906 Hardinge also reported that Herr Wallwitz, the German Minister in Brussels had denied a rumour started by the Daily Mail; their Brussel's correspondent reported that Berlin had/

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1. FO367/5/27556 Hardinge to Grey, August 9, 1906. Indeed the German government and the Congo State reached a modus vivendi on August 9, 1906, which maintained the status quo. The two disputants promised to settle the matter in a just manner. See Zuylen, p. 391; cf. Louis, pp. 59-60.

2. Minutes by Grey and Barrington on above document. Probably Grey was hoping to see what steps the Belgian Chamber would take with respect to the annexation of the Congo, which Grey appeared to have desired, in the expected debate in Nov., 1906. By Dec., 1906, as a result of pressure from the Belgian Parliament and a growing realisation of his isolation Leopold decided to agree to annexation. See Cookey, op. cit., p. 170ff; Williquet, p. 187ff for discussion of speculations of Anglo-German co-operation in the Congo question.

3. FO367/5/27056 Grey to Lascelles, Aug. 22, 1906; FO367/5/31357 Lascelles to Grey, Sept. 12, 1906.

had made a démarche to the Congo State on the subject of reforms in its internal administration. This uncertain position and the ill defined attitude of Berlin led to speculation by the Foreign Office. Erskine remarked: "It is clear Germany does not want to invite Britain to join in the negotiations with Belgium." He, however, suggested that Lascelles should sound out the Germans. Barrington did not see much point in that, while Grey stated, "We must be careful about inviting Germany to make common cause with us against the Congo and I should not stir this at Berlin."[1] In other words, it was unwise to take further steps without being sure of German policy, i.e. whether Berlin wanted co-operation on the boundary question or the reform question. The Foreign Office did not know it, but Dernburg had decided to work with Britain. He disagreed with Bülow who felt that the Congo was a preferable neighbour to Britain. Dernburg did not think the Congo had been a good neighbour. In November, London was told about the disposition of Berlin; while in December, 1906,[2] the Congo government proposed "an examination by the three interested parties of the imperfectly known country to the south."[3] On February 12, 1907, Grey gave Dernburg the assurance already referred to. The Foreign Office stated that it intended to base its case on the intention of Article 1 of the 1894 agreement, and the position given to the meridian on the maps published at the time when the treaty was drawn up. The British view on the meridian was also communicated to Belgium. M. de Cuvelier, for the Congo State, received it with reservations. He pointed out that such disputes would have to be referred to arbitration.[4]

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1. FO367/5/32974 Hardinge to Grey, Sept. 28, 1907 and minutes of Grey, Barrington and Erskine.
2. See note 2, p. 245 and Louis, op. cit. p. 58.
3. The Times, December 16, 1906.
4. FO367/36/3607 Grey to Hardinge, Feb. 12, 1907; see Note 1, p.245.

On March 16, 1907 the Germans explained their position to London. The Memo gave a historical exposé of the German case. They intended to claim the whole course of the Russisi to the north end of Lake Kivu, the course of which would have to be fixed in detail, but which, in any case, must so run as to pass to the west of the Islands Kwindsche and Kwidschiwi from south to north. On the boundary north of Lake Kivu, i.e. Mfumbiro, the Germans suggested that there would have to be some adjustments because of the mountainous terrain. In other words Britain would have to share Mfumbiro with Germany.[1]

The German note gave the Foreign Office an opportunity to discuss what strategy to adopt in putting its claims forward. Mfumbiro was well worth having according to the reports of Boundary Commissioners. Lt. T. T. Behrens noted "...just this corner would be the finest and most fruitful part of the Uganda Protectorate." The mountain ranges in the area averaged 6000' and they formed a plateau with deeply curved flat bottomed valleys: "The whole of the area is exceedingly well watered, and contains an abundant supply of timber. The luxuriant vegetation which covers the country, the ample water supply and cool climate, combined with a fertile soil makes it a most suitable area for European occupation."[2]

The Foreign Office was, however, not confident about its case. Victor Wellesley, one of the African experts, was firmly convinced that Germany had a strong case if she was basing her claims on old maps and treaties, and Britain would be better off by putting her claims/

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1. FO367/36/8652 Lascelles to Grey, March 16, 1907 encl. German note.

2. FO367/36/11349 Notes on Mfumbiro prepared for use of topographical sections of General Staff by Lt. T.T. Behrens, R.E., April 25, 1906; FO367/175/18705 Memo by C.F. Close, May 24, 1910. He noted:"We were allowing our claims to a valuable upland region to go by default..." Also quoted in R. Louis, op. cit., p. 52.

claims through her. At any rate if this failed she could try to claim Mfumbiro from the Congo under article 1 of the 1894 agreement. In order to get this "far more valuable possession" he suggested giving concession to Germany in another dispute, the Aka question, as an inducement.

This dispute had similar features to the Mfumbiro meridian problems. The 1890 agreement gave the boundary between the Gold Coast and Togoland as the course of the River Aka between $6^{\circ}10'$ and $6^{\circ}20'$ north latitude. Again, this was based on imperfect knowledge of the area; when subsequent surveys proved that the real Aka was further from its assumed position disagreements arose between Britain and Germany. The new discovery was to the advantage of Britain and so she insisted on the letter (of course, Germany appealed to the intention of the treaty), while in the Mfumbiro-Meridian question she appealed to the intention when new geographical evidence was against her. This inconsistency was noted by Wellesly and he observed that "we should admit that the intention comes before the letter, and it is for them (the Germans) to adduce evidence of intention, in the absence of which the letter must be adhered to").[1] The area of dispute, 5½ square miles of uninhabited swamp, was not of any "great value" to Britain, but it was to Germany, because an important trade route passed through the territory. In any case, the Colonial Office was opposed to concessions to Germany in the Aka boundary.[2]

Eventually an Interdepartmental Committee meeting of representatives of the Foreign Office, the Colonial Office and the War Office took place on October 9, 1907. After discussing the whole problem it was decided to/

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1. FO367/36/3709 Memo by V. Wellesly on Mfumbiro and Aka, April, 1907.
2. Ibidem. The Germans suggested arbitration on the dispute. FO/367/11/41512 de Salis to Grey, Dec. 4, 1906 encl. note from Dr. Mulberg.

to consider the possibility of co-operating with Berlin on the Mfumbiro dispute when the Germans attended the Aka Conference scheduled to take place in London the following year.[1] Berlin was told this on October 30, 1907.[2] The Conference took place in May, 1908.

Before this development certain quarters began to express concern about British policy on the frontier. This factor did not affect the course of the boundary negotiations but it showed what a complex issue the Congo question could be. In terms of general policy it also illustrated how a limited Anglo-German co-operation (even on a frontier question) could excite the friends of either power; furthermore, the episode underlined the suspicion with which the British Foreign Office always regarded German policy. Though an appearance of co-operation was kept up to the Tripartite Conference of 1910, it was one of convenience.

Towards the end of 1906 Leopold agreed to the annexation of the Congo by Belgium. The Foreign Office, however, wanted guarantees that reforms would be introduced and Grey was prepared to call an International Conference on the Congo in concert with the U.S.A., Germany and other powers were apparently disposed. France on the other hand, was worried about the effect Belgian annexation would have on her pre-emptive/

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1. FO367/36/33941 Memo by Victor Wellesly on Congo-Uganda boundary and Mfumbiro Interdepartmental Conference, October 9, 1907. Wellesley, Clarke and Kenrick represented the F.O. Major Close and Read represented the War Office and Colonial Office respectively. The Foreign Office decided to put the proposal to the Germans to exchange views on Mfumbiro though a report from the Law Officers assured Grey that Britain could win Mfumbiro either through arbitration or through the Congo State. FO367/36/17849 F.O. to Law Officers of the Crown, June 7, 1907; FO367/36/2965 Law Officers to F.O., Sept. 2, 1907.

2. FO367/78/1194 Lascelles to Grey, Jan. 7, 1908. The F.O. wanted to include the boundary questions of Orange River and Caprivi Zipfel, but the C.O. refused. FO367/78/15535 F.O. to C.O., April 30, 1908; C.O. to F.O., May 5, 1908.

pre-emptive right.[1] Neither Britain nor Germany had recognised this right. France, therefore, began early in 1907 to press London to recognise the French right to the Congo. Grey was prepared to recognise it but he wished to give this concession in return for French support for an International Conference on the Congo. Bertie, on the other hand, was apprehensive lest non recognition of the French right by Britain might enable Germany to make a bargain with France whereby Germany would be brought in still further contiguity with British interests in Africa." He recalled that Germany had "pegged a claim for an opening in some future date to extend German territory from the Indian Ocean to South Atlantic."[2] This dream was one of the real reasons for German opposition to the 1894 agreement with the Congo. Bertie was expressing his old distrust of German policy in Africa as well as casting some doubt on French fidelity. At the same time it would seem that he was providing for a possible partition of the Congo: "What I think inadvisable is to give the French to understand or to let them infer that we are indifferent as to how the territories of the Congo State may be distributed between France and Germany provided that we receive assurances about the natives and our trade." He later integrated these views in a memo on German expansion in Africa. Grey did not want more tropical territories but he conceded that Bertie's memo had "some useful points" which "must be borne in mind if partition of the Congo occurred."[3]

Partition/

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1. Cookey, op. cit. p. 184ff; D.D.F. 2nd Series Vol. XI No. 205 P. Cambon to Pichon, Nov. 22, 1907. Cambon argued that Grey did not want to deny French pre-emptive right; what he wanted was to work with France on the Congo question. France declined to join with Britain because she was afraid that her own administration in the Congo would be called into question. Grey did not press the issue.

2. (Bertie Papers) FO800/160 Bertie to Grey, Jan. 23, 1907; Bertie to Tyrell, Oct. 31, 1907; Tyrell to Bertie, Nov. 21, 1907 encl. memo by F.A. Campbell(?) Nov. 4, 1907.

3. (Bertie Papers) FO800/160 Bertie to Tyrell, Nov. 25, 1907 and minute by Grey. See Chapter I, p. 24 and Appendix III.

Partition did not occur and French pre-emptive right was recognised by the Belgian government in November, 1908.[1] But while there was still uncertainty on this question and the future of the Congo State, Hardinge advised Grey to leave all frontier questions in abeyance.[2] Leopold himself hastened to Berlin in May, 1908 to seek assurance that Germany would not collude with Britain to press him on the frontier issue. He was not assured by Bülow's elusive twistings, but he had sufficient discernment to foresee that his two adversaries would unite against him.[3]

The road to co-operation was not an easy one. During the Mfumbiro-Aka Conference the two parties were widely apart in their attitudes. Wellesley stated that Britain would have to claim Mfumbiro through Germany since the latter was the original contracting party, but these claims included areas, such as the north of Lake Kivu, where German troops were already in occupation. The Germans were unwilling to concede all of Mfumbiro "unless it was worth their while." No agreement was reached, but the discussions enabled both parties to assess the relative merits of each other's case and more importantly, to discern the intentions of each other. One encouraging result was that both had similar views on the 1884, 1885, 1890 and 1894 treaties which in themselves suggested a possible basis for co-operation.[4]

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1. Treaty of Nov. 4 1908 Hertslet II p. 549; Hertslet III p. 1226; D.D.F. 2nd Series Vol. XI No. 553 Pichon to French representatives in London and Berlin, Nov. 13, 1908; See also Zuylen, op. cit. pp. 352-355. A Treaty of cession was signed between Belgium and Congo Free State on Nov. 28, 1908 thus making the Belgian government the new sovereigns power of the Congo.

2. FO367/36/41077 Hardinge to Grey, Dec. 13, 1907.

3. Willequet, op. cit., p. 198ff.

4. The delegates were : Britain - V. Wellesley and G.L. Werner (F.O.) C. Strachey, Head of the West African department of the C.O., Major C.F. Close(W.O.) H.M. Hall, formerly of the Cold Coast Service and Capt. Behrens; Germany - Prince Stolberg (German Embassy) Freiherr von Danckelmann and Capt. Freiherr von Seefroid. FO367/78/20145 Memo by Wellesley on the Aka-Mfumbiro Conference, May 19, 1908; H. Louis, pp. 5 -57. Agreement was not reached on the Aka dispute for which the Conference was primarily summoned.

But even so, the fear and suspicion that Germany would settle with the Congo at her expense, urged Britain to inform the Congo State of her claims on Mfumbiro.[1] The knowledge that Duke Adolf Friedrick of Mecklenburg, a noted colonial expansionist, was roaming in the area of dispute, collecting information for the settlement of the boundary (the photographic material for the map of Mfumbiro was not expected to be ready till 1909) was also a discomforting one.[2]

In any case the Congo State rejected the British claims.[3] Britain now began to send feelers to Belgium to settle the meridian dispute. The Anglo-Congolese boundary commission of 1907-8 had finally located the exact spot of the meridian - 13 miles from the originally assumed position, thus leaving 2,200 square miles of territory in dispute. In March 1909, Britain presented its claims. The Foreign Office insisted that the proposals were informal since Britain had not yet recognised the annexation of the Congo by Belgium. The British wanted access to Lake Edward, including the Katwe Salts, the highest peak of the Ruwenzori range, Mboga etc. The Belgians promised to put their own proposals later on.[4]

Meanwhile, probably as a result of the suspicion of a British sell out/

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1. Minutes by Wellesley and Hurst on F0367/78/20145; F0367/78/27085 F.O. to Wyndham August 7, 1908; Von Zuylen, op. cit., p. 397.

2. F0367/78/29983 D.M.O. to F.O., August 28, 1908 encl report of conversation Capt. Behrens had with a member of the Duke's party in July, 1908. The Germans were expected to claim Kivu, the Russisi and the whole of the volcanic region of Mfumbiro.

3. F0367/78/28431 Wyndham to Grey, August 13, 1908; Zuylen, ibidem.

4. F0367/127/3109 Hardinge to Grey, Jan. 20, 1909; F0367/127/14567 Hardinge to Grey, April 17, 1909; cf. Zuylen, pp. 397-398.

out and the reluctance of the Belgians to give Germany the frontier it wanted, and possibly because of the pressure of the German Colonial Office on the Auswartiges Amt, Berlin indicated in March, 1909 that it would welcome an exchange of views with London on their boundary dispute.[1] The staff in the African department welcomed the initiative. Wellesley, however, suggested that Britain should make her claims as preposterous as possible; then, later on she could concede the southern slopes to Germany (which she wanted) for her help in obtaining Mfumbiro for Britain.[2]

The Conference took place in April, 1909. As in the meeting of May, 1908, both sides were unable to agree on what Mfumbiro meant. The British said it meant "land of fire", the Germans retorted that it meant "potters' clay". The argument went in circles and as it was realised how unprofitable it was to continue the Germans suggested a practical solution. Mfumbiro was divided on the basis of old maps and natural frontiers. Germany got the southern slopes which were politically and geographically important to Ruanda. Britain retained the northern half. She was promised Mpororo for her losses in Mfumbiro and access to Lake Kivu was given to her. This territorial arrangement was to become effective after the evacuation of Congolese protest posts in territories claimed by Germany. It also partly depended on the successful solution of Germany's Kivu dispute with the Congo. A secret supplementary /provided/ agree for /

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1. FO367/127/7953 Goschen to Grey, Feb. 22, 1909; FO367/127/11221 Goschen to Grey, March 22, 1909. See R. Louis, op. cit. pp. 58-60 for German Colonial Office's pressure on the Auswärtiges Amt; Zuylen, p. 393 for German note to Belgium in Jan. 1909. cf. McEwan, International Boundaries, p. 242.

2. Tilley noted: 'Britain is anxious to settle with the Germans before they settle with the Belgians.' Minutes by Tilley and Wellesley on FO367/127/11221 and FO367/127/13174 C.O. to F.O., April 3, 1909 respectively.

for common action against Belgium. Incidentally it was also meant to prevent any unilateral arrangement with Belgium by either power.[1]

The British, however, jumped the gun. Before the claims of both powers could be secured by agreement with Belgium, the Colonial Office anxious to forestall any advance of Belgian troops in the area assigned to Britain, sent a small force to occupy Mfumbiro.[2] When news of this reached Europe it created an unfavourable impression on Berlin and Brussels. The Germans had not thought that Britain would have moved so fast, and indeed the Colonial Office under Lindequist was worried lest an Anglo-Belgian clash should have unfortunate effects on the natives in German Ruanda.[3] The Belgians were outraged. M. Davignon, the Foreign Minister, attributed the British action to the "effects of the African sun." Belgium was not used to such frontier incidents and British behaviour was, therefore, very serious. Britain was asked to withdraw her forces.[4]

This/

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1. The British contingent comprised Count de Salis, Major Close and Capt. Behrens; the German delegation included Geheimrat Ebermaier, Dr. Baron von DanHelmann, Capt. von Crawert, Resident of Ruanda and Capt. Hermann. Von EcKert represented the A.A. in some sittings. See FO367/127/13174 Grey to Goschen, April 22, 1909 encl. instructions to British delegates; FO367/127/18830 de Salis to F.O., May8, 1909; FO367/127/19316 Goschen to Grey, May 20, 1909 forwarding reports of the conference. Notes were exchanged on May 27 after the agreement had been signed on May 19, 1909. See FO367/127/19316 Grey to Goschen, May 27, 1909. For a description of the Mfumbiro mountain ranges see E.M. Jack, "The Mfumbiro Mountains" The Geographical Journal, Vol. XLI (Jan.-June 1913), pp. 532-555.

2. The Foreign Office did not believe that there was any chance of a collision of British and Belgian forces. In any case "we have no reasons for making ourselves pleasant to Belgium" commented Tilley. See minutes by Tilley and Hardinge in FO367/127/19316, Grey to Goschen, May 27, 1909. The force under the political command of J. H. Coote was ordered to occupy Mfumbiro on May 22; it had already reached the area and a local agreement had been signed with the Belgian officer to maintain the status quo when telegrams reached Coote ordering him to withdraw. The reason was the fear expressed by Hesketh Bell, Governor of Uganda that the forces in Uganda were not enough to resist the Belgians. When the C.O. reordered the reoccupation of Mfumbiro the British troops found their way barred to Kivu. This episode can be followed in FO367/127 files 20151,21938,25569,26477,16542, 26742; R. Louis, p.65ff. cf. Zuylen, pp. 397-400.

3. R. Louis, p. 74-76.

4. Ibidem; Zuylen, pp. 397-405; FO367/128/25807 Hardinge to Grey, July 8, 1909.

This attempted fait accompli was partly the result of the difficulty of establishing a relationship with Belgium. Britain had not yet recognised her annexation of the Congo. It was, therefore, inexpedient to make a formal communication to Brussels. Such an act could be interpreted as a recognition of Belgian sovereignty over the Congo. However, Britain was forced to explain her action to Belgium on July 13, 1909, as a result of the Belgian representations.[1] The Belgians rejected British claims to Mfumbiro and proposed arbitration.[2]

This again raised another problem. To agree to arbitration would mean an implied recognition of Belgian annexation. On the other hand, Germany had recognised the Belgian annexation and so she could agree to arbitration without any fear of inconsistency. Hence there was always the possibility that she might be tempted to come to an agreement with Brussels. Indeed, Germany ostentatiously posed a conciliary attitude to Belgium. Von Schoen assured Brussels that the German foreign office was not privy to British action. In fact the 1909 agreement was not a definitive treaty but a "simple programme destiné à servir de base à une conversation à trois", arrived at betwee n the two Colonial Offices.[3] Baron Greindl and Wallwitz, the Belgian Minister in Berlin and the German Minister in Brussels respectively, were agitated by the political implications of this "co-operation". Wallwitz complained that it would harm Belgo-German relations[4] and Greindl urged his government to show consideration to German colonial complaints. The Belgian Minister argued that in a/

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1. F0367/127/20274 F.O. to C.O., June 10, 1909; F0367/128/25569 de Salis to Grey, July 6, 1909. Minutes by Langley; F0367/128/25578 Minute by Grey, July 7, 1909; F0367/128/26483 Hardinge to Grey, July 13, 1909.
2. F0367/128/34512 Grey to de Salis, Sept. 27, 1909.
3. Zuylen, pp. 400-405.
4. R. Louis, p. 75. See also Willequet, passim, especially pp. 179 and 204 for a discussion of the German Foreign Office attitude on the Congo.

a continental war, Belgium would be at the mercy of Germany.[1] Belgium also suspected that British action was induced by the pressure of the Anti-Congolese agitators on the Foreign Office. Van der Elst, the Secretary-General of the Belgian Foreign Ministry, bluntly told Arthur Hardinge that the Germans were more conciliatory than the British.[2]

Reports of this kind could not increase British confidence in Berlin. Already Metternich's enquiry as to what was the Anglo-German view on the Franco-Belgian agreement of December, 1908 (which confirmed French pre-emptive right and which apparently prevented Belgium from rectifying her Congo borders with other powers) was interpreted as an attempt to induce Britain "to take common action against the French."[3] This was to be avoided at all costs. In fact, during the months preceding the Mfumbiro Conference, which coincided with the attempts for an Anglo-German agreement on the Naval issue and a general detente, lively fears were expressed in some quarters about the policy of Britain. Bertie sent a series of anxious letters to Grey urging him to explain his policy on the frontier, in order to calm French fears of an Anglo-German co-operation which might extend to wider and more important issues.[4] On November 16, 1909 Grey sent a memo to Paris explaining British policy on the frontier. Britain was merely making good its claims on territory which had been promised her under old treaties. The frontier question was independent of the non-recognition of Belgian annexation. Although Dernburg had informally suggested an Anglo-German demarche to end the obnoxious acts in the Congo, Grey would only act if this was put formally and in concert/

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1. Zuylen, p. 401.
2. FO367/128/26105 Hardinge to Grey, July 10, 1909; FO367/129/36633 Hardinge to Grey, Oct. 1, 1909.
3. FO367/129/33892 Grey to de Salis, Sept. 8, 1909; de Salis to Tyrell, Sept. 24, 1909 (private).
4. (Grey Papers) FO800/51 Bertie to Grey, Nov. 11, 1909; same to same, Nov. 11, 1909.

concert with other powers, for example the U.S.A., but certainly not before France had been consulted. Recent Belgian announcements had improved the situation in the Congo but before Britain committed herself to recognition "which (is) the solution we desire" she must be assured that the new laws would be implemented. As regard Naval Arms, conversations had not led to any result. In any case they would be suspended until the General Election was over.[1] This assurance that the Anglo-German agreement of 1909 was merely restricted to the frontier issue and that it did not extend to wider political questions pleased the French. Pichon told Bertie that this was useful to refute misrepresentations by German paid French newspapers.[2]

But co-operation even on the restricted Mfumbiro frontier question was on a shaky foundation and it had all the hallmarks of the political antagonism between Britain and Germany. The British Officials who handled the Mfumbiro question were all suspicious of the "incredibly tortuous" German policy. For example, A. Hardinge, who believed Germany wanted the Belgians to feel that the Germans were more conciliatory than the British, explained the motive for this attitude in this way:[3]

"...one/

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1. (Grey Papers) FO800/51 Grey to Bertie, Nov 16, 1909 encl. memo. See also (Bertie Papers) FO800/171 Grey to Bertie, January 7, 1909. See p.

2. (Grey Papers) FO800/51 Bertie to Grey, Nov. 20, 1909.

3. FO367/129/44324 Hardinge to Grey, Dec. 4, 1909 and Tilley's minute. The mystery, which in part was derived from the conflicting reports which reached the F.O. about who first suggested a conference on Mfumbiro, led the F.O. to read the worst motives in German policy. Goschen reported that Schoen said it was the Belgians who took the initiative and Berlin had insisted on a conference, à trois, while Davignon gave Hardinge the impression, which the latter was inclined to believe, that Berlin had taken the initiative. Zuylen's account op. cit. p. 405, agrees with the German version. See FO367/129/44577 Grey to Goschen, Nov. 17, 1909; FO367/129/44324 Goschen to C. Hardinge, Dec. 4, 1909 (private).

"...one of the elements which the Germans value in their proximity to the Congo State is the leverage which it gives them for bringing pressure here in Europe on Belgium and it is just possible and it would be consistent with the brutal tone of their last note to her that they may have in view some concession or gain, commercial or otherwise, to be obtained by them over here in return for a more conciliatory attitude in Africa, which would have the further advantage of shining in the eyes of the Belgian public by contrast to our own conciliatory one, and if so they prefer to treat directly with Belgium side by side with, of course, the tripartite conference. The Belgians would hail this. Anglo-German combination would be detrimental to them."

To avoid antagonising Belgium, Hardinge rejected a German request to get a map from France because "if (the) Belgians know that Britain ...working behind their backs (and on Congo questions they have, for various reasons and especially versus Germany,[1] the sympathy of France) it would be difficult to work with the Belgians satisfactorily." The British, therefore, went along with Germany because they believed their claims were stronger on the German platform and because they wanted to avoid arbitration. The Germans also co-operated with Britain because they were angry with the Belgians for refusing to give them the Russisi-Kivu line and because they believed joint pressure would secure favourable frontiers for the two partners.

However,/

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1. FO367/174/6027 Hardinge to Grey, Feb. 17, 1910. The map was the original attached to the Franco-Congolese Treaty of February, 1885.

However, when the Conference which was called to discuss the frontier question between Britain, Germany and Belgium, met in Brussels in February, 1910, the Belgians successfully argued that by accepting the Congolese declaration of 1885 and the boundaries which it described Germany had recognised the supercession of the 1884 treaty. The British claims were not accepted because their 1890 agreement gave them territory which was not German but Congolese.[1]

On the other hand the disputed territory was under occupation by the forces of the three disputants and such a situation was dangerous if the frontier dispute was not settled soon. The principle of replacing astronomical or straight lines with natural features was also accepted by Belgium.[2] The question of dividing the disputed territory, however, took up three months of haggling over pieces of territory of equal area. Britain was prepared to hand over western Mfumbiro, which the Belgians wanted and which had never been under British administration, and some concessions to the Belgians north of 1° South latitude (i.e. the Congo/Uganda border).[3] Germany was asked to/

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1. The Conference began on February 8 and lasted till May 14 with intervals. The delegates to the Conference were (Britain): Sir A. Hardinge, Lt. Col. C.F. Close, and J.A.C. Tilley; (Germany): Herr Fber maier, Dankelmann and Baron Lefsner; (Belgium): M. van den Heuvel (Ex-Minister of Justice), M. van Maldegham and M. Van der Elst. I have not thought it necessary to give an account of the proceedings, since the arguments made by the disputants boiled down to the above summary. The Conference proceedings can be followed in R. Louis, op. cit. Chapt. VIII, Van Zuylen, pp. 405-410. See also FO367/174 files 4201, 6027, 6632, 6939, 6359, 7174, 8759, etc.

2. Van Zuylen, p. 407.

3. FO367/174/6027 Tilley to Langley, Feb. 16, 1910. This was the first suggestion put privately by Tilley. Tilley's suggestion bore fruit and it was put to the Germans on Feb. 26, 1909. See FO367/174/7179 Hardinge to Grey, Feb. 27, 1910.

to give the Belgians concessions in the north of Lake Kivu so that she could get her Russisi-Kivu boundary. She was asked also to give Britain the Kagera boundary. For some time the Germans refused to give the Belgians the north of Lake Kivu, which would have included the Island of Kwidshi, where there were Germa n missionaries, one of whom had been the tutor of the Kaiser. They also refused to give the Kagera frontier which was reported to be rich in forests.[1]

During this time the British and the Belgians reached a compromise on their boundary north of 1° south latitude. Belgium offered Britain a large extent of territory south of Lake Edward, the Katwe Salt Lakes and access to Lake Edward and the highest peaks of Ruwenzori. The Belgians retained the whole western shore of Lake Albert to the Semliki and the important chiefdom of Mboga. This satisfactory arrangement enabled the Belgians to accept British offers in Mfumbiro.[2] It also gave the impression that the Belgian and British delegates were working together against the Germans instead of the other way round. Thus Hardinge was careful to point out on April 18, that any compromise proposed by Britain on Mfumbiro "was conditional on a mutually satis-factory arrangement between Belgium and Germany."[3]

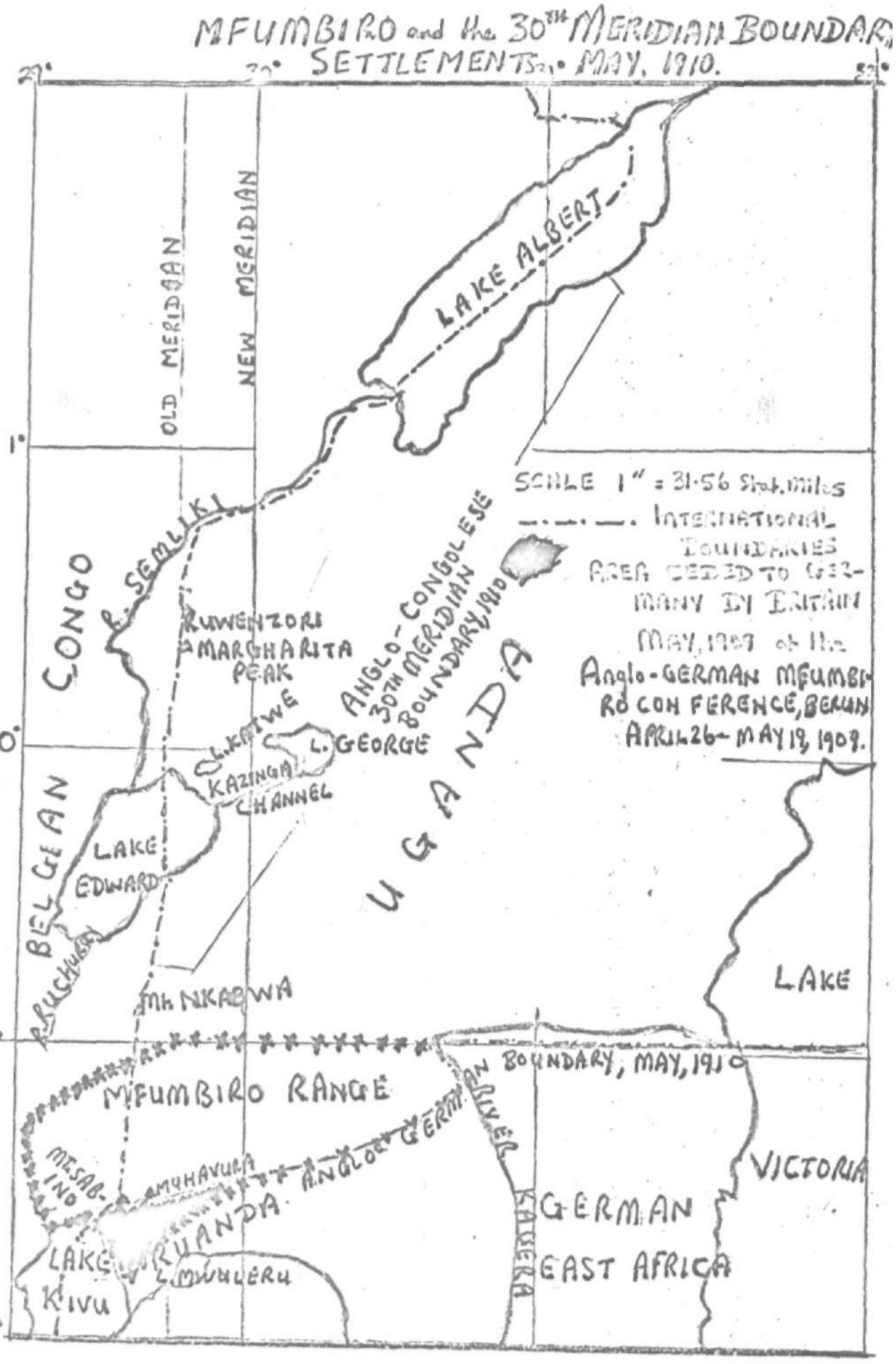
Eventually, the Germans agreed to give the Island and north of Lake/

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1. Ibidem. See map on p. 265.

2. FO367/174/10099 Notes on the Mfumbiro Conference by Tilley and Close, F.O. to C.O. March 29, 1910. Originally the British did not want to mix the 30th meridian question with the Mfumbiro issue, but the realisation that the German case was weak led Tilley to suggest early in February, to join the two questions. See FO367/174/2953 C.O. to F.O. January 25, 1910 and note 3, p. 263.

3. FO367/175/13512 Hardinge to Grey, April 18, 1910.


MFUMBIRO and the 30TH MERIDIAN BOUNDARY
SETTLEMENTS, MAY, 1910.
29°
30°
31°
1°
0°
1°
2°
OLD MERIDIAN
NEW MERIDIAN
LAKE ALBERT
SEMLIKI
CONGO
BELGIAN
RUWENZORI
MARGHARITA PEAK
ANGLO-CONGOLESE 30TH MERIDIAN BOUNDARY, 1910
L. KATWE
L. GEORGE
KAZINGA CHANNEL
LAKE EDWARD
RUCHURU
UGANDA
MT. NKABWA
MFUMBIRO RANGE
MESABINO
AMAHAVURA
RUANDA
ANGLO-GERMAN BOUNDARY, MAY, 1910
LAKE KIVU
L. MUHLERU
KAGERA RIVER
GERMAN EAST AFRICA
LAKE VICTORIA
SCALE 1" = 31·56 Stat. Miles
INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARIES
AREA CEDED TO GERMANY BY ENGLAND MAY, 1910 of the Anglo-GERMAN MFUMBIRO CONFERENCE, BERLIN APRIL 26 - MAY 19, 1909.

Lake Kivu to Belgium. They, however, demanded compensation from Britain for this loss of territory. Mpororo was deemed to be adequate. The British on the other hand rejected this claim. Their agreement of 1909 did n t mean Britain should compensate Germany for failing to secure territory which she had claimed. Besides, Tilley greatly disliked "the principle of allowing ourselves to be squeezed by Germany in order to enable her government to say that they have got everything that they wanted without any sacrifice on this point."[1] Nevertheless, the Germans insisted on the cession of Mpororo and O. F. Close warned that the Conference might break down if Germany did not get Mpororo.[2] Eventually Grey conceded Mpororo as proof of British benevolence. The Germans agreed to cede Ndorwa.[3] It was not certain whether this piece of territory was in Ruanda or not, but the Germans promised to give an exactly "equal area" in the Kagera valley if Ndorwa was found to be part of Ruanda.[4]

By May, agreement had been reached between the three powers. Germany obtained her Russisi-Kivu line, but she had to give up part of Lake Kivu. Britain secured the most valuable part of Mfumbiro and in the meridian boundary she got "most of the useful country." Separate protocols were signed between Germany and Belgium, Germany and Britain, and Britain and Belgium on May 14, 1910.[5]

The/

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1. FO367/175/13517 Goschen to Grey, April 18, 1910; Minute by Tilley on FO367/174/10099.
2. This insistence was due to the fact that Governor Rochenberg, the Governo of East Africa had protested violently against the cession of Mpororo. FO367/175/13517 Tilley to G.R. Clarke, April 19, 1910; FO367/175/13712 Hardinge to Grey, April 20, 1910.
3. FO367/175/13712 Grey to Goschen, April 27, 1910.
4. FO367/175/16674 Hardinge to Grey, May 11, 1910.
5. FO367/175/17312 Hardinge to Grey, May 14, 1910 (tel.); FO367/175/18705 Memo by C.F. Close, May 24, 1910. See also Van Zuylen, pp. 407-410; R. Louis, pp. 90-91.

The long and contentious dispute was at an end. The Foreign Office congratulated itself on the diplomatic efforts of the British delegates and C.F. Close was happy about the net gains of territory earned by Britain,[1] but the truth was that the Mfumbiro venture was an unedifying example of Anglo-German co-operation. The co-operation was one of convenience and both found it increasingly embarrassing. Both did make efforts to come to an understanding with Belgium behind the back of each other. The appearance of these two politically antagonistic powers co-operating with each other did arouse some concern in certain quarters. In the German Foreign Office the 1909 agreement was not exactly welcomed (indeed, it was the Colonial Office which championed the idea of co-operation), hence, Schoen endeavoured to explain to the Belgians that the agreement was simply arranged by the two Colonial Offices as a basis for discussion.

The British Foreign Office also showed indications that it suspected Germany of using the frontier question to involve Britain in some diplomatic complications with France or Belgium. It, therefore, explained its policy to France and kept the co-operation strictly on the frontier issue.[2] It is relevant to point out this episode, for when the idea came about a couple of years later that colonial understanding could be one way of lessening the tension in Europe, political and diplomatic considerations also negated the efforts of Harcourt, Kühlmann and Solf.

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1. FO367/175/18135 Hardinge to Grey, June 7, 1910. Minutes by Clarke, Langley and Grey.
2. When the German memo of Nov. 1909 declared that Germany would not agree to the Belgium proposal for arbitration because [illegible].M.G. had refused Grey noted wistfully: "The last passage of the German memo is very friendly to us. The Belgians will not like this at all, and will probably endeavour to disturb this harmony by a very conciliatory attitude to Germany." Langley, however, observed:"The German note is stiff in tone. If the Belgians are suffering from the delusion that we are discussing with the Germans the whole question of the Congo, this communication will not relieve their minds." Minutes by Grey and Langley on FO367/129/40911 Goschen to Grey, Nov. 5, 1909, encl. German memo.

The Mfumbiro question also revealed an unattractive aspect of European imperialism. The spectacle of Britain and Germany haggling over a few square miles of territory was hardly becoming of such great powers. Though Bertie's memo did not influence the Foreign Office policy on Mfumbiro, it did, however, reveal that tendency of Britain, which Bismarck used to call dog-in-the-manger, to see every expansionist move by Germany as an infringement of British interests. The German colonial expansionists were to make much of this factor during the Agadir crisis.

VI. The 1890 Agreement and British Policy 1905-1912: Co-operation or obstruction?

During the period of the Scramble, Portugal's dream of a Colonial Empire stretching from coast to coast was seriously checked by her more powerful European neighbours who were contemptuous of her imperial efforts.[1]

Though she remained distrustful of or hostile to non-Portuguese investors she realised that she could not develop her colonies without foreign help. The Portuguese government, therefore, decided to give concessions to chartered companies, nominally Portuguese, with quasi-sovereign powers to exploit her African territories.

The first of such concessionary companies was the Mozambique Company which had semi-sovereign rights over 60,000 square miles of primeval forest, wide agricultural lands and supposedly mineral bearing terrain. Founded in March, 1888, it was a successor of several unsuccessful ones launched by a Portuguese Captain, Joachim Pavia D'Andrada to work mineral concessions in Manicaland. Subsequent injection of British and foreign capital put the Company on its feet.[2]

The Company was granted a royal charter in February 1891 for 50 years/

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1. For background story on this aspect of Portuguese Colonial History, see Philip R. Warhurst, Anglo-Portuguese relations in South Central Africa 1890 1900 London (1962). Eric Axelson, Portugal and the Scramble for Africa, 1875-1891 Johannesburg (1967); H.H. Johnston, The Story of my Life p. 10ff gives a personal account of the role he played in the Anglo-Portuguese clash in the Shire Highlands.

2. R.J. Hammond, Portugal and Africa 1815-1910: a study in uneconomic Imperialism pp. 147-149; Admiralty, I.D1189: A Manual of Portuguese East Africa, H.M.S.O. London (1947) pp. 154-162, cited afterwards as The Manual; J. Duffy, Portuguese East Africa, Massachusetts, (1959) pp. 24-26.

years to administer the territory between the rivers Zambezi and Sabi. The majority of the directors were to be Portuguese domiciled in Portugal. The headquarters were also to be in Lisbon. In return for the privileges and rights to administer the territory, to build roads, railways, canals and to collect taxes, the Company had to hold allegiance to the Portuguese government and to use the Portuguese flag, while the government reserved political supervision and a guaranteed percentage of the net profits.[1]

The other concessionary companies, the Nyassa Company, the Zambezi Company and the Mossamedes Company were broadly modelled on the Mozambique Company. Each of them had British, German, French and, of course, Portuguese investors. In other words each of the great powers was represented. The investments of their nationals gave the powers stakes in the Portuguese colonies which they could take advantage of when the need arose. We sha ll see what efforts were made by investors to get their governments to appropriate these territories.[2]

By far the most important of the 19th century concessions was the one granted to a dubious American character, "Kentucky Colonel", Ed. MacMurdo in December, 1883. We need not go into details of its history. The crucial point is to illustrate how concessions granted to the nationals of more powerful countries could compromise the territorial integrity of a weak state like Portugal.

Briefly,/

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1. Ibidem.

2. The Manual, pp. 163-171; Hammond, op. cit. pp 215-217; Duffy, pp. 92-93; Horst Drechsler, "Germany and South Angola 1898-1903", Presence Africaine, Vol. XIV/XV No. 42/43 (1962) pp. 51-69. W.O. Henderson, "British Economic Activity in the German Colonies, 1884-1894" Economic History Review, Vol. XV (1945) p. 56-66.

Briefly, the concession was granted to build a railway from Lourenco Marques to the border of the Transvaal in order to provide access for the latter to the sea as was agreed by the Portuguese-Transvaal treaty of 1875. Because of difficulties in raising capital and political pressures from different elements, MacMurdo was unable to fulfil the contract when he died on May 8, 1889. He had only constructed 82 kilometres of line.[1]

The British and American governments demanded compensations on behalf of their nationals when Lisbon rescinded the contract and confiscated the railway on June 25, 1889. Eventually the case was submitted to the Swiss Federal Council for arbitration. It was a foregone conclus ion that Portugal would be asked to pay a heavy sum as indemnity; and the expected Berne award and Portugal's chronic financial condition (which worsened in 1891 when her Bankers in London, Baring Brothers, failed) led to offers from capitalists, for example, Cecil Rhodes, the South African magnate, to loan money to Portugal on the security of the Delagoa Bay railway. Lisbon resisted all such attempts.[2]

Greater danger arose, however, when governments began to show signs of intervening. The Transvaal, Germany and Britain each endeavoured to control or at least neutralise the Delagoa Bay railway. This objective, for Britain at least, and matters connected with general policy led to the Anglo-German agreement of 1898. In addition to the Convention/

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1. See Hammond, op. cit. Chapter VIII for a full discussion.

2. Ibidem; see also Warhurst, op. cit. pp. 115-127. The Berne Award was made in 1900 totalling about £1m.

Convention which stated the ostensible reasons for the agreement and which described the respective spheres of influence, there were a Secret Convention and a Secret note. The former obliged the two powers to oppose a third power's intervention either by loan, "acquisition of territory, by grant, cession, purchase or lease..." It also provided for the lapse of territories in case Portugal renounced her sovereignty over the territories mentioned in the agreement. Both powers agreed not to seek concessions outside their own spheres. The secret note provided that concessions which were of occasional character granted to one party could only become valid if the other party was helped to get similar ones.[1]

As we have seen the agreement was not implemented. The signing of the Anglo-Portuguese treaty of October, 1899 (reaffirmed at Windsor in 1904), whose terms and spirit were in contradiction to those of the Anglo-German treaty, made it less likely that Britain would be willing to hasten the demise of her ally's colonies. Though the two treaties were not communicated officially to the two powers concerned, officials in Germany and Portugal suspected the general terms of both treaties.[2] Bülow was particularly put out when as the years progressed Britain made no effort to implement the agreement. He began to suspect that Britain wanted to evade/

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1. See Chapter I p. 26.

2. Bülow is credited to have known officially of the October agreement which the Germans erroneously called the "Windsor Treaty". Though Soveral, the Portuguese Minister in London's (1897-1910) assertions that he knew the details of the 1898 treaty were probably exaggerated he knew, however, its general tenor and the Portuguese King also had some idea about its meaning. See B.D.I. No. 84 Balfour to Thornton, Aug. 10, 1898; D.D.F. 2nd series II No. 423 Rouvier to Delcassé, June 14, 1902 reporting a conversation with King Carlos; D.D.F.II No. 423 Rouvier to Delcassé, Oct. 5, 1902; (Lascelles Papers) FO800/10 Bertie to Lascelles, Feb. 19, 1901.

evade the issue. This was confirmed when Britain and Portugal publicly demonstrated their amity during the visits of the British fleet to the Tagus in 1900 and the King of Portugal to London in 1904.[1] It was true that Salisbury did not want to partition the Portuguese colonies and he desired to postpone such an eventuality as long as possible.[2] Thus, the position of the British government after 1898 was to manoeuvre between the terms of the two agreements. It was not an easy job especially since the two powers concerned gave particular twists to the meaning of the accord of 1898. Germany appeared to have attached a hidden meaning to the deal and indeed made efforts to precipitate the execution of the terms while Britain demurred. The same duality of interpretation was present in the 1913 review.

In the intervening period several incidents occurred which could presumably have led to the operation of the treaty, even a possible partition of the Lusitanian colonies. In certain instances British policy was imprecise or unclear, but generally it was characterised by a disposition to maintain the status quo or an unwillingness to see the treaty implemented.

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1. B.DI pp. 97-99; Pierre Dubois "Le traité Anglo-Allemand du 30 Août, 1898 relatif aux colonies portugaises"; Revue de la Guerre Mondiale, (1939) p. 244 cf. Beazley, "Britain, Germany, and the Portuguese colonies 1890-1899", Berliner Monatshefte (1936) p. 886.

2. On Balfour's report that he had concluded the treaty, Salisbury commented: "I only hope that it will not come into use for a long time"; quoted in Blanche Dugdale, Arthur James Balfour, First Earl of Balfour. K.G., O.M., F.R.S.: Years 1848-1906 London (1939) p. 206.

At the turn of the century the conscience of some English philanthropists and radicals was struck by the inhuman economic policies of Leopold II and a campaign was begun, spearheaded by E.D. Morel's Congo Reform Association, to stop these practices and to effect the transfer of the Congo Free State to the Belgian government. Not unnaturally, attention was also directed to the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Sao Thome where there were similar abuses. Later on, the campaign of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society and humanitarians like Rev. J. H. Harris and Lce Strachey (1860-1924) against Portuguese slavery and their advocacy for the rescission of the Anglo-Portuguese alliance came to be suspected as moves to facilitate the acquisition of the Portuguese Colonies by Germany. The linchpin of the Servicaes system or Portuguese slavery was the Native Law of 1899 which made it obligatory on the African to find work and left him open to the charge of vagrancy if he had no job. Without adequate administrative machinery to see that excesses did not take place, and given the character of the curadores who were to look after the natives, a situation was created whereby natives could be abducted, captured, sold or simply arrested as vagrants and forced to sign contracts for Sao Thome where they would end the days of their lives under appalling conditions.

A great deal of labour was needed in Sao Thome where the rich soil aided a vast production of cocoa, the island's main cash crop. But the planters did not see to the welfare of the natives. There were reports of high infant mortality, bad food, poor clothing and planters refusing to repatriate the labourers to their homeland after the expiration of their contracts. In short, the conditions of/

of the workers recalled that under the Atlantic slave trade.

The cause of the Servicaes was taken up by H.W. Nevinson, an experianced journalist, Cadbury, the chocolate manufacturer, J. H. Harris and the Aborigines Protection Society. Nevinson visited Angola and Sao Thome in 1904 and when he returned to England he began to write a series of articles on the Servicaes system in Harper's Magazine (which had sponsored his tour) describing the "legalised slavery" in these territories.

The appearance of these articles prompted Lansdowne to order Consul Nightingale to investigate the affair in Sao Thome in November, 1905. Nevinson urged Cadbury, who had personally made representations to the Sao Thome Planters' Association and who had sent his agent Joseph Burtt to collect evidence in 1905, to publish the findings. Gradually, a movement was formed to agitate against the servicaes system. As Portuguese reforms were not forthcoming Cadbury and other cocoa firms, e.g. the German firm of Stollwerck began to boycott Sao Thome cocoa in 1908.[1] When Nightingale presented his report in 1906 the Liberal government had assumed office. The report generally supported the accusations of slavery, and this put the British government in a quandary. It had given tacit approval to labour immigration from Mozambique into the Transvaal mines, where there were higher mortality and grave diseases like "miners phthisis" and tuberculosis.

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1. See Hammond, op. cit. Chapter XI p. 311ff for background discussion of the Servicaes system cf. Duffy, op. cit. pp. 157-173; Angel Marvaud, Le Portugal et ses colonies: étude politique et économique. Paris (1912) pp. 211-214. For a territory of about 1,300,000 square kilometres and a population of 12 million there was a garrison of only 5,065 men and 952 officials, i.e. 1 for every 1313 square kilometres. FO367/187/ 10501 Villiers to Grey, March 23, 1910.

The Foreign Office, therefore, could not denounce the system without being accused of condoning the labour conditions in South Africa. (In any case the Foreign Office always tended to be sympathetic to the labour requirements of South Africa.) An edited version was given to the Aborigines Society and it was decided not to make representations to the Lisbon government for the present.[1]

But this is not to say that the British Government did not make representations to the Portuguese government. Grey and his staff disapproved and detested the campaigns of the Aborigines Society whose claims they believed were exaggerated;[2] his position was that he could not derogate in any way the sovereign rights of Portugal or hurt her political susceptibilities. Grey, nevertheless, received delegations and memoranda from the Aborigines Society and had private conversations with his friend, Lee Strachey.[3] Privately, he made representation to Lisbon and urged her to put her house in order.[4]

Lisbon/

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1. Hammond, pp. 322-323; Duffy, pp. 161-163. Labour recruitment in Mozambique was more regularised, though the same malpractices were evident. For one thing natives preferred to go to South Africa where they could find work and a better life. Secondly, the Transvaal and Mozambique governments regularly entered into agreements on labour recruiting. On F.O.'s representations to Lisbon on behalf of South Africa's labour requirements see FO367/187/17967 C.O. to F.O., May 23, 1908; Grey to Villiers, June 18, 1908. Voluminous correspondence on the Servicaos can be found in FO367 (New Series).
2. Minutes by Grey, Nicolson and Tilley on article by the Spectator, Oct.15 1910 filed in FO367/187/37937. See also Chapter IV.
3. FO367/187/23417 Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society Memorandum communicated to Grey, June 28, 1910. Meeting of delegation of Anti-Slavery Society with Grey, reported in The Times, July 2, 1910, filed in FO367/187/24228. On Grey's conversations with Strachey, see (Grey Papers) FO800/111 Strachey to Grey; June 23, 1908; Strachey to Grey, Dec 2, 1908; Strachey to Grey, June 22, 1909.
4. For relevant correspondence see Accounts and Papers Vol. LIX (1912-1913) Cd. 6322. "Correspondence on Contract Labour, Portuguese West Africa."

Lisbon also made efforts to ameliorate the system. A law was passed in July, 1909, whereby recruitment of servicaes for Angola was suspended for three months and deposits made by emigration agents were increased. Minors under 15 years could not be recruited, though children under 7 years must accompany their mothers. Provisions were made for the repatriation of labourers after their contracts had expired.

Reports of abuses and the poor conditions of the labourers, however, continued to arrive at the Foreign Office. The Anti-Slavery Society visited Lisbon in November, 1910, and made representations to the government. The delegates were politely received and thanked for their interest, but they were told that the government would not welcome foreign opinions.[1]

This did not deter Rev. Harris and Strachey to step up their campaign against Portuguese slavery. Harris visited the Portuguese Colonies in 1912 and on his return he began to write a series of articles describing the situation. He claimed that, for the period 1887-1908, out of 80,000 slave labourers 25,000 died. Strachey regularly wrote leading articles in his paper, The Spectator, condemning the system and urging H.M.G. to rescind the Anglo-Portuguese alliance if the system was not discontinued.[2]

Probably their agitation and the reports from H.M. Consuls in the Portuguese colonies describing the continuing unsatisfactory conditions, and Portuguese misgovernment and anti-British policy in Mozambique led Grey to make one more démarche in 1912. A particularly strong worded memorandum was sent to Lisbon demanding a change of policy towards British subjects and a reform of their administration. The future of the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance was even raised.[3]

The Portuguese answered the memorandum a few months later. They rebutted the accusations made by H.M.G. and asserted that they had made/

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1. Ibidem.
2. Ibidem, Cd. 6607; John H. Harris, Dawn in Darkest Africa (1968) Chapter III; See The Spectator for the period 1912-1913 for the articles of Harris and Strachey.
3. FO367/289/1568 Grey to A. Hardinge, Jan. 9, 1912; FO367/289/3990 Hardinge to Grey, January 24, 1912 copy of memorandum.

made all efforts to improve recruitment. They pointed out that the rate of mortality in the Cocoa Islands was 20% while that in the Rand Mines was 40% and the British government "in spite of its powerful means of action" had not been able to put an end to the consumption of spirit by the natives in the Rand. The Portuguese reply was a polite but sharp retort.[1]

Crowe, who in any case was suspicious of the anti-slavery agitation thought the whole matter a bore. He suggested that the Foreign Office should discontinue such controversial correspondence; anyhow the Portuguese would always give a fair and effective reply on paper. Patience must be shown to them. Putting pressure on Portugal was playing into the hands of the anti-slavery reformers who wanted to facilitate German expropriation of Portugal's colonies by painting them as slave states.[2] Crowe was not wrong in suspecting the motives of the reformers; though their desire for a cessation of the servicnes might have been genuine, Harris and Strachey, as will be shown later, did consider the possibility of Germany acquiring some of the Portuguese colonies.

Arthur Nicolson (p ermanent Under-Secretary 1910-1916) and Grey agreed with Crowe, but the Foreign Secretary pointed out that it was disgusting that Britain should be pledged to defend the Portuguese possessions and all that it implied. He intended to review the whole position/

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1. FO367/289/21399 Hardinge to Grey, May 1, 1912 forwarding Portuguese reply.

2. Minutes by Crowe on above; see also his minute on FO367/341/11071 Hardinge to Grey, March 6, 1913.

position at some favourable opportunity.[1] Grey did begin steps to have the Alliance renewed at intervals instead of leaving it in perpetuity.[2] He, however, sharply denied a suggestion by the Portuguese Minister in London that (at the time when Strachey and Harris had stepped up their campaign against the alliance and the servicaes system and also at the time when Britain and Germany were revising the old treaty of 1898 on the Portuguese colonies) H.M.G. were showing extraordinary sympathy towards the German inspired campaign, to please Berlin:

> "I am ready to s tand up for the improvement as regards Angola, Sao Thome and Principe, but I have no evidence that the prazos system in East Africa which was represented to us as very bad has been improved and I hated the fact that I was obliged by the alliance to play at Peking in defence of Macao, which I was told on all sides was a sink of iniquity. It is this sort of thing and what I hear of Portuguese administration in Portugal itself and not any desire to please Germany or dislike of republic that makes me uneasy with the alliance."[3]

As the foregoing has shown "Portuguese slavery" could probably lessen British sympathy for Portugal and presumably lay the way open for an Anglo-German understanding on her colonies. Indeed Harris and Strachey's campaigns were regarded as moves towards such an end. But Grey and his staff, though exasperated by the state of Portuguese administration, refrained from exerting too much pressure on their ally.

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1. Minutes by Grey and Nicolson on FO367/239/21399 Hardinge to Grey, May 1, 1912.
2. CAB41/33/61 P.M. to Soverign, Aug. 1, 1912. CAB37/116/53 Memo on Treaty obligations of Britain to defend Portuguese territory against aggression submitted to the Cabinet by Grey, July 30, 1913. cf. (Bertie Papers) FO800/176 Bertie to Grey, June 29, 1913. He urged Grey not to change the nature of the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty.
3. Minutes by Grey and Crowe on FO367/341/11071 Hardinge to Grey, March 6, 1913.

They were much more unwilling to see the 1898 agreement implemented when activities of investors and concession hunters threatened to bring about its operation. In reacting to these incidents one facet of British policy, i.e. the denial of ports or coaling stations to Germany, was amply demonstrated. Though it was not conclusive, according to the evidence available the Foreign Office did not appear to have been as excitable over reports of German designs in the West African colonies of Portugal as they seemed to have been over rumours of foreign, invariably German, concessions in Mozambique.

Before 1912 there was only one major concession, apart from the Mossamedes Company which was, in any case, nominally Portuguese, granted to a foreigner in Angola. The concession, in the reversionary sphere of Germany under the 1898 Convention, was granted to a Scots Engineer and an associate of Cecil Rhodes, Sir Robert Williams. The latter wanted an outlet by rail for the export of minerals from his company's (Tanganyika Concessions Ltd.) holdings in Katanga, near the north west of Rhodesia. The route chosen for the railway was that from Lobito Bay, with its excellent harbour on the Angolan coast, to the Congo frontier. This railway was expected to tap the wealth of the Congo and bring fringe benefits to the otherwise underdeveloped Angola territory. The scheme was well in line with the Portuguese plan to develop their territory. Already, the Germans, hoping to see the immediate implementation of the secret treaty, were jockeying for the concession from Portugal to build a railway, in this case, from Tiger Bay, further south of Lobito, to connect the Otavi copper mines. Tiger Bay would also satisfy the need for a good harbour,/

harbour, German South West Africa having no good harbour worthy of the name.[1]

Eventually, the concession to build the railway was given to Williams on November 28, 1902. Lisbon was suspicious of German motives and Soveral, who knew the general tenor of the August agreement, exerted himself to see that the Germans did not get it. In any case the German scheme did not agree with that of the Portuguese.[2] When the Germans, who soon came to regard Angola as destined to fall into their hands, knew of this concession they were furious, and they saw the incident as a clear example of the untrustworthiness of 'Perfidious Albion'. She was using her special relation with Portugal to fructrate German colonial hopes. Though this suspicion was not unjustified in many cases, in this particular case the Foreign Office was free from all blame.[3] It came to know about the concession when the British Minister in Lisbon, Sir M. Cosselin (1902-1905), piqued because he had not been consulted by Williams, wrote to London announcing the grant. The rest of the story of the Benguella railway can be followed in Katzenellenbogen's thesis. It is only fair to say that when Williams wanted capital to finish the

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1. S.E. Katzenellenbogen, "The Building of the Benguella Railway and the related railway and Economic Development of Northern Rhodesia and Katanga 1900-31" unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Oxford, (N.D.) pp. 3 and 75-80; H.F. Varian "The Geography of the Benguella Railway", Geographical Journal Vol. LXXVIII (Dec. 1931) pp. 497-523; William A. Hance and Ireno S. Van Dongen "The Port of Lobito and the Benguella Railway", The Geographical Review Vol. XLVI (1956) pp. 460-87 give the economic and social effects of the railway in the development of Angola. For German activities in Angola, see Drechsler, op. cit. passim.
2. Katzenellenbogen, p. 75.
3. British representatives in Lisbon occasionally warned the Portuguese government about German aims in Angola. See C0879/80/10716 Milner to Chamberlain, March 2, 1903 ref. alleged German expedition to gold bearing districts of Angola; C0879/80/32721 F.O. to C.O. Aug. 31, 1903; C0879/80/18019 F.O. to C.O., May 15, 1903 ref. German railway plans in South Angola.

construction of the railway in 1913 Grey advised him to find it in Germany.[1]

However, repo ts continued to seep in, during the period under review, of German activities in Angola. The weak and effete Portuguese government was unable to pacify the interior of its territories. In a situation, not unlike that in the Sierra Leone/Liberian border, where tribes living on both sides of the frontier attacked each other, and a rebellion by one tribe could possibly spill over to the German colony, the Germans not unnaturally took effective measures to impose peace on the frontier. These measures were regarded as preliminary moves to absorb Portuguese territory. Indeed, Consul Mackie, the British representative in Angola told Grey that the Germans were suspected of having incited the Cuamata tribe to rebel against the Portuguese.[2] Frontier cl,shes between German and Portuguese troop s in 1910 on the border near Cubango led to the occupation of a piece of Portuguese territory by Germany.[3] The Germans also app eared to have stepped up their activities in Southern Angola; for example, Mackie reported that a German Vice-Consul was appointed in 1908 to reside at Mossamedes and that there was an influx of German agents among Boer settlers in the Huilla District who aspired to proclaim a republic.[4] The Foreign Office staff/

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1. (Bertie Papers) FO800/176 Gosselin to Bertie, Dec. 17, 1902; Katzenellenbogen, p. 75ff FO367/290/26445 Memo by Grey, June 20, 1913.

2. Note 3 p.281 ; FO367/48/7568 F.H. Villiers to Grey, Feb. 2?, 1907; FO367/48/9908 Villiers to Grey, March 22, 1907; FO367/142/2748 Consul Mackie to Grey, Dec. 20, 1908. See also FO367/142 files 3251 and 10938.

3. FO367/187/6970 Villiers to Grey, Feb. 14, 1910; V. de Braganca-Cunha, Revolutionary Portugal 1910-1936, London, (1937) pp. 187-188.

4. FO367/142/2748 Mackie to Grey, Dec. 20, 1908.

staff did not seem terribly interested in these reports. The minutes which annotated the despatches were in this vein: "I doubt ... the Germans are having designs in Angola; they are probably only trying to push their commerce." (J. Lister, Assistant Clerk 1907-13); "It is not surprising that the inefficient Portuguese military expeditions do not pacify the country." (G. R. Clerke); "Judging by what we hear of the military organisation in Angola the colony would not be difficult to annex if the Germans were so inclined" (E. Grey?).[1] The Portuguese were, however, not taking chances. The presence of German gunboats "Sperber" and "Panther" on Angolan waters in the month of December led to the dispatch of Portuguese warships to that area.[2]

The same complacency was demonstrated in the case of Portuguese Guinea (which was outside the agreement of 1898), a territory of 13,949 square miles on the west coast of Africa with ⅔ of its boundaries running with those of the neighbouring French possessions. The usual story was retold, viz. the tribes, the Papels and the Ballanters, were unpacified and the unrest resulting from such a situation might spill over to French territories. The French authorities did not hide their desire to incorporate this territory into their possessions. But the Germans also seemed to have wielded much influence over the local Portuguese official, a factor which continually exercised M. Merland Ponty, the Governor-General of French West Africa.[3]

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1. Minutes by Lister, Clarke and Grey(?) on FO367/142/2748; FO367/187/4141.
2. FO367/187/4141 Mackie to Grey, Dec. 31, 1909.
3. FO367/89/16325 Henry Siegler C.O. to F.O., May 11, 1908; FO367/89/21507 Baldwin to Grey, June 8, 1908. FO367/140/629 Baldwin to Grey, Dec. 23, 1908; FO367/187/5714 Wallis to Grey, Feb. 4, 1910.

The Foreign Office reacted to these incidents only twice: once when a cablegram from Henry Siegler and Co. re orted on May 11, 1908 that the native rising in Bissao, the capital, would endangor British life and property. The 'Mutine' was sent, but the Captain reported that there were only 30 French men and Germans. A Foreign Office minute smugly commented: "There are no English men in the colony"; Secondly, when Wallis, who assumed the Dakar post after his recall from Liberia in 1909, reported that German activities had increased and the French were taking steps to counteract it. A Foreign Office minute suggested that a visit to Portuguese Guinea would do him good, but no action was taken on it according to another minute.[1]

We now know that the Germans did covet Angola, and that since the 1898 treaty was signed they had never ceased to push their interests especially in Southern Angola.[2] The Foreign Office attitude is the more difficult to explain, because in contrast to reports from Angola it showed the liveliest fears when rumour of concessions in Mozambique falling into the hands of German capitalists reached London. One possible reason for this difference was that South Africa was opposed to the establishment of German power in Mozambique especially in the south, an area which she regarded as an annex. The Foreign Office, and indeed the entire British government, for reasons already discussed in another section, were sympathetic to South African susceptibilities. Furthermore, South Africa was prone to intervene in Mozambique to secure/

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1. Ibidem; Minutes on FO367/89/21507 and FO367/107/5714.

2. Dubois, "Les Négociations Anglo-Allemandes relatives aux colonies portugaises de 1912 à 1914", Revue d'Histoire de la Guerre Mondiale (1939), pp. 353-368.

secure her interests in the Lourenco Marques railway and port. Such an intervention was likely to lead to international complications; apart from the natural protests of Portugal there was also the possibility that Germany might take the opportunity to raise the question of the secret treaty of 1898. Secondly, there were objections on strategical grounds to the establishment of German ports or coaling stations (for rightly or wrongly concessions were equated with eventual territorial acquisition) on the East African coast which might threaten the British route to India. Though an Admiralty memo of February 1912 did not think German presence on that coast would affect British strategic position in the Indian Ocean, so long as Mombassa and the Cape were well fortified, the Admiralty showed some anxiety about alleged German concessions on the coast of East Africa.[1]

British interests in Angola on the other hand did not seem to have been as large and as important as those in Mozambique. Of course, there was British capital in the Benguella railway, but H.M.G. did not actively support Williams' concession, and it was even feared that the railway would compete with those of South Africa. The narrow strip in the middle of Angola destined to fall to Britain under the 1898 agreement was secured as a future economic outlet for the British protectorate of Rhodesia. This did not become important until the renegotiation of the treaty in 1913. According to a Colonial Office minute in 1912 much was not known about Angola.[2] The following passages will illustrate

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1. CAB37/109/29 Memo from the Admiralty, printed for the Cabinet (Signed W.S.C.) Feb. 26, 1912. (Though the Germans had a harbour in Dar-es-Salaam on that coast, it had a few disadvantages. It was cramped and it had a narrow anchorage room. It was, however, practically safe from torpedo attacks. Ibidem.) For British attitude to the Benguella Railway, see Katzenellenbogen, p. 6ff; FO367/48/0896 Soveral to Grey, March 15m 1907. Minutes by Grey.

2. Minute by Lambert on CO551/32/14605 F.O. to C.O., May 11, 1912.

what I have tried to explain above.

On January 14, 1905, a concession of 5,500 hectares of land was granted to a Portuguese Balthazar Freire Cabral for agricultural purposes on a yearly basis. The concession was at the shores of the Bay of Fernao Veloso in the district of Mozambique near the coast opposite Mozambique Island. The Foreign Office know about this when R. C. Hawkins, the Secretary of the Eighty Club, told G. R. Werner, a Clerk in the Office, in July 1909, that a concession for £30,000 had been offered to one Cabral at Fernao Veloso. This land which was between the Nyassa and Mozambique Companies' territories, had "the finest harbour in East Africa".[1] Two weeks later the Colonial Office informed the Foreign Office that the German government was about to acquire this concession which had a harbour "capable of holding great fleets in perfect security." Carl Peters, a name notorious enough to start tongues wagging, was reported to be on his way to inspect it.[2] The Admiralty, on being apprised by the Foreign Office confirmed that the harbour at Port Nakala had a deep and clear entrance half a mile wide and it could afford anchorage for a very large number of vessels in any depth of water up to 20 fathoms. The Admiralty asked the Foreign Office to inform it if there were further/

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1. FO367/143/25998 Minutes by G. R. Werner, July 8, 1909 cf. FO367/143/35840 Gaisford to Grey, Sept 18, 1909 described the area as a Lake. It was really a Bay. Hawkins' description which tallied with the Admiralty's was based on Consul O'Neill's account. O'Neill was Consul in Lourenco Marques in 1885 when, so he claimed, he discovered the Bay. See Henry E. O'Neill, "Some remarks upon Nakala (Fernao Veloso) and other parts on the North of Mozambique Coast", Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society, Vol. VII New Series (1885) pp. 373-377 and Map on p. 416.

2. FO367/143/2791 C.O. to F.O., July 20, 1909.

further developments.[1]

A flurry of activities ensued. The Foreign Office asked the British Minister in Lisbon and the British Consul in Lourenco Marques to investigate the rumour.[2] The Portuguese Foreign Minister, Col. du Bocage, assured Hugh Gaisford, the British Charge D'Affaires, that there was no question of Cabral handing over his concession to a foreigner without the approval of the government. In fact neither the German government nor any other government had made overtures to Lisbon, though an Englishman named Rau had shown an interest in the concession, but he had been discouraged.[3]

This assurance seemed to have satisfied the Foreign Office. Maugham's reports, which sought to show that the concession of Cabral was different from the one described by Hawkins, but which later admitted that the Admiralty's description of the bay was correct, were treated with scant respect. One minute described them as "generally not quite convincing" and Langley dismissed him caustically with the remark "... nor do we want a Consular Officer's view about the value of the bay as a harbour."[4]

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1. FO367/143/2791 F.O. to C.O., July 22, 1909 C.C. to Admiralty; FO367/143/31128 Admiralty to F.O., Aug. 14, 1909.
2. FO367/143/27846 Maugham to Grey, July 23, 1909 (tel.) reported that there was no foundation for the rumour.
3. FO367/143/19534 Villiers to F.O., July 31, 1909; FO367/143/35840 Gaisford to Grey, Sept. 13, 1909.
4. FO367/143/37434 Maugham to Grey, Sept. 15, 1909; FO367/143/39423 Maugham to F.O., Sept. 22, 1909; FO367/143/45084 Maugham to F.O., Nov. 18, 1909. Among other things Maugham said that the real Fernao Veloso was 45 miles northward of Mozambique, but when pressed by the Foreign Office to give more definite information he admitted that the Admiralty's description was accurate, though he insisted that Veloso was inferior to Pemba Bay. FO367/143/45084. Maugham to F.O., Dec. 11, 1909 and Minutes on it.

The same anxiety was shown in another reported German take-over in 1911. The story surrounding this episode is a bit confusing since different agencies brought conflicting reports.[1] Apparently what happened was that a concession was granted to a Portuguese, Carlos Vicente Ribeiro in August 1910, who later transferred it to another Portuguese, Dr. Alves de Sa on May 10, 1911. It turned out that the latter was acting as a front for a Johannesburg mining magnate and financier, Alfred Goldberg. This concession, about 3,500 square miles of territory which contained coal deposits (7% inferior to best Welsh coal) and, it was suspected, also tin and gold deposits, lay in the Marscuene district roughly south of the Lourenco Marques-Pretoria railway in the British sphere.[2] At first the Foreign Office welcomed the information when it learned that the syndicate was largely British financed.[3] Later on information began to come in of a move to hand over the concession to the Germans. One report alleged that the German Foreign Office had helped to introduce the German capitalists to Goldberg, who apparently was considering selling the concession to the Germans.[4] Another said Krupp was interested and Carl Peters had been told about the possibilities of the area.[5] If the coalfields were developed a much/

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1. The first report from the Colonial Office in Jan. 1911 was denied by Lisbon "in as much as this would be contrary to the principle latterly followed of not granting concessions which include the banks of bays and rivers." FO367/235/1981 C.O. to F.O., Jan. 17, 1911; FO367/235/7203 Villiers to Grey, Feb. 21, 1911.
2. FO367/237/27997 Maugham to Grey, June 20, 1911; FO367/283/15475 Hardinge to Grey, April 6, 1911 encl. memo from Director General of the Portuguese colonies.
3. FO367/237/27997 Maugham to Grey, June 20, 1911; Minute by W. Langley.
4. FO367/235/1981 C.O. to F.O., January 17, 1911. F.O. Minutes.
5. FO367/283/12307 Minutes by Tilley and Crowe based on information from Major Macdonald and F.O. to A. Hardinge, March 25, 1912; FO367/291/38899 Macdonald to Grey, Aug. 23, 1912.

much more modernised Delagoa Bay would become an important coal bunkering port. This would reduce the number of markets for Transvaal coal, since transportation would cost less and ships could easily load coal in Lourenco Marques port. But a far more serious consequence was the possibility of the coalfields falling under German control. The Germans might even establish a coaling depot on that coast. Tilley did not believe some of the stories, but Langley thought there might be some truth in them.[1] Moves were, therefore, made to block the takeover. Grey asked Harcourt if it was possible to bring pressure on Goldberg and whether he could ascertain from South Africa if any financier could take over the concession.[2] Lord Herbert Gladstone, the Governor General of South Africa telegraphed Harcourt: "Most desirable if Germans are operating that we should know it."[3] The Portuguese disclaimed all knowledge of such a bid for a takeover by German capitalists. Indeed, the original concessionaire could not transfer his right without authority "in so far as they involved the acquisition of minerals found there, but consent may not be presumably refused so long as transferees are serious persons or unless undesirable political complications would be likely to result from their taking over from Goldberg and Sa..." They assured H.M.G. that if international complications might arise they would oppose such a transfer.[4] Nevertheless, the Foreign Office felt it would be safer/

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1. Minutes by Tilley and Langley on FO367/235/1981 C.O. to F.O. Jan. 17 1911. Minutes by Tilley and Crowe on FO367/283/12307

2. FO367/283/17 Maugham to Grey, Dec. 30, 1911. F.O. Minutes.

3. CO551/15/41019 Gladstone to Secretary of State, Dec. 22, 1911 (tel.)

4. FO367/283/15475 Hardinge to Grey, April 6, 1912; FO367/283/16840 Hardinge to Grey, April 17, 1912.

safer to warn Lisbon that: "the transfer of (the) Goldberg concession to foreigners other than British subjects would certainly produce undesirable political complications...H.M.G. are relying upon the refusal of the Portuguese government to allow any such transfer."[1] The Portuguese government were reminded again in September 1912 not to allow the transfer. H.M.G. were assured that the Lisbon government shared their desire and that they would take all necessary measures to prevent it from falling into German hands. This apparently satisfied the Foreign Office.[2] Apart from demonstrating how the Foreign Office reacted to these incidents the foregoing does show an absence of confidence by the Foreign Office in Portugal's ability to resist pressures for concessions which might jeopardise British interests or lead to international complications.

If the Foreign Office showed an unwillingness to see German capital in Mozambique fearing that this might be used for political objectives, it also resisted attempts by British capitalists to appropriate Portuguese territory and it frowned on the activities of South Africans which threatened to raise the question of the 1898 treaty.

In 1903, Colonel A. J. Arnold, formerly of the Royal Niger Constabulary and now Inspecteur-General d'Exploitation of the Mozambique Company at Beira, in co-operation with Ochs, a financier and director of/

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1. FO367/283/15475 F.O. to Hardinge, April 16, 1912 (tel.) CO551/32/11789 F.O. to C.O., April 17, 1912 copy of telegram to A. Hardinge.

2. FO367/291 F.O. to Wingfield, Sept. 25, 1912; FO367/283/42363 Wingfield to Grey, Oct. 4, 1912. "Quite satisfactory" noted an official.

of the Company, suggested a scheme to the Foreign Office whereby Britain could gain control of the Company's territories through the purchasing of shares by the British South Africa (Chartered) Company or a group associated with it. The Foreign Office discouraged the plans because of Portuguese hostility to the Chartered Company.[1]

Five years later Arnold repeated his scheme. L.Ochs and his group, the main British financiers, were thinking of leaving the Mozambique Company which was reported to be in financial difficulties. Such an event would result in the collapse of British control and financial support. The Company's territory might possibly be incorporated with the rest of the Province, "becoming a dumping ground for undesirable protegés."

Arnold's aim was to prevent such a situation. He considered the conditions right: Portugal was once more in penury and the heavy cost of colonial administration (which was claimed by one writer to have amounted to £105 million for the period 1870-1903) would induce the new government to practice economy and it might even consider the possibility of selling, leasing or exchanging (plus cash) parts of its colonial empire in order to reduce the burden of their upkeep. Furthermore local Portuguese in that part of Mozambique were coming round to the idea of a change of flag and they would welcome such a development. This would give the Transvaal a permanent hold on Lourenco Marques which she had always coveted, and Rhodesia would be assured of an exit to the sea. He/

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1. Hammond op. cit. p. 264.

He offered to prepare the way if the British Foreign Office approved of his plan. This was to get the B.S.A.C. and the British supporters in the Mozambique Company to reach an agreement to jointly guarantee debentures for the amount necessary or to guarantee the rental for a lease, the Chartered Company assuming control of the Mozambique Company. The High Commissioner in South Africa, Lord Selbourne, to whom Arnold told his plan was most sympathetic, but he doubted whether Lisbon would agree.[1]

The Foreign Office, however, had some objections. While the desirability for the B.S.A.C. acquiring the Mozambique Company's territories was the concern of the Colonial Office in the first place, there were other serious considerations: Firstly, there was the diplomatic angle, arising out of the 1898 treaty. If the British syndicate acquired this concession Germany would also demand a similar concession in her own sphere. The French and Belgians had interests in the Company and these would have to be satisfied. Secondly, the Portuguese had always been hostile to the Chartered Company and there was no evidence, even supposing that they were inclined to see the transfer take place, that this attitude had disappeared.[2] (Moreover, it was dangerous to support such a scheme especially since the political stability of Portugal was unsettled. King Carlos had been killed in February, 1908, by anarchists and there was evidence that republicanism was gaining strength. Soveral had feared a revolution in April and had urged Grey to send Royal Navy warships to Portugal.)[3]

Finally,/

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1. FO367/89/23981 C.O. to F.O., July 10, 1908 encl. despatches from Selbourne.
2. Minutes by G.R. Werner and G.R. Clarke on FO367/89/23981.
3. Minute by C. Hardinge on above. On disturbances in Portugal see B.D.VIII Nos. 42 &43. Grey to Villiers 2/2/08 and 3/2/08; (Grey Papers) FO800/71 Soveral to Grey, April 26, 1908; Grey to Soveral, April 27, 1908. Grey refused the request because "public opinion would resent it as well as Portugal."

Finally, the Foreign Office doubted whether the B.S.A.C. which was also in financial difficulties would be able to administer the territory "in a satisfactory way". These considerations were put to the Colonial Office which apparently did not officially know about the Anglo-German treaty and it was told that "it would therefore, seem highly probable that any attempt to carry into execution such a scheme as that sketched out by Col. Arnold ... could not only involve difficulties with Germany but would meet further with much opposition in Portugal itself."[1] Lord Crewe, the Colonial Secretary (1908-1910), agreed with the Foreign Office. An additional reason for refusing Arnold's suggestion was underlined viz. the Transvaal government and mining interests might object to the deal since the B.S.A.C. would draw the labour supply from the Transvaal.[2]

Lord Selborne was told that Arnold's (who in the meantime continued to urge that H.M.G. approve of his scheme)[3] plan could not be supported for diplomatic as well as reasons of colonial policy. British interests in that part of the territory would be safe as long as the Company did not fall under the influence of a foreign power.

The British government's (i.e.the Foreign Office and Colonial Office) decision to maintain the status quo was a sensible one. No Portuguese government would have acquiesced in the scheme, unless it wanted/

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1. Minutes by Werner and Ball on FO367/89/23981; F.O. to C.O. Aug. 12, 1908.

2. FO367/89/29650 C.O. to F.O., Aug. 25, 1908.

3. FO367/89/28073 C.O. to F.O., August 11, 1912 forwarding letter from Arnold; see also files 34097 and 36739. The Colonial Office letter to Selborne was despatched on Sept. 11, 1908.

wanted to commit political suicide.[1] The memory of the Anglo-German treaty still remained in the minds of many Portuguese. The influential "O Seculo" severely censured the government on October 30, 1908, for being partly responsible for Portugal's serious financial situation. It reminded the government of the financial difficulties in which Portugal had found herself in 1892 (sic) and the consequent Anglo-German agreement envisaging the partition of her colonies. The nation must not forget the constant danger which an insolvent Portugal faced, especially when she owned magnificent harbours coveted by Germany and the neighbouring British colonies.[2]

Fear of international complications also led H.M.G. to disclaim all knowledge of a rumoured lease or cession of Lourenco Marques to the Transvaal in 1909.[3] In actual fact the rumour was deliberately started by the "Natal Mercury" who disliked the Convention signed between the Transvaal, Natal, the Cape Colony and the Mozambique governments on April 1, 1909, guaranteeing to the South African colonies a percentage of railway goods to Lourenco Marques and setting up a joint Board to advise on port improvement.[4] Indeed, the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office knew about these negotiations leading to the Convention, as early as/

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1. FO367/89 F.O. to C.O., Aug. 31, 1908 forwarding despatch from H.M. Minister in Lisbon to F.H. Villiers.

2. FO367/89/30957 Villiers to Grey, Nov. 2, 1908. It was also reported that the "mysterious cruise" by the German fleet off the Canaries in July alarmed and annoyed the Lisbon government. See B.D. VIII No. 50 Lister to Grey, July 10, 1908; B.D. VIII No. 51 Rennie to Grey, 31/7/08.

3. FO367/142/10131; FO367/142/11907 Col. Seeley, for the Colonial Secretary's reply to questions in the House of Commons, May 16, 1909 and Minutes by Langley.

4. FO367/142/11907 Villiers to Grey, March 23, 1909; Hammond pp. 331-332.

as early as March, 1908; and Langley had drawn the attention of Grey in a minute on a despatch from the Colonial Office, that the Foreign Office would be in a difficult position if the talks succeeded. He pointed out that the same objections to Arnold's scheme would be raised, e.g. that it could not become operative until the Germans had got similar advantage elsewhere "...it is most improbable that Portugal would indemnify Germany by ceding what the Germans want."[1]

There was no German démarche, but the episode demonstrates how unsatisfactory the situation was under the Treaty. Every concession was to be weighed in terms of counter claims. Crowe summed it up in 1912, though with typical anti-German bias: "the necessity of keeping the Germans out rose from 1898 invidious position of refusing British capitalists in South Angola and North Mozambique and Germany does not reciprocate. Britain will continue to suffer this disability if they (sic) do not insist on publication..."[2]

The 1898 treaty had become irksome and Crowe's minute perhaps suggests one reason why the Foreign Office agreed to revise the 1898 and insisted that it should be published. Meanwhile, an unforeseen event occurred, which threatened to raise the question of the future of Portugal and her colonies once more.

On/

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1. F0367/89/29098 Papers on Lourenco Marques forwarded to Langley by Just, June 29, 1908. Minutes by Langley. Other relevant papers are F0367/88/9773 C.O. to F.O. March 20, 1909; F0367/88/10701; F0367/88/14340 Villiers to Grey, April 23, 1909.

2. F0367/283/15475 Hardinge to Grey, April 6, 1912. Minute by Crowe.

On October 4, 1910, a revolution broke out in Lisbon and two days later the Braganca dynasty was deposed and a republic was proclaimed.[1] The revolution raised inconvenient questions. Since the British monarchy was friendly with the Portuguese throne it was feared that London might become less sympathetic to Lisbon following the deposition of the Monarchy.[2] Revolution might also spill over to Spain, whose King had as early as 1909 expressed fears about the growth of republicanism in Portugal and its possible effect on Spain, and the latter might intervene dragging the Great Powers into the fracas.[3] Political affairs in the metropolis might not improbably affect Portugal's sovereignty over her colonies.

Though officially Berlin maintained a waiting attitude, German Newspapers and Colonial enthusiasts, however, began to ring the bell of the Secret Treaty.[4] The Berlin Post, a paper which alternated between strong support for German policy and a desire for an understanding with Britain, suggested that the revolution was an opportunity for Britain and Germany:[5] "It would be a blessing for the African countries/

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1. Background on the Revolution can be traced in Braganca-Cunha, Revolutionary Portugal, p. 90ff; Angel Marvaud, Le Portugal et ses Colonies, p. 274ff; See also The Times, Oct. 6, 1910.

2. H. Nicolson, King George the Fifth: His Life and Reign, London (1952) cf. Dubois, op. cit. p. 355.

3. D.D.F. 2nd Series, Vol. XII No. 587 Note de M. Revoil, Oct. 5 1910; D.D.F. 2nd Series Vol. XIII No. 176 Geoffrey to Cruppi, March 4, 1911 Letters of Winston Churchill to Grey, Oct. 6, 1910; June 21, 1911; July 25, 1911 (Grey Papers) FO800/97.

4. Reported statement by Herr Kiderlen-Waechter, German Foreign Secretary, The Times, Oct. 10, 1910.

5. For political affiliations of German Newspapers see O. J. Hale, Germany and the Diplomatic Revolution, Philadelphia (1931) pp. 220-222; The Times, Oct. 7, 1910.

countries over which the Portuguese flag still flies if they were rapidly transferred to other government (sic)." Professor Singelmann pronounced: "The loss of Portugal's colonies is sooner or later inevitable."[1] The Times, annoyed by these suggestions, expressed its satisfaction in a leader on October 8, that there had been no ill effects of the revolution in the Portuguese colonies, since this was a point Britain was interested in.[2]

In the Liberal government, however, there were some members, for example, Winston Churchill, ~~Minister of~~ Home Secretary ~~Affairs~~ (1910-1911), who, anxious about the apparent irreconcilability of Anglo-German differences in the Naval question which was being discussed at this time, wanted Grey to work with Germany on the future of Portugal as one area of co-operation. He asked Grey on October 6, "What of Germany? You have so often spoken of your desire that we should find some external questions upon which we could frankly co-operate. Is this one?" Both powers could impress upon Portugal that they would not recognise her new government until genuine elections had been carried out.[3] Co-operation might limit the possibility of a clash between the Great Powers and might help to solve the colonial possession of Portugal which were "of the highest consequence to us" and to Germany.[4]

The Foreign Secretary and his staff were not willing to experiment on this suggestion. They preferred to work with Spain and France who were the nearest neighbours and whom H.M.G. did not want to embarrass.[5] The Cabinet/

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1. Quoted in Marvaud, op. cit. p. 276.
2. The Times, Oct. 8, 1910.
3. Also quoted in Keith Robbins, Sir Edward Grey, p. 223; (Grey Papers) FO800/97 Churchill to Grey, Oct. 6, 1910.
4. (Grey Papers) Churchill to Grey, June 21, 1911.
5. B.D. VIII No. 67 Grey to Villiers, Oct. 15, 1910. See also B.D. VIII Nos. 65 and 66; (Bertie Papers) Bertie to Grey, Oct. 6, 1910. Bertie to Nicolson, Dec. 31, 1910 urged the Foreign Office not to alienate the new government for "Germany would be the gainer."

Cabinet decided to accord a de facto recognition for the purpose of day to day business and to withhold a de jure recognition until H.M.G. were satisfied that the government had received "popular recognition and a constitutional status."[1]

In any case, the Republican government showed no desire to forfeit its colonial heritage. On the contrary, it restated quite firmly that it was determined to maintain it sovereignty over the colonies undiminished. Their development became a top priority.[2] But Lisbon had no money to invest in her colonies, and once again foreign financiers lined up to offer loans; and, of course, the rumours of loans contracted, on the point of being contracted, etc. became ever present.

One such loan was that which D'Erlanger was negotiating with the Portuguese authorities in the early part of 1911. The loan was to develop Mozambique and it was to be secured on the revenues of the customs in Delagoa Bay.[3] It did not come to anything. For one thing the Foreign Office did not support D'Erlanger; though it put him in touch with the British Minister in Lisbon, the latter was secretly told that Grey would prefer the loan being put in"the hands of financiers with a colonial connection."[4] The retirement of Col. D'Andrade, Governor-General of Mozambique (1906-1911) who should have negotiated the loan was also another/

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1. CAB41/32/69 Asquith to the King, Oct. 13, 1910; B.D. VIII No. 68 Grey to Villiers, Oct. 30, 1910. Portugal was recognised as a republic on Sept. 11, 1911. B.D. VIII No. 77 Gaisford to Grey, Sept. 11, 1911.
2. Marvand, op. cit. pp. 274-275.
3. FO367/234/95 Villiers to Grey, Dec. 8, 1910. F.O. Minutes on it. At first Lisbon denied such a negotiation was going on. FO367/234/2223 Memo (Secret) by W. Langley, Jan. 7, 1911 ref. to a meeting with Col. D'Andrade.
4. FO367/234/10684 Memo by Tyrell, March 20, 1911; Langley to Higgins, March 23, 1911 and secret instructions to Villiers.

also another possible reason for D'Erlanger's failure.[1] Anyhow, if the loan had been effected it would have meant a parallel loan by Germany also.

Indeed, the Portuguese did make some effort to get a loan from South Africa. Werner, Beit and Company and Abe Bailey, South African Mining Magnate and Transvaal parliamentarian were approached. A loan of £500,000-£600,000 secured on Delagoa Bay taxes was asked for.[2] There was some obscurity in the subsequent development of this episode. Bailey was apparently willing to offer the loan, but he was not in South Africa at that time. Jan C. Smuts, the Interior Minister in the Union Cabinet, welcomed the opportunity for furthering South African interests, which Portugal's difficulties offered. Botha, however, for reasons which one was not able to discern, suggested that they should wait until Bailey's return.[3] The Foreign Office who preferred the South African financiers to have the loan as "it would obviate any possibility of French and German financiers stepping in", was surprised at Botha's attitude. Grey thought that if Bailey represented Beit and Co "...it would be a pity if a chance were lost by postponing the consideration of the offer."[4] Here the matter ended, apparently.

What is important to note is the apparent inconsistency or ambiguity of the Foreign Office. It is understandable that Grey did not support D'Erlanger either because he had had enough of the business of/

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1. FO367/234/10990 Erlanger to Langley, March 24, 1911; FO367/234/12284 Erlanger to F.O., April 1, 1911, on which Tilley minuted:"I thought it impossible there would be a loan at present."
2. FO367/234/2223 Memo by Langley, Jan. 7, 1911;(Harcourt Papers) Box 2, Harcourt to Cladstone, Feb. 7, 1911; Cladstone to Harcourt, Feb. 11, 1911 (tel.)
3. Ibidem; FO367/234/5489 Villiers to Langley, Feb. 8, 1911 (Private) C.O. to F.O., Feb. 13, 1911 transmitting tel. from Cladstone.
4. Minutes by Tyrell on FO367/234/5489 and on tel. from Cladstone in (Harcourt Papers) Box 2, Feb. 11, 1911.

of the Foreign Office guaranteeing a loan offered to a weak government by a British concern, or because such a support would have meant a claim for a parallel loan by Germany. But what is not easy to comprehend is why did Grey prefer South African investors? The Union of South Africa was an independent colony of Britain and part of the British Empire and, if the South Africans gave a loan, it in effect became a British loan and, therefore, a parallel loan from Germany would be necessary; if South Africa was regarded as a foreign power then Britain and Germany would have to oppose her under the secret note (though, according to a Minute by Grey, in another context, the possibility of an armed opposition to a third Power was very remote indeed).[1] It is all the more difficult to see, if Britain did not want to infringe the 1898 agreement, why Grey showed some anxiety when the Union threatened to intervene in Mozambique in 1911. In other words the situation was ambiguous and not clearly defined, and it would appear that the Foreign Office was stretching the meaning of the agreement in making a distinction between British capitalists and "financiers with a colonial connection." The following illustrates the point.

The ripples of the 1910 revolution reached Portuguese Mozambique where they found a fertile ground among the already strongly republican and xenophobic colonists, especially the lower classes. Resentment against monarchism and Britain found expression in a riot against Governor-General D'Andrade who was accused of being a stout royalist and of showing favouritism to foreigners. In early 1911, D'Andrade went to Lisbon to have his plans for the development of Mozambique approved.

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1. FO367/237/49719 Hardinge to Grey, Dec. 8, 1911. Minute by Grey.

It was thought that the republican government would not accept them, since this would mean the increase of foreign interests, and because he was a royalist. His development scheme was surprisingly accepted, and this gave the signal to the republicans to agitate against his return. They threatened to oppose him by force. Hell was let loose when two newspapers ridiculed their efforts.[1] Consul Maugham got frightened for British life and property and he telegraphed the Foreign Office for help.[2] This news roused fears of a unilateral intervention by South Africa, who "(are) just longing to get hold of it (Delagoa Bay) somehow",[3] to safeguard its commercial and economic interests in Lourenco Marques. These fears were confirmed when Gilmour, a director of the Mozambique Company, was assured by a friend from the troubled district that "were it not for H.M.C. the district would be ours in half an hour." The Admiralty was asked to send a ship to Mozambique.[4] The nearest available one H.M.S. Forte was 800 miles away and so the Foreign Office ordered Maugham to keep in touch with the Commander-in-Chief of the Cape Squadron. At the same time to forestall any apprehension for the safety of British lives and property (which would presumably be the pretext for intervention) the Union government was told of the measures taken by H.M.C. Lisbon was also informed of the actions taken.[5] Though the Portuguese government assured London that British interests were safe, the Foreign Office thought that the presence of the ship would be more likely to reassure/

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1. FO367/236/7123 Villiers to Grey, Feb. 25, 1911; FO367/236/9958 Maugham to Grey, Feb. 24, 1911 reporting the background history of the unrest.
2. FO367/236/6406 Maugham to F.O., Feb. 21, 1911 (tel.)
3. (Harcourt Papers) Box 2, Gladstone to Harcourt, May 7, 1911.
4. FO367/236/7110 Admiralty to F.O., Feb. 24, 1911 replying to F.O.'s request of Feb. 22, 1911; Minutes by Langley.
5. FO367/236/7110 F.O. to C.O., Feb. 27, 1911.

reassure the Union government.[1]

Things quietened in March, 1911 but the Foreign Office thought the ship should remain at Mozambique. Tilley even suggested telling the Admiralty why they were anxious about the result of the disturbances.[2] Reports, however, continued to come in which made it increasingly likely that South Africa might intervene to protect its interest or forestall possible German penetration and this might have raised international complications. Col. O'Sullivan, Gilmour and Sir A. Napper (all having connections with the Mozambique Company and not improbably looking forward to a British or South African intervention) told Tilley that it was very possible that the republicans would declare independence from Lisbon; these men were of low calibre and were held in contempt by the merchants and other important foreign elements; their assumption of power might, therefore, lead the foreign element to throw their lot in with the Union who might be tempted to make a 'Jameson type' raid.[3] A secret telegram to Smuts confirmed the gentlemen's story.

The riot revived in April, 1911. Important officials suspected of royalist feelings were dismissed and foreigners were demonstrated against. The Director of Railways was sacked and replaced by "an inexperienced individual ignorant of English."[4] Maugham was ordered to/

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1. FO367/236/7123 Villiers to Grey, Feb. 25, 1911 and F.O. minute on it.

2. FO367/236/7759 Maugham to Grey, March 1, 1911; FO367/236/7756 Admiralty to F.O., March 2, 1911. Minutes by Tilley; Ibidem, F.O. to Admiralty, March 3, 1911.

3. FO367/236/9530 Minutes by Tilley on interviews of 8th and 15th March 1911, and also by Grey. The Mozambique Company's charter did not include the Lourenco Marques area which was south of the Incamata river, but so much was the Delagao Bay identified with the whole of Mozambique Province that anything happening at this sensitive area aroused fears in other parts of the province.

4. FO367/236/13373 Maugham to Grey, April 10, 1911 (tel.)

to keep in touch with Lord Gladstone and to be incommunicado to any other authorities. A ship was ordered to Lourenco Marques once more.[1]

Maugham, however, struck a line of his own, an action which raised a few angry minutes from the Foreign Office officials, and sent a telegram to Smuts:[2]

> "Consider favourable opportunity to obtain more control over administration of Delagao Bay railway. Have communicated with Minister of the Interior South Africa confidentially in this sense."

Lord Gladstone intercepted the telegram and decoded it. He faced Smuts with this news and Smuts admitted that they were expecting further revolution; on the outbreak of trouble there would be disturbances over the dock and the railway followed by a strong local appeal for British protection. This appeal would be generally and powerfully supported in the Union, especially the Transvaal, who would then have to send a police force to protect the railway, the dock and British subjects.

Apparently Smuts knew something about the 1898 treaty, though Botha did not, and it was partly to secure the Lourenco Marques area for South Africa that he considered intervening in the crisis. Gladstone pressed/

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1. Ibidem. F.O. to Admiralty, April 11, 1911. The ship had been withdrawn in March; F.O. to Maugham, April 13, 1911. The Admiralty seemed to have been reluctant to send a ship and the F.O. had to prod them on. FO367/236/13892 C.O. to F.O., April 13, 1911. The 'Mutine' and the 'Hermes' were sent.

2. CO551/18/14417 decoded telegram from Maugham to Union Minister of Interior, April 18, 1911; Harcourt minuted: "Mr. Maugham's proceedings are outrageous." "The F.O. might be looking out for a successor." See also CO551/18/13293 F.O. to C.O. April 19, 1911; (Harcourt Papers) Box 2 Gladstone to Harcourt, April 12, 1911. Maugham defended his action later that he had not received the F.O. order before he sent the telegram. He thought British subjects should fill the top posts of the railway. An F.O. official suggested he be removed from the post: "his incompetence is a public danger...I think Maugham was wrong in forcing British interests in view of international complications." F.O. minutes on FO367/236/18778 Maugham to Grey, April 18, 1911 see also files 13992/11; 14529/11, 14417/11.

pressed upon him the need for caution and the desirability of avoiding complications with Berlin. The Colonial Office strongly urged the Union not to move a police force into Portuguese territory. H.M.G. could not countenance any action which would lead to serious international complications. The Imperial Navy was capable of safeguarding British interests.[1]

The Union Ministers acquiesced, but Botha pointed out that he hoped the Royal Navy would be able to handle the situation to prevent a clamour for intervention from the Union. Gladstone, therefore, suggested that Botha be taken into confidence on the secret treaty, since he was afraid of German influence in Mozambique. Grey assured Botha privately that: "H.M.G. are quite satisfied there is no possibility of a German occupation of Delagoa Bay."[2]

Indeed the Germans were not far behind in making their presence felt in the trouble spot. Richard von Kühlmann, First Secretary of the German Embassy in London, informed the Foreign Office that Germany was sending the cruiser 'Seeadler' to Mozambique to allay the anxieties of Germans living there.[3] The Hermes was also dispatched to the area to keep an eye on German activities. By May things had quietened down according to the Captain of the Hermes and the ship was withdrawn on May 2nd, 1911.[4]

No complications arose, but the episode emphasises the unsatisfactory state of affairs. British policy was to preserve British interests/

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1. Ibidem.
2. Ibidem; FP367/14529 F.O. to C.O., April 18, 1911; CO55/18/12778 F.O. to C.O., April 18, 1911.
3. FO367/236/14668 Memo by Kühlmann, April 20, 1911.
4. FO367/236/160366 F.O. to Admiralty, May 2, 1911.

interests (rather a vague but at the same time a convenient term) and to prevent as far as possible international complications which might arise out of the 1898 agreement. As far as it could be discerned, the Foreign Office was much more sensitive to reports of German activities in Mozambique than in Angola. By 1912 the policy of maintaining the status quo had become tiresome. Unrest, as in the case of the Lourenco Marques riots, and allegations of maladminis tration in the Portuguese colonies threatened to result in foreign intervention. Foreign capital was needed to make the colonies viable, but this in turn could lead to complications where each national group contended to have major influence, or German capitalists tried to invest in areas earmarked for British capital and vice versa, or in cases where political designs were thinly veiled when concessions were being acquired. These reasons were enough to necessitate the reviewing of the 1898 agreement, but an event occurred in 1911 whose subsequent development served as a pretext for the re-negotiation of the treaty.

During the Agadir crisis, to be discussed in the next chapter, the Germans demanded colonial compensations in the Congo for the renunciation of their 'political' interests in Morocco. This demand suggested a resurgence of the acquisitive mood of the late nineteenth century. On July 21, Grey assured Metternich that Britain did not oppose German expansion in Africa. This was one reason why Germany had a larger share of the Portuguese colonies under the 1898 agreement. Apart from her interests in Delagoa Bay which was contiguous to British possessions, Britain did not object to the expansion of others.[1] This was the first of/

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1. FO367/237/29119 Grey to Goschen, July 21, 1911; See also FO367/225/30547 Conversation printed for Cabinet, dated August 4, 1911; CAB37/107/79 Anglo-German talks with reference to Africa, July 24, 1911. (F.O.)

of several official and unofficial talks which led to the unsigned treaty of October, 1913. The conversation with Metternich on July 21 was supposed to demonstrate to the German Ambassador Britain's friendly attitude to German expansion, but as we have seen, this did not represent the true picture of British policy. For example, Grey was in possession of information on the Goldberg concession, which neither the Foreign Office nor the Colonial Office wanted to fall into German hands, when he had the conversation with Metternich.

Yet it would seem, judging from the minutes which covered press cuttings from newspapers suggesting the execution of the 1898 treaty, that the Foreign Office was coming round to the idea of renegotiating the treaty with Germany.[1] Furthermore, the criticism of Grey by radicals and those who desired a détente with Berlin and the latter's accusations that Britain had obstructed German expansion led Grey to declare in the House of Commons on November 27, 1911 that Britain was not standing in the way of German expansion.[2] The consequence of this statement can be better followed in another chapter, but here it is imperative to note that though some of the Foreign Office staff were disposed in a vague way to renegotiate the treaty and to accommodate German expansion, others such as Crowe, who had to refuse approval of a projected concession to Gilmour of the Mozambique Company in Portuguese Timor, because it was earmarked for Germany under the old treaty, had more tactical reasons. Day in, day out Crowe insisted that the Treaty must be published. This would indicate at least "our friendly attitude towards Germany, and so disarm/

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1. FO367/237/45300 Minutes by Tilley, Langley and Grey on press cuttings from the Daily Telegraph and The Globe quoting German newspapers e.g. Die Post, Nov. 16, 1911.

2. See Chapter III.

disarm a good deal of parliamentary criticism." But then he went on to say "We should almost certainly stimulate the efforts of the Portuguese government to set their house in order. For the sake of the Portuguese alliance, which retains its value in large European complications, and which gives us the right to keep foreign powers off the strategically important Portuguese Islands, Azores, Cape Verde which we are called upon under the terms of the alliance, to defend against attack, it will be better that Portugal should develop her colonies herself (with British capital) than that we should be forced to take them over."[1] In other words Crowe hoped that publication would put Lisbon on her guard against giving concessions to German capitalists. If Portugal needed capital Britain could supply it. What difference publication would have made is not clear; for, as previous pages have shown, the 1898 agreement was an open secret. The Portuguese press from time to time referred to it whenever it felt that the colonies were in danger of being appropriated by a foreign power. And the Lisbon government on a number of occasions had assured London that it would not allow large concessions to pass into German hands. But then, Crowe's objections (which, it seems to me, smacked too much of a dog-in-the-manger attitude) merely reflected British policy.

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1. Recounting Portuguese maladministration Tilley noted: "if the question of dividing Portuguese colonies does come up ?(and I think it is in this case) we shall be confronted by the Timor problem. We might consider with the Colonial Office of preparing to tell Germany Britain could not help her to get Timor, but in exchange we could give her a larger share in Angola to balance our acquisitions in Mozambique." FO367/237/45800 Minute by Tilley, Nov. 16, 1911. FO367/284 Memo by Sir Eyre Crowe, January 27, 1912; also in B.D. X(ii) No. 270 dated January 26, 1912.

In so far as it can be clearly defined, British policy towards territorial change was basically conservative, i.e. in the sense of wishing to maintain the status quo. There was an assumption, some times expressed, that Africa had been partitioned and that nothing more could be done about it.[1] Grey himself often asserted that Britain had enough colonies and that she did not want any more; her desire was to develop what she had. But there was some ambivalence, even inconsistency, in this policy. While she had no wish to expand further, she was interested in certain areas, such as Katanga (in the south east of Belgian Congo), Southern Mozambique, and parts of Ethiopia contiguous to British territories, which, if they should come into the market she was not averse to securing for herself.[2] And in areas, such as Liberia, where her chief European rival, Germany, appeared to show some interest, Britain tended to block her path or to raise objections to her presence. This point has been made clear in the foregoing pages.

A few conclusions can be drawn from the questions discussed in this chapter. It is clear that the Entente Cordiale was not enough to induce Britain to cede the Gambia to France; there were other factors, such as material interests, which were perhaps equally as important as maintaining good relations with France.

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1. E.J. Dillon, an implacable critic of Germany, declared in one of his regular contributions in the Contemporary Review, Vol. 101, Jan. 1912, p. 108ff, lashing out against those who advocated a rapprochement with Germany and making colonial concessions to her, that Britain wanted to keep what she had, while Germany wanted to wrest it from her - to upset the status quo. Cf. E.M. Carroll, Germany and the Great Powers 1866-1914: a Study in Public Opinion and Foreign Policy (1966) p. 350; Charles Andler, Le Pan-Germanism Colonial sous Guillaume II, Paris, (1916) p. XXXXIIIff.

2. F0367/237/29119 Grey to Goschen, July 21, 1911; F0367/237/57342 Grey to Goschen, Dec. 20, 1911. C0533/127/13855 F.O. to C.O., April 24, 1913; F0371/1572/31574 Minutes of Interdepartmental Committee Meeting, July 2, 1913.

But, it must be stressed, there was no objection to the principle of cession itself; at least not from the Foreign Office. And although small colonial irritations continued between Britain and France, and the latter often showed lack of consideration for the feelings of her partner, for example in Liberia and Muscat, the entente was there to see that things did not get out of hand.

The British attitude to Germany was less generous. Germany's bullying tactics under Bismarck and her aggressive acquisitiveness under Wilhelm II created an atmosphere of suspicion and resentment in the British Foreign Office, which was sharpened by the naval rivalry and the political antagonism of the two powers in Europe. Thus, in Liberia, where Grey was not interested, her activities raised more serious objections than those of the French. Grey appreciated Germany's desire for Walfisch Bay, but again political and strategic reasons combined against any move towards concession; the same nuances were evident in the South African frontier questions. Anglo-German 'co-operation' in the Mfumbiro-Kivu dis pute had all the hallmarks of the mutual distrust which characterised their relationship. Although one cannot say, as many Germans and even some Britons contended during the Agadir crisis, that British colonial policy was consciously anti-German, it definitely had an anti-German element.

After the crisis had subsided there were wisespread criticisms of British foreign policy, and inevitably questions were raised about British policy towards German expansion. The idea that the African map could still be readjusted was widely expressed. In the discussions which followed, as the next three chapters will make clear, some of the questions treated in this chapter came up again for revision. We shall see what effect the agitation of 1911-1912 had on British policy.

CHAPTER III

AFTERMATH OF AGADIR 1911

"... not a sparrow can fall to the ground anywhere on the globe but some British interest is affected and Great Britain must have her say in the matter."

(Extracts from German Press, Victor Corbett to Grey, Dec. 5, 1911, FO371/1169/48440)

"... looking to the enormous possessions of France and Great Britain in Africa and to the relatively very small possessions of Germany, Germany might reasonably claim a larger share and that it would be policy so far as possible to satisfy her."

((C.P. Scott Papers) Vol. 1 50901 Diary, July 22, 1911)

"... C'est que dans le centre de l'Afrique, les positions ne peuvent être considérées comme définitivement prises. Il sera d'une politique prévoyante et sage, pour beaucoup de Puissances Européennes, de préparer de règlements de compte et des échanges où chacune de diverses parties contractantes ait à trouver son profit."

(Caillaux, Nov. 7, 1911. Quoted in van Zuylen, L'Échiquier Congolais, p. 419)

Much has been written on the Agadir crisis and I need not go into its history.[1] What one needs to state is that although the Act of Algeciras recognised, by implication, the right of France to reform Morocco, the hands of the French were tied because of the fear of international complications,/

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1. This can be followed in Ima Christina Barlow, The Agadir Crisis, (1940); Williquet, Le Congo Belge, p. 277ff has an interesting discussion on Agadir. Other relevant works are: F. W. Pick, Searchlight on German Africa: The Diaries and Papers of Dr. Rosendanz, London (1939) pp. 3-101; Roger de Fleuriau, Caillaux, Paris (N.D.); Van Zuylen, L'Échiquier Congola[illegible] 411-52

complications, especially with Germany. Ultimately politicians on both sides of the Rhine came to realise that it would be best to reconcile their differences in Morocco. By the Franco-German agreement of February 9, 1909, French political rights in Morocco were recognised by Germany in return for economic concessions. But differences over the interpretation of the Agreement once more caused irritation and resentment between the two governments.[1] When France attempted to reorganise Morocco after a series of incidents and disorder, Germany demanded compensation for her acquiescence in what she interpreted as the prelude to the establishment of a French protectorate in the Sherifean Empire. To back up their demands, or rather to induce France to grant them the concessions they wanted, the Germans sent the gunboat 'Panther' to the port of Agadir.[2]

Of more relevance to this study, the Agadir crisis raised the question of the inequality left by the partition of Africa, with respect to the possessions of the Powers, and the problem of Germany acquiring territories commensurate with her power. During the crisis the old Foreign Office tendencies of hostility to Germany were emphasised, and the British attitude to Germany, both with regard to general foreign policy and territorial expansion was highlighted. The episode stimulated lively discussion and bitter criticisms of Grey. Eventually, a statement on British foreign policy was wrested from Grey.

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1. Eugene Staley, "Mannesmann Mining interests and the Franco-German Conflict over Morocco", Journal of Political Economy, Vol. XL (Feb-Dec. 1932) pp. 52-72; E.W. Edwards, "The Franco-German agreement on Morocco, 1909, English Historical Review, Vol. 78 (July, 1963) pp. 483-513. For British anxiety about the political and economical implications of the agreement see B.D. VIII No. 157 Grey to Bertie, Feb. 11, 1909, infra note by Grey; B.D. VII Nos. 149 and 158.

2. E.M. Carroll, French public opinion and foreign affairs, 1870-1914 (1967) New Edition, p. 234ff. The course of events leading to the French march to Fez can be studied in B.D. VII, D.D.F. XIV, and G.P. XXIX.

On July 1, 1911, the Chancelleries of Europe were presented with a note by the German Ambassadors to the effect that certain German firms established in the south of Morocco at Agadir and its environs, alarmed by the troubled state in that country, had addressed a petition to the Imperial Government requesting protection of life and property. The German government had, therefore, sent a gunboat to be in readiness to safeguard the interests of German nationals. The gunboat would be withdrawn as soon as things returned to normal. The Agadir Crisis had begun.[1]

The Germans' action angered and surprised the powers. Though conservative and right-wing newspapers, such as the Daily Mail and The Times sensationalised the action as an attempt by Germany to pick a European quarrel with France, moderate dailies like the Manchester Guardian and the Westminster Gazette took a more restrained view.[2] They mildly disapproved of the action, but they conceded that it was the Germans' way to start negotiations. What they hoped to achieve was another matter. After the initial shock this was the conclusion arrived at by French opinion.[3]

In London, the British Cabinet refused to be driven into panic action. At its meeting on July 4, the Cabinet declined to send a gunboat as a counter demonstration. It was agreed that Germany wanted a negotiated settlement of the Moroccan question; however, in view of Britain's large commercial interests in Morocco and her treaty obligations to/

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1. B.D.VII No. 330 Aide-memoire communicated by Count Metternich, July 1, 1911.
2. See The Times, July 3rd and 6th, 1911; Daily Mail, July 3, 1911; Daily Chronicle, July 4, 1911; Manchester Guardian, July 3, 1911; Westminster Gazette, July 3rd and 8th, 1911.
3. Comments by French newspapers, reported in The Times, July 4, 1911. See also Fleurieu, Joseph Caillaux, pp. 109-110.

to France, she could not allow the future of Morocco to be settled behind her back.[1] Grey was authorised to reaffirm Britain's loyalty to her obligations, but he was also to tell the French Ambassador that concessions would be expected from France since a return to the status quo had been rendered impossible by her own action. In any case, the British interests to be safeguarded were, the Prime Minister concluded, no German port in the Mediterranean shore; no new fortified port anywhere on the Moroccan coast, and the "open door" must be assured to British trade. The German Ambassador was also told that Britain had interests in Morocco and that she "could not recognise any new arrangement which was come to "without her.[2]

It would seem that Britain had accepted Agadir as a fait accompli and she was disposed to an arrangement recognising German interests, provided British interests were safeguarded. As Grey explained to Cambon, though Britain would prefer compensation to Germany outside Morocco, she did not rule out concessions in Morocco. She was even prepared to concede a commercial port to Germany.[3]

This revelation, understandably, perplexed Paul Cambon. He would have preferred that Britain and France should send gunboats to keep surveillance on German activities in Agadir,[4] but, he lamented ".. obtenir une mesure quelconque/

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1. CAB41/33/20 P.M. to Sovereign, July 4, 1911. See B.D.VII Nos. 352 and 354 for Nicolson's promptings.

2. B.D. VII No. 355 Grey to Bertie, July 4, 1911; cf D.D.F. 2nd Series XIV No. 26 P. Cambon to Caillaux. B.D. VII No. 356 Grey to de Salis, July 4, 1911; cf. G.P. XXIX Nr. 10592; Dugdale, German Documents, IV, p.8. Grey told Metternich explicitly that the talk he had with him was a conversation and not a written communication. His Nov. 27th speech implied that this was a formal communication for which a formal reply was required.

3. B.D. VII No. 363 Grey to Bertie, July 6, 1911; cf. D.D.F. XIV No. 36 Cambon to Caillaux, July 6, 1911.

4. Paul Cambon, Correspondance, II, p.32[illegible]. Nicolson also wanted Britain to send a ship "if only for the purpose of ascertaining what was really passing there." B.D. VII No. 359 Nicolson to Hardinge, July 5, 1911.

quelconque du Cabinet libéral anglais est impossible." The Foreign Office staff and the British Diplomatic Corps were much more exercised by what they considered a dangerous policy of appeasement. They believed that this policy was not only prejudicial to British material interests, but also inimical in terms of general policy. They therefore urged Grey to stand by the side of France and to resist Germany. When the First Sea Lord assured Grey that no port on the west coast of Morocco could easily be converted to a naval base, Crowe bitingly commented about "the casual opinions, given verbally, by Naval Lords which never carried weight with their successors," and were in fact "often belied by subsequent events." [1] Bertie complained to Nicolson that there was "hesitation and a desire in some quarters to ignore dangers and inclination to believe in assurances which would last just as long as might be necessary for the convenience of Germany."[2]

As news of German demands reached the Fore ign Office, Crowe, Nicolson and the other Germanophobes became more suspicious of, and hostile to, German intentions. On July 9th, Kiderlen told Jules Cambon, the French Ambassador, with whom he had begun to negotiate, that Germany was prepared to give France a carte blanche in Morocco for concessions in the Congo. This demand was appare ntly a logical progression of the vague hints on compensations which the German foreign secretary had made during his conversations with Jules at Kissengen in June.[3] But Paul Cambon/

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1. B.D. VII No. 372 Bertie to Grey, July 12, 1911. Minute by Crowe; cf. (Grey Papers) F.O. 800/52 Grey to Bertie, July 12, 1911.
2. B.D. VII No. 376 Bertie to Nicolson, July 12, 1911.
3. G.P. XXIX Nr. 10598 Memo by Kiderlen, July 9, 1911; Dugdale IV pp. 9-10 D.D.F. XIV No. 51 J. Cambon to de Selves, July 10, 1911. Cambon's memo on his conversation with Kiderlen on June 21 is printed in D.D.F. XIV Appendix pp. 749-51.

Cambon and Bertie feared that this deal would injure British and French interests in Central Africa.[1] Crowe suspected that Kiderlen wanted to separate France from Britain and, perhaps, what was intended as an advice to Grey to safeguard British interests or an expression of uncertainty about French fidelity, he urged that Britain should not "disinterest herself formally in any question of compensation in the Congo." Langley, however, suggested that the Foreign Office should wait until it knew exactly what the Germans wanted in the Congo.[2]

On July 15th, Kiderlen proposed that France should cede that part of French Congo extending from the Atlantic Ocean to the Sangha River. On his part he offered the north of German Cameroons to make the cession less difficult for France. He would have given Togoland to France but the German Colonial Minis ter was opposed to such a deal. Jules Cambon was, however, seriously agitated by Kiderlen's demand for he feared that French opinion would find it difficult to accept such a claim.[3] On the other hand, he believed that Kiderlen made these maximum demands with the hope of getting less. One objective of the Germans, hazarded the Ambassador, was to get the port of Libreville as compensation in default of Agadir.

The French considered the German demands inadmissible. Bertie, who had always seen spectres of an extensive African empire in every German move on the Congo and who had never ceased to warn the Rip van Winkels in the Foreign Office of the detriment a realisation of the German/

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1. B.D. VII No. 368 Grey to Bertie, July 10, 1911; B.D. VII No. 369 Bertie to Grey, July 11, 1911.
2. Minutes by Crowe and Walter Langley on above; cf. B.D. VII No. 377 Grey to Bertie, July 13, 1911.
3. D.D.F. XIV No. 71 J. Cambon to de Selves, July 16, 1911; G.P. XXIX NR. 10607.

German plans could have on British interests in Africa, regarded the demands as a vindication of his prognostications. On the 17th and 18th July, he restated his fears about the effects on British interests if Germany established herself at Libreville and Brazzaville. He again emphasised that the French thought the demands impossible and that they were waiting to hear from Grey before instructing their ambassador in Berlin.[1]

In the minutes on Bertie's letter the permanent staff showed that they did not see this territorial demand as an isolated case. As subsequent passages will indicate the Foreign Office sometimes gave the impression that every German design on an African territory was tied up with a diplomatic move. It would appear that accretion of territory would affect the balance of power. On the German proposals Crowe offered the opinion that the demands were unacceptable to a country which had an independent policy: "This is a trial of strength, if anything. Concessions mean not loss of interests or prestige. It means defeat with all its inevitable consequences."[2] Britain must stand firm by France, he urged. Nicolson, the permanent secretary, deemed the moment critical to decide whether Britain would remain true to her engagements to France and would maintain the existing grouping of powers or leave Germany to settle matters with France. He recalled that Metternich had called on him on the 12th and had complained about the meagreness of the German Colonial Empire. For the past 40 years, observed the German/

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1. B.D. VII No. 391 Bertie to Grey, July 17, 1911; (Grey Papers) FO800/52 Bertie to Grey, July 17, 1911; B.D. VII No. 392 Bertie to Grey, July 18, 1911.

2. Minutes by Crowe and Nicolson on B.D. VII No. 392.

German ambassador, a defeated France had acquired great colonial possessions and England had increased hers by hundreds of thousands of square miles, while Germany, powerful and victorious, had acquired nothing but a few isolated localities of little or no value; to anyone viewing colonial history impartially Germany's claim to large concessions could not be disputed. He assured Nicolson that acquisition of territories by Germany would not affect the British Empire. While the acquisition of large territories by Germany was a serious consideration, on the immediate issue Nicolson suspected that the real aim of the Germans was to remain at Agadir, hence the impossible demands put forward by Kiderlen. The permanent secretary, therefore, expressed the hope that the British government would not be beguiled into admitting the harmlessness of the establishment of German power on the Atlantic coast. What he feared most was the establishment of a naval base, another Heligoland, on the Atlantic coast.[1]

It was unfortunate that, because of the mystery which surrounded the real intentions of Kiderlen, the Foreign Office had to entertain so much speculation. Though he might have encouraged the Pan-Germans and the Navy League, in order to get their support against France, to expect a slice of Morocco, Kiderlen did not seem to have been primarily interested in getting territorial compensation in Morocco. According to the letter he wrote to Bethman Hollweg on July 17th, explaining his Moroccan policy, he clearly stated that his objective was to get territoria compensation in the Congo for the renunciation of German political interests/

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1. B.D. VII No. 395 Nicolson to Goschen, July 18, 1911 of B.D. VII No. 388 Grey to Goschen, July 18, 1911.

interests in Morocco. He pointed out that the occupation of southern Morocco would bring Germany into conflict with Britain. On the other hand, this was the last occasion that Germany would have an opportunity of obtaining any acceptable concession in Africa without a war. The partition of the Congo would give Germany the opportunity of linking its eastern empire thus creating a German Mittel-Afrika. It was, therefore, necessary to be firm with France.[1]

Neither Grey nor the Cabinet, as has been suggested, was opposed in principle to territorial compensation to Germany, provided they were not excessive, but when his permanent staff began to ring it about his ears that the impossible demands of Germany was another attempt to humiliate France he began to get worried. Bertie's telegram of 16th July was so serious that Grey thought the Prime Minister and the first Lord of the Admiralty should see it before a reply was given to it.[2] Before July 19th, the British Cabinet did not appear to be seriously worried about the Agadir crisis. Haldane's daily letters to his mother give us the situation. On the 12th he told his mother with reference to the Cabinet meeting on July 11th,: "The Morocco negotiations are going quietly and so far, I am glad to say, promise well, but it is too soon to be sure." On July 17th: "Morocco affairs look better"; but on the 19th "things are not going pleasantly about Morocco,/

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1. G.P. XXIX NR. 10610 Kiderlen to Bethmann, July 17, 1911; quoted in van Zuylen, op. cit. p. 413; See also Will&quot, op. cit p. 281ff. Joanne Stafford Mortimer, "Commercial interests and German diplomacy in the Agadir crisis," The Historical Journal, Vol. X No. 4 (1967) pp. 440-456 claims that the report of the expedition Kiderlen sent to the south of Morocco to collect information on the potentials of the territory did not influence the final settlement of the Moroccan crisis. In any case, the report was not very favourable; F. W. Pick, Searchlight on German Africa, pp. 23-34.

2. Minutes by Grey on B.D. VII No. 392, Bertie to Grey, July 18, 1911.

Morocco, careful steering is wanted," added the War Minister. By July 20, he had become worried and anxious about the turn of events.[1]

Indeed, at a meeting on July 19, the Cabinet reviewed the situation. It agreed that France could not be expected to cede her entire Congo territories, but the French should consider new proposals. Grey then suggested summoning a conference; if Germany refused, Britain should tell her that she would take steps to protect her interests. This was too much for Loreburn, the Lord Chancellor, an unsympathetic anti-entente member of the Cabinet, who did not believe Britain had any direct interests involved in the crisis. Such a communication to Germany might even lead to war. Loreburn's objections as well as the concern expressed by Morley, Harcourt and Burns resulted in the Cabinet deciding to defer a communication to Germany. Meanwhile, France was to be asked whether she was prepared to resist à outrance the admission of Germany into Morocco. As far as Britain was concerned this admission would not be vital to British interests nor would it be treated as a casus belli. Britain was, however, prepared to work in concert with French diplomacy if a conference was eventually summoned.[2]

Though Grey was perturbed by the tone of the Cabinet he dutifully carried out its instructions.[3] He conceded that, "we cannot go to war in order to set aside the Algeciras Act and put France in virtual possession/

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1. (Haldane Papers) 5986 letters to his mother dated 12th, 17th, 19th and 20th; cf. CAB41/33/21 July 8m 1911; CAB41/38/2 July 11, 1911 (this latter document was photographed and put in CAB41/38 instead of the correct volume CAB41/33).
2. CAB41/38/3 July 22, 1911.
3. B.D. VII Nos. 396 and 397 Grey to Bertie, July 19, 1911 (tel.)

possession of Morocco..." Equally so, a conference which would demand a return to a status quo of Algeciras was inconvenient, since it would be "a cumbrous, troublesome and temporary expedient." The best solution was compensation to Germany in the Congo. For example, France could cede part of her reversionary right on the Belgian Congo to Germany. The map of Africa, explained Grey to Bertie, was largely dominated by the colours of France and Britain and both could not increase their territories without Germany getting a substantial increase of the African cake. "As to British interests," went on the Foreign Secretary, "it really does not matter to us who owns tropical territory that we do not want for ourselves. Our trade is well off in German as in French possession." As far as ports were concerned, Germany had contingent rights to Angola, under the secret agreement of 1898, which had better ports than Libreville and it did not matter whether Germany had ports in French Congo too.[1] In other words, Grey was trying to use tropical Africa to take off the heat in the Franco-German quarrel - a form of appeasement. This policy of using African territories as a safety valve in European quarrels was given greater prominence in the Anglo-German attempts at rapprochement during 1912-1913. As the next two chapters will show it was not always easy to isolate territorial questions from considerations of diplomacy. In this case the amount of compensation ultimately depended on the French.

Grey's arguments neither convinced Bertie, who still maintained that British interests would be seriously affected by the establishment of German power in central Africa, nor did his generosity impress the French.[2] Rather/

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1. B.D. VII Nos. 402 and 405 Grey to Bertie, July 20, 1911. (Telegram and private letter respectively.)

2. B.D. VII Nos. 401 and 403 Bertie to Grey, July 20, 1911 encl. French reply to British memo; B.D. VII No. 407 Bertie to Grey, July 21, 1911. See also Note 1, p. 316.

Rather, the French showed a marked resentment at what they felt to be the indifference of their partner in Morocco's future. Caillaux, the French Prime Minister, warned Bertie that if France was deserted by England and left to face Germany alone in the controversy, it would be a serious blow to the Entente and France might be forced against its wishes, to make great sacrifices to Germany in order to keep her out of Morocco. The consequent feeling of resentment in France would be deep and lasting. The French did not discount the idea of a conference but they insisted that no question of territorial concession in Morocco should be discussed. They expected Britain to honour her treaty obligations of 1904. Nicolson, fearing that this last reference might raise complications about the extent of British obligations, advised Grey to discuss the matter with Bertie and Paul Cambon. In the meantime, he urged his chief that the British government should not give France any grounds for believing that its adhesion to the Triple Entente was in any way weakening. France might be driven to make terms with Germany, the latter noting hesitation on Britain's part would turn the screw with the result that the entente would disintegrate.[1]

While Crowe and Nicolson pressed Grey to take a firm stand, The Times and other jingoistic papers embarked on a campaign designed to jolt the liberal government into action. On July 17, the chauvinistic Daily Mail blazoned the headline: "Slice of France in Africa!"[2] The Times, which two days previously had been relieved that international issues on Morocco had now disappeared and that the two powers were discussing/

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1. B.D. VII No. 408 Bertie to Grey, July 21, 1911; B.D. VII No. 409 Minute by Sir A. Nicolson, July 21, 1911.

2. Daily Mail, July 17, 1911.

discussing "a mainly colonial bargain," lashed out on the 19th declaring that the public ought to know what was happening in Agadir. The next day it splashed in several pages, describing in graphic detail, the demands made by Germany. If these were admitted they would not only add 200,000 square miles to the German Empire, they would also touch British interests in several important directions. "No British government could consent to suffer so great a change in the distribution of power in Africa even were a French government to be found feeble enough to sanction it," screamed a leader.[1]

The Times was one of the most influential national dailies in Britain and its views were widely read in the continent. The exaggerated pictures of an insatiable and covetous Germany could not have helped the course of negotiations which were of necessity to be kept within the strict bounds of diplomacy. Indeed, the views it expressed were those of officials like Crowe, Nicolson and Bertie. It was not improbable that the articles were inspired by ~~either~~ one of these men.[2] The authors of History of the Times, however, claim that the article of July 20, "was responsible for an immediate change in the British attitude, national and official, towards the issue."[3]

Be~~l~~t as it may, Grey himself had become anxious owing to the failure of Berlin to reply to the conversation Grey had had with Metternich on July 4. On July 19, he expressed this concern to Asquith. He urged that/

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1. The Times, July 17, 19, 20, 1911. On the 19th Le Matin published the German demands without pointing out that Germany had offered some territories in return, thus giving the impression that it was an attempt to bulldoze France. E. M. Carroll, French public opinion and foreign affairs, p. 243 contends that the press agitation in France was a conscious policy of the government.

2. Grey denied that The Times article was inspired by the F.O. Williquet, Le Congo Belge, p. 282, alleges that Nicolson and Crewe were responsible; cf. Printing House Square, The History of The Times, pp. 699-700.

3. Ibidem.

opened to Germany in tropical Africa was a useful diversion or perhaps an attempt to whet the German appetite.

In any case, without waiting for the German reply to the British communication of July 21, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lloyd George, made a gratuitously provocative speech on that very evening at The Mansion House, declaring that though Britain wanted peace, she would not allow herself to be treated "as if she were of no account in the Cabinet of nations...peace at that price would be a humiliation intolerable for a great country like ours to endure."[1]

There has been much dispute on whether the speech was a warning to France or Germany.[2] Grey, who was the man best qualified to have stayed Lloyd George's hands, in the light of the information he already had, justified the speech as salutary. Since the Chancellor was known to have friendly feelings towards Germany, so argued the Foreign Secretary, such a speech made by him would be taken as a determination of the whole government to be firm.[3] Most of the British press supported and praised the speech as clear, decisive and statesmanlike (The Times);[4] and as a polite/

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1. B.D. VII No. 412 Extract from Lloyd George's speech July 21, 1911; also quoted in Grey's Twenty-Five Years, p. 224-225.
2. A.J.P. Taylor, Struggle for Mastery in Europe, p. 471, contended that the speech was a warning to Caillaux that Britain could not be left out of settlement in Morocco. This has been rebutted by Richard Cosgrove's "A Note on Lloyd George's speech at the Mansion House, July 21, 1911," The Historical Journal XII, No. 4 (1969). He maintained that it was a warning to Berlin that Britain's role in world affairs could not be ignored. A recent study endorses this view and it puts forward the argument that the speech was consistent with Lloyd George's views on Britain's role in international questions. See M.L. DocMrill, "David Lloyd George and foreign policy" in A.J.P. Taylor (Ed.) Lloyd George: Twelve Essays, London (1970) pp. 3-31.
3. Grey of Fallodon, Twenty-five years, p. 225.
4. The Times, July 22, 1911.

that Britain should re-emphasise her interests in Morocco "lest irreparable harm may have been done by continued silence and inaction." The German Ambassador should be told that Britain could not be ignored in any settlement.[1] Although it was known the following day that France and Germany had resumed negotiations on the French Congo,[2] the Cabinet, however, authorised Grey to tell Metternich that Britain would welcome a settlement based on concessions in the French Congo, but if this failed, she would not recognise any settlement on Morocco in which she had no voice.[3] The German Ambassador was informed of the Cabinet decision on July 21; at the same time Grey assured him that Britain was not jealous of German expansion in Africa.[4] It may be asked why Grey made this reference to German expansion and why the Cabinet decided to reassert the British view, when it was already known that negotiations were continuing. For Grey, at least, on this occasion, the more important issue was that in a possible deadlock of the negotiations there existed the very grave risk of the French thinking that he was not supporting them strongly enough to resist German importunities and this could have unfortunate complications in the entente. Perhaps also, there was some vague suspicion that British interests might be sacrificed if France, unsure of British support, gave concessions (for example, commercial or economic) to Germany in Morocco.[5] The reference to the possibilities opened/

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1. B.D. VII No. 399 Grey to Asquith, July 19, 1911; Keith Robbins, Sir Edward Grey, p. 241
2. B.D. VII No. 401 Bertie to Grey, July 20, 1911. See also D.D.F. XIV Nos. 83 and 86.
3. CAB 41/38/3 July 22, 1911.
4. B.D. VII No. 411 Grey to Goschen, July 21, 1911.
5. The Foreign Office staff did show strong traces of suspicion of French policy. See B.D. VII No. 383 Goschen to Grey, July 15, 1911. Minutes by G. H. Villiers and Crowe. See also Note 1, p.32; Robbins, p. 242.

polite answer to the dramatic and sensational way Germany had put her claims" (Westminster Gazette)[1] In Paris it was generally believed that the speech exercised a powerful effect on the side of moderation and prudence. Not unnaturally the German press greeted the speech with dismay and anger. The Frankfurter Zeitung confessed that it did not know what were the aims of Britain. If only the latter could appreciate German aims and need for expansion, relations would be better. The Munchener Neuester Nachrichten deprecated good advice conveyed in the tone of a threat, while the Neue Freie Presse accused Britain of driving a wedge between the French and Germans.[2]

Grey's claim that the Mansion House speech had a salutary effect and that it helped to preserve peace was not supported by subsequent events. Certainly, Kiderlen was induced to explain to the British government confidentially that Germany desired no territorial compensation in Morocco and that no man had been landed at Agadir.[3] But the tenor of the German communication of July 25, protesting against the public method of diplomacy adopted by the British government, with reference to the Mansion House speech and press attacks, was such that Grey almost went into a panic. He sent for Lloyd George and Churchill, the two Ministers who stoutly supported him throughout the crisis, to tell them that he could expect an attack by Germany at any moment.[4] This drift to war on

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1. Westminster Gazette, July 22, 1911.
2. Quoted in The Times, July 25, 1911.
3. B.D. VII No. 417 Grey to Goschen, July 24, 1911. Joanne Stafford Mortimer, "Commercial Interests and German Diplomacy in the Agadir Crisis," The Historical Journal X No. 4 (1967) pp. 440-456.
4. B.D. VII No. 419 Grey to Goschen, July 25, 1911; G.P. XXIX NRs. 10623 and 10626; Dugdale IV, pp. 14-16. For Grey's panic message see Mander, op. cit. p. 242; Editor's note B.D. VII p. 625 cf. No. 637.

a question in which they believed Britain had no direct interests was very disturbing to some eminent liberals both in the government and outside. What was the position of Britain in the conflict? Were British interests directly involved? If Britain was bound to support France because of treaty engagements, to what extent should that support go? Should Britain continue to block German expansion? These were the questions put to members of the government by C.P. Scott during his sojourns in London, at the height of the Agadir crisis. Scott was the Editor and part owner of the influe ntial liberal paper, the Manchester Guardian. Although he would not necessarily sacrifice British interests, he was for a pacific foreign policy. He had not had a brilliant parliamentary career (1895-1906) but he seemed to have been held in high esteem by his liberal colleagues in the government, especially Lloyd George with whom he exchanged confidences.[1]

Troubled by the growing tension between Britain and Germany he saw important members of the Cabinet:- Lord Loreburn, Lloyd George, the Prime Minister, Grey, Churchill; and spoke with Lord Courtney, an elder Statesman of the Liberal party and a confirmed anti-imperialist who distrusted Grey's policy,[2] and other officials, between July 20th and 25th, in order to get a clear picture of British policy. What emerged from his talks were: i. that there were certain elements in the liberal party who did not accept the assumptions of the Foreign Office, ii. that the British Cabinet was beginning to think of using Africa as a means of satisfying/

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1. J.L.Hammond, C.P.Scott of the Manchester Guardian, London (1934); Trevor Wilson, The Political Diaries of C.P.Scott, 1911-1928 London (1970) has collated and edited Scott's private papers.

2. G.P.Gooch, Life of Lord Courtney, London (1920) p. 547ff.

at once do the same and we should again be faced with the old troubles about the frontier of India. It could also mean the complete ascendancy of Germany in Europe and some fine day we might have the First Lord of the Admiralty coming to us and saying that instead of building against two powers we had to build against six."[1]

Britain would not go to war over the question of a fortified Agadir, but, Grey stressed, the establishment of German power on the Atlantic coast of Morocco might cause very grave inconveniences.[2] Lloyd George on the other hand confessed that Asquith was conscious of the "anti-Germanism in the Foreign Office and he was prepared to resist it." At the same time what the Cabinet demanded was the assertion of Britain's treaty rights and real interests and for her to be treated with ordinary diplomatic civility consonant with her position as a Great Power. On German expansion, "the feeling of the government was that looking to the enormous possessions of France and of Great Britain in Africa and to the relatively very small possessions of Germany, Germany might reasonably claim a larger share and that it would be policy so far as possible to satisfy her... But as to Morocco we had a strong interest not in preventing the acquisition of territory by Germany ... on the contrary it would give her useful occupation and take up some of the money that might otherwise go into dreadnoughts, but in preventing the formation of a great naval base right across our trade routes."[3]

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1. (C.P.Scott Papers) Vol. 1 50901 Diary, July 25, 1911.
2. Ibidem
3. (C.P.Scott Papers) Vol. 1 50901 Diary, July 22, 1911; Trevor Wilson op. cit. pp. 46-49.

Asquith endorsed this view.[1] Scott was not entirely convinced by the explanations of his friend Lloyd George and the other Ministers. As he noted, Lloyd George was"not immune from the microbe of Germanophobia."[2] Nonetheless, the conversations helped him to have a better picture of British policy. On the 24th the Manchester Guardian in a leading article dedared that it did not agree with those who believed that Britain must stand by France "at any cost against unreasonable demands no matter of what nature." Britain should adhere to her treaty obligations, i.e. diplomatic support, whose nature must be governed by prudence and reason. France knew that even with the best intentions Britain could not save her from the German legions and she would rather prefer promises of support from the Russian Army than from the British Navy. Therefore "we must take care not to be more French than the French, and not to encourage her for motives of our self-interest in a policy which would have far more serious results for her than for us," advised the paper. Apart from Morocco, British interests were not involved at all and if France wanted to cede part of the French Congo it should be "no concern of ours."[3]

On the whole it was a balanced leader, making an attempt to sift the Moroccan issue as it affected British interests in Morocco, from the compensations in the Congo which did not affect British interests.

Asquith's/

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1. Ibidem

2. Ibidem

3. The Manchester Guardian had not written a leader since the Mansion House speech, and Lloyd George had specifically asked Scott to see him so that they could discuss his motives for making the speech. C.P.Scott had agreed to stay his hand until after the meeting. According to Hammond, p. 162, the leader was not written by Scott himself; but the ideas were obviously supplied by him.

Asquith's statement on July 27, in the House of Commons, declared that Britain was not a party in the talks (a position which approximated to that of the Manchester Guardian) but the suggestion was left hanging in the air that Britain could intervene if the need arose.[1]

Indeed, all through the hot summer months of August and September amidst strikes and domestic troubles, the atmosphere was tense with rumours of war.[2] Haldane told his mother on August 21, that while he was acting for Grey at the Foreign Office he prevented a panic among officers in the War Office by forestalling a telegram which purported to say that an immediate war between France and Germany would commence.[3] On August 23, the Committee of Imperial Defence met in Whitehall to discuss strategy and the co-ordination of the war plans of the War Office and the Admiralty.[4] While the British government insisted that there was nothing binding in them, there were military discussions between the general staffs of Britain and France, which envisaged the joining of their forces, in anticipation of a conflict. Britain was ready to send six infantry divisions and a cavalry division to the 'Belgian frontier with great speed', if war broke out.[5]

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1. B.D. VII No. 426, Statement by Mr. Asquith in the House of Commons, July 27, 1911.

2. Traces of this can be found in the letters of Austen Chamberlain, Politics from Inside: an epistolary chronicle, 1906-1914, London (1936) passim; Roy Jenkins, Asquith, London (1964) pp. 240-244.

3. (Haldane Papers) 5986. Letter to his mother, August 21, 1911.

4. Mander, op. cit. Vol. 1, pp. 244-246; Keith Robbins, Sir Edward Grey, pp. 244-245; Viscount Esher, Oliver, (Editor) Journals and Letters of Reginald, Viscount Esher, London (1938) Vol. III pp. 58, 62, 70-74.

5. Robbins, Ibidem; Richard Burden Haldane, An Autobiography (1926) p.225. (Haldane Papers) 5919 Memo of events between 1906 and 1915; M.L. Dockrill, "David Lloyd George and foreign policy", A.J.P.Taylor, Lloyd George: Twelve Essays, p. 19. See B.D. VII Chapter LIX for Anglo-French military conversations. Haldane denied in a letter to Spender that the French had asked for 120,000 troops or any other form of help; nor had anything been promised. (Spender Papers) Vol. V 46390 Haldane to Spender, August 27, 1911; cf. A. Chamberlain, Politics from Inside pp. 360-361, claimed that the French had asked for 160,000 men and the government had promised to send these troops to France.

Happily war did not break out. Caillaux, perhaps because he was unsure of Russian and British support, or because he was not confident about the military preparation of France should war break out, endeavoured through secret agents Fondère and Lancken, to break the deadlock.[1] Between July 25 and 28, Caillaux's agent Fondère offered to Germany concessions, which included some Islands in the Pacific Ocean and French reversionary right on the Congo.[2] Though the two negotiating parties were in sight of a basis for agreement by August, the talks, however, continued to oscillate between compromise and deadlock. Eventually settlement was reached on November 4, 1911.[3] Germany recognised the pre-eminence of French political rights in Morocco and she obtained economic and commercial guarantees for its nationals. On the issue of compensation to Germany, the latter received 275,000 square kilometres of French Congo adjoining her Cameroons protectorate. Germany withdrew her offer of Togoland and ceded to France the north east portion of the Cameroons - "Duck's beak." Perhaps one factor which contributed to the ending of the crisis was the Kaiser's unwillingness to have a war over Morocco.[4] But the settlement had unfortunate repercussions./

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1. Van Zuylen, p. 412ff; Fleurieu, p. 110ff.

2. D.D.F. XIV No. 105.

3. See D.D.F. XIV for the closing stages of talks, p. 492ff. Texts on Moroccan agreement and Franco-German Convention Nov. 4, 1911 are in B.D. VII No. 619 Daeschner to Grey, Nov. 3, 1911 FO367/228/45871 Daeschener to Grey, Nov. 27, 1911.

4. The Kaiser was known to be unsympathetic to a Moroccan adventure and hence when the plans for a Moroccan policy were being made in the months of May and June, 1911, the Emperor was the last to be informed and he unwillingly gave his consent to the dispatch of a warship. At the height of the Agadir crisis, a governmental crisis was averted (when Kiderlen threatened to resign because the Kaiser, alarmed at the turn of events, disapproved of his policy) by the intercession of the Chancellor. See F.W.Pick, op. cit. pp. 8-22, pp. 67-68; G.P.XXIX, pp. 108; pp. 120-123 and p. 152.

repercussions. The Pan-Germans, the Navy League and many colonialists, perhaps having been encouraged by Kiderlen to hope for a slice of Morocco, were outraged by the meagre gains secured by the Foreign Secretary. They put the disappointment down to British obstruction. The sphinx-like character of German policy also aroused fresh suspicions abroad. The reactions to the settlement will be discussed later.

The Franco-German negotiations on Congo raised questions of possible territorial changes in Nigeria which in turn became linked with the old colonial disputes between Britain and France discussed earlier.[1] The decision to cede the northern part of French Congo adjacent to German Cameroons to Germany would mean cutting off the remaining northern half from direct access to the sea. The French premier, therefore, wanted to know whether the British government would consider a suggestion for exchanges of territory in Northern Nigeria which would give France access to her possessions in the North of Nigeria through the Bec du Canard.[2] Grey was willing to give careful consideration to the proposal. When Bertie presented the French proposals, however, they went considerably beyond what was suggested in the Ambassador's previous communication. Briefly, the French proposed the cession by Britain of an ideal line running from Porto Novo to Zinder and another from Zinder to Yola - North west and North east of Nigeria respectively.[3]

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1. See Chapters I and II

2. B.D.VII Nos. 485 and 488 Bertie to Grey, Aug. 20 and 21, 1911; B.D.VII No. 487 Grey to Bertie, August 21, 1911.

3. FO367/227/37069 Bertie to Grey, Sept. 19, 1911 encl. French proposals. Also printed in B.D. VII No. 558.

The memo explained that the former would enlarge lower Dahomey, a region rich in palm oil, well populated and with very great commercial potentials. Possession of this territory would give France access to lower Niger, i.e. in the south of the rapids of Boussa which marked the limit of the navigable stream. France would be able to acquire Sokoto "whose value was comparable to the other parts of the mouth of the Niger." The Yola-Zinder line would give France a territory, whose economic value was negligible, but which, however, was considered to contain mineral deposits. This piece of land had certain advantages, for example, of welding the French military territories of Zindor and Tchad, and of being the nerve centre for the co-ordinarion of policies and troop movements between French West Africa and Kanem, Oudai and Borku-Tibesti in the Sudan. The French offered in return that part of Upper Oubanghi between the present Anglo-French frontier and the River Kotto. The economic value of this territory was negligible and its political value nil, admitted the memo. Alternatively, Britain could cede the North East of Nigeria (Yola-Zinder line) in return for the abandonment of French rights in Sheikh Said and Muscat.[1] This was regarded as sufficient since Yola, the only important centre of the region, would remain British. If further concessions were expected some islands in the Indian Ocean (Kerguelen, St. Paul, Amsterdam) or in the Polynesian group (notably Mangareva, which the British Admiralty had desired since 1906, in the Archipelago of the Gambier) would be ceded.

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1. Sheikh Said was a Turkish enclave, of some strategic value to Britain, in the Persian Gulf.

ceded. Should the British decide to accept Margareva, the French would ask for the cession of the Yola-Zinder line plus the Gambia, except Bathurst.

Finally, a third proposal envisaged the cession of North-East Nigeria, Northern Gold Coast (north of the Black Volta) in return for the cession by France of its rights in Sheikh Said, Muscat, Margareva or the Upper Oubanghi as far as Kotto.[1]

This memo was obviously meant for the eyes of the Quai D'Orsay and it was not intended to be handed to the British.[2] It is profitless to speculate on why de Selves gave Bertie this memo, since he himself must have realised that the proposals were extravagant and disproportionate. What is relevant to note is that the memo proposed a comprehensive colonial deal which would enable the two powers to tie up the loose ends of their scattered global interests and to put an end to the irritations which these interests tended to arouse.

The Foreign Office initially regarded the proposals as being grotesque, but it was not opposed to territorial exchanges in principle. Britain had interests in certain French territories, for example, Margareva, the French loges in India and she was anxious to have France renounce her ancient rights in certain areas, (Muscat, New Hebrides and Newfoundland). France was interested in certain British territories, notably the North east of Nigeria and the Gambia. In the view of the competent authorities the/

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1. Ibidem.
2. Apparently, de Selves handed the memo to Bertie without first getting the concurrence of the Colonial Office. Bertie, therefore, warned Nicolson not to mention the proposals to Cambon unless the latter gave some indication that he knew about them. (Bertie Papers) FO800/160 Bertie to Nicolson, Sept. 28, 1911.

the two could reconcile their differences by a deal.[1] The problem was to get an equitable one in which Britain did not sacrifice material interests for specious concessions. Thus, while F. A. Campbell saw "elements of a satisfactory deal in these proposals," Grey observed that there was "no equivalent territorial concession for Bornu or for any solid territorial concession on our part."[2] It was decided that an interdepartmental committee comprising representatives of the Foreign Office, Colonial Office, India Office and the Admiralty should meet to discuss the reply which was to be given to France.[3] Grey's reaction anticipated Harcourt's which was much more forceful. He agreed to the idea of an interdepartmental meeting to consider the reasons for refusing the present proposals and the concessions Britain would give and take (which was not to be communicated to France. Grey was afraid that to invite new proposals from the French without having settled what Britain might accept would cause irritation if they were rejected by Britain).[4] Although Sir John Anderson, the permanent under-secretary in the Colonial Office (1911-1918) had told Tilley that he did not believe there would be insuperable difficulties, political or economic, for a friendly deal on Bornu, Harcourt was opposed to the cession of Bornu. He was, however, not unwilling to have the matter discussed/

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1. Minute by A. Parker, a Junior Clerk at the F.O., on the French proposals. For British interests in India and the French Islands, see F0367/227/36824 Private telegram of Lord Charles Hardinge, Viceroy of India in private letter of Peel to Cranley, Sept. 14, 1911; Extract from the report of Sir C. Hardinge's Committee of 1908, F0367/227/37069. Minute by A. Parker, Sept. 23, 1911.

2. Minutes by Campbell and Grey on French proposals F0367/227/37069 Sept. 23, 1911.

3. Ibidem.

4. (Grey Papers) Grey to Harcourt, October 3, 1911; Harcourt to Grey, October 4, 1911; cf. (Harcourt Papers) Box 6.

discussed in the meeting.[1]

Harcourt's official letter to Grey was much more blunt. He would prefer to make no move at all u til the French put more acceptable proposals. He regarded the transfer of West African Colonies or protectorates a very serious matter requiring the most careful consideration, and only to be justified as part of an agreement which would be clearly of advantage to Britain. In particular he would not be disposed as "at present advised, to concur in any settlement which provided for a surrender of territory by Great Britain merely in exchange for French rights in other parts of the world."[2] The Foreign Office itself had reservations on ceding territory for rights, but it was less disposed to take a puritanical attitude. Thus Harcourt's letter was interpreted as literally a refusal to negotiate at all. Tilley, the official who handled the question, noted:... there seemed no object (sic) to

exchanging/

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1. Ibidem; cf. Letter of Sir John Anderson dated August 21, 1911 enclosed in Case 622 F0367/267/25345 Memo by J.A.C. Tilley, Dec. 30, 1911. The I.D.C. meeting was scheduled to take place on or before October 19. The Indian Office representative was Sir A. Hirtzel, K.C.B. and John Anderson and Strachey were the C.O.'s representatives. There was no report of the Committee's meeting in the volume consulted. However, with the help of Mr. Harrington, an official in the P.R.O. and an ex-F.O. employee, I found a memo by Tilley dated Dec. 30th which catalogued the various requirements and interests of the Board of Trade, the C.O., Admiralty and the India Office. This would suggest that the meeting took place before December, at any rate. The elements of a deal were left tentatively in balance. As regards Northern Nigeria and the Cambia, their increase in prosperity made the C.O. unwilling to cede them; it was also assumed that the French would not be interested in acquiring part of Nigeria any more since they got only part of the Duck's Beak enclave from Germany, F0367/267/52345 Case 622. Memo by J.A.C. Tilley, Dec. 30, 1911.

2. F0367/227/39232 C.O. to F.O. Oct. 6, 1911. I could not ascertain local government opinion in Nigeria about the proposed changes. There was a note in the volume consulted that papers on the French proposals were not ready when the volume was being bound. C0446/101.

exchanging portions of British territory for other territory which we do not want and refusing rights which we do want, but it is no doubt arguable that we should refuse any territory until we find a territorial equivalent which we do want." What appeared to Tilley as a possible arrangement was the cession of part of Bornu for Chandena ore and (the French loges?), territory near Pondicherry, New Hebrides, rights in Abyssinia and Muscat (including Zanzibar). Grey, however, pointed out that French rights meant treaty rights as distinct from territory: "if we give territory we must have territory as a return."[1]

Unfortunately, Grey's minute does not give a clear picture of what he would want. His renunciation of more tropical territories for the British Empire was almost axiomatic and if one goes by this attitude he probably wanted the New Hebrides, but his minute on another context would suggest that this interpretation was unlikely.[2] On the other hand, his view on the French proposals contrasted that on the Moroccan/Congo negotiations. He was not opposed to France giving a territorial compensation for the recognition of her political rights in Morocco by Germany. There are several inferences one could draw from this apparent contradiction. His devotion to the entente was unimpeachable, indeed it was the pivot of Grey's foreign policy. To say that he did not believe local arrangements outside Europe would affect the groupings of Powers on the Continent, as Zara Steiner argues, would ignore the sensitivity about, or the over reaction of Grey and his staff to arrangements whose implications might affect relationship and/

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1. Minutes by Tilley and Grey on FO367/227/39232.
2. On an article by Le Temps Nov. 9, 1911 (which suggested that France should cede Chari, most of her Indian possessions and New Hebrides to Britain for Bornu, Sokoto, north of Gold Coast and the Gambia) Grey commented that the price offered would not give satisfaction to the Colonial Office. FO367/227/44638 Minutes by Grey, Langley and Tilley.

and hence presumably the grouping of the powers.[1]

The Mediterranean agreement of May 1907 had been arranged between France, Britain and Spain ostensibly to preserve the status quo in the Mediterranean, but in actual fact to prevent Germany from gaining a foothold on the Mediterranean as well as the Spanish Islands in the Atlantic coast of West Africa (the Canaries and Fernando Po) and also the Balearic Islands in which Germany was alleged to be interested. The fear was that concessions acquired by Germany from Spain might result in the latter being drawn into the German camp in which case the strategic position of both France and Britain would be threatened.[2] Grey himself admitted to Goschen in September that he dared not press the French about concessions in the Congo lest he incurred the odium of having contributed to an unpopular decision and the "whole entente (may) go." Equally so French anxiety during the Anglo-German pourparlers worried him.[3] If this view is accepted that territorial arrangements or local arrangements, whether in the nature of territory or economic and commercial facilities, could not be distinguished from considerations of political and diplomatic alignment, then it is strange to think that British statesmen did hope to remove Anglo-German tension by satisfying Germany in her colonial ambitions when they knew that these accommodations worried a partner on whose friendship their foreign policy was based.

Secondly/

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1. Z. Steiner, The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1898-1914, p. 128.
2. B.D.VII Chapter 1, especially Nos 7 and 8 Bertie to Grey, Dec. 25, 1906 and January 3, 1907. D.D.F. XI especially No. 15 Pichon to Ambassadors at St. Petersburg, Berlin, Vienna, Washington, Tokio and Lisbon, June 6, 1907. The Reichstag Colonial debates of 1906 disclosed that some Germans had plotted to get the German government to intervene in the Spanish Islands of Fernando Po. Reported by The Times, Dec. 13 and 14, 1906.
3. B.D.VII Editor's note: Grey to Goschen, Sept. 27, 1911 infra p. 545. See also Editor's comments in Introduction of D.D.F. 3rd Series, Vol. VIII (1913).

Secondly, if proposals for exchanges of territory with an entente partner who had something which Britain wanted (as opposed to Germany, who, it is often argued by historians, had nothing in the shape of territory or rights which could serve as basis for an arrangement) were thought to be inadmissible, it follows that apart from political and diplomatic considerations, European powers ipso facto were unwilling to cede territories which had been under their administration for a number of years. The Gambia question illustrates this point.

The conversation Cambon had with Grey on October 7th and the suggestion made by Le Temps later in the year emphasises it further. Probably sent to test the ground, after the British had failed to reply to the French memo of September 19, Cambon suggested to Grey that a comprehensive deal on large lines such as in 1904, might be negotiated between Britain and France. Grey agreed that it was best to get rid of ~~contentious~~ IRRITATING questions which were apt to cause a great deal of trouble between the two powers. In pressing for the cession of North Eastern Nigeria, and in urging Grey to accept the French offer of territory in the Ubanghi, Cambon resorted to his well tried practice of referring to German presence in Central Africa as injurious to British interests. Grey rebutted this (though in another context he admitted that Britain would prefer a weaker power in Africa than Germany); but he assured the Ambassador that the British government was considering the proposals.[1]

The matter was taken up by M.J.Coudurier, the correspondent of Figaro in London, who appeared to have enjoyed playing the role of a free lance ambassador during this period. On October 20th he sent an article/

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1. F0367/227/39256 Grey to Bertie, Oct. 7, 1911; cf. B.D.VII Nos. 458, 459 and 461 Grey to Mallet, August 5, 1911.

lished /article/ by the Pall Mall Gazette, speculating on possible territorial changes, to the Foreign Office.[1] The next day he followed this up by an article in Figaro. After stating categorically that Britain would have come to the aid of France if Germany had attacked her, he declared that the Quai D'Orsay, far from looking "d'un mauvais oeil" on German expansion in Africa, would be glad to see the surplus activity of the Teutonic race finding a safety valve in the immense African territories which needed colonists. More important, he hinted at talks, which had begun on certain exchanges of territory, between Britain and France beneficial to both. They seemed to have languished for the moment, though they bore on delicate matters and could not be rushed; Coudurier hoped that they would be restarted after the Franco-German talks.[2] Here Crowe struck a note of caution. The loyalty of England during the Agadir crisis had been lauded, but if exchanges should take place between the two powers to which colonial circles in France might be hostile, though the government might defend itself that because of British loyalty sacrifices must be made, they might retort that they had thought British support was one of disinterestedness not to be paid by compensations. In other words, a decent interval must be allowed before negotiating. Langley, while admitting the force of the argument, believed that the opportunity which French gratitude presented could be used to forestall critics. Grey agreed not to hurry the negotiations.[3]

In any case, nothing resulted from the proposals, despite the attempts by Le Temps in a few articles to advertise these talks and to stress the advantages of such an arrangement.[4] The Colonial Office refused/

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1. F0371/1120/41552 Bertie to Grey, Oct. 21, transmitting article.
2. Extract in F0367/267/522354.
3. Minutes by Crowe, Langley and Grey on F0371/1120/41552.
4. Extracts from Le Temps, Nov. 9, 1911 in F0367/227/44638.

refused to cede territory in Nigeria or the Gambia because their prosperity had improved over the years, while the French were unwilling to give up their rights in Muscat and the enclaves in India. Agreement was difficult to arrive at because neither side was willing to give up prized possessions and what was offered by one was thought to be inadequate by the other. Poincaré's statement on February 16th, 1912, that the government had no intention "de consentir, ni par accord secret, ni accord public, à aucun abandon de territoire français"[1] apparently put an end to the discussion. The entente did not seem to be enough to make either party cede its territory to the other. What success an Anglo-German territorial deal would have, remained to be seen.

Far from pleasing the Germans, the convention of November 4, 1911, violently angered them. Lindequist, the German Colonial Secretary and his under secretary, Dankelmann, resigned in disgust with the settlement.[2] Tirpitz called it an Olmutz, and this reinvigorated his energy to introduce a new Navy Bill.[3] The Germans held Britain responsible for their humiliation and they were convinced that Lloyd George's speech was an evidence/

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1. F0367/274/6898 Carnegie to Grey, Feb. 16, 1912. The statement was an answer to a question put to the Prime Minister in the French Chamber.

2. Apparently their resignations were motivated by their disapproval of the cession of German territory and because the Kolonial Amt was not allowed a deciding voice in the Franco-German negotiations. See translation of the German Chancellor's speech in the Reichstag, No. 9, 1911. Parliamentary Papers, Vol. CIII (1911) Pa. 5970. Also printed in B.D.VII No. 674. See Harry R. Rudin, Germans in the Cameroons 1884-1914: a case study in Modern Imperialism (1938) pp. 97-99 for reactions of colonial circles.

3. J.C.G.Röhl "Admiral von Müller and the Approach of War 1911-1914" H.J. Vol. XI No. 4, 1967, pp.651-673, E.L. Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, pp. 314-315.

evidence of British obstruction and interference.[1] Herr von Heydebrand, the leader of the Conservative party in the Reichstag, gave expression to this resentment. The crisis had shown Germany, he argued, where her enemy lay. She now knew who it was that thwarted all her natural desires for expansion and refused her a place in the sun.[2] Thus, the most important effect of the accord was the issue it raised about Anglo-German relations.

While conservative papers like The Times and Daily Chronicle and even some Unionist politicians reiterated the view that Britain was bound to support France against Germany[3] (even to its logical conclusions), other people, such as radicals, liberal parliamentarians and those whom The Times called "professional pacifists" were not so sure that Britain had done the right thing. The tenor of Anglo-German relations - the problems of the naval race and rising expenditure, the allegation that Britain was obstructing German expansion and denying her the right of a world power - gave grave concern to these people who felt something should be done about reaching an understanding. Two points seemed to stand out clearly: i. how to reach a détente with Germany which would not be inconsistent with British interests? ii. if Germany wanted colonies, as the strident cries of German colonialists seemed to suggest, how could Britain satisfy her?

In discussing these considerations the Foreign Office as well as the general lines of British foreign policy naturally came under heavy criticism./

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1. L.C.B. Seaman, Post Victorian Britain, 1902-51, London (1966) p. 54
2. B.D.VII No. 674 Goschen to Grey, Nov. 10, 1911; Quoted by J.P. Conwell-Evans, Foreign Policy from a Back Bench, 1904-1918 (London, 1932) p. 55.
3. The Times, Oct. 24, 1911; Daily Chronicle, Nov. 4, 1911; History of The Times, p. 701ff; Chamberlain, Politics from Inside, p. 425.

criticism. Some of the heavy criticisms were deflected towards the entente, especially Grey's apparent condonation of Russia's policy in Persia. G.H. Perris, one of the radical critics of Grey, criticised his policy as anti-German without any compensating advantage for the understandings with Russia and France.[1] Sir F. Lascelles confessed to C.P. Scott that Lloyd George's speech had done considerable harm to Anglo-German relationship. Though the entente originally was not pointed against Germany, she had, however, regarded it as being directed against her. The ex-Ambassador did not know how the entente came to be perverted, but the sensible thing to do now was to assure Germany that it was not intended to be against her. Grey would do well by making such a statement.[2]

Lord Courtney believed that the root danger outside the Foreign Office (if not within it) was that of "jealousy of German expansion which must be got rid of, since it is a jealousy of inevitable fact ... that Germany desires to acquire and is bound to acquire coaling stations here and there is one of the phases of the inevitable." He told Grey that it depended/

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1. G.H. Perris, Our Foreign Policy and Sir Edward Grey's failure, London (1912); John H. Harris, Dawn in Darkest Africa, London (1968 Edition) p. 91ff. For a discussion of radical criticisms of Grey's policy see A.J.P. Taylor, The Trouble Makers, London (1957) p. 108ff, who argues that the Radicals were more hostile to the F.O. than favourable to Germany. Cf. John A. Murray, "Foreign policy debated, Sir Edward Grey and his Critics, 1911-12" in Lillian Parker Wallace and William C. Askew (Eds.) Power, Public Opinion and Diplomacy: Essays in honour of Eber Malcolm Carroll, North Carolina (1959); Howard S. Weinroth "The British Radicals and the Balance of Power, 1902-1914", Historical Journal, Vol. XIII No. 4 (Dec. 1970) pp. 653-682; Robbins, op. cit. p. 245ff.

2. (C.P. Scott Papers) 50901 Diary, Nov. 7, 1911; Sir F. Lascelles "Thoughts on the Anglo-German Problem", Contemporary Review, Vol. 101 (January - June, 1912) pp. 1-9.

depended on "the manifestation of our temper in respect of such acquisition whether they would remain merely mercantile stations or would be converted into naval bases."[1]

Although he appreciated the difficulties and obstacles to an Anglo-German rapprochement, Noel Buxton, a liberal M.P., one of Grey's strongest critics in this period, did not think that the entente should preclude the desirability of a good understanding with Germany based on accommodation in markets and colonies. On a wider context, Noel Buxton and his collaborator, A. F. Ponsonby, a former private secretary of Campbell-Bannerman, were concerned about the secrecy of foreign policy, the dearth of information on critical issues, the absence of a liaison between the Foreign Office and the public and the absence of control by parliament over foreign policy.[2] They therefore set up a foreign affairs Committee in parliament specifically for the purpose of improving relationship with Germany and to consider the "legitimate aspirations" of that country, having suspected that "policy is virtually dictated by a very small number of permanent men at the Foreign Office." It was also obvious that "frictions with Germany had been partly due to the private opinion of some of our diplomatists."[3]

The efforts of Ponsonby and Buxton to influence the lines of foreign policy did not impress Asquith or Grey.[4] The latter reiterated in his conversation with C.P. Scott that Britain had to support France, otherwise the/

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1. Cooch, Life of Courtney, pp. 567-568.
2. T.P. Conwell-Evans, Foreign Policy from a Back Bench, 1904-1918 passim. For Noel Buxton's views, see articles in The Times, Dec. 9, 1911; "England and Germany" Contemporary Review, Nov. 1911, pp. 605-647.
3. A.J.P. Taylor, The Trouble Makers, p. 118; Conwell-Evans, Foreign Policy from a Back bench, p. 58ff.
4. Conwell-Evans, Ibidem.

the entente would have no value.[1] Nonetheless, Grey and Asquith could not ignore pressures and criticisms from the public. Even inside the Cabinet some of the members were beginning to get restive, especially after disclosures of the military talk that had been going on between France and Britain during the summer. Morley, Harcourt and Loreburn complained about these irregularities. And their pressure finally induced Asquith and Grey (reluctantly) to agree that questions of policy on military and naval matters must be reserved for the decision of the Cabinet.[2] In parliament the Foreign Secretary was pressed on the 13th, 16th and 20th November, to make a statement on foreign policy,[3] while outside parliament, various organisations for the improvement of Anglo-German relations were set up. The speeches of the German Chancellor on 9th and 10th November in which, while he asserted that Germany had not retreated out of fear of any power and at the same time condemned the violently anti-British speeches of Heydebrand, seemed to have created a friendly impression on Grey.[4]

On November 27th, Grey made his policy speech. As an oratorical exercise it was brilliant, if disingenuous. It also had one or two inconsistencies. Certain of the support of the majority of his party (who even if they disagreed with some aspects of his policy did not want to destroy his position, for that would ultimately mean a destruction of the Liberal government), and the leadership of the opposition Unionist Party, Grey was defiant[5] He refused to change the/

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1. (C.P.Scott Papers) 50901 Diary, Nov. 3, 1911; cf. his interview with Sir Frank Lascelles on Nov. 7, 1911.
2. Sir Almaric Fitzroy, Memoirs, London (1925) II, p. 468; Trevor Wilson pp. 60-61; Esher, Journals and Letters, p. 74; Keith Robbins, p. 246; C.J. Lowe and M.L. Dockrill, The Mirage of Power, London (1972) III p. 440, has a copy of Cabinet letter dated Nov. 2, 1911.
3. Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 5th Series Vol.XXXI Nov.13-24, 1911
4. Parliamentary Papers, Vol. CIII(1911) Cd.5970 Speeches by Bethmann Hollweg, Nov. 9 and 10, 1911.
5. (C.P. Scott Papers) 50901, Diary, Dec. 1, 1911; Robbins, p. 250ff.

the basic lines of his foreign policy, and he restricted himself to pronouncing platitudes of friendship with Germany. He, however, made one concession, i.e. he declared that Britain was not hostile to German expansion in Africa. He began his speech by traversing over the period of the despatch of the Panther and his meeting with Metternich on July 4th. He asserted that he had told the German Ambassador that Britain's attitude would not be a disinterested one and when he did not get any reply to this communication, he became afraid that the impossible demands of Germany might lead to a breakdown of the negotiations since France would not accept them, and he had, therefore, called Metternich to see him on July 21st. He argued that the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech had been necessary since he had to attend a formal occasion in which he would have been expected to say something on foreign affairs. He denied that the speech was menacing since it was meant to demonstrate that where British interests were affected "we must not be treated as if we were of no account." Eventually, Germany explained her intentions, but he argued that if a reply had been given to his July 4th statement a good deal of misunderstanding would have been avoided. All through the negotiations, he revealed, the French had kept Britain informed and the role of the latter had not been to impede but to help the discussions.[1]

On the question of the tension in the summer he severely criticised the sensation mongers, rumour and gossip digesters who "tend to glow and be happy when war was rumoured to be near." He declaimed: "... it is as if the world were indulging in a fit of political alcoholism and the/

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1. Parliamentary Debates, 5th Series, Vol. XXXII No. 27-Dec. 16, 1911. Grey's rendering of the events during the crisis gave the impression that his conversation with Metternich on July 4th was a direct and formal communication to Berlin while he got the information of the German demands on the Congo from newspaper reports. At the same time he admitted that the French kept him informed throughout the negotiations. Cf. note 2, page 313.

and the best that can be done by those of us who are in positions of responsibility is to keep cool and sober." He, however, admitted that there had been anxiety, not constant, but intermittent, about the result of the negotiations. He repeated that the French had kept the Foreign Office informed and it knew that negotiations were going on, that they would not break off abruptly, but his fear was that if the talks broke down it would mean calling a conference to which Germany was opposed, or going back to Algeciras and the third possibility he refused to discuss.[1]

He denied that there was any secrecy in his diplomacy, nor was there any secret agreement since the Liberal government assumed office. Liberal policy was a continuation of Lansdowne's. The entente, with France and Russia, were in themselves a guarantee that neither would pursue a provocative or aggressive policy towards Germany. As far as Germany was concerned, he regarded it as a very strong country with which no country would desire to pick a quarrel. But a nation with the largest army in the world could not go on to build a big Navy without causing apprehensions among other powers. He rejected the advocacy for "splendid isolation" and the suggestion that Britain should not support her friend every time was denounced. 'Splendid isolation,' he argued, was impractical and it was a negation of policy.

On future lines of British policy with respect to Germany, Grey virtually admitted, it seems to me, that there could be no understanding with Germany while the entente was in existence: "One does not make new friendships worth having by deserting old ones," he pointed out. He was ready to do all he could to improve relations with Germany, but would not/

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1. Ibidem.

2. Ibidem.

not sacrifice old ones - improved relations might also improve those of "our friends."[1]

Not even the bitterest of his critics suggested that Britain should give up her friendship with France and Russia, but perhaps Grey was being true to himself when he made this declaration. He was always unwilling to have "any special co-operation which would alter the present grouping of powers."[2] Hence, although he praised Bethman's speeches as friendly to Britain, he warned that he could not force the pace to improve relations. Britain could only steer a straight course and a favourable one when possible and if Germany reciprocated.

On the other hand, with reference to German expansion and the accusation that Britain's policy was to block it, he conceded that "if Germany has friendly arrangements to negotiate with other foreign countries, we are not anxious to stand in their way ..." If it was not British policy to extend her empire he declared, "it would be diplomatically and morally wrong to indulge in a dog-in-the-manger policy with regard to others. I think, indeed, the House may see something of the sort in the recent negotiations."[3]

Perhaps Grey's statement can best be described as self-justification of his policy. He gave nothing away, his policy rested on the pivot of the entente,he was prepared to improve relations with Germany provided such a process did not impair or unsettle Anglo-French understanding. It was/

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1. Ibidem.
2. (Bertie Papers) FO800/171 Grey to Bertie, January 7, 1909.
3. Parliamentary Debates, 5th Series Vol. XXXII Nov. 27-Dec. 16, 1911; B.D. VII, pp. 725-735.

was rather a naive promise since France was as sensitive to visits of British officials to Berlin as much as to naval or political understandings between Britain and Germany, but the point illustrates the irony of the British position vis-à-vis France and Germany.

At any rate, Grey's peroration was lauded by his closest colleagues. Asquith described it as a "great performance."[1] Haldane told his mdher that Grey had made a "great speech" and that none of them "could make it so well."[2]

Of the issues he spoke about, his reference to German expansion drew the most discussion in the press as well as among private and public figures which in turn became part of a scheme for a détente, and this factor was illustrated in the subsequent debate on Grey's policy statement. The Conservative-Unionist front bench supported Grey's defence of his policy, indeed there was less criticism from the opposition than from his own back benchers who, together with the Labour members, were his most bitter critics.

Bonar Law, the newly elected leader of the Opposition, endorsed Grey's belief in the continuation of foreign policy and he agreed with him that it was not Britain's desire to enlarge her empire but to build it up. Ramsay MacDonald, the Labour Party Leader, did not believe in the continuity of foreign policy and he was not impressed by Grey's speech. Grey's reference to Germany, "while cordial, was not enthusiastic-ally/

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1. Quoted in Robbins, Sir Edward Grey, p. 253.

2. (Haldane Papers) 5986 Letters to his mother, Nov. 27 and 28, 1911. Lord Esher commented, "Edward Grey made one proud of the House of Commons and of one's country and of him." Esher, Journals and Letters III, p. 75.

enthusiastically cordial," charged MacDonald. Dillon, the Irish Nationalist, spoke in the same vein but he concentrated on Grey's Persian policy and he was almost alone in condemning the cavalier way the fate of the Moroccan people had been treated. He roundly condemned secret diplomacy and the baneful influence of the permanent staff in the Foreign Office over policy.[1] Noel Buxton initiated the subsequent trend of the debate of cutting out general platitudes of foreign policy and restricting the debate on specific issues of Anglo-German relations. He was concerned that not less than four crises of recent times had affected Anglo-German relations. It was flattering to note that men like the German Chancellor and Dr. Schiemann (a writer of Kreuz-Zeitung, normally regarded as violently Anglophobe) had expressed a desire for better relations. He dealt at great length on his favourite theme, the need for better relations and how to go about it.[2] Is it a question of German colonies, of coaling stations or is there a certain demand for colonial expansion in Germany? Is it a question of continental prestige? He came up with the answer that he believed that the real trouble on both sides was "a sense of profound distrust" which might be remedied by the Foreign Office asking experts like Lascelles, ex-British Ambassador, to give their views on Anglo-German relationship and that exchange visits must be encouraged. Grey's reference to German expansion was not enough. A recognition of German aspirations and an undertaking that Britain would not act the/

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1. Parliamentary Debates, Vol. XXXII Nov. 27-Dec. 16, 1911.
2. Ibidem; Conwell-Evans, op. cit. p,67ff.

the dog-in-the-manger could go a long way. Finally, he reiterated his view that the entente with France, which was regarded in Germany as a symbol of aggression should not be an obstacle to Anglo-German understanding.

James Hope (Conservative M.P. for Sheffield Central) endorsed Buxton's arguments and he emphasised the need for dialogue between the two powers. There was room for the natural claim of extension of Germany that would not be inconsistent with the claims of Britain or her allies. Sir H. Norman, (Liberal M.P. for Blackburn) felt that Germany had not been treated fairly as far as colonial possessions were concerned. Since 1870, victorious and powerful, she had never fired a shot in anger, but a defeated France, whose colonial policy was prejudicial to Britain, had very large territories. To complain about the German Navy was unbecoming of the British, what they should do was to have the strongest Navy (which was a necessity for her) and leave the German Navy alone. He suggested that Germany should be asked to state what she wanted and where Britain stood in the way - what precisely "is the place in the sun from which she is excluded."[1] Other speakers, A. Bigland (Conservative M.P. for Birkenhead) and J. King (Liberal M.P. for North Somerset) followed the previous two speakers in urging the government to show more accommodation to Germany. The latter suggested an arrangement which was similar to the one later adopted/

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1. Parliamentary Debates Vol. XXXII Nov. 27 - Dec. 16, 1911.

adopted by the government. He asked, "Could we not intimate to Germany that proposals for purchase or exchange of territory might be entertained? 'Suppose the purchase of any territory was contemplated, if it was accompanied by a mutual understanding about armaments, it would be a very useful investment for Germany to pay two or three millions a year, knowing that by doing so it would secure good feeling and, therefore, freedom from war and from anxiety about increasing naval expenditure." He denounced British policy of preventing as far as possible the acquisition of new coaling stations by Germany as wrong. At any rate, the opposite policy ought to be seriously considered.[1] J.L. Baird, Tory M.P. for Rugby and Parliamentary PRIVATE Secretary to Bonar Law was, however, not enthusiastic for a rapprochement. He was not against improving relations with Germany, but he did not think the moment opportune, he claimed.[2]

The rest of the speakers went over the same ground or discussed the naval issue, which will be referred to in another Chapter, in the subsequent days. In the House of Lords, the most remarkable incident was a bitter attack by Lord Courtney on Grey's partisan support for French policy during Agadir and the stout defence put up on his behalf by Morley, who, however, did not agree with all the lines of Grey's policy.[3]

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1. Ibidem. J. King, M.P.(N. Somerset 1910-1918) was interested in foreign policy and he wrote various pamphlets on politics and foreign policy.
2. Baird appeared to have been expressing the views of a section of the Conservative party, see A. Chamberlain, op. cit. p. 412.
3. Gooch, Courtney, p. 510ff; Fitzroy, Memoirs, p. 471. Courtney accepted the Presidentship of the Foreign Policy Committee founded by L. T. Hobhouse in April, 1912. See A.J.P. Taylor, The Trouble Makers, pp. 118-9 and Contemporary Review (April issue, 1912) Vol. 101 for the Manifesto of the Committee. For Morley's views on foreign policy see D.A. Hamer, John Morley: Liberal Intellectual in Politics, Oxford (1968) p. 311ff cf. Monger, The End of Isolation, p. 286ff.

On the whole, though the allegations were sharp and the criticisms bitter, no one advocated surrendering the entente; it was, however, deemed desirable that an attempt should be made for an understanding. One consideration which emerged from the discussion was the idea that a colonial entente could help pave the way to an understanding. How far the government's decision to consider a colonial détente was influenced by the debate could not be easily determined. One need only point out that during the Agadir crisis, some of the Cabinet Ministers did begin to think about such an arrangement. The press reception of Grey's policy statement was, however, mixed. The Times denied that Britain had been blocking Germany's place in the sun. On the contrary Britain had shown marked consideration to her in 1886, 1890 and 1898. In fact, Anglo-German diplomacy had been so successful in this respect that the paper challenged "those who talk of the necessity of some fresh arrangement with Germany to point to any part of the globe where there is at present any concrete question at issue between this country and Germany which would afford matter for negotiation."[1] The Navy League commended Grey's speech but it insisted on two keels to one in Dreadnought ships against the strongest European Power.[2] A. J. Spender's Westminster Gazette mildly criticised Grey for the absence of regular intercourse between the Foreign Office and parliament.[3] But it re-emphasised the view that Lloyd George's speech was justified, while Grey's/

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1. The Times, Dec. 5, 1911. In any case, The Times was opposed to German expansion in Africa. History of The Times, p. 701; Esher, Journals and Letters, p. 80.

2. Reported in The Times, Nov. 28, 1911.

3. Westminster Gazette, Nov. 28, 1911.

Grey's speech struck the right note. The Manchester Guardian disagreed. It was uncompromisingly critical of Grey's attitude in the crisis and it regarded Grey's statement as disappointingly less friendly compared to Bethmann's offer of a clean slate.[1]

On the continent, the Parisian Newspapers welcomed Grey's statement. Gaston Calmette's Figaro praised it as "generous towards Germany, and affectionate towards France, English exclusively English, nobly English and violently English." Le Temps denied that Britain had blocked German expansion. On the whole, the French press expressed a desire to strengthen the entente.[2]

The German Newspapers reacted from two positions; those who were critical both of German policy in Morocco and British policy and those who accepted Grey's statement with reserve or sceptism or both. The Lokalanzeiger, a semi-official paper, while praising the efforts of the German government denounced British interference in no uncertain terms. The Berliner Tageblatt, a much more independent paper, was critical both of Kiderlen and Grey. It alleged that what Grey meant by not standing in the way of German expansion was to accommodate Germany, "not on the coast of Africa where, as The Times had pointed out any change of ownership would touch the life interests of Great Britain; No, not on the coast, but in the heart of Africa, that is to say in that region of swamps where we have eventually found our compensation." With telling sarcasm/

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1. Manchester Guardian, Nov 28, 1911.
2. FO371/1169/47683 Bertie to Grey, Nov. 28, 1911 transmitting French press comments. See also The Times, Nov. 29th and 30th, 1911.

sarcasm it greeted Grey's speech on November 29,[1] declaring that this speech had indicated that Britain claimed the right to be a deciding voice in the disposal of every corner in the world. Other papers such as the Frankfurter Zeitung, Hamburgher Nachrichten and Borsner Courier were either sceptical or violently hostile. The Post and the Kolnische Zeitung saw some good points in the speech, but the latter did not think it was wise to hasten the improvement of good relations. The general impression, noted a German writer, was that Britain had assumed for itself the role of arbiter mundi and "that not a sparrow can fall to the ground anywhere on the globe but some British interest is affected and Great Britain must have her say in the matter."[2]

The subject of colonial understanding was taken up by publicists and pamphleteers. Not unnaturally minor European powers like Belgium, Portugal and Spain were alarmed at this development since much of the discussion on territorial rearrangement centred on the African possessions of these powers. Anxious enquiries were made about the meaning of Grey's statement.[3] When Caillaux declared at Calais that one of the considerations which influenced him in the recent Franco-German negotiations was his belief that adjustments could still be made in Africa to the profit of European powers, Le Temps hastened to assure its readers that the French Premier's statement was in reference to territorial discussions/

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1. FO371/1169/47169 Goschen to Grey, Nov. 24, 1911 transmitting German press comments; FO371/1169/47977 Goschen to Grey, Nov. 29, 1911.
2. Ibidem.
3. FO367/238/48922 Hardinge to Grey, Nov. 27(?) 1911 (tel.) reporting disquiet of Portuguese Minister as a result of Grey's speech; FO367/237/49719 Hardinge to Grey, Dec. 8, 1911 enclosing Saculo article. The paper asked: "Are our colonies in danger?"; D.D.F. 3rd Series, Vol. 1 No. 334 St. René Taillandier to de Selves Dec. 11, 1911 reporting disquiet over Portugal over Caillaux's speech.

discussions between Britain and France.[1] De Selves endeavoured to calm the fears of the Belgian government. The French Minister in Belgium, M. Klobukowski, was instructed to tell M. Davignon that there had been no secret agreement between France and Germany on the Belgian Congo. The Belgians were not convinced; indeed, a Belgian newspaper interpreted the transfer of Sir Arthur Hardinge from Brussels to Lisbon as a move to facilitate the eventual partition of Belgian and Portuguese Africa.[2] In short the discussion which followed Grey's statement raised the issue of a possible repartition of Africa. Though it was argued that it was not in Africa "que se pourraient jouer nos destinées, ni memé, comme l'évenément actuél le prouve, les destinées do nos colonies, c'est en Europe, sur le vieux theâtre,[3] Nevertheless, in the search for a basis for an understanding Africa became important in European diplomacy. The frequent display of maps and references to the meagreness of German territories during the Agadir crisis by Ministers in the Liberal government would suggest that they regarded Africa as a profitable place where German energies could be diverted. Such a diversion would be an advantage to European politics; engrossed in Africa she might have less energy to compete with Britain in a naval race or aspire to European hegemony. It was a naive assumption, nonetheless such a consideration was not absent in the thoughts of policy makers.

Ironically/

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1. See quotation above p. 310 and Van Zuylen, p. 419; q.v. Williquet, Le Congo Belge, p. 308.
2. Van Zuylen, p. 419ff; F0367/237/45800 extracts from Newspapers. The Globe quoting, Bien Public, Nov. 14, 1911.
3. F0371/1170/50645 Bertie to Grey, Dec. 17, 1911 encl. excerpts of speech made by M. Paul Deschanel, President of the Commission of Foreign Affairs, in the French Chamber.

Ironically, however, German expansion in Africa was not exactly welcome to the Foreign Office Staff and some British politicians.[1] Not only would the strengthening of German power in Africa be prejudicial to British interests with reference to the Cape to Cairo ideal and strategic harbours, but also in a wider context the policy of colonial appeasement would encourage Germany to demand more concessions;for German policy was to fulfil "many ambitions, territorial, idealistic and other, through the acquisition of a general ascendancy in Europe."[2] Furthermore, a policy of appeasement would reduce the confidence of Britain's friends. In other words a repartition of Africa was not without some diplomatic and political implications. The next two chapters will discuss the suggestions for territorial arrangements as one way towards a détente and the reaction of the British government.

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1. (Cromer Papers) FO633 Lord Curzon to Lord Cromer, Nov. 8, 1912; Chamberlain, op. cit. p. 412. Bertie made representations to the French Foreign Minister about an alleged lease of Djibouti to a German Company for use as a coaling depot. (Bertie Papers) FO800/160 Bertie to Nicolson, Feb. 23, 1911 cf. Pich, op. cit. p. 98; B.D.X (II) No. 299 Harcourt to Grey, May 26, 1912. Minute by Crowe.

2. B.D. VII Appendix III pp. 821-826. Memo by Sir E. Crowe respecting the Franco-German negotiations, January 14, 1912.

CHAPTER IV

Suggestions for a rearrangement of Africa, and an Anglo-German Colonial d'etente.

"The consequences of such a foreign crisis do not end with it. They seem to end: but they go underneath and reappear later on."

(Grey, Twenty-Five Years I, p. 241)

"We must strike while the iron is hot. Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey should be given an immediate opportunity to prove their words that Britain does not oppose Germany's expansion. Perhaps it may eventually be possible to induce England to cede Rhodesia, and France the remainder of the mutilated Congo. If we in the meantime secure the Portuguese possessions, a mighty German Empire in Central Africa would be assured."

(Die Post, Dec. 25, 1911 F0367/283; Braganca-Cunha, Revolutionary Portugal, p. 188)

"My dream has always been a great rearrangement of the African chequer board ..."

(See Loe Strachey to Lord Cromer, Sept. 27, 1912. FO 633/21 Cromer Papers)

Resentment against Britain for supporting France during the Agadir crisis moved Von Tirpitz, the German Imperial Navy Minister, to advocate a new Naval Bill to improve "our (German fleet) readiness for war."[1]

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1. Alfred Von Tirpitz, My Memoirs, p. 211ff. See also Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, p.314ff; Marder, From Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, p. 275ff; J.C.G. Röhl, "Müller and the approach of War," The Historical Journal, Vol XII No. 4 1969, pp. 655-657.

This Bill, formulated early in August 1911, provided for the creation of a third squadron to be placed on a permanent war footing. Rumours about this Bill late in 1911 roused fears in Britain that a new era of an Anglo-German rivalry, with all its consequent harmful effects on international relations, was about to begin.

Anticipating this, Ramsay MacDonald warned those parliamentarians, mostly Conservatives, who were prepared to accept the challenge, that, "if we cannot improve the understanding with Germany we have to go on staggering and tottering under an ever increasing burden of armaments." "There is a desire," he went on, "at the present in England - an overwhelming desire - that the Foreign Offices of England and Berlin should come to an understanding as to the necessity of the piling up of these armaments."[1]

The Labour leader's warning reflected the growing concern about Anglo-German relations, and the prospect of an intensified naval race became one more reason for advocating a dialogue with Berlin. Many active and more or less influential people began to express a strong desire for action to improve Anglo-German relations; among these were capitalists, radicals, Quakers, an Ex-Ambassador and some newspaper editors - in short, all those who Nicolson dubbed "fadists" and "pacifists" and who Crowe more picturesquely described as "a confraternity of international busybodies."[2]

As the list suggests those "busybodies" were a heterogeneous lot,

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1. Ibidem; Parliamentary Debates, Vol. XXXII, Nov. 27-Dec. 16. 1911; E.D. Morel, "The true story of the Morocco negotiations," The Nineteenth Century and After, Vol. LXXXI No. 420, (Feb. 1912) pp. 233-251. See also B.D. VI Nos. 470 and 476 for information on German Naval plans forwarded by the Naval Attache in Berlin.

2. Connell-Evans, op. cit. p. 71; (Crowe Papers) FO800/243 Crowe to Sir Charles Dilke, Oct. 15, 1907.

and they had diverse views on how to improve relations with Germany. Although they were aware of each other's existence, they do not seem to have acted together. While some, because they distrusted French policy, urged the Foreign Office to be frank with Berlin, leaving all questions of arms aside, others wanted a Naval agreement either to save funds for more useful social purposes, or to avoid conflict with Germany. For the sake of such an agreement they were prepared to offer colonial concessions to Germany.[1]

Another distinct view was that Germany had a grievance, a colonial one, and that probably her insistence on having a large Navy was a symptom. She ought to be appeased with economic and territorial concessions in Africa.[2]

Of course, the attitudes of those who advocated colonial concessions were not always clear cut. There were those who were distrustful of or antagonistic to Germany and others who, while they condemned certain aspects of her policy felt she was a better colonial partner than France. Yet they all conceded that a place in the sun could be found for her in Africa, even if it was "to keep her quiet". A few, such as Sir Harry Johnston, believed that Africa could be readjusted on lines in which the just claims of the Great Powers could be satisfied.[3]

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1. See speeches by Sir Henry Norman, Liberal M.P. (Blackburn); Sir Henry Dalziel, Liberal M.P. (Kircaldy); Keir Hardie, Labour M.P. (Merthyr Tywfil, Wales), Parliamentary Debates, XXXII Nov. 27-Dec. 26, 1911; cf. Stephen Koss, Sir John Brunner: Radical Plutocrat, 1842-1919, C.U.P. (1970), Chpts. X and XI; Trevor Wilson, C.P. Scott, pp. 38-40.

2. Conwell-Evans, op. cit. pp. 72-77; Noel Buxton, "England and Germany", Contemporary Review, Vol. 100 (Nov. 1911), pp. 605-617; letter to the Editor, The Times, Dec. 9, 1911; E.D. Morel, op. cit. passim; letter to the Editor of The Spectator, January 6, 1912.

3. See (Cromer Papers) FO633/21 Lee Strachey to Cromer, July 17, 1912, and also pp.

It is impossible to say precisely how far government was directly influenced by the suggestions and opinions expressed by this peace lobby, but the proposals which the Cabinet eventually put to Berlin broadly reflected many of the ideas these "pro-Germans" discussed.

Criticisms against Grey's handling of British foreign policy continued unabated after his November statement. To the intense disgust and annoyance of the Foreign Office, several public men, including religious leaders began to express their desire for a closer understanding with Germany. (In one instance Nicolson had to dissuade the Archbishop of Canterbury from making friendly pronouncements on Anglo-German relations lest he gave the impression that Britain was "offering an olive branch for her misdeeds").[1] Strong resolutions were passed by City Corporations in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Bradford in favour of "better official relations between this country and Germany." The Anglo-German Friendship Society, formed in May 1911, and which had amongst its members prominent liberals like Lord Courtney, Lord Averbury and Lord Lonsdale and Noel Buxton, held regular meetings urging the government to take steps to improve relations.[2] The Society's Chairman, Sir Frank Lascelles, former Ambassador in Berlin, implored his brethren to show understanding and patience towards Germany.

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1. (Grey Papers) FO800/93 Nicolson to Grey, Jan. 20, 1912; A.J.P. Taylor The Trouble Makers, p. 118ff; John A. Murray, "Foreign Policy debated: Sir Edward Grey and his Critics, 1911-1912", Wallace and Askew, Power, Public Opinion and Diplomacy, p. 161ff; Howard S. Weinroth, "The British Radicals and the Balance of Power, 1902-1914; The Historical Journal (1970), pp. 653-682.

2. FO371/1372/4557 Lord Provost (Glasgow) to Grey, Jan. 30, 1912; F.O. to Lord Provost, Feb. 3, 1912; FO371/1372/4736 Lord Provost (Edinburgh) to F.O, Jan. 26, 1912; FO371/1372/4973 Town Clerk (Bradford Town) to Foreign Secretary, Feb. 1, 1912; Koss' John Brunner, pp. 240-250. See The Spectator, Feb. 10 and 17, 1912 for its critical comments on the activities of the Anglo-German Friendship Society. For report of a meeting by the National Peace Council in Nov. 1911, which was attended by several M.Ps. including Noel Buxton, Lord Courtney and Gordon Harvey, and the Bishop of Hereford, etc. to determine the formation of a national movement in favour of an Anglo-German understanding, see the Daily Chronicle of Nov. 4, 1911.

As regards the Navy issue, he could not offer any positive suggestion. He held the opinion that this was a difficult problem to solve because there was always the danger of each power thinking that the other was directing its affairs.[1] J.A. Spender also expressed sympathy for the movement for a rapprochement,and for a generous attitude to German colonial expansion, but he was sceptical about the efficacy of a Naval understanding. The Germans, he argued in a series of leaders, could not change their views about their Navy, and the British could or would not change theirs.[2]

Perhaps this fatalistic attitude was one reason why Britain and Germany found it difficult in the long run to agree on the Navy issue. And as this discussion will later make clear, as the prospect of a Naval agreement dwindled, Britain sought a less direct way of easing tension in the form of a colonial agreement.[3]

There were men, however, who, despite discouraging experiences in their fight for a Naval agreement in previous years, were willing to make one more effort to effect an understanding. Prominent amongst these were Sir John Brunner, non-conformist Industrial Magnate of Swiss extraction and Liberal M.P. (1886-1910); Francis William Fox, a quixotic Quaker engineer, philanthropist and co-founder of the Anglo-German Friendship Committee; Sir Ernest Cassel, a financial magnate of German extraction, friend of Edward VII and a man with close connections in governing circles;

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1. Reported in the Manchester Guardian, Feb. 29, 1912. See also (C.P.Scott Papers) Diary, Nov. 7, 1911; Sir F. Lascelles, "Thoughts on the Anglo-German Problem", Contemporary Review, Vol. 101, (Jan. to June, 1912)pp. 1

2. Westminster Gazette, leader articles, Feb. 10 and 12, 1912; J.A. Spender, Life, Politics and Journalism, London (1927) p. 205ff.

3. After the Political/Naval talks had failed in March, 1912, Grey and his staff were unwilling to reopen the naval talks on the grounds that relations would worsen, since there was little hope of an agreement being reached. R.Sontag, "British Foreign Policy, 1892-1912", The Journal of Modern History, Vol. II, (1,30) pp. 542-553; B.D. X(11) Nos. 455 and 457.

and Albert Ballin, Lord of the Shipping Empire of HAPAG (Hamburg-America Line) and the Kaiser's friend.[1] Because of their connections with Germany the activities of these men and their motives were suspect, at least, to the Foreign Office.

Nicolson was contemptuous of, and hostile to financiers like Cassel. And, indeed, the attitude of the Foreign Office generally to outsiders was one of disdain. Crowe, in a moment of exasperation, annoyed at Fox, who arrogated to himself the role of a go-between of the British and German governments, commented:[2]

> "I do not understand in virtue of what position Mr. Fox comes forward as mentor of the Secretary of State. He is not, as far as I know, either an M.P. or leader of thought on controversial questions, or an authority on Germany. He is clearly being used by that part of the organisation of the German Foreign Office which exists for the purpose of disseminating in England an entirely erroneous view of Anglo-German relations and of influencing English political opinion in favour of this country making gratuitous concessions to Germany."

Brunner was constantly attacked by the Tory right and pilloried as a traitor by Leo Maxse, Editor of the rabidly partisan National Review.[3]

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1. The Life and Works of John Brunner can be read in Stephen Koss, John Brunner. A biography of Fox has been written by J.E. C. de Montmorency, Francis William Fox: a biography (1923), though there are interesting references about him in most modern works. There are many valuable accounts of Ballin's activities, but the following deal thoroughly with his efforts at improving Anglo-German relations: Eduard Rosenbaum, "Albert Ballin: A note on the Style of his Economic and Political activities", Leo Beck Institute of Jews from Germany, Year Book III (1953), pp. 257-199, and "A postscript to the Essay on Albert Ballin", Ibidem, Book IV (1959), pp. 267-270; Lamar Cecil, Albert Ballin (1967) References on Cassel can be found in Studies on Ballin.

2. (Grey Papers) FO800/93 Nicolson to Grey, Feb. 16, 1912; (Grey Papers) FO800/110 Mrs. Florence Phillips to Grey, Nov. 20, 1911; Grey to Mrs. Phillips, Nov. 21, 1911; Mrs. Phillips to Grey, Nov. 24, 1911; Grey to Mrs. Phillips, Nov. 28, 1911; FO371/1372 Fox to Grey, Jan. 19, 1912. Minute by Crowe.

3. Koss, John Brunner, p. 238.

Although some of the suspicions and criticisms were understandable, given the situation of Anglo-German relations, they were, over censorious and unge erous. They overlooked the noble ideals of these men, who were not stoolpigeons for Germany. Brunner was disturbed by the prospect of war, the rising costs of the Navy, the diversion of much needed funds for social purposes to the building of dreadnoughts and concerned about the apparent betrayal of liberal principles by the government;[1] Fox was inspired by no less an ideal than to make the world a better place;[2] and Ballin, who had once been a supporter of Tirpitz, was worried over the effect Anglo-German rivalry was having on business and on the relations of the two countries. He conceded that Naval supremacy was a necessity for Britain and he believed Germany had enough ships to protect her interests; both powers could reach a satisfactory agreement if they could discuss their differences in a friendly manner. For this reason he had played a conspicuous role in the peace moves of 1908-1909, during which period he met Cassel, a German Jew like himself.[3] Fox and Brunner also had participated in the movement for the reduction of armaments in this period.

Brunner, a disciple of Gladstone, had long held strong views on naval expenditure. He believed that if better relations could be established with Germany there would be less need to increase the naval estimates. A naval understanding, including an agreement on the protection of private commerce in war could be reached. The money thus saved on the Navy would be used for social services.[4]

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1. Ibidem, pp. 214-235.
2. Montmorency, William Fox, passim.
3. Lamar Cecil, Albert Ballin, p. 144ff; Rosenbaum, "Albert Ballin", Leo Beck Institute, Year Book III, p. 279ff.
4. The valuable help which Dr. Koss's work on Brunner rendered in this section is hereby acknowledged. See Koss, op. cit. passim, especially p. 240ff.

When he retired from parliament his colleagues showed their appreciation of his worth by electing him President of the National Liberal Federation - the Liberal Caucus - in November, 1911. From this position of influence and prestige he endeavoured to pressurize the government into modifying its naval policy and its attitude to Germany. He was assisted and encouraged by H.W. Massingham, Editor of the Nation, C.P. Scott, and F.W. Hirst, Editor of the Economist. Apart from their concern about the rising costs of the Navy programme, these influential liberals (who were certainly no soft-headed pro-German sentimentalists) were also exercised by the apparent disposition of the government to get embroiled in a "continental squabble" by its close attachment to France. What they wanted was a free hand for Britain to decide her future which was consonant with British interests and to live in peace with France and Germany.[1] In other words, a plea for a return to the policy of isolation. Whether such a policy would have been practical after Britain, through its ententes with France and Russia, had become part of the continental system, was perhaps one of the ironies of Britain's situation, and one reason why Scott and Hirst could not hope to change the general lines of Grey's foreign policy.

Working through the component organisations of the National Liberal Federation and even through some members of the Cabinet, such as Harcourt, Morley and Loreburn, they strove to press their views on the government. In his presidential address Brunner moved a resolution of thanks to the Kaiser for using "his influence in the direction of peace" (during the Agadir crisis).

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1. Hirst himself pointed out during the height of the Agadir crisis (using almost exactly the same words Neville Chamberlain was to choose in 1938 with reference to Czechoslovakia) that "until we hear a great deal more we are not entitled to assume that Mr. L (Lloyd) G (George) or any other responsible person is thinking of asking millions of his innocent fellow countrymen to give up their lives and fortunes for a continental squabble about which they know nothing and care less"; quoted in Manchester Guardian, July 24, 1911.

The Manchester Liberal Federation sent a memorandum to Grey expressing "deep concern ... at the recent developments of the foreign policy of the Government."[1] Hirst enjoined the other cities to follow suit. On January 17, 1912, the National Executive of the N.L.F."carried with perfect unanimity " a resolution moved by Brunner for the establishment of a friendly understanding with Germany. Nine days later the Labour Party, on whose votes the government often depended, publicly declared for friendship with Berlin. In parliament both liberal and labour M.P.s stepped up their criticisms of Grey's policy, especially his attitude on the Persian question. He was not only a Germanophobe, he also appeared to be a willing tool of Russian aggression on Persia. The radical cry "Grey-must-go" became distressingly strident.[2]

While Brunner and other liberals pressed His Majesty's Government to establish good relations with Germany, Noel Buxton and several prominent men concentrated on the colonial issue. It was argued that colonial agreement was one way to prove to Germany that Britain did not begrudge her a place in the sun. Buxton's favourite theme was that it was wrong to prevent the formation of German colonies where they did not "threaten us strategically." He even suggested that British obstruction of German colonial expansion, for example, in Morocco, was partly responsible for the demand for a larger Navy. Unless Britain was prepared "to meet the just claims of Germany in regard to colonial territory," there was every possibility that relations would continue to worsen.

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1. J.L. Hammond, C.P. Scott, pp. 164-165.

2. Robbins, p. 253. The Russian Ambassador, worried over radical criticism of Grey's attitude to Russian action in Persia, wrote anxious letters home, urging the government to restrain itself; otherwise Grey might be forced to resign if public opinion a out Russia beceme very bitter. The Entente with Russia might even be destroydd, and the gainer would be Germany. The letters of Count Beckendorff are printed in B. de Siebert and George Abel Schreiner (Ed.), Entente Diplomacy and the World, (1921) Nos. 298, 711 and 712.

"The Colonial question, both strategic and economic, must be faced," he said in January, 1912. On the other hand, he admitted that there might be difficulties in accommodating Germany, e.g. such factors as the natural envy of a new arrival, considerations of strategy and trade. Moreover, Britain had no territory which she could give her, nor did France have any to part with. What he suggested was that Germany must be encouraged to expand in Asia Minor, Turkey and areas which could be purchased. Like another liberal parliamenterian, Sir Henry Norman, who also advocated colonial concessions to Germany, Buxton believed that Britain should have a safe margin of naval superiority over Germany.[1] This is one interesting factor which was common to all those who advocated a détente with Germany; not one suggested giving up the British claim to Naval supremacy. What they objected to was the anti-German policy which might be behind it. Perhaps this was one reason why, although it might feel constrained to conciliate liberal opinion, the government never really felt threatened by the agitation during 1911-1912.

In the press, probably stimulated by Die Post's suggestion and Grey's House of Commons statement on German expansion, several papers discussed exhaustively the idea of a colonial entente. The Foreign Office wassufficiently intrigued to take press cuttings of these suggestions, though it did not often approve of them.[2]

The Saturday Review of January 20, 1912, stated that an opportunity of showing Germany that Britain was not greedy and that she was ready to accommodate her would come "when Portugal, in dire need of finance, will have to give up its colonies."

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1. See note 2, p. 360.

2. See p. 348 above, and p. 358 ; Daily Mail, January 22, 1912.

Recalling that Grey's statement suggested this, the paper went on to remap Africa as it saw fit. Beira and Delagoa Bay went to Britain, while Germany acquired Angola and the Cape Verde Islands and the Azores for coaling stations. At the same time it sternly warned Germany that her sabre rattling did not impress Britain.[1] Though The Times endeavoured to rebut these speculations, by asserting that Portugal had no intention of disposing of its colonies, this did not stop other papers from expressing their views on the colonial question.[2] The Eye Witness claimed that the proposal for German acquisition of the "colonies under Portugal was advancing and that it had many allies in England." "Expansion confined to the tropics is not a thing that Great Britain need fear on the part of such a rival," went on the paper, "but care must be taken" that it did not acquire some "natural naval base."[3]

Papers like the Eye Witness were less well known, but other papers such as the Pall Mall Gazette and the Observer gave prominence to these discussions. Well respected and influential papers like the liberal-oriented Westminster Gazette and Manchester Guardian also opened their pages to the discussion of this subject. Indeed, in a vague way the editors of the two papers expressed themselves in favour of German colonial expansion.[4]

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1. Saturday Review, January 20, 1912 press cutting filed in FO367/284.

2. The Times, January 23, 1912; also press cutting filed in FO367/284/3256; Press clippings from other papers, the Pall Mall Gazette, The Observer and the Morning Post, January 12 and 20, 1912 are filed in FO367/284. At a much later date several newspapers both British and Foreign, published interesting articles on the Colonial deal, for example, Le Temps, Sept. 9 1913; the Daily Telegraph, Nov. 10, 1913; filed in FO367/327/41471 and FO367/330/50864 respectively. The Daily Telegraph account of the Anglo-German colonial talks was almost accurate. Langley noted: "...the D(aily) T(elegraph) knows a great deal, and must have had access to very secret documents, or been primed by someone who knows the subject thoroughly." Grey minuted: "The Daily Telegraph is, I believe, closely in touch with German sources," and "with the German Embassy here," added Crowe.

3. Filed in FO367/284/2983.

4. See the Manchester Guardian and the Westminster Gazette for Dec. 1, 1911; January 3 and 24, 1912 and Dec. 4-20, 1911 respectively.

The Editor of The Spectator, Loe Strachey, about whom something has been said in another section, is of some interest in this period because he provides a good example of the ambiguous motives which inspired those who suggested a colonial agreement.[1] Politically, The Spectator supported a big Navy and the plea for the transformation of the entente with France into an alliance. Strachey distrusted German policy and was even hostile to that power, and though he supported Grey's foreign policy, he would have wished for a stronger and firmer line. (In his autobiography he claimed that he detested the liberal foreign policy for its pusillanimity.)[2]

As we have seen in another section The Spectator was a consistent opponent of Portuguese slavery and the renewal of the Anglo-Portuguese alliance. On the issue of German acquisition of the Portuguese colonies, the journal maintained an equivocal stand. The division of these colonies "would be greatly to the benefit of the world" but it would not advocate the appropriation of the colonies, argued an editorial note of August 24, 1912.[3]

Yet in private letters to Cromer, the ex pro-Consul of Egypt, Strachey confided that[4] "the work of fighting Portuguese slavery has brought me into some curious situations. I have lately found myself in the position of a friend of Germany arguing on her side with Quaker, Non-Conformists and Radical Philanthropists."

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1. See p. 360

2. John St. Loe Strachey, The Adventure of Living: a subjective autobiography, (1922), p. 454.

3. The Spectator, leading article, Jan. 27, 1912, "Germany and the African Colonies of Portugal." Cf The Spectator, Aug. 24, 1912 (Letter to the Editor by David Alex. Wilson).

4. (Cromer Papers) FO633/21 Loe Strachey to Lord Cromer, July 15, 1912.

He felt that in the last resort the Germans might be given the slave ridden colonies of Portugal. They would make better colonisers than the Portuguese. Strachey's disgust with Portuguese maladministration and slavery and his passion for "sound and sane imperialism" was, therefore, combined with a desire to accommodate Germany in Africa - an objective which was not motiviated by purely altruistic ideals as his next letter to Cromer shows:[1]

"I wish we could get the Germans into the Congo, for the harder the job, the more likely it would be to keep them quiet ... My dream has always been a great re-arrangement of the African chequer board. I s hould like it to be brought about by the forfeiture of both the Belgian Congo and the whole of the Portuguese territories. With these vast stretches of land to work upon I think a rearrangement of the possessions of Germany, Britain and France might be made which would be very much to the advantage of the natives and of the world at large. But I realise that my dream is not likely to be fulfilled. I think you might have carried it out if you had been Foreign Minister, but I doubt very much if there is anybody now in office, or likely to be in office, who could."

Strachey was a friend of Grey, but I could find no evidence that he communicated these ideas to the Foreign Secretary. If he did discuss them with Grey, he must have failed to receive encouragement.

But neither Cromer nor Lord Curzon, both of whom were at one time or another considered as Foreign Secretary, would have helped Strachey anyway. For political reasons, Cromer deprecated the suggestion of partitioning the Congo. What he feared was that this might have unfortunate repercussions on Anglo-French relations.

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1. (Cromer Papers) FO633/21 Lee Strachey to Lord Cromer, Sept. 12, 1912. Also quoted in Roger Louis "Great Britain and German Expansion, 1884-1919" in P. Gifford and Wm. R. Louis, Britain and Germany in Africa, p. 36.

He was less definite on the colonies of England's ally, Portugal.[1] And Curzon wrote to Cromer that he earnestly hoped that "even to satisfy the beaux yeux of Germany we shall not, as Mr. Harris suggests, assist her to the entire Congo basin."[2]

The Rev. J.H. Harris, motiviated by his admiration of Germany's colonial administration and a curious blend of philanthropism and paternalism suggested that Germany should purchase part of the Belgian Congo, whose administration Belgium was unable to take up. He felt convinced that Germany might be able to put it to a better use. He also felt that France could cede part of her Congo territory to Germany for a quid pro quo, namely the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine to her.[3] Sir Harry Johnston endorsed this view. And he further suggested in a couple of articles that Portugal could do well to cede Portuguese Guinea to France, sell Northern Mozambique to Germany and Southern Mozambique to Britain. She could keep the rest of her colonies for herself, but she must end slavery and she should give self-government to Angola. Morel, another radical critic of Grey, also advocated the appropriation of part of the Congo by Germany as a solution to the Congo problem.[4]

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1. Cromer noted, in the introduction to J.H. Harris, Dawn in Darkest Africa, (~~1969~~) New Impression, that changes in the Congo "must be of such a nature as will not in any degree impair the very friendly relations which now fortunately exist between our own country and France. The wellbeing of the Congo State, however deserving of consideration, must be rated second in importance to the steadfast maintenance of an arrangement fraught with the utmost benefit not merely to France and England, but to the world in general."

2. (Cromer Papers) FO633/21 Lord Curzon to Cromer, Nov. 8 1912; See W.R. Louis, Great Britian and Germany's Lost Colonies, (1967) p. 22 for Curzon's objections to colonial concession to Germany.

3. J.H. Harris, op. cit. pp. 293-304; R. Louis, "Britain and Germany" in Gifford and Louis, op. cit. p. 38.

4. Sir Harry Johnston, "The Aftermath of Agadir: suggestions for a settlement of territorial ambitions," The Nineteenth Century and After, Vol. LXXI (Jan. - June, 1912) pp. 191-203; "A wise book on West Central Africa," Review article in Contemporary Review, Vol. 102 (Dec. 1912) pp. 807-814; R. Louis, "Britain and German expansions," op. cit., p. 35; R. Louis and J. Stengers, E.D. Morel's History of the Reform Movement, pp. 201-203.

5. Introduction

Curious as this paper partitioning of other powers' possessions might seem, all these proposals were designed to find a way in which Germany's grievances could be satisfied. Of course, Johnston was always indulging himself in redrawing frontiers in Africa. In the middle of the scramble,[1] his map showing spheres of influence of the Great Powers brought him to the attention of Salisbury. But his latest indulgence was geared towards securing p eace. Indeed, before 1911 he had struck up an acquaintanceship with Kühlmann and Baron von Speck von Sternburg, German Ambassador in Washington, and he used to discuss German colonial expansion with them. His views impressed them favourably and he was invited to give an address to the German Colonial Society in London in 1909. In 1910 and 1911 he was asked by the King of Württemberg to visit Stuttgart and other places in Germany to deliver a series of lectures on the adjustment of colonial ambitions.[2]

He was well received in Germany in 1910. In his lectures, which he claimed he always submitted to the Foreign Office for approval, while he conceded that Germany ought to be accommodated not only in Africa (he even suggested giving up Walfisch Bay and Zanzibar to Germany in return for a corridor behind the hinterland of German East Africa) but also in Asia Minor, he consistently stressed that Germany should help towards this colonial entente by returning Alsace-Lorraine to France. In 1912 he worked with others to arrange an Anglo-German friendship Conference at Caxton Hall where he read a paper on the removal of conflicting interests in Colonial development. The Conference was not a success; Johns ton was disillusioned by the excessive ambitions expressed by the German delegates.[3]

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1. Roland Oliver, Sir Harry Johnston and the Scramble for Africa, pp. 134-144. See also maps on pp. 102 and 103, Ibidem; Sir Harry Johnston, The Story of My Life, p. 202ff; Alex. Johnston, Life and Letters of Sir Harry Johnston, p. 301 and passim.

2. Oliver, pp. 353-354; H.H.Johnston, Story of my Life, pp.410-422; Alex. Johnston, op. cit. pp.301-307. Johnston's visit to Germany in 1911 was less fortunate; because of the feeling roused by the Agadir incident he was paid and asked not to deliver his lectures.

3. Ibidem.

Others, however, went beyond mere exercises in paper partition. They sought to improve Anglo-German relations in a practical way. One such scheme was the development of Angola by a Chartered Company under British and German shareholders, the latter having overall control of the Company, with the ultimate intention of acquiring it for Germany. The scheme was originated by a respectable London Banking House with German connections, J. Henry Schroeder and Co. It was a joint partnership of Baron Bruno von Schroeder and Frank C. Tiarks whose uncle and father (deceased) respectively had been partners. Both Schroeder and Tiarks (the latter's mother was German) were interested in the project because they saw it as a convenient means of improving relations:[1] the former because "an Anglo-German combination for the development of Angola or part of Angola would ensure the peace of Europe," and Tiarks because he thought "he was acting in the best interests of the British government, and indeed in accordance with their wishes, in facilitating the acquisition of German rights in Angola, by lending the name of his firm to the project." Von Kühlmann, the Counsellor in the German Embassy in London, another enthusiast for a colonial rapprochement, encouraged them in their efforts.[2]

The opportunity for this scheme was presented when the Portuguese government expressed the wish for a loan of £15 million to an English promoter, Edward J. Frewen. The latter had been negotiating to acquire plantations for development in the Cocoa Islands of Sao Thome and Principe late in 1911. He had encountered some difficulties with certain German backed agents, but through the help of the Foreign Office he was able to wind up his business successfully by March 1912.

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1. Who's Who, 1913 and 1914; FO367/289/22213 Memo by Crowe, May 24, 1912; Printed in B.D. X (11) Nos. 295 and 296.

2. Ibidem; FO367/289/15518 Minute by Tilley, April 12, 1912.

It was at this juncture that he was approached by the Portuguese government for a loan. He and his associates pointed out that no loan more than £5 million could be got without it being made part of a scheme for the commercial development of the Portuguese Colonies.[1] At first the Lisbon government demurred, but it later agreed to this condition and to the idea of a Chartered Company, divorced from Portuguese politics and administration, controlling the territory.[2]

Angola was chosen as the area of exploitation because "no other part of the Portuguese Colonial possession (teem) with more possibilities of commercial developments of all descriptions."[3] The choice fortuitously fitted with German aspirations in Angola, which territory, Jules Cambon reported, German Colonial circles were strongly in favour of annexing: "When one talks in Berlin," the Ambassador noted, "both in public and in the press ... there is a fatal destination of Angola being part of the Reich ..."[4]

Frewen had no money of his own to offer a loan to the Portuguese, and so he sought the help of the bankers, Tiarks and Schroeder, who eagerly seized the chance of realising their dream of establishing a German controlled Chartered Company.[5]

They agreed to offer the loan, but on condition that the Company, which was to be formed to work the concession, was granted a Charter. Interest payments on the loan were to be paid from securities of the European Customs of Portugal. To calm the fears of the Portuguese parliament the loan was to be made to appear distinct from the concession.

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1. FO367/289/14712 Hardinge to Grey, April 2, 1912. Reports on Frewen's Cocoa schemes are to be found in FO367/289 files 1814, 3646, 5967, 8934 F.O. to A. Hardinge, March 5,1912.
2. FO367/289/14990 Frewen to F.O. April 6, 1912.
3. Ibidem.
4. D.D.F. 3rd Series Vol. II No. 59 J. Cambon to M. Poincare, Feb. 18, 1912. See also p. 281
5. See note 1, p. 373.

Ostensibly all agreements were to be in the name of Schroeder and Co., but Tiarks and Schroeder would later sell 80% of the shares of the Chartered Company to the Germans, 10% to Portugal and would keep the remainder for themselves and their friends.[1]

Frewen, who acted as agent for Schroeder and Tiarks, seemed to have brought matters to a promising point when negotiations were broken off partly because the Portuguese agreed to granting the charter only for the south west corner of Angola, and partly because the German government, who had been notified of the scheme by the Foreign Office in fulfillment of the terms of the 1899 treaty, asked that department to withhold its support until it could get capital.[2] But the real reason was that the Portuguese had become increasingly suspicious of Germany because of the indiscreet remarks by Germany newspapers and important personalities on German aspirations in the Portuguese colonies, which were bandied about during the winter months of 1911 and 1912. The Wilhelmstrasse, therefore, thought it would be better that Lisbon did not know of their interest in the scheme. In any case, the British Foreign Office did not favour the idea of a British Company acting as a front for German interests in the possessions of its ally.[3]

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1. FO367/289/21401 Hardinge to Grey, May 16, 1912; FO367/289/24054 Tiarks to Crowe, June 5, 1912.

2. Ibidem; FO367/289/22789 Goschen to Grey, May 20, 1912.

3. Minutes by Grey on Crowe's memo (May 24, 1912, FO367/289/22213): "... we could not play the part of stalking horse for Germany at Lisbon." Also in B.D. I(11) p. 464.

While men like Brunner, Noel Buxton, C.P. Scott, Hirst, Lascelles and Spender, to name a few, because of their prestige and standing in Liberal circles or because of their experience in political and international affairs could not be ignored, people such as Harry Johnston, J.H. Harris, Morel and even Strachey, because of some of the causes they championed, stood in a less favoured position in the eyes of the Foreign Office.[1] Spender and Strachey were friends of Grey, but there was nothing in the letters which they exchanged with the Foreign Secretary to suggest that they discussed[2] the idea of a naval agreement or colonial détente with Grey. Indeed, both men stood for a strong Navy (though Spender later claimed that his editorials were responsible for the Haldane Mission).[3] And Brunner's letters to the ~~component~~ national Liberal Federations in January, 1912, calling for a National Liberal Federation meeting to discuss government foreign policy reached most of the local chairmen after Haldane had reached Berlin;[4] while Johnston, according to his brother, found a Foreign Office that was less sympathetic to his ideas than that under Salisbury.[5] The evidence suggesting that these men directly influenced government policy is, therefore, slight.

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1. See (Cromer Papers) FO633/22 J.H. Harris to Cromer, Oct. 8, 1913 jubilantly reporting the transfer of Crowe and Tilley from "our department" (The African Department). On F.O.'s attitude to Strachey and Harris see pp.276-77. On Morel's relationship with the F.O. see S.J.S. Cookey, op. cit. p. 250ff; Louis and Stengers, op. cit. pp. 100-180, 200-203.

2. Letters between Grey and Spender, and Grey and Strachey can be found in (Spender Papers) Vol. IV 46389 and (Grey Papers) FO800/111 (Miscellaneous) respectively.

3. J.A. Spender, Life, p. 243. Probably he was referring to the series of articles in the Westminster Gazette, Dec. 4-20, 1911.

4. Koss, Sir John Brunner, pp. 248-251.

5. Alex. Johnston, pp. 254, 256 and 269; q.v. Johnston, My Life, p. 376.

Besides, other less public and less direct approaches were made, whose authors later claimed that they were responsible for the sending of the Haldane Mission: Fox, perturbed by the nearness of war in the summer of 1911 went to Berlin in December where he had conversations with Bethmann, Kiderlen and Herr Von Gwinner, President of the Deutsche Bank. He came back with a message that Berlin would welcome a mission in February of the following year. He had a satisfactory interview with Grey upon whom he impressed the importance of taking up the initiative, and he told Courtney that the Foreign Secretary favoured the idea.[1] Also Ballin, once more disturbed by the threat of a new naval race, suggested to Cassel that he bring Winston Churchill, who had succeeded McKenna as First Lord of the Admiralty in October, 1911, when next he went to Berlin.[2] Churchill declined, but after, an ad hoc Cabinet meeting of Grey, Haldane, Lloyd George and Churchill, the quartet who had handled the Moroccan crisis, Cassel was allowed to go to Berlin to explore the situation, taking with him suggestions for possible discussions between the two governments.[3] Historians are still arguing about the relative influence of these men on the Anglo-German talks of 1912-1913.

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1. Montmorency, William Fox, pp. 115-119; Koss, John Brunner, p. 249; FO371/1129/51436 Francis William Fox, to Grey, Dec. 21, 1911; FO371/1372/William Fox to Grey, January 19, 1912. Crowe's Minute.

2. Emile Bourgeois, "La mission de Lord Haldane à Berlin", Revue des Deux Mondes, Vol. XXXV (1926) pp. 881-910 contends that the original suggestion came from the Kaiser; Cf. Rosenbaum, op. cit. Year Book III pp. 284-285; Lamar Cecil, Ballin, p. 183ff; Churchill, World Crisis I p. 94; q.v. Bothmann Hollweg, Reflections, p. 47.

3. Churchill, Ibidem; Cecil, p. 183; B.D. VI No. 492 Churchill to Cassel, January 7, 1912; (Haldane Papers) 5987 f25 letter to his mother January 23, 1912; Woodward, p. 325. Cf. J.A. Spender and Cyril Asquith, Life of Herbert Henry Asquith, Lord Oxford and Asquith, (1932) Vol. II p. 64.

What can be said with some certainty is that the public agitation of men like Brunner and Co. and the informal approaches of Fox and Ballin created a climate of opinion favourable to a détente; and that while the government would not sacrifice Grey,[1] nor give up the Entente Cordiale (or indeed change the general lines of its foreign policy) nor its claim to naval supremacy, it felt constrained to humour its radical wing whose support was vital on other issues, such as Home Rule in Ireland and parliamentary reforms. It was also necessary to preserve harmony in the Cabinet, which, already split on many issues and the reshuffle of October, 1911, had certain members agitating for a rapprochement with Germany.[2]

On New Year's Day, 1912, Haldane, Sidney Buxton, McKenna, Herbert Samuel, C. Hobhouse, and Harcourt publicly expressed their wishes for improved Anglo-German relations and their desire to allow Germany a "place in the sun."[3] Although the motives of some of these Cabinet Ministers might be genuine, there were indications that this desire was tactical. McKenna was piqued by his transfer from the Admiralty and for a time he supported the pro-German lobby,[4] Morley and Loreburn (who resigned in June, 1912, because of illhealth, but really because he found himself increasingly out of step with his colleagues) were not blind admirers of Germany, but they distrusted the policy of France;[5]

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1. The King awarded Grey the Garter in February, 1912 on the suggestion of Asquith "as a deliberate snub to his Radical critics." Fitzroy, Memoirs, p. 470.
2. Koss, John Brunner, p. 250; Robbins, Grey of Fallodon, p. 255, q.v. B.D. VI p. 479.
3. Reported in the Manchester Guardian, Jan. 3, 1912; Koss, Lord Haldane, p.68.
4. Fitzroy, Memoirs, p. 446; Lowe and Dockrill, Mirage of Power, p. 45.
5. D.A.Hamer, John Morley: Liberal Intellectual in Politics, p. 366; Esher, Journals and Letters, III, p.74; (Grey Papers) F.O.800/99 Loreburn to Grey, July 27, 1911 and Aug.26,1911. See also Trevor Wilson, Political Diaries of C.P.Scott, p.55; cf. Robbins, op. cit. pp. 191-2,220 for Loreburn's views on Anglo-German relations.

Haldane's attachment to Germany was more on the intellectual plane;[1] Lloyd George wanted a binding Naval agreement in return for territorial concessions to Germany. It has also been suggested that, apart from his known desire to cut down expenditure on the Navy to save money for social services, his friendly pronouncements on Anglo-German relations in early 1912 were designed to recapture the sentiments of his radical supporters and to blur the image of a jingoistic fillibusterer.[2] Churchill, who appeared to be the most belligerent in the Cabinet, on his own account, agreed to this move for a rapprochement in order that, if it failed, his hand would be strengthened "in asking the Cabinet and the House of Commons for the necessary monies" to increase the Naval Estimates;[3] Grey himself had no illusions about an Anglo-German rapprochement, and he was sceptical about the efficacy of a Naval/ Colonial agreement; at the same time, however, he endeavoured to convince Metternich on July 21 and December 20, 1911 that he was favourable to German colonial expansion.[4] Of all the Ministers, perhaps Harcourt was the only one with a positive suggestion or programme for an Anglo-German rapprochement.

Harcourt's disposition towards a rapprochement with Germany seemed to have sprung from two considerations. Along with some of his colleagues he was concerned about the Naval problem (he was one of Brunner's allies in the Cabinet), but a stronger factor was his distrust of and even hostility to the policy of the Triple Entente.

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1. Stephen Koss, Lord Haldane, p. 68; cf. (Haldane Papers) 5919 "Memo of events between 1906 and 1915."
2. Dockrill, "Lloyd George and foreign policy" in A.J.P.Taylor, Lloyd George, p. 21; cf. F.W. Wiemann, "Lloyd George and Navy Estimates" Ibidem, pp.71-91 has cast some doubts on Lloyd George's pro-German reputation.
3. Churchill, The World Crisis, I, p. 95.
4. B.D.X(1) No. 266 Grey to Goschen, Dec. 29, 1911; FO367/237/29119 Grey to Goschen, July 21, 1911; FO367/237/57342 Grey to Goschen, Dec. 20, 1911.

He believed the policy of France was a selfish one and that she was bent on embroiling Britain in a continental war.[1] Irritations in the colonial field also contributed to Harcourt's resentment against France. Exasperated with French policy in Ethiopia he once blurted out: "The entente cordiale is about as valuable to us as the triple alliance."[2]

Above all, he dreaded a war between Britain and Germany. To avert this and to improve relations he suggested a colonial détente. From this understanding it was his hope that Britain and Germany might co-operate on wider fields. In December, 1911, he told Sir John Anderson, his permanent Under Secretary, that he had had it in his "mind for some time that Anglo-German relations could be permanently improved if we had 'conversations' leading to exchanges of territory which might give Germany a 'place in the sun' without injury to our colonial or imperial interests." He asked Anderson to cast his mind and eye over the British Empire "especially in Africa and the Pacific with a view of seeing what we could give and what we want in exchange." "The 'deal' - if there is one - should be rather to the advantage of Germany - at least there should be no ground for saying that we had 'done' her."[3]

Anderson's reply was not very encouraging, but, as we shall see later on, Harcourt was not deterred from foraging for a basis worthy of discussion.

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1. P.H.S. Hatton, "Harcourt and Solf: the search for an Anglo-German understanding through Africa, 1912-1914" Offprint European Studies Review I No. 2, (1971) pp. 123-145 gives a concise account of Harcourt's attitude to Germany. See also Cameron Hazlehurst, "Asquith as Prime Minister, 1908-1916", English Historical Review, Vol. LXXXV No. 336 (July 1970) pp. 502-531; Robert Rhodes James, Memoirs of a Conservative: J.C.C. Davidson's Memoirs and Papers, 1910-1937, (1969) pp. 10-11, 20-21.
2. CO535/32/7299 F.O. to C.O. Feb. 2[illegible], 1913, encl. letter from Kitchener. Minute by Harcourt. See Caplan, "British policy towards Ethiopia", p. 70 and passim for Anglo-French relations in Ethiopia.
3. (Harcourt Papers) Box 12, Harcourt to Anderson, Dec. 23, 1911; Anderson to Harcourt, Dec. 27, 1911. See Appendix IV.

British Ministers who sought means of easing tension had their counterparts in Berlin. In October, 1911, Tirpitz and the Kaiser had wanted to announce that a Navy Bill would be introduced in the Reichstag the following spring. Some of the Kaiser's advisers felt it was unnecessary to build more ships, and others pointed out that an announcement of the Bill would be a needless provocation to Britain and the latter might even be tempted to "Copenhagen" the Reich's fleet. This would be unfortunate since the Kiel Canal was not yet finished. Besides, Germany was not financially prepared for a war, warned Gwinner.[1] Bethmann was not opposed to the Naval increase in principle, but he wanted to cultivate good relations with Britain, possibly to detach her from France, and at the same time to work quietly on Germany's defences without "threatening boisterously". He therefore supported those who were opposed to the introduction of the Bill. Probably to divert attention from the Navy Bill he earnestly took up the suggestion that Britain was prepared to view German colonial expansion with favour.[2]

On December 6, 1911, he asked Metternich for enlightenment on Grey's vague Commons' statement on not "standing in the way of German expansion." Could it be that he was referring to Spanish Guinea, which, in any case would fall into Germany's lap sooner or later? The Belgian Congo was not yet ripe for partition and it had too many complications. So it could only mean the Portuguese colonies over which Britain and Germany already had a secret agreement. Could Metternich ascertain whether British statesmen were now disposed to consider its implementation?

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1. J.C.G. Röhl, "Müller and the Approach of War," The Historical Journal (1969) pp. 655-657; Woodward, op. cit. p. 316; Otto Hamman, The World Policy of Germany, pp. 232-233; cf. Tirpitz, My Memoirs, p. 215.

2. Röhl, Ibidem, Woodward, pp. 316-321.

The Chancellor had no illusions about what he seemed to have been considering, a Naval Colonial deal; for the Kaiser had set his heart on an increase of the Navy. Nevertheless, he thought that it might be possible to make some attempt to avoid a further deterioration in "our relations with England" which the new Bill might cause.[1] Metternich's reply was encouraging. His conversations with leading politicians such as Balfour, Harcourt, Lord Esher and Sir Harry Norman (who, he alleged, asked his advice before speaking in the debate on Grey's policy statement) led him to believe that Britain was favourable to German colonial expansion. But he warned that this disposition would disappear if the Navy Bill was brought forward.[2]

Kühlmann, Harcourt's confidant in the summer of 1911, who worked with the British Colonial Secretary for closer understanding based on a colonial agreement, emphasised the dangers, which the novelle might cause, more sharply. He stated that Germany was faced with two choices; 1. she could maintain the existing Naval Bill and seek an arrangement with Britain which promised her a future as a great colonial power; or 2. she could introduce the supplementary Bill and destroy "all chances of an understanding with England both on colonial and general policy," thus increasing the likelihood of war with the Triple Entente.[3]

The Kaiser was neither impressed by the arguments of Metternich and Kühlmann nor by the alluring vision of an enlarged German Colonial Empire. On the other hand, the unfavourable results of the Reichstag elections and the visit of Cassel induced the Kaiser to consider a rapprochement.[4]

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1. Ibidem; G.P. XXXI Nr. 11338.
2. G.P. XXXI Nr. 11339; Dugdale, Vol. IV, p. 53; Esher, Journals and Letters, p. 80.
3. G.P. XXXI Nr. 11345; Dugdale IV, p.56; Woodward, pp. 318-322.
4. Minutes by the Kaiser on above document; Rohl, p. 657; Bourgeois, op. cit., pp. 887-889.

The British proposals - indicating that in return for the recognition of British Naval superiority and the retardation or reduction of the present German Naval programme, Britain was prepared to discuss favourably German colonial aspirations and to welcome "reciprocal assurances debarring either party from joining in aggressive designs or combinations against the other" - pleased the Kaiser and strengthened the hand of Bethmann in resisting Tirpitz's pressure for the announcement of the Bill.[1]

The German government replied that it was willing to receive a mission, preferably a visit by Grey himself, to discuss matters. There was, however, one important reservation: the 1912 estimates, i.e. the Novella, must be included in the present German Naval programme in as much as all the arrangements had already been completed. On colonial matters, the Germans "did not seem to know what they wanted."[2]

The reservation on the Navy question was disturbing. Churchill commented: "... the spirit may be good, but the facts are grim." The implementation of the novelle would mean that Britain would have to build extra ships and increase her Navy personnel. All in all expenditure would rise to not les than £3 million per annum.[3] However, the Cabinet decided on February 2nd, to send Haldane, rather than Grey, on the latter's proposal, to Berlin to "feel the way" towards an understanding with Germany. If the question of Naval competition could be got out of the way, Haldane was at the same time to indicate "our readiness to deal in a cordial and generous spirit with German aspirations and interests."[4] In other words, Britain was proposing a comprehensive deal on Naval, political and

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1. Rosenbaum, Ballin, p. 235; G.P. XXXI Nr. 11347; Bethmann Hollweg, Reflections, pp. 48-49.
2. G.P. XXXI Nr. 11350; printed in Bourgeois, op. cit. p. 893; Churchill, World Crisis, I p. 96.
3. Churchill, p. 96; Marder, op. cit., p. 276.
4. Ibidem; CAB41/33/34 P.M. to Sovereign, Feb. 3, 1912.

colonial questions, though for her the Navy issue was the most important. However, as the naval issue became less likely to be solved, the colonial issue took a more prominent place in the subsequent discussions.

The idea that Germany might be sufficiently interested in a re-partition of Africa was perhaps derived from the belief that Kiderlen's demand for the Congo was the first step towards a German Mittel Afrika, long cherished by colonial enthusiasts, and from articles in the German press.[1] Die Post, a loyal supporter of government policies, appeared to have been the first paper to give prominence to the colonial question. Other German newspapers followed suit, though they stressed more the political aspect of British policy. The reports of the British and French representatives in Berlin were full of these colonial speculations.[2]

Grey himself circulated to the Cabinet two extracts from the Frankfurter Zeitung of December 2 and 3, 1911, as'having some interest' since they showed an independent German view. While the paper expressed doubts on whether Grey would honour his statement on German expansion, it conceded that "if Germany could be assured that when the moment came (for territorial changes) Britain would not object, it (Grey's promise) would be of value ..." This would lay the road open to good understanding.[3]

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1. M.E. Townsend, The Rise and Fall of Germany's Colonial Empire, p. 323ff; E. Evans Lewin, The Germans and Africa (New Edition, 1939) p. 247ff; R. Louis, "Britain and German Expansion" in Gifford and Louis, op. cit. p. 35. The expressed views and ambitions of Pan-Germans and Colonial enthusiasts have been collated and printed in, Charles Andler, Le Pan-Germanisme Colonial sous Guillaume II, Paris (1916).

2. See note 2, p. 367; FO367/284/3898 Goschen to Grey, January 29, 1912 forwarding press extracts e.g. Deutsche Tagezeitung.

3. CAB37/108/173 extracts from Frankfurter Zeitung circulated to the Cabinet by Grey, Dec., 1911.

Many intellectuals, such as Professor Schiemann, a confidant of the German Foreign Office, historian, and an intimate of the Kaiser, and a regular contributor to the Kreuz-Zeitung, a paper representing the reactionary elements in Germany;[1] Professor Hans Delbruck, professor of History and a leading exponent of German nationalism; and Dr. Class, President of the Pan-German Association, expressed themselves in favour of a deal on Africa. Delbruck was quoted as saying "... in Africa alone we see possibilities worth cultivating. I am thinking of what seems to me the inevitable collapse of Portuguese power in Africa and a division of the republic's posses sions there between England and Germany."[2]

In a couple of interviews he complained of British policy on Walfisch Bay which, he said, was the gateway to the German colony of South West Africa and he stressed that Germany only wanted to expand p eacefully.[3] Class urged Germany to acquire the Portuguese colonies and Spanish Guinea "as an outlet for German commerce and a source for the supply of raw materials."[4] Pan German literature in this period was full of such suggestions.

We now know that friendly as the suggestions of Delbruck and Co. might have appeared they did not regard concessions to Germany in Africa as sufficient to meet the aspirations of Germany. Rather, they hoped for a larger colonial Empire as the result of a successful war. General Bernhardi's book Germany and the Next War (which ran into six editions by 1914) expressed the views of the Pan-Germans.[5]

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1. FO367/237/45800 press extract from the Daily Telegraph, dated Nov. 16, 1911. Oron J. Hale, Germany and the Diplomatic Revolution, p. 8.
2. Quoted in de Braganca-Cunha, op. cit., p. 189.
3. FO371/1129/52003 press cutting from the Daily Mail. See also Williquet, Le Congo Belge, pp. 330-331
4. FO367/284/3898 Goschen to Grey, Jan. 29, 1912 enclosing press extracts.
5. Fritz Fischer, Germany's Aims in the First World War, pp.8,125,160-162, 175-176, 275-276 and map on p. 596; General Friedrich von Bernhardi, Germany and the Next War, London, 1914; Andler, Pan-Germanisme Colonial sous Guillaume II, passim .

There were men in Berlin, however, who favoured a colonial agreement. As we have noted Bethmann was interested in it for tactical reasons, and perhaps he was for its own sake; Wilhelm von Stumm, Director of the political division in the Auswärtiges Amt pressed the idea of a Colonial/Naval agreement on Bertie;[1] Metternich welcomed a colonial understanding, but Kühlmann and Dr. Wilhelm Solf, Colonial Minister (1911-1915) favoured the colonial deal not only for its own sake, but also as a prelude to understandings on wider issues. These two, later joined by Prince Lichnowsky, the German Ambassador to Britain (1912-1914) were Harcourt's German counterparts.

Solf, like one of his predecessors, Dernburg, believed in the systematic economic development of the colonies. And he regarded British colonial administrations, especially the system of direct rule, as models, and he also believed that co-operation with neighbouring British colonies would facilitate German economic plans like railway construction, mining and agriculture. For this reason he visited South Africa in mid 1912, where he discussed economic questions with Union Officials, and also British East Africa and Nigeria in 1913. A member of his staff, Dr. Hardy, was sent to London to liaise with the British Colonial Office in 1912.[2]

In his desire to collaborate with the British as their 'junior partner' Solf did not leave out France. He told de Manneville, French Charge d'affaires in Berlin, on April 30, 1914 that[3] "L'Afrique renferme de telles richesses, et il y a tant à y faire que les querelles entre les peuples

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1. B.D.I(11) No. 265 Bertie to Grey, Dec. 21, 1911; B.D.VI No. 503 Bertie to Grey, Feb. 11, 1912.

2. Eberhard von Vietsch, Wilhelm Solf: Botschafter Zwischen den Zeiten, Tubingen (1961), pp. 102-150; Hatton, op. cit., passim. His visit to London in Jan. 1912, raised some speculation that he and his British counterpart were going to conclude a colonial deal. In actual fact he had come to London to discuss diamond business with British and South African merchants, though he tried to get a meeting with Harcourt. The latter avoided him because he thought such a meeting would be awkward, since he he had not yet been authorised by the Cabinet to negotiate an agreement. See F0367/204/3256 and 3389 press cutting from The Times and Daily News Jan. 23, and 26 resp; (Grey Papers) F0800/91 Harcourt to Grey, Jan.28,1912.

3. D.D.F. 3rd Series Vol. IX No. 385 De Manneville to Doumergue, March 1, 1914.

européens devraient faire silence au seuil de ce merveilleux continent. Ce devrait être la terre de la paix être les hommes blancs. Les trois grandes Puissances Africaines surtout la France, L'Angleterre et L'Allemagne, auraient le plus grand avantage à s'entendre sur un programme d'action commune en Afrique, notamment en matière de Chemins de fer."

Unfortunately, this proposal for a Franco-German co-operation in railway construction in the Lake Chad and the Cameroon-French Congo area and Solf's veiled suggestion that the powers should consider the future of the Belgian Congo smacked too much of a deep-laid plot to embroil France in some complications with other powers. M. de Manneville warned Doumergue, the French Foreign Minister, that "we ought not to ignore the dangers to the Entente to which Germany could invite us."[1]

The above incident illustrated, as others were to do, the difficulty of separating colonial matters from general diplomatic considerations and also of finding a suitable colonial basis for discussion. In this regard, therefore, one is tempted to say that Harcourt and the other advocates of a colonial entente were too optimistic.

Anderson's letter to Harcourt, as we have seen, had not been encouraging on the possibilities of a colonial deal. Those areas, such as the Trans-Volta district of the Gold Coast and Walfisch Bay, in which, it could be assumed, that Germany would be sufficiently interested, could not be given up. In the case of the former its cession would be detrimental to the British colony of the Gold Coast.[2] And in the case of Walfisch Bay, as we have noted in Chapter II, South Africa would not agree to the transfer of that territory to Germany. In other words, the Germans had no colonies

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1. Ibidem.
2. See note,3, p. 380.

which Britain wanted nor had Britain any territories to give. "...Speaking frankly, I don't see what scope there is for a deal with them," Anderson said. At the last resort he could only suggest a deal on the Portuguese Colonies.

Harcourt, on the other hand, in spite of the limited choice open to him, did find a basis worthy of discussion. Of the questions discussed in Chapter II only three, including the Anglo-German treaty on the Portuguese Col nies, remained to be settled. The unsatisfactory situation of the 1898 treaty, the increased activities of Germans in the Portuguese colonies and the possibility of clashes between British and German capitalists and concession hunters made it desirable that an early opportunity be taken to review the secret agreement between the two powers. The call for a colonial entente offered this opportunity to redefine the respective spheres of influence of the two powers.

Britain and Germany had failed to solve the Caprivi Zipfel and Orange River boundary questions, partly because they were unwilling to accept each other's definition of the boundaries and partly because of the uncompromising attitude of the South African government in the Orange River question. Harcourt had attempted a compromise solution but he had failed; however he thought that now that an opportunity had come to show Britain's favour to German expansion, he could get satisfactory boundaries for the Union of South Africa and Bechuanaland protectorate by giving concessions to Germany in the Seal and Penguin Islands.[1] These Islands, off the coast of South West Africa, were annexed by Britain in May 1866, and later transferred to Cape Colony. From time to time the Germans had shown interest in acquiring these strategically placed islands for use as a harbour, but this had been discouraged by the Cape.[2] German interests

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1. Chapter II.

2. Hertslet, Map of Africa, Vol. I pp. 165-166; FO367/231/32046 Memo on the Penguin Islands (Luderitz Bay) by R.C. Dickie, August 26, 1911.

seemed to have revived in June 1911, when the Commissioner of Railways and Harbours in German South West Africa called upon the British Consul, Müller, and asked him whether the Union would be likely to lease Penguin Islands for the purpose of erecting quarantine stations. The Consul and the Foreign Office suspected that the quarantine stations were mere covers for a port or a coaling station. The despatch was, therefore, sent to the Admiralty for its opinion.[1] Although the latter department warned that it would be "undesirable to assist the German government in forming a good harbour there, especially as the two isles, if retained intact, might have a high value in any future bargain," Grey and Harcourt were favourably disposed to consider the German proposals when they put them forward.[2]

The revision of the Portuguese treaty and these frontier questions with bits and pieces of territory thrown in for good measure therefore, formed Harcourt's basis for a colonial deal. It was not very substantial but it was the gesture that counted.

Those countries which stood to lose their possessions, if some of the ideas suggested in the press at this time were put into effect, were naturally concerned about the future of their territories. Sir Arthur Hardinge, on the authority of Grey, assured the Portuguese Premier that Grey's November 27th statement did not mean an attack on Portuguese sovereignty over her colonies and that he did not intend to do anything to impair that sovereignty.[3] The British and German governments agreed to allow the Portuguese Prime Minister to make a statement in the Portuguese Chamber: "We are satisfied that no treaty exists between Great Britain

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1. FO367/231/32046 Consul Müller to Grey, July 21, 1911.
2. FO367/231/42827 Admiralty to F.O., Oct. 27, 1911. Minute by Grey; FO367/231/37014 C.O. to F.O., Sept. 20, 1911. See also Chapter III.
3. B.D. X(11) No. 273 Grey to Hardinge, Feb. 29, 1912; CO417/517/7688 F.O. to C.O., March 11, 1912 encl. correspondence with Hardinge.

and Germany which contains anything of a nature to menace the independence, integrity, or interests of Portugal, or of any portions of her dominions."[1] Portuguese representatives abroad re-emphasised that Portugal would not sell its colonies or abdicate sovereignty over her African colonies, although it would collaborate with Britain, France and Germany to develop the economy of its empire.[2]

Although Grey spoke on several occasions about what British interests should be secured in the Congo, if the latter ever came into the market, these pronouncements were never seriously followed. The Belgian Congo did not play any role in the negotiations of 1912-13. For political and military reasons, Britain and Germany were careful not to drive Belgium into the camp of either by pursuing a hostile policy towards the Belgian Congo, whose administration, even after 1908, left much to be desired.[3]

Nonetheless, the Belgians, alarmed by the press discussion of territorial changes in Africa, were continually on their guard. The French and British Ministers in Belgium sent back to their Foreign Offices copious reports and press articles warning about the danger which faced Belgium. One writer boldly asserted that the powers wanted to make the Congo a peace sacrifice.[4]

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1. Minutes by Tilley, Crowe and Grey on Hardinge to Grey, March 8, 1912, B.D.X(11) No. 274; No. 279 Goschen to Grey, March 15, 1912.

2. FO367/284/4933 Goschen to Grey, Feb. 1, 1912 encl. report in Tageblatt, CO417/517/17458 F.O. to C.O., June 6, 1912 encl. despatch from Bertie to Grey, dated May 11, 1912; D.D.F. 3rd Series I, No. 324 St-René Taillandier to de Selves, Dec. 11, 1911.

3. Cookey, op. cit., p. 287ff; R. Louis, "Britain and German expansion" in Gifford and Louis, op. cit., p. 36; Chapter III, pp.247-248.

4. D.D.F. 3rd Series II, No. 190 Klobukowski to Poincaré, March 12, 1912; see also No. 59; FO367/326/25124 Villiers to Gray, May 28, 1913. Minute by Newton; FO367/325/8214 Consul Lambert (Boma) to Grey, Jan. 23, 1913 reporting German activities in the Congo.

France also showed the liveliest fears about territorial changes during this period to an even greater extent than those powers which stood to lose their possessions. The underlying fear, apart from hostility to German expansion, was that these territorial pourparlers could possibly become an element in a general basis of understanding.[1] This aspect would be reviewed later. It is pertinent to note at this point that as early as the end of 1911, following Grey's statement, the Quai D'Orsay became anxious about the rumours of territorial arrangements. Early in 1912, Paul Cambon was asked by M. Poincaré, successor to Caillaux, to furnish him information as soon as possible on details of efforts made in order that Portugal might sell her colonies to Germany. On February 2nd, a circular was sent to the French embassies in London and Berlin (and a copy to the Hôtel de Pavillion) asking them to give information on rumours affecting the Portuguese colonies. The Berlin Embassy was specifically required to furnish reports on current projects for economic participation in foreign colonies, especially in Africa.[2] Thus, Bertie, who began to fear that His Majesty's Government was tending towards a colonial deal, and being alive to French susceptibilities, urged Nicolson that France must be consulted, because during the Morocco crisis France had kept Britain informed about her negotiations:"In any territorial arrangements or exchanges which we may make with the Germans we may injure the interests of our friends if not our own," warned the Ambassador.[3]

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1. Editor's avant-propos D.D.F. 3rd Series, Vol. VIII (1913).

2. D.D.F. 3rd Series Vol. I No. 538 Poincaré to Cambon, January 27, 1912; No. 557, Cambon to Poincaré, January 29, 1912; No. 584 Poincaré to Ambassadors in London, Berlin, and Minister of Colonies, Feb. 2, 1912. See also Nos. 591 and 617.

3. (Bertie Papers) FO800/171 Bertie to Nicolson, Feb. 11, 1912.

In the British Foreign Office itself the idea of a colonial agreement was not viewed with sympathy. As Bertie wryly noted, Germany had come 100 years too late and Britain was not in a generous enough mood to give up what she had won with the sweat of her sons.[1]

As regards the Naval question the Germans were only prepared to modify their Bill if Britain was ready to offer a tangible political formula, though it must be said, Bethmann himself doubted whether Grey would agree to this basis. Perhaps a Liberal government without Grey would agree, but Metternich soon disabused him of such chimerical dreams.[2]

What chances then, did the Haldane Mission have? The Mission itself was not blessed with auspicious circumstances. It was too clouded in mystery and secrecy. The decision to put across the idea that Haldane went to Berlin on University business, which Grey defended on the grounds that if it failed "there should be no sensation and little disappointment to the public," was at best political dishonesty, at the worst perhaps an implied admission that no agreement could be reached with Germany while the Entente was still the most important element in British foreign policy.[3]

While the point that "Haldane was simply the minister who combined a knowledge of Germany and of military matters" is well taken, it must, however, be pointed out that Grey himself would not have gone to Berlin;

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1. B.D. X(11) No. 265 Bertie to Grey, Dec. 21, 1911; Newton (a junior clerk) noted: "If the acquisition of an extensive Central Africa is seriously contemplated in Germany, the German government have missed the opportunity offered by the nature of things that recently existed in the Congo ..." Minute on FO367/326/25124 June, 1913.

2. G.P. XXXI Nrs. 11353 and 11354; Dugdale IV, pp. 73-74; Bethmann Hollweg, p. 49. Bourgeois, p. 894; Rosenbaum, op. cit., Year Book III, CAB41/33/34 P.M. to Sovereign, Feb. 3, 1912; CAB41/33/35 P.M. to Sovereign, Feb. 7, 1912, discussions of preliminary notes preceding Haldane's Mission.

3. Grey of Fallodon, Twenty-five Years I, p. 252ff. See also note 2, p. 378.

he had refused to go in 1909, even when Anglo-French co-operation was at a low ebb. (It is indicative of Grey's double standards that when he visited Paris in 1914 he justified it as normal - it was a visit amongst friends!)[1] Although he knew German well and was friendly with the Kaiser and he enjoyed Grey's confidence the fact remained that Haldane was not as expert in diplomacy nor in naval matters. He was not the best choice. It is no wonder that Cambon dubbed the mission "assez mal adroitement executé."[2]

The Germans were also to blame. Instead of pursuing a consistent policy they were chasing shadows for substance. The Kaiser himself was not decided on his priorities. He appeared to have both wanted to retain his Navy Bill as well as to get a political agreement. He was contemptuous of a colonial deal, but at the same time was impressed by the promise of more territories.[3] In this state of indecision, or rather an oscillation from one objective to another, it was not very difficult for Tirpitz, the civilians having no say, to prevail on the Kaiser to proceed with the Novelle. On the eve of Haldane's visit the Kaiser announced Bills for the increase of the Navy and the Army. Churchill's impulsive and ill-advised, if defiant "luxus flotte" speech in Glasgow on February 9th, did not help Haldane, who was far "from sanguine of success", in his arduous task.[4]

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1. Robbins, p. 257; cf. Chapter II, p.220and Grey of Fallodon, Ibidem, p. 279

2. Koss, Lord Haldane, p. 68ff; D.D.F. II No. I P. Cambon to Poincaré, Feb. 8, 1912.

3. Woodward, pp. 320-322; cf. Röhl, op. cit., p. 658; Fischer, op. cit. pp. 26-29; Bourgeois, pp. 886-889; Tirpitz, op. cit., p. 219.

4. Tirpitz, p. 215; Mander, p. 277; (Haldane Papers) 5987 letter to his mother, Feb. 6, 1912; cf. Churchill, p. 90. The First Lord declared that Britain's Navy was a necessity for her, while Germany's was a luxury. For Cabinet reaction to Churchill's speech, see Fitzroy, Memoirs, p. 477.

The permanent staff of the Foreign Office and the Diplomatic Corps could hardly conceal their hostility to the Mission. Bertie called it an "absurd and foolish move to satisfy the Grey-must-go Radicals. But the Foreign Office officials were often less aware of political pressures and were generally inclined to be contemptuous of "our singularly naive and feeble negotiations." On the other hand, Grey as a politician had to take into consideration the pressures of liberal radicals, and, at least, make some gesture to appease his political colleagues. Nevertheless he had misgivings about the mission, and he had to spend considerable time assuring Britain's entente partners that there would be no secret agreement with Germany and that Haldane had gone to Berlin to test the ground.[1]

British newspapers, starved of information on the real reasons for Haldane's sojourn in Berlin, almost seemed to want to convince themselves that the Cabinet Minister was discussing nothing more serious than a colonial understanding.[2] But was a colonial understanding innocuous? In the words of Charles Hardinge it was curious how "as soon as we settle our differences with a Great Power, the agreement as with France gradually develops into an Entente."[3]

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1. (Bertie Papers) FO800/171 Bertie to Nicolson, Feb. 11, 1912; Nicolson to Bertie, April 6, 1912; cf. Grey of Fallodon, op. cit. p. 252; Koss, Lord Haldane, pp. 72-73; B.D.VI No. 495 Grey to Buchanan, Feb. 7, 1912; No. 498 Grey to Bertie, Feb. 7, 1912. Austen Chamberlain, Politics from Inside, p. 412, summed up the Unionist view: "... the visit seems to me singularly ill-timed and the representative ill-chosen."

2. Even The Times which was against further enlargement of Germany's African Empire was relieved to announce that one of the main tasks of Haldane was to convince Germany that Britain was not "an ambitious competing party" in regard to territorial expansion in Africa (Feb. 10, 1912). The Spectator put it more bluntly:"Haldane's visit was able to prove viva voce that Britain wants to be friends and welcomed her expansion", but it had also made it plain that Britain wanted to remain supreme at sea and that she would not forsake France and Russia (Feb. 17, 1912) See also the Westminster Gazette, Feb. 10 and 12, 1912; Manchester Guardian, Feb. 10, 1912 quoting Rundschau.

3. (Hardinge Papers) FO800/24 Sir Charles Hardinge to Villiers, Feb. 20, 1908; cf. Chamberlain, op. cit. p. 412, Crowe's comments on FO371/75/19790 press cutting of an article in Grenzbote, quoted by the Morning Post, June 8, 1906 advocating Anglo-German co-opration on the Bagdad Railway; B.D.VI No. 527 Lord Granville to Grey, Feb. 29, 1912.

There was an underlying assumption that a colonial rapprochement was just one step towards a general understanding. And one suspects that although the Foreign Office might be induced to make gestures towards an Anglo-German rapprochement, there was not always a wish for one. There was a fear, and Crowe never ceased to harp on it, that Germany might use its friendship with Britain to attack France. The defeat of France by Germany would be one step nearer to European hegemony and world domination by Germany. It was, therefore, of the utmost necessity not to do anything that would adversely affect Anglo-French relations or reduce French confidence in Britain.

It was this reasoning which seemed to have underlined the Foreign Office's attitude to the talks that followed the Haldane Mission.

CHAPTER V

British reactions to suggestions for colonial rapprochement and the aftermath of the Haldane Mission, 1912-1914

"... We hoped that the formula which we had suggested might be considered in connection with the discussion of territorial arrangements, even if it was not effective in preventing the increase of Naval expenditure. If some arrangement could be come to between us, it would have a favourable, though indirect, effect upon Naval expenditure as time went on; and it would have a favourable and direct effect upon public opinion in both countries."

(Grey to Goschen, March 29, 1912, B.D.VI No. 557)

"Comme jadis la Pologne d'epecée fut un lien entra la Prusse, l'Autriche et la Russie, on espère icé que l'Empire colonial portugaise, absorbé peu à peu en commun, créera des liens entre la politique de l'Angleterre et celle de l'Allemagne et rattachera les deux pays l'un à l'autre en détachant l'Angleterre de ses amis actuels."

(De Manneville, Jan. 3, 1914. D.D.F.IX No. 10)

Lord Haldane arrived in Berlin on February 8, 1912, and after a series of meetings with Bethmann Hollweg, Tirpitz, and the Kaiser, he only succeeded in gaining an offer by the Germans to reduce the tempo of their ship-building, in return for a tangible political formula.[1]

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1. For the background story of the Haldane Mission see; Viscount Haldane, Before the War, pp. 56-70; R.B. Haldane, An Autobiography, pp. 239-246; (Haldane Papers) 5919 Memo of events between 1906-1915; Emile Bourgeois "La Mission de Lord Haldane à Berlin", Revue des deux Mondes, Vol.XXXV 7ieme periode (Oct. 15, 1926) pp. 881-910, gives a French view; G.P. Gooch, "Lord Haldane," Contemporary Review Vol. 34, (Oct., 1928) pp. 424-432. Bethmann Hollweg, Reflections on the World War, pp. 49-55; Tirpitz, Memoirs, pp. 215-226. The most recent study on the Mission is by Stephen E. Koss, Lord Haldane - scapegoat for Imperialism, Chpt. III

Haldane rejected Bethmann's proposal for an unconditional neutrality, but a 'conceivable formula' was arrived at, which suggested that if either Power should be engaged in a defensive war, the other would observe, at least, a 'benevolent neutrality'.

On the Colonial issue there seemed to have been some misunderstanding later as to who offered what and what was promised whom. But generally, the Chancellor promised to give concessions to Britain on the Bagdad Railway, and he signified Germany's desire to acquire certain British territories, such as Zanzibar, Pemba, the Seal and Penguin Islands; and foreign possessions, e.g. the whole of Angola. Bethmann was prepared to consider British interests in Katanga, if successful negotiations with France and Belgium could secure the lower Congo basin for Germany. Haldane on his part, expressed his desire to accommodate Germany and he emphasised that Britain would like Germany to give up its right over Timor.[1]

Of course, in the discussions which Haldane had with the German leaders, the divergencies and mistrust which were to appear later were already apparent.[2] It was evident that Britain would not agree to a formula which would tie her hands and prevent her from running to the aid of France, while it was also obvious that Germany could only agree to reduce her navy programme if she was assured of a precise political formula. Since the arrangement arrived at by Haldane and Bethmann did not prevent either side from increasing its fleet and, as the subsequent

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1. B.D.VI No. 506 Diary of Lord Haldane's Visit to Berlin, Feb. 10, 1912 and Appendices, G.P. XXXI Nrs. 11359, 11362, 11363 and 11364; Dugdale, German Documents, IV pp. 74-75.

2. While Haldane had stressed from the beginning that he had only gone to Berlin to test the ground and that any arrangement come to was ad referendum, Bethmann's account stated that Haldane had made a definite offer of neutrality plus colonial concessions in return for accommodation in the Navy programme and the Bagdad Railway. See B.D.VI No. 506 Ibidem; cf. G.P. XXXI Nrs. 11363 and 11364; Dugdale IV pp. 75-76; q.v. Fischer, Germany's aims in the First World War, pp. 20-29.

discussion demonstrated,[1] ~~that~~ neither side was willing to give the other what it cherished most, the colonial question, therefore, became the only subject on which agreement was reached, though it was not signed. Nonetheless, when Haldane left Berlin on February 11, guarding his box which "contained more secrets than any had for probably half a century," he was pleased with his mission and impressed by Bethmann, "a high-minded sincere gentleman."[2]

On the other hand, his colleagues were not so happy when they scrutinised the novelle, a copy of which had been handed to Haldane by the Kaiser when he was leaving, and which he had not had time to study. Churchill worked out that this new bill would cause Britain to spend about £14½ million over the next five years if she wanted to maintain a safe margin of superiority. The most serious feature of the Novelle, observed the First Lord, was "the extraordinary increase in the striking force of all classes throughout the year."[3]

While the Cabinet thought it would be an absurdity, if both countries followed "an exchange of pacific and friendly formula" with a "large and progressive increase in Naval expenditure," it, however, decided not to lose so favourable an opportunity for improving our relations." Grey was authorised to find out from Metternich whether the novelle could be altered so as to avoid the necessity for heavy increases in the British estimates.[4] On February 22nd and 29th, British Ministers made it plain to Metternich that if the Novelle was not changed, Britain might be forced to increase her own estimates. Not only that, they also seemed to have reduced the colonial concessions which had been promised Germany;[5] for example, Grey

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1. Bourgeois, op. cit. pp. 896-897; G.P. XXXI Nr. 11359; Mander, op. cit. pp. 277-286; B.D.VI No. 506 Minute by Crowe.
2. (Haldane Papers) 5987 letter to his mother, Feb.11, 1912; Robbins, op.cit. p. 258.
3. (Haldane Papers) 5987 letter to his mother, Feb. 14, 1912; Churchill, World Crisis, I, pp. 102-104; Mander, p.279; CAB41/33/37 Report of the P.M. to the Sovereign, Feb. 16, 1912.
4. CAB41/33/37 P.M. to Sovereign, Feb. 21, 1912.
5. B.D.VI No. 523 Memo by Sir Edward Grey, Feb. 22, 1912; B.D.VI No. 524 Grey to Goschen, Feb. 24, 1912 encl. copy of memo communicated to Count Metternich; D.D.F. 3rd Series Vol. II No. 39 P. Cambon to Poincaré, Feb. 15, 1912; (Haldane Papers) 6011 letter to his sister, March 1, 1912; Bourgeois, p. 901ff.

told Metternich that Zanzibar and Pemba could not be ceded without corresponding territorial concessions from Germany (the concession of rights on the Bagdad Railway was not adequate).

When news of this development reached the Kaiser he was outraged. Not only did the British government seem to have disavowed the "firm offers" of Haldane, it also seemed to be dictating a naval policy to Germany. He vented his spleen on Metternich: "If Metternich understood his duties properly, he ought to have told Grey a week ago that his proposal meant a complete disavowal of Lord Haldane's negotiation with His Majesty, and that he refused to pass on such a proposal..."[1] He ordered Metternich not to proceed with the discussion of the naval question until Britain had favoured him a political agreement including a clause of neutrality! He also threatened war if the British Admiralty concentrated its fleet in the North Sea. The Chancellor, who felt the moment inopportune to provoke a war, averted danger by tendering his resignation. The Kaiser could not afford to lose him, because he was trusted abroad; and he therefore retreated and promised changes in the Navy Law.[2]

The internal struggle in the Berlin Cabinet was suspected in London, and so when Metternich, in a 'remarkable interview',told Haldane on March 12th, that Berlin would not press "the provocative points of the proposed new law" if Britain offered her an acceptable formula, it was interpreted as a temporary victory for Bethmann over Tirpitz.[3]

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1. Minutes by the Kaiser on Metternich's despatch. G.P.XXXI Nr. 11374; cited in Bourgeois, op. cit. p. 900; Röhl, "Müller and the Approach of War, 1911-1914", The Historical Journal, Vol. XII, No. 4 (1969) pp.651-673; B. Hollweg, Reflections, p. 54.
2. For an account of the crisis in the Berlin government following this despatch see, Bourgeois, op. cit. p. 920ff; Röhl, p.659; Woodward, op. cit. p. 342ff; Lamar Cecil, Ballin, p. 192ff; Minutes by the Kaiser on Metternich's despatch, March 1, 1912 G.P.XXXI Nrs. 11380 and 11387.
3. Robbins, op. cit. p. 259; B.D.VI No. 533 Memo by Lord Haldane on a conversation with Count Metternich, March 12, 1912; CAB41/33/40 P.M. to Sovereign, March 14, 1912.

The Pro-Germans in the Cabinet were delighted. On March 14, the Cabinet authorised Grey to offer the following formula: "England will make no unprovoked attack upon Germany and pursue no aggressive policy towards her. Aggression upon Germany is not the subject and forms no part of any treaty understanding or combination to which England is now a party nor will she become a party to anything that has such an object."[1]

Metternich, certain that such a formula would not be acceptable to Berlin since there was no mention of neutrality, urged Grey to include a neutrality clause.[2] Harcourt also pressed his colleague to agree. But Grey was adamant. Such a clause would hamper the freedom of England and it would lead the French into thinking that Britain might not help them if they had a war with Germany. Since it was the basic tenet of Grey's policy to support France, he simply could not prejudice it by subscribing to a neutrality formula.[3]

Already, the French were showing nervous concern over these talks. Paul Cambon was a frequent visitor to the British Foreign Office to get the latest information.[4] His anxieties were shared by the senior members of the Foreign Office who feared that by discussing a formula at all, Grey was playing a dangerous game. Crowe did not believe that "German policy could be deflected by concessions on our part, territorial or otherwise"; while Nicolson drove home, with "as much energy" as he could muster, arguments against a formula.[5] Bertie, frightened that the British Cabinet would reach an agreement, (which in his view would be prejudicial to the

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1. Ibidem; B.D.VI No. 537 Grey to Goschen, March 14, 1912 encl. copy of draft formula communicated to Metternich.
2. B.D.XI No. 539 Grey to Goschen, March 15, 1912; Woodward, p. 345ff; Marder, Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, pp. 280-283.
3. Robbins, pp. 259-260; Lowe and Dockrill, The Mirage of Power, pp. 50-51.
4. For French anxiety over the Anglo-German pourparlars, see D.D.F. 3rd Series II Nos. 11, 12, 15, 16, 25, 42, 72, 88, 104, 105, 119, 126, 240, 266, 271, 319, etc. B.D.VI Nos. 563 and 564.
5. See Minutes by Crowe on B.D. VI Nos. 506, 527, and 564; Nicolson, Ibidem; No. 562 Nicolson to Goschen, April 1, 1912.

Entente) hurried to London in a desperate bid to avert disaster. To his horror he found out that Harcourt, Loreburn and even Lloyd George were "for coming to arrangements." He noted: "Grey is wavering," while Churchill was against and the Prime Minister was aware of the difficulties in reaching an agreement with Germany which would bind her and yet not hamper British arrangements with France.[1]

Bertie himself was not against a formula, so he said, for he "thought that a formula of some kind had become necessary, but it should be of a very general and anodyne character."[2] Yet a few weeks later he was urging Poincaré to protest "avec énérgie" against publication of "une déclaration quelconque."[3]

While Grey shared his staff's distrust of Germany, he, however, felt that an attempt should be made to remove tension between the two countries as France and Russia had done in their relations with Germany. He even made a further concession, though a useless one, to the formula of March 14th (i.e. "Britain will neither make nor join in any unprovoked attack upon Germany").[4] But it was becoming plain at this time that there would be no headway; for as it was later revealed, what Berlin really wanted was an "absolute neutrality" formula, which no British government, certainly not the Liberal government, could give.[5]

Thus, in the interview Grey had with Metternich on March 16th, he expressed the hope that the two powers would discuss the territorial question and exchange some formula which would have a calming effect.[6]

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1. (Bertie Papers) FO800/171 Memo by Bertie, Feb. 16, 1912.
2. Ibidem, Memo by Bertie, Feb. 19, 1912; Lowe and Dockrill, op. cit.
3. D.D.F.II No. 319 Note of M. Poincaré to Paléologue, April 10, 1912; Raymond Poincaré, Au Service de la France: Le Lendemain d'Agadir, (1926) Vol. I pp. 170-171.
4. See note 1, p. 400; B.D.VI No. 544 Grey to Goschen, March 16, 1914; CAB41/33/41 P.M. to Sovereign, March 16, 1912; B. Hollweg, Reflections, p. 54; Robbins, p. 259.
5. B.D.VI No. 545 Grey to Goschen, March 19, 1912; G.P. XXXI Nrs. 11405 & 11406; Dugdale IV, pp. 83-86; Woodward, p. 350ff; Röhl, op. cit. p. 659.
6. B.D.VI No. 544 Grey to Goschen, March 16, 1912; cf. P. Dubois, "Les Negotiations Anglo-Allemandes relatives aux Colonies Portugaises de 1912 à 1914", Revue d'Histoire de la Guerre Mondiale (1939) pp.232-246.

The subsequent course of the talks would suggest that this interview was a turning point in the negotiations which followed Haldane's mission. In subsequent days, both powers publicly declared their intention of increasing their Navies. Though desultory talks continued, it was clear by the end of March, that after the presentation of the British Naval estimates for 1912-1913 (March 18th), and the publication of the Novelle on March 22nd, there was no hope of reaching a political/naval agreement.[1]

Asquith himself confirmed this on April 10th when he confessed to Grey: "...I am becoming more and more doubtful as to the wisdom of prolonging these discussions with Germany about a formula. Nothing, I believe, will meet her purpose which falls short of promise on our part of neutrality: a promise we cannot give. And she makes no firm or solid offer, even in exchange for that." It was with relief that the British government received Germany's decision to proceed with the Novelle (since His Majesty's Government "could not agree to the larger formula " which had been asked for).[2]

The breakdown in the naval/political discussions did not preclude an understanding on territorial questions. Grey had emphasised this to Metternich in their interviews of March 16th, 19th and 29th. A few pertinent questions seem desirable to explain why Grey took the initiative in these three meetings to suggest a colonial deal: Was it a diversion to a less inconvenient arrangement, or was he anxious for a territorial arrangement at a time when it was obvious that the naval/political talks had failed, to stand as some tangible result of British efforts at rapprochement?

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1. For accounts of this episode, see Churchill, op. cit. pp. 107-118; Woodward, p. 353ff; Mardam, op. cit. pp. 283-284. The Novelle was presented to the Reichstag on April 14, 1912.

2. B.D.VI No. 571 Asquith to Grey, April 10, 1912; B.D.VI No. 557 Grey to Goschen, March 29, 1912; Woodward, p. 358.

Did he hope to strengthen his hand diplomatically by giving concessions in Africa?[1] Or was he experimenting on some issues as his most recent biographer suggests?[2]

It is not always easy to read the motives of statesmen with accuracy, since situations and attitudes are always changing; but what can be said, in the case of Grey, with a fair amount of certainty, is that whatever flexibility he might have shown he was basically distrustful of Germany.[3] At the same time, he seemed to have wanted some agreement with Germany for various reasons, either to conciliate some of his critics such as Harcourt, who was uncomfortably pressing for a political formula, or to show that, given the subject and its scope, Britain and Germany were capable of reaching an agreement. Or it might be that the Naval/Political talks having failed, he simply carried the Haldane programme to its logical conclusion.[4]

On the other hand, Grey seemed to be using African colonial questions, just as he attempted to do in the Walfisch Bay question in 1908, to take the heat off European diplomatic differences. Though he never formulated such a trend into a policy, or outlined his ideas on this point as concisely as Harcourt, nevertheless, there were one or two indications that Grey did think that perhaps a more accommodating attitude by Britain on colonial questions might invoke a relative flexibility in German Naval policy.[5] He was proved wrong; and perhaps this appreciation of realities partly accounted for his lack of interest in the colonial issue, during the latter part of 1913-1914.

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1. W.R. Louis, Great Britain and Germany's Lost Colonies, 1914-1919, p. 58.
2. Robbins, Lord Grey of Fallodon, p. 260.
3. B.D.X(11) No. 455, Grey to Rodd, January 13, 1913.
4. CAB37/110/52 Grey to Goschen, March 19, 1912. Printed for the Cabinet, March 21, 1912; B.D.X(11) No. 366 Grey to Goschen, March 3, 1914.
5. See pp. 182, 192 and 320. On the question of giving concessions to Germany in the Penguin and Seal Islands, Grey remarked: "... the islands have considerable value for Germany ... in my opinion we should not make it a cardinal point of our policy to prevent Germany from having a good harbour on the coast of South West Africa, but if we are to give facilities it should clearly be a matter of bargain for which value should be given in return." Minute by Grey on FO367/231/42827 Admiralty to F.O., Oct. 27, 1911.

Anyway, whatever the motives of Grey might have been, the Germans reacted positively to his invitation for a colonial agreement. Bethmann instructed Metternich to make a comprehensive agreement on colonial questions which included the Portuguese colonies, Zanzibar and Pemba, the Bagdad Railway and Persia.[1] Kühlmann also saw Tyrrell, Grey's private secretary, and discussed the matter with him. If agreement could be come to on the colonial question, it would serve as a "shop-window dressing" and it would remove the widespread impression amongst the Germans that Britain begrudged them "every place under the sun", urged the German Counsellor. The latter also expressed the wish that he would like France to come in on the deal if Britain could take the initiative of sounding her.[2]

Once the two governments agreed to negotiate on territorial changes, what were the implications of the colonial deal? In answering this question three factors must be borne in mind: 1. the entente cordiale was the pivot on which Grey's foreign policy revolved and he would not do anything which might injure British relationship with France; 2. the attitude of the permanent staff towards Berlin. Though Professor Trevelyan[3] and others would argue that Grey was master in his own house and that it was his views that counted, yet the opinions of his senior staff invariably modified the Foreign Secretary's attitude; 3. British interests, i.e. strategy, imperial/colonial interests (e.g. in South Africa), and commerce.

This chapter will endeavour to show that British policy had not changed basically, and that African colonial questions could not be divorced from the arena of international politics. If the Foreign Office staff objected to a formula with Germany and the French had anxious moments, they demonstrated the same feelings on the territorial question.

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1. G.P. XXXI Nr. 11440; Woodward, p. 357.
2. B.D. VI No. 565 Memo by Mr. Tyrrell, April 3, 1912.
3. G.M. Trevelyan, Grey of Fallodon, p. 112. Cf Zara Steiner, The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, p. 80ff.

While the Naval and political talks were proceeding Kühlmann and Harcourt had been working on the colonial question. Harcourt and Grey had studied the map of Africa in a "pro-German spirit" in January, 1912;[1] and after discussing the question with Metternich (March 9th) and with Kühlmann, through a series of meetings and by correspondence, the colonial secretary and his German collaborators agreed on a basis for a revised version of the 1898 secret treaty on the Portuguese colonies. The first draft of May 26th, provided for the renouncement of the British sphere in Angola in return for an enlarged sphere in East Africa (i.e. north of the Zambézir) and a small enclave in the south east of Angola. Timor was dropped out. In return Britain disinterested herself in San Thome and Principe, where Germany showed indications of developing its interests. These two islands had not been included in the original agreement, but by bringing them in, British negotiators hoped to demonstrate their bien veillance.[2] Harcourt went further, he wanted to include other territories in the deal, though Metternich's responses in the interview of March 9th had not been very encouraging. Nonetheless, Harcourt was willing to cede the Seal and Penguin Islands and to concede the thalweg of the Orange River as the boundary between German South West Africa and the Union of South Africa in return for Caprivi Zipfel. He was also disposed to consider the lease or cession of Walfisch Bay in exchange for the lease or cession of part of German South West Africa east of parallel 20.

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1. B.D.X(11) No. 266 Grey to Goschen, December 29,1911.

2. P.H.S. Hatton, "Harcourt and Solf: the search for an Anglo-German understanding through Africa, 1912-1914", offprint European Studies Review, I No. 2 (1971) pp. 123-145. B.D.X[11] No. 276 Memo by Harcourt, March 9, 1912; B.D.X (11) No. 299 Harcourt to Grey, May 26, 1912 encl. memo; B.D.X. (11) No. 301 Draft telegram from Harcourt to Lord Gladstone, May 28(?) 1912. For minutes and letters leading to this first draft see (Harcourt Papers) Box I, envelope marked Secret (Anglo-German Secret Convention).

He even wanted to exchange Zanzibar and Pemba, though the Colonial Office staff and other departments were opposed to the cession, for the German territory of Ruanda. The Germans, however, refused to pay this price for the British Islands. Metternich observed that the cession of Ruanda "would cut German East Africa off from any possible future connection (through the Congo) with their West African possessions, actual or potential."[1]

There were also difficulties with the Union government over the proposed territorial changes in South Africa. Premier Botha found it impossible to assent to the proposal for strategic reasons. He argued that a well defended Naval base in Luderitzbucht or Walfisch Bay would endanger the Union; and that the areas offered by Germany were not of adequate economic value for the Seal and Penguin Islands and Walfisch Bay. Botha was also less enthusiastic about the proposed revision of the 1898 treaty.[2]

Deadlock on the British territorial questions left the revision of the 1898 treaty as the only subject for further negotiations. Before definite agreement was reached the opinions of the Service Departments were sought. The War Office opposed the contemplated modification in Angola. The argument was that the 1898 treaty secured communication with the sea for Rhodesia through Portuguese territory. This concession might prove to be of considerable importance to Britain in future; and if it was given away, Britain might find herself, as she did over Delagoa Bay during

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1. Ibidem. On departmental objections to the cession of Zanzibar and Pemba see CAB37/109/24. Notes on Zanzibar and Pemba printed for the Cabinet Feb. 1912 (Board of Trade, Feb. 19, 1912); CAB37/109/29 (Admiralty, Feb. 26, 1912); CAB37/109/11 (F.O. Memo by J.A.C. Tilley, Feb. 5, 1912); B.D.VI No. 524 Grey to Goschen, Feb. 24, 1912.

2. Minute by H.W. Just (Asst. Under Secretary, Colonial Office) on draft telegrams to Gladstone, May 28, 1912. (Harcourt Papers) Box I, B.D.X(11) No. 309 Gladstone to Harcourt, June 13, 1912. A long series of correspondence was exchanged between Harcourt and Gladstone on the subject of Botha's approval of the revision of the treaty. Apart from not favouring the enlargement of German territories, he was also displeased about the amount of territory that would fall to South Africa compared with that allotted to Rhodesia. See (Harcourt Papers) Box 2, letters between Harcourt and Gladstone from Dec. 16, 1912 to April 23, 1913, especially Gladstone to Harcourt, 12/3/13.

the Boer War, unable to make use of this communication which she had the opportunity of securing for herself.[1]

The Admiralty did not exactly oppose the proposed revision. A long memo wistfully observed that if Britain had retained the port of San Paulo de Loanda (allotted to her under the secret treaty) the Royal Navy would have been able to watch and neutralise German activities, in an important stretch of trade route used by British ships, more easily. Now the Admiralty would have to augment its squadrons in Sierra Leone and the Cape proportional to whatever the Germans kept in the station (i.e. San Paulo de Loanda). On the other hand, the establishment of Germany on that coast would mean the dispersion of her fleet, and this would be to the advantage of Britain. Finally, the memo stated that the changes in Mozambique did not affect Naval policy in any way.[2]

In a memo of December, 1912, the Admiralty reaffirmed its view that British strategical interests would not be affected by German presence in Angola or Mozambique. What the Board was nervous about was the acquisition, by Germany or any hostile power, of the Portuguese Islands: the Azores, Cape Verde and Portuguese Guinea, which in any case were outside the treaty of 1898.[3] On Admiralty evidence, therefore, it would seem as though no ill effects would result in the revision of the treaty giving Germany certain ports which could be converted into Naval bases. But that department was not always consistent. As I have shown in Chapter II, the Admiralty was often excited by rumours of German interests in ports on the East African coast, for example, in Fernao Veloza.

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1. B.D.X(11) No. 371 Grey to Colonel Seeley, June 18, 1912; No.313. Col. Seeley to Grey, July 4, 1912.
2. B.D.X(11) No. 310 Grey to Churchill, June 18, 1912; No. 316 Churchill to Grey, July 17, 1912. Harcourt minuted: "This is on the whole satisfactory. The Admiralty do not realise that Lobito Bay w(oul)d go to Germany under the present treaty. Any dispersion of the German fleet w(oul)d be a great advantage." This makes one wonder how genuine Harcourt's pro-German sentiments were.
3. FO367/342/7899 "Remarks on the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance and the Strategic value of Portuguese Colonies and Memorandum by Sir Eyre Crowe on Admiralty Memorandum of Dec. 18, 1912." (Registered on February 18, 1913).

And it did not view the prospect of Germany establishing itself at Walfisch Bay or acquiring the Seal or Penguin Islands with equanimity.[1]

The permanent staff of the Foreign Office were consistent in their attitude towards Germany. The leaders of this uncompromising anti-German bloc were Crowe and Nicolson in London; Bertie, Coschen and A. Hardinge in Paris, Berlin and Lisbon respectively.[2] Examples of Bertie's opposition to a repartition of Africa have been given elsewhere. When the Cabinet appeared to be willing to give colonial concessions to Germany, he pointed out in conversations with Grey and Nicolson during his hurried visit to London in February, 1912, that the proposal to cede Pemba and Zanzibar would be a gratuitous sacrifice. He stressed that the French were anxious about these talks and if concessions were"given without practically any return it (will) be surmised that there must be some secret agreement to our advantage."[3]

Mindful of French mutterings with reference to the colonial discussions (and it might well be an attempt to dissuade Grey from going along with the talks by harping on French susceptibilities) Bertie never ceased to urge that the French be consulted. Even Crowe was irritated by Sir Francis' persistence: "The French government want to know more than this office can tell them. The negotiations are at present in Nebulia," minuted the Senior Clerk.[4] Crowe viewed the Anglo-German territorial negotiations from two points both based on the apparent irreconciliability of Anglo-German interests. He believed that in treating with Germany to despoil

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1. See Crowe's sarcastic comments on Bertie to Grey, July 12, 1911. B.D. VII No. 372, ref. to the Admiralty. See note 2, p. 192.

2. Harcourt was bitterly attacked by these men. Bertie called him a "tempter' who was not only "a willing seller but a generous giver of which might (sic) almost be considered stolen or filched goods." (Bertie Papers) FO800/171 Bertie to Nicolson, April 1, 1912. See Watton, op. cit. pp. 133-134 and Steiner, op. cit., p. 128ff for discussion of attitude of members of the Foreign Office.

3. See pp.400-401 (Bertie Papers) FO800/171 Memo by Bertie on conversation with Grey, Feb. 16, 1912.

4. B.D.VI No. 578 Bertie to Grey, April 18, 1912 and Crowe's minute on it. See also B.D. X(11) No. 268 Bertie to Grey, January 12, 1912.

the possession of her ally, whatever that power's weaknesses and shortcomings were, Britain was running the risk of alienating Portugal and thus driving her towards the arms of Germany. The maintenance of the alliance was of great interest to Britain, for by appealing to it Germany had been and would be prevented from taking possession of Portuguese territories, especially the strategic islands of Azores and Cape Verde.[1]

Secondly he was dismayed by what appeared to be a gratuitous sacrifice of British interests to Germany. In a particularly bitter minute on the first draft of the revised treaty with reference to the proposed surrender of the British strip to Germany, he observed:

> "I am apprehensive lest H(is) M(ajesty's G(overnment) should be accused of repeating the mistake that was made in ceding Heligoland. That also was treated at the time as of no importance, it was also effected without any consultation with the strategical advisers. I believe it is now agreed that if Heligoland were not in German hands, Germany would never have been able to create the tremendously strong defensive position on her North Sea Coast which we have to meet by so costly a superiority of floating and offensive forces.[2] If and when Germany shall have consolidated her African Empire by the absorption besides Angola and Northern Mozambique, of most of the Belgian and French Congo - which she is clearly aiming at - and shall have raised and perfected a powerful native army there - which she will certainly do - it is not difficult to foresee that the action of H(is) M(ajesty's) G(overnment) in throwing away the advantage which they possessed in the Angola belt with the port of Loanda, will be bitterly lamented and blamed."[2]

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1. Crowe's memo on the Admiralty memo of Dec. 18, 1912 and Nicolson's minute on it, FO367/342/7899; B.D.X(11) Nos. 281, 282 and 299. Minutes by Crowe.

2. B.D. X(11) No. 299 Harcourt to Grey, May 26, 1912. Minute by Crowe, endorsed by Grey.

As we have seen, the Admiralty did not think the passing of Loanda to Germany would greatly affect British position, but these views of Crowe expressed his anger at Harcourt who, the former feared, was trying to usurp the role of the Foreign Office by negotiating on matters which really must be decided from the point of view of foreign policy.[1]

Secondly, these pourparlers ~~caught~~ offended against his cherished principle of not making any concession to Germany without adequate returns, ~~on the eve~~. He was particularly incensed by reports of German obstructions to British capitalists in Sao Thome and Principe. He angrily noted: "British interests are real and (we) cannot be justified in sacrificing them to German cupidity. We have gone as far as we ever could be expected, to meet German territorial aspirations by signing the agreement of 1898. We areneither technically nor morally bound to stand aside before German pushfulness in other parts of the world."[2] Though he detested the whole transaction, he dutifully carried out the assignment given to him by Grey, since he was the supervising Assistant Under Secretary of the African department and the only one with legal training and technical knowledge of the German language, to prepare the drafts for the Anglo-German treaty.[3]

Nicolson, who was finding himself increasingly disenchanted with the Liberal government and its policy of "pacifism", agreed with Crowe's analysis.[4] He himself regarded the talks on the Portuguese Colonies "as the most cynical business that I have come across in my whole experience of diplomacy." He refused to do absolutely anything with the whole "discreditable" business.[5] He was neither disposed to ceding British

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1. B.D. X(11) No. 285 C.O. to F.O. April 1, 1912; B.D.X(11) No. 306 Bertie to Grey, June 5, 1912. Minutes by Crowe.
2. See pp. 373-4. FO367/289/3646 E.J.Frewen to Under-Secretary of State, January 25, 1912. Minute by Crowe.
3. Steiner, op. cit. pp. 142-143.
4. For a discussion of Nicolson's differences with Grey and contempt for the Liberal government, see Steiner, op. cit. p. 139ff; Robbins, op. cit. pp. 225,240,263-264, 267-268; Lowe and Dockrill, op. cit. pp. 119-120. q.v. (Bertie Papers) FO800/171 Nicolson to Bertie, April 6, 1912.
5. Quoted in Harold Nicolson, Sir Arthur Nicolson, p. 313; Steiner, p. 128.

territories, whether they were of immediate use strategically or otherwise:

> "Utility is not everything, and if we were ready to part with all possessions which were not strictly useful, the Empire would shrink considerably," he minuted in February, 1912.[1]

But this reservation applied only when such a possibility concerned with Germany; with France it was different. Thus a French proposal which would have truncated $\frac{2}{3}$ of Nigeria was not rejected in principle by Nicolson. This was the double standard assumed by the Foreign Office staff when colonial questions were discussed. It would seem that a disposition towards a colonial deal depended on the political relationship with the particular country concerned.

With such an attitude by the Foreign Office staff it is a wonder that Grey, who shared their distrust of Germany and who sometimes agreed with them, approved the colonial talks. It is arguable also whether these would have progressed to the extent that they did had not Harcourt, "who was adept at moulding opinion by the quietest and often unobserved methods",[2] pushed the matter through. While Grey tried to justify his deal on the Portuguese colonies on the grounds that they were sinks of iniquity and that the Portuguese were incapable of administering them, he did seem to be sceptical about the execution of the partition envisaged in the accord.[3] In June 1913, he told Lichnowsky, when the latter accused him of acting as medical adviser to the Portuguese colonies, that what he envisaged was a development of the colonies by German and British capital in which case the two would not be so much medical advisers as agents or lessees to develop the colonies without disturbing the ownership.[4]

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1. B.D.VI No. 516 Nicolson to Grey, Feb. 13, 1912. (Minute). Cf. p. 335.
2. Quoted from Fitzroy, Memoirs, p. 476. See also James, Memoirs of a Conservative, pp. 10-11.
3. B.D.X(11) 266 Grey to Goschen, Dec. 29, 1911; quoted in Louis, Germany's Lost Colonies, p.33. Cf. D.D.F. 3rd Series VIII No. 397 P. Cambon to Pichon, Oct. 29, 1913, and B.D.X(11) No. 345 Grey to Bertie, Oct.29, 1913.
4. F0367/340/25736 Grey to Goschen, June 13, 1913.

Just as in 1898 the two partners had opposite intentions; one hoping to see the immediate result of his efforts, the other wishing to postpone that eventuality as much as possible. It would appear that Grey intended economic co-operation rather than the territorial aggrandizement of Germany. But then, in this period, economic penetration of less developed countries such as China and Persia was equated with eventual territorial sovereignty. And Grey himself must have appreciated this point since in this very period he was having difficulties with Russia who was bent on transforming its own economic sphere in Persia into a territorial appendage. In this regard, if one's reading of Grey's intention is correct, then Grey was unrealistic, since economic penetration was merely preparing the ground for ultimate partition. It is also possible that Grey was simply being disingenuous - he did not want to come out boldly in favour of partition and he did not want to appear to be cynically carving up the empire of Britain's ally. It was an odd situation.

In any case, it is evident that while Grey showed some flexibility of approach to the colonial problem, his staff were still opposed to concessions to Germany.

There were parallel reservations in the Auswartiges Amt. Possibly only Kiderlen wanted a colonial agreement. Stumm, the political Chief in the Wilhelmstrasse, was hostile. Outside of this institution, Metternich, who was recalled in May, Kühlmann, Marschall, Lichnowsky and Rosen, Ambassador to Portugal, were in favour.[1] The Chancellor himself appeared at one time to favour a colonial agreement.[2] In the Kolonial Amt,

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1. Prince Lichnowsky, My Mission to London, 1912-1914, London (1918) pp.14-19; Edward P. Willis, Prince Lichnowsky, Ambassador of Peace: a study of Pre-War Diplomacy, 1912-1914, Los Angeles (1942) p.194; Williquet, Le Congo Belge, p. 315ff; E.M. Carroll, Germany and the Great Powers, 1866-1914: a study in public opinion and foreign policy, Connecticut (1966) p.702ff; L.B. Namier, "Richard von Kühlmann- the story of a German Diplomatist" Quarterly Review, Vol. 288 (July, 1950) pp.356-372 is rather an unkind comment on Kühlmann's role in the negotiations. Other authors have vindicated the important part the Counsellor played.

2. G.P.XXXI Nr. 11391; Dugdale IV, p. 81..

however, Harcourt had a worthy counterpart in Dr. Solf who used his influence over the less tractable Auswärtiges Amt to accept the British conditions during the revision of the treaty. He did not think it would be wise to precipitate the break up of the Portuguese colonies; but he felt that the "penetration pacifique" of German capital would give a strong stake to Germany in those territories when they came to be divided eventually.[1]

Non governmental circles were also not unanimous on the desirability of a colonial deal with Britain. As was pointed out in the last chapter those pan-Germans, such as Carl Peters, Friedrich Naumann, Delbrück and others who clamoured for colonies, hoped for a larger African Empire as a result of a successful war. Bernhardi noted in 1912:[2] "Other possible schemes may be imagined, by which some extension of our African territory would be possible. These need not be discussed here more particularly. If necessary, they must be obtained as the result of a successful European war..." The Kreuz-Zeitung commenting on the negotiations, stated that Britain was always putting emphasis on the African side of German welt politik. The wish, the paper argued, was father to the thought. It felt convinced that Britain would like Germany to be thoroughly taken up with African affairs leaving other more important places free for British enterprise. The agreement, it said, would not constitute a determining factor in the entente programme. It was merely an agreement by which London must recognise its obligations to a previous treaty as well as "Germany's right to equal treatment in any decisions as to exchanges of territory in Africa." Nevertheless, the conservative journal concluded, the colonial arrangement "comprises certain points which if handled with due care and loyalty on both sides might be developed into a settlement

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1. Eberhard von Vietsch, Wilhelm Solf: Botschafter zwischen den seiten, p. 123ff; Hatton, op. cit., passim.
2. Vietsch, op. cit., pp. 129-133; Carroll, op. cit. pp. 710-12; Bernhardi, Germany and the Next War, pp. 107-114.

serviceable to both countries."[1]

The views of these elements put a big question mark on the hope held by quite a few statesmen that tropical Africa could once again serve the role of a safety valve in International relations. Desirable as the prospect of enlarging their African Empire was, extremists like the Pan-Germans did not believe a colonial deal would affect the political relations of the powers, so long as the entente existed. And it was because they felt that the entente must remain inviolate that the Foreign Office staff distrusted the policy of appeasement.

Still, the idea of a colonial deal as a means of détente remained a desirable objective for some Germans. In 1913, a controversial brochure Deutsche Weltpolitik und Kein Krieg, said to have been officially inspired (Lichknowsky and Kühlmann were suspected) and written by Hans Plehn, a noted journalist, was published. It urged the diversion of German energies in Central Africa where there would be no risk of clashing with British, French or Russian interests as there would in Asia Minor. The powers could collaborate in the commercial rather than the territorial aspect. It created sufficient impact for J. Cambon to anxiously enquire at the Wilhelmstrasse about the real source of the pamphlet.[2]

By May-June, both governments had agreed in principle to renegotiate the 1898 treaty. Difficulties soon arose. The Germans were unwilling to renounce Timor as part of the concession to Britain for surrendering the Enclave in Angola. The slice east of the 20th meridian was considered sufficient for the latter, plus the self denial declaration on Sao Thome and Principe which Britain had conceded.

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1. FO367/284/13638 Goschen to Grey, March 28, 1912 encl article in Kreuz-Zeitung.

2. Carroll, p. 712 cf. C. Bloch "Les Visées allemandes sur le Congo-Belge à la veille de la Grande Guerre", Bulletin de la Société d'histoire moderne, (Oct. 1936) pp. 171-177, Vietsch, p. 218; D.D.F. VIII No. 463, J. Cambon to Pichon, Nov. 9, 1913.

Secondly, Grey's suggestion that he would have to inform the French of the deal respecting the two Islands, since France had consulted Britain during the Agadir episode and because her interests might also be affected, was strongly deprecated by Kiderlen. He was not able to appreciate Grey's extreme consideration for France, and he did not think it was desirable to approach Paris. But Grey remained stubbornly insistent until the Germans agreed not to include any article in the agreement that would be detrimental to French interests.[1]

The negotiations made slow progress, not least because of the technical details, but also because there was some scepticism in Berlin of London's sincerity in view of the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance. As Marschall, the Ambassador who succeeded Metternich in June, 1912, told Grey, this enabled Britain to come to an agreement with Lisbon about her colonies while Germany's proposals could be blocked if Portugal appealed to the alliance. The agreement, it was argued, was one-sided. Such a suspicion was not unjustified in view of Britain's action in 1899 (in confirming the ancient alliance guaranteeing Portuguese possessions) which neutralised the effect of the secret treaty. To ensure that the agreement stood a fair chance of succeeding this time, Marschall suggested a declaration or an understanding whereby both parties could occupy their reversionary zones if Britain found it necessary to occupy part of, or assert her rights in any section of her zone.[2]

Grey, who was also considering revising the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance by signing it at fixed intervals instead of in perpetuity, since it was "morally indefensible to protect the scandalous state of things" that

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1. CAB41/33/51, P.M. to Sovereign, June 4, 1912; B.D.X(11) No. 305 Grey to Goschen, June 4, 1912; cf. G.P. XXXI Nrs. 11447, 11448; B.D.X. (11) No. 308 Grey to Goschen, June 10, 1912; cf. G.P. XXXI 11451.

2. B.D.X (11) No. 312 Grey to Goschen, July 4, 1912; Nos. 314 and 315 Grey to Granville, July 17, 1912; Willis, op. cit., pp. 186-187.

existed in the Portuguese colonies, was willing to think over Marschall's proposal.[1]

The German Ambassador did not live to pursue the matter. He died on September 24th. Kühlmann, and then Lichnowsky, carried on the talks. Misunderstandings over details still continued; but these were, however, not very important. What became an issue for the rest of the talks was the British proposal to publish the secret treaty of 1898 as well as the revised treaty.

The British position was plain, or so it seemed. Grey and the Liberal government had been attacked for secret diplomacy, and Grey had declared in parliament that the government would be no party to secret agreements. Thus, for this reason it was necessary to publish the treaties. Furthermore, publication would acquaint German and British capitalists with the zones of either power and so prevent Germans investing in the British zone or vice versa as it had been the case in the past. Thirdly, since this colonial deal was supposed to represent a disposition of Britain to accommodate Germany in its colonial desire which, it was hoped, would lead to a détente with that power, its publication would have a favourable effect on public opinion.[2] The reasons of Crowe and the other Foreign Office Germanophobes were more tactical; for example, it was felt that once the treaty became public, Lisbon would be on its guard and would prevent concessions falling into the hands of Germans.[3] I cannot see why so much stress was put on this point, for those who were in the know knew about the secret Anglo-German treaty. The Portuguese government certainly knew about its existence, even if it did not know all its details.

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1. B.D.X(11) infra No. 315; CAB41/33/61 P.M. to Sovereign; August 1, 1912; CAB37/116/53 Memo printed for the Cabinet, July 30, 1913, by Grey; Hatton, op. cit. p. 136.

2. B.D.X (11) No. 318 Grey to Goschen, Nov. 21, 1912; q.v. No. 337; G.P. XXXVII(1) Nr. 14652, P. Dubois, "Les Negotiations Anglo-Allemandes relatives aux colonies portugaises de 1912 à 1914" Revue d'histoire de la Guerre Mondiale (1939) pp. 353-368; FO367/237/50143 Prime Minister's answer to a question on secret treaties in the House of Commons; Parliamentary Debates, XXXII, Nov. 27-Dec.16,1911, pp.107 and 1400.

3. Minute by Crowe, January, 1913, B.D.X(11) infra p. 507.

And, indeed, this treaty, even its provisions, were publicly discussed by newspapers in this period and there was much speculation, to Crowe's disgust, about what rectifications were to be made on the treaty. It would have made little difference to Portuguese attitude to Germany if the treaty was published.[1]

In Berlin, while Solf, recently returned after a successful visit to British territories in South and East Africa, convinced of British sincerity, accepted all the British conditions, including publication, Kiderlen was reluctant to concede this point. The German Foreign Secretary found himself unable to appreciate London's desire for publication (except that the British wanted to contract out, he suspected) since this would not help the execution of the treaty. On the other hand, he conceded that he would agree to the British proposal if Whitehall would be willing to implement the treaty at the same time.[2]

This concession depended on certain conditions: 1. Britain and Germany should have equal liberty of intervention if the interests of either were endangered; 2. if Germany intervened to protect its subjects or property, the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance should not be invoked; and 3. both powers should agree that the alliance did not apply to a Portuguese colony or part of a colony that had declared its independence. Grey appeared to have met Berlin halfway. He offered the opinion that the alliance, which was of ancient origin, did not cover a colony which had declared its independence. He had always been pressed by Lisbon to publish the treaty, but he had refused, feeling that it ought to be published together with the secret treaty.[3]

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1. See pp. 367-9 See F0367/284/391 C.O. to F.O. Jan. 1, 1912 ref. to enquiries made by the British South Africa Company about the possible division of the Portuguese colonies. The Company indicated the areas in which it was interested.

2. Vietsch, p. 125; G.P. XXXVII(1) Nrs. 14653, 14654 and 14667; Dugdale IV, pp. 220 and 224; Willis, p. 187. Kiderlen died on Dec. 30, 1912.

3. B.D.X(11) No. 323 Grey to Goschen, Jan. 11, 1913. Minutes of Crowe, Nicolson and Grey.

As was to be expected, in a minute of 'great force' Crowe emphasised that the German proposals were intended to induce Britain to despoil her ally's territories in advance of any financial difficulties in Portugal which the agreement envisaged. While Grey agreed with Crowe's views, he still maintained that he intended to make the alliance run for a term of years instead of for eternity.

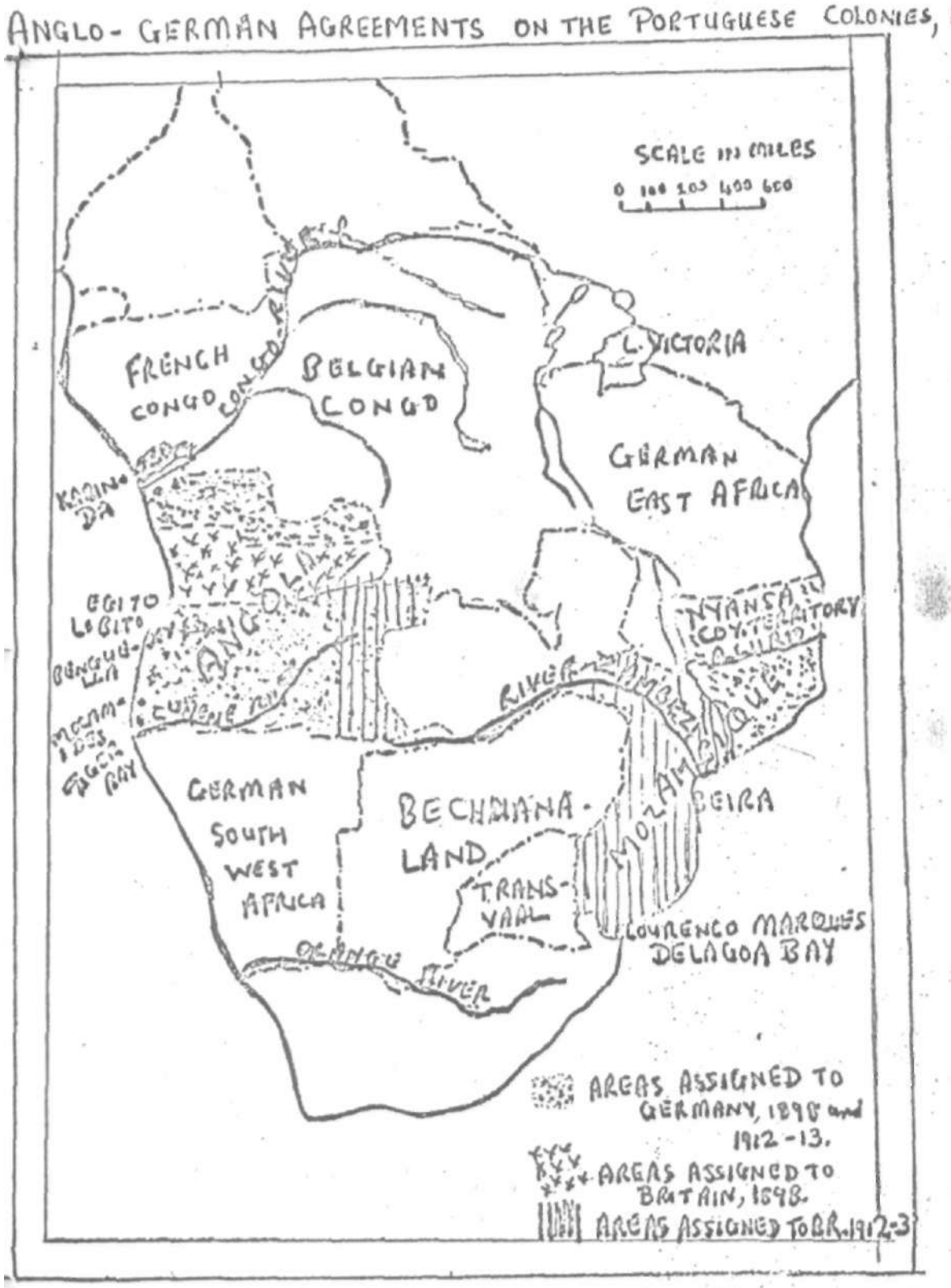
On January 11, 1913, Grey submitted the draft treaty to Lichnowsky. It followed the general terms of the 1898 agreement, using finance as its base. The spheres of influence were revised accordingly: Britain gave up the enclave for a portion lying east of the 20th meridian east longitude and south of the 11th parallel of south latitude, and an extension in Mozambique north of the Zambezi running up to the Lukugu or Likungo River with its confluence the river Lugella; Germany received an enlarged sphere in Angola and a smaller area in Mozambique; Timor was removed from the agreement and Britain disinterested herself in San Thome and Principe.[1]

Berlin took two months to reply to the draft. The reason was, as Jagow, the new Foreign Secretary, who succeeded Kiderlen in January, 1913, explained to Lichnowsky, that Britain was suspected of being capable of circumventing German ambitions as she had done in 1898. He restated Kiderlen's objections to publication. He would not agree to publication "merely as documentary evidence to prove to British public opinion how harmoniously Sir E. Grey (is) co-operating with us in colonial questions, or to free the Minister from the scruples which he(feels)in connection with Portugal over the arrangements ..." To prevent Germany being duped a second time and to anticipate an Anglo-Portuguese understanding, several amendments were made in the British draft which were calculated to ensure that Germany would have equal right of intervention, and that if the treaty

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1. See map on p. 419; B.D.X(11) No. 324 Grey to Lichnowsky, Jan. 11, 1913 encl. draft treaty. The agreement was submitted to the Cabinet for approval on November 21, 1912 (CAB41/33/71 Nov. 21, 1912).

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was published, the simultaneous execution of the terms would nullify any reactions from Lisbon.[1]

Thus, the counterdraft which Lichnowsky submitted on March 18th, apart from slight territorial rectification in Angola, embraced the conditions already referred to.[2] In subsequent amendments to make the agreement tighter and more likely of execution, Berlin included Portuguese slavery as one issue which the two Powers could use as a pretext for intervention, and suggested widening the scope of the preamble, the financial base being too narrow. (It is not improbable that the desire to extend the preamble from its financial base was due to Rosen's letter of January 20, 1913, which, while urging Berlin to conclude the treaty with London, pointed out that Portugal was financially stable).[3]

Crowe, Anderson and Nicolson reacted strongly against these new proposals, especially the one for intervention. The inclusion of slavery received a biting comment from Crowe. The Germans, he said, who had been "quite cynical in their attitude in this question", were putting another pretext for annexing the Portuguese territories. Indeed, he recalled that the Portuguese Minister had suggested that the British anti-slavery agitators were being controlled through the German Embassy in London and the Anglo-German Friendship Committee.[4] One cannot say definitely whether there was any official connection between these organisations and the German Embassy, but there were few individuals amongst them, such as Sir Lee Strachey, otherwise a Germanophobe, who favoured the acquisition of the Portuguese colonies by Germany.

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1. G.P. XXXVII(1) Nr. 14661; Willis, p. 189ff.

2. B.D.X(11) No. 331 Lichnowsky to Grey, March 18, 1913; FO367/340/13076 Lichnowsky to Grey, March 18, encl. German counter draft. Cf note 1, p. 418; G.P. XXXVII(1) Nrs. 14661 and 14662.

3. B.D.X(11) No. 334 Note by Sir Edward Grey, June 2, 1913 encl. draft Amendments from Prince Lichnowsky. Other relevant documents are Nos. 332-333. B.D.X(11); CAB37/115/22 April 11, 1913 draft reply to German proposals; G.P.XXXVII(1) Nr. 14657; Dugdale, pp. 221-222.

4. Minutes by Anderson, Nicolson, Tilley and Grey on B.D.X(11) No. 331, and Crowe's minute on B.D.X.(11) No. 334.

It was likely that Kühlmann, a great mover in London society and an advocate of Anglo-German rapprochement, might have been in touch with some of the members. The evidence is inconclusive.[1]

What can certainly be suggested is that there was every possibility of independence being declared by a section of the Portuguese colonies or an intervention by either Britain or Germany to protect their interests. And this was admitted by the Foreign Office experts. As noted elsewhere, the British Foreign Office had become irritated by continued reports of Portuguese maladministration and Portuguese slavery, and there were instances when sharp letters were sent to Lisbon pressing the government to put its house in order. In December, 1912, Grey warned Portugal that if administration broke down in the Mozambique provinces adjoining the Union of South Africa, there was bound to be "very grave consequences to which His Majesty's Government could not be indifferent."[2]

Of course, there was always the threat of South Africa intervening in Mozambique - a factor which had been a problem for Whitehall. Also, disaffected republicans in Mozambique often threatened to declare independence from Portugal, threats which we re accompanied by wild talk from South Africans about making a "Jameson Raid" to secure Lourenco Marques for the Union. And in the Huilla Plateau (Angola), Boer renegades and refugees, who had established colonies there, often aspired to play the role of "Uitlanders". Inevitably the German authorities in South West Africa were suspected of colluding with them and of fomenting trouble among the natives.[3]

In other words, the German proposal was not so innocent, if London had agreed to it, a number of pretexts could have been found to annex Portuguese territory. Thus, Grey and Harcourt refused to extend the scope of the treaty. Instead of allowing Germany a free hand, they amended the proposal in such a way as would make it necessary that both powers should consult before either of them took any action to intervene, if their interests were threatened.[4]

The crucial articles as finally agreed to, were:

1. See pp. 274-277.
2. See pp. 277-279; F.O. Minutes on B.D.X(11) No.334, Lichnowsky to Grey, March 18, 1913; FO367/291/27192 Grey to Hardinge, Dec. 13, 1912.
3. See p. 202.
4. B.D.X(11) No.332 Grey to Goschon, March 20, 1913. See also B.D.X.II Nos.

Article 8. If in any part of the provinces of Mozambique or Angola the lives or property of British or German subjects, or the vital interests of the adjoining British or German dominions or protectorates, are endangered by local disturbances or by the action of the local authorities, and the Portuguese Government are not in a position to afford the necessary protection, or otherwise fail to do so, the British and German Governments, after consulting together, and after a joint communication to the Portuguese Government, shall determine the nature, duration and scope of such measures as it may be deemed necessary to take for the protection of the interests endangered.

Article 9. If any of the Portuguese colonies in question, having become independent and having been recognised as such by the two high contracting parties, or if any part of such independent colony, should declare its annexation to the dominions of one ~~of such independent colony, should declare its annexation to the dominions of one~~ of the two contracting Powers, the other contracting Power shall, for its part, be entitled, after previously informing the first power, to annex those portions of such colony thus become independent, of which the customs revenues would be assigned to it under the present convention.[1]

It is questionable whether these articles affected the treaty greatly, for it seems fair to suggest, judging from past attitudes and even from present ones, that the British government (read Foreign Office) would not have

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1. B.D.X(11) No. 341 Grey to Lichnowsky, July 21, 1913 encl. draft Anglo-German convention.

allowed Germany to despoil her ally's territories in so cynical a manner. On the other hand, there was too much ambivalence on the part of Britain for one to be sure about her future attitudes; and this partly explains why the Auswartiges Amt continued to be sceptical about British honesty, and to procrastinate. Solf, on the other hand, wore English glasses. He declared himself satisfied with the concessions Britain had made. For him it was the spirit rather than the letter that was crucial; besides, Article VIII, which he considered essential, would facilitate German intervention "seeing that German interests are perpetually threatened by Portuguese misgovernment in Angola."[1] Anglophil he might be, but Solf's cynical remarks justified Crowe's suspicion of German intentions. However, together with Lichnowsky and Rosen, Solf induced Jagow to accept the revised treaty, on condition that its publication was postponed. London agreed to this, until the winter season. On August 13th, Grey and Lichnowsky paraphrased and initialled the text; and after some amendments Kühlmann and Grey appended their initials to the treaty on October 20, 1913.[2]

The agreement was never signed, rather a new phase now entered the negotiations: the question of publication and the French intervention. The Germans opposed the publication of the agreement because they were afraid that it might help Portugal in avoiding partition, a fear that was heightened when Rosen reported that Britain intended to publish the Anglo-Portuguese treaty of October 14, 1899 (the so-called Windsor treaty). When the Wilhelmstrasse knew the details of the treaty, and realised that they guaranteed Portugal's possessions, it was amazed at its own gullibility and indignant at British perfidy. It strengthened its resolve not to agree to publishing

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1. Willis, op. cit. pp. 191-196; Vietsch, pp. 125-126.

2. Ibidem; G.P. XXXVII(1) Nr. 14680; B.D.X(2) Grey to Granville, August 13, 1913. Texts in B.D.X.(11) pp. 538-544.

the Treaty.[1] Jagow noted: "... The thought underlying the Convention of 1898 was partition of the Portuguese Colonies. The view that England was then guilty of disloyalty to us is very widespread in Germany. This conception would receive fresh nourishment - and with justification, if the public learned that very shortly after concluding the 1898 Convention, England debarred us from carrying out the agreement by renewing the arrangements under a long obsolete Anglo-Portuguese alliance. The unfavourable impression which knowledge of this fact would arouse in Germany would not be deadened but rather sharpened by publication of an arrangement with England ..." In fact publication "might endanger the position of Herr Bethmann Hollweg, as affording a proof of British hyprocrisy and perfidy."[2]

Although Grey endeavoured to explain to Lichnowsky that the 1899 treaty merely reaffirmed old treaties neither adding to nor subtracting from their terms, and he offered to publish the 1898 and 1899 treaties and then after an interval of six months, to publish the 1913 revised agreement, the Berlin government refused publication.[3]

Eventually, Grey acquiesced in the German's request to leave things as they were, and he agreed that the initialled Convention was binding. He could not undo what had been done with Portugal in 1899 and with Germany in 1898 (a rather reproachful comment on Salisbury's government) but he must stand by them. He further conceded that he would not do anything, if he could help it, that was likely to embarrass Bethmann or

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1. G.P.XXXVII(1) Nr.14684. See Nr.14685 for Rosen's enthusiastic reaction to the conclusion of the negotiations; G.P.XXXVII(1) Nr.14686; Dugdale IV,p.230; Willis, p.199. The Germans were being melodramatic. They did in fact suspect as early as 1901 that the 1899 treaty contradicted the 1898 agreement in spirit, but they had been assured by Lansdowne that the secret agreement was in no way affected. See (Lascelles Papers) FO800/10 Bertie to Lascelles, Feb. 19, 1901.

2. Cited in Willis, op. cit. pp. 200-201.

3. FO367/340/57191 Grey to Goschen, Dec.15,1913; printed in B.D.X.(11) No. 352. The course of this episode can be traced in B.D.X. (11) Nos. 358, 360 and 366. Of special interest are the despathhes from Goschen to Grey, relating the conversations he had with Jagow. B.D.X.(11) Nos. 370 and 371, March 28 and 29 respectively; cf. G.P.XXXVII(1) Nrs. 14694, 14695, 14697 and 14699.

Jagow, or to have an unfortunate effect on German public opinion.[1]

But the situation was unsatisfactory. And Harcourt, who was receiving stormy opposition from the Foreign Office, was perturbed by the indefiniteness of the matter. He conceded that Germany must comply to the conditions of publication; on the other hand "the abandonment of the initialled agreement would produce a most unfortunate effect." He complained "we cannot keep indefinitely in existence two secret treaties - one signed and one initialled - and if a crisis arises not to know on which we are to act." Grey promised to discuss the matter with him, but nothing appears to have resulted.[2]

At any rate, when the Germans took up the matter again on July 27th, four days before the war, it was for tactical reasons. Lichnowsky was to sign the agreement if Britain would support German schemes for railways in Angola. If Grey refused, the whole matter should be dropped. It was too late; the guns were being rolled into position. Grey told Lichnowsky: "We must now await the end of the present crisis."[3]

Since German refusal to publish the treaty coincided with French pressure on Grey not to publish or at least postpone publication of the treaty, it is not easy to make a definite assessment of the relative influence of the two on the British Foreign Secretary. His senior members of staff, Crowe and Nicolson, had clear cut views. They never liked the colonial deal, and the French objection was a good excuse for abandoning the whole project. Nicolson, more and more distrustful of Grey's flirtation with Germany, was particularly/

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1. B.D.X.(11) No. 366 Grey to Goschen, March 3, 1914; No. 372 Grey to Goschen, April 1, 1914; cf. G.P. XXXVII (1) Nr. 14705; B.D.X.

2. (Grey Papers) FO800/91 Harcourt to Grey, Feb. 25, 1914; Memo by Harcourt, April 6, 1914 and Minute by Grey 8/4/14 and 15/4/14. Mr. Hatton, op. cit. p. 139, attributes the second quotation to Grey. This is unlikely. The ink used by the two Secretaries was of two different shades of red; and on Harcourt's memo of April 6, Grey minuted: "This can keep till I come back." On the 15th he minuted on the same document: "I shall see Mr. Harcourt in due course." I was unable to ascertain what happened after the 15th.

3. G.P. XXXVII(1) Nr. 14716; Williquet, op. cit., p.355; Willis, p. 206; Fischer, op. cit., p. 39.

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perturbed that at the moment, "when we have some troublesome questions with Russia we should be incurring the discontent of France ... if the revised convention could be dropped it would be well."[1]

The French intervention stemmed from three considerations: 1. territorial and material interests; Sao Thome and Principe, which were left free for Germany to further her interests, were opposite French territories in West Africa and strategically placed for Germany to use as a springboard if she harboured any designs on French territory. Mozambique was a commercial outlet for the French territory of Madagascar, and the establishment of German power on that coast might have adverse effects on the trade figures of Madagascar. The French were particularly indignant that Kabinda, an enclave north of Angola, in French Congo, was included in the German sphere of influence in Angola.[2] They recalled that during their territorial changes with Germany in 1911, the French public had been very hostile to the establishment of Germany in the Congo basin; the acquisition of Kabinda would appear as a move to encircle French possessions in Central Africa, presumably with the aim of absorbing those territories. 2. The publication of the treaty: it was argued that in view of the entente, the public release of a document, which included certain provisions detrimental to French interests,[3] would have a very bad and unfortunate effect on French public opinion and it might necessitate a formal protest by the French government. This point was particularly stressed during the months preceding the visit to Paris of George V in May, 1914.

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1. B.D.X.(11) No. 361 Bertie to Grey, Feb. 11, 1914. Minutes by Crowe and Nicolson.

2. D.D.F.3rd Series VIII No. 663 Lebrun to Doumergue, Dec. 23, 1913 gives an analysis of French material interests. Cf. B.D.X.(11) No. 345 Grey to Bertie, Oct. 29, 1913; No. 350 Grey to Granville, Nov. 28, 1913; Williquet, p. 351ff; P. Dubois, op. cit., pp.364-367.

3. D.D.F.3rd Series IX No. 116 Circular to London, Berlin, Madrid, Lisbon, Brussels and M. Lebrun, Colonial Minister, from the Foreign Minister, January 20, 1914.

3. On lines of general policy: it was feared that a colonial deal would not be restricted entirely to mere territorial changes; it might even extend to other areas of co-operation. Some members of the French diplomatic corps suspected the African deal as another move by Berlin to break the Entente. De Manneville, Charge d'Affaires in Berlin, Klobukowski, French Minister in Brussels, who in any case was not exactly pro-British, were the leaders of this thought.

For a time Paul Cambon, the most loyal of French diplomats to the entente, had doubts as to whether the colonial deal might not go beyond mere partition of the Portuguese colonies. Just a few days after Lloyd George's Daily Chronicle interview of January 1, 1914, (in which the Chancellor urged reductions in Naval expenditure because Anglo-German relations had improved and because the continental states were now spending more on their armies than on their navies),[1] Cambon saw Grey, and stressed that an outcry would be raised in France when the public learned about what their entente partner had done to French interests:

> "Ce sera un tolle contre l'Angleterre, et l'Allemagne ne manquera pas d'en profiter pour renouveler ses tentatives contre notre entente. C'est déjà bien assez, ai-je ajouté que nous ayons à compter avec l'emotion causée par l'interview de M. Lloyd George."[2]

M. Beyens, Belgian Minister in Berlin observed that the African deal which appeared "près de se conclure à Londres à l'insu de la France" was "la première infidélité de l'Angleterre à l'union libre baptisée du nom d'Entente Cordiale."[3]

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1. (Bertie Papers) FO800/171 Bertie to Mallet, May 12, 1912; D.D.F.3rd Series, IX No. 35 P. Cambon to Doumergue, Jan.8, 1914; cf. B.D.X.(11) No. 356 Grey to Bertie, Jan. 6, 1914; No. 359, Minutes by Nicolson and Grey, Jan. 8, 1914. For background information on the Lloyd George interview see F.W.Wiemann, "Lloyd George and the Struggle for the Navy Estimates of 1914" in A.J.P. Taylor (Ed.) Lloyd George, p. 80ff; Trevor Wilson, op. cit. pp. 72-81; Churchill, op. cit., p. 177.
2. D.D.F.Ix No. 35 Cambon to Doumergue, January 8, 1914.
3. C. Bloch, "Les visées Allemandes sure le Congo-Belge", Bulletin de la Société d'histoire Moderne, p. 177.

De Manneville firmly believed that what Germany wished was to make Britain some sort of accomplice in despoiling Portugal's colonies, as a bridge work for closer relations, just as in the 18th century the partition of Poland by Prussia, Austria and Russia had resulted in a closer tie of interests between those powers. Since 1904, he argued, German aims had been unceasingly "baiser le bloc de l'Entente Cordiale, d'y créer du moins des fissures et d'y enfoncer des coins."[1]

Thus the French government exerted every effort through vigorous diplomatic representations to wreck or neutralise the agreement between London and Berlin. While London was pressed not to publish the treaty, Berlin was reminded of her obligation under Article 16, of the Franco-German treaty, November 4, 1911, which provided that any change in the status of a territory within the conventional basin of the Congo as a result of the action of one power, must be the subject of an International Conference of the signatories of the Berlin Act.[2]

Although the French Colonial Office would have preferred maintaining the status quo, this office and the Quai D'Orsay formulated high pitched demands which were to be submitted to Germany and Britain, if those two succeeded in absorbing the Portuguese colonies. Germany and Britain would be required to compensate France by ceding the Gambia and the North East of Nigeria near the Chad; Togoland and Northern Cameroon near the Chad, and to give France liberty of action in Liberia.[3]

And when German economic activities, especially in railway networks, seemed to have increased in the Congo during 1913-1914, Klobukowski and J. Cambon, who otherwise was not hostile to German expansion in Africa, pressed Doumergue to give a loan to the Belgian government to enable it to

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1. D.D.F. IX No. 10 De Manneville to Doumergue, January 2, 1914.

2. B.D.X.(11) No. 361 Bertie to Grey, Feb. 11, 1914; D.D.F.IX No. 178 J. Cambon to Doumergue; No 326 Doumergue to Cambon, Feb. 18, 1914; Williquet, Le Congo Belge, p. 351; Poincaré IV, p. 53.

3. D.D.F. 3rd Series VIII No. 404 Note pour le Ministre, Oct. 30, 1913, Lebrun to Doumergue, Dec. 23, 1913.

redeem its railways from foreign capitalists, and to prevent Germany from getting a foothold in the territory.[1]

The foregoing would suggest that the French government was opposed to the remapping of Africa; at the same time, if this was unavoidable, France would want compensation, and, incidentally, acquire territories which she had long desired to include in her empire.

However, it was on the diplomatic implications of the treaty that the French concentrated. Cambon saw Grey on October 29, 1913, and expressed French fears about the rumours of a deal between Britain and Germany as reported by the Press. The British Foreign Secretary explained to him that only the 1898 agreement had been revised. The scope had not been extended; there were some changes in the areas of option: Sao Thome and Principe had been brought in the agreement by Britain disinteresting herself in them, which he later told the French Ambassador, was the payment for Germany giving up Timor.[2]

From here the arguments developed and revolved in circles. Grey was incredibly obstinate; he asserted that the agreement had been signed in 1898 before there was any entente with France, he was sorry that Kabinda was anenclave in French territory, but really it was part of Angola which had been included in the German sphere of 1898. He was apologetic that Principe and Sao Thome were left free for German acquisition, but he pointed out that the British promise to support German claims did not extend to the Islands.[3]

The French answer to all this was simple. In the words of Grey:

> "In 1898 we were not on good terms with France, and as far as she was concerned we were quite free to do whatever we plessed; but the French would feel that, since 1904, we ought

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1. D.D.F.IX No. 55 Klobukowski to Doumergue, Jan. 10, 1914; No. 165 Doumergue to M. Caillaux, Minister of France, Jan. 26, 1914; P. Dubois, op.cit.p.175.

2. B.D.X.(11) No. 345 Grey to Bertie, Oct. 29, 1913; No. 350 Grey to Granville Nov. 2 , 1913. Cf. D.D.F. 3rd Series VIII No. 397.

3. Ibidem; B.D.X.(11) No. 357 Grey to Bertie, Jan. 6, 1914. Cf. D.D.F. 3rd Series IX No. 35.

not to have made any agreement with Germany at the expense of France."[1]

Moreover, publication would have this effect:

"Outre les facilités que l'Allemagne trouverait dans cette publication pour le développement de son action en Afrique, elle en retirerait un avantage d'ordre plus général, celui de faire éclater publiquement l'antagonisme entre la politique de la France et celle de l'Angleterre, en montrant cette dernière associée, à l'Allemagne, et reprenant avec elle en 1914, en dépit des relations respectives des trois États l'oeuvre anti-française de 1898. La France ne pourrait manquer de répondre à la publication de l'accord par une déclaration destinée a sauvegarder ses droits et à manifester ses principes de respect du droit des peuples faibles contre la politique de la force, déclaration de nature à aggraver encore l'impression produit par le dissentiment de la politique Anglaise et Française."

Cambon was asked to impress this point upon Grey.[2] It is not clear what Doumergue meant by "des peuples faibles" (it can safely be assumed that whatever he meant, he was not referring to the indigenous people in the Portuguese territories), but it was obvious that the French were using every argument to dissuade Britain from proceeding with the agreement. Cambon saw Nicolson and Crowe and he tried to draft a formula that would secure French interests in Angola, and at the same time blunt the British support, as provided in the treaty, for German claims in that territory.[3] Poincaré had several interviews with Bertie to whom he complained about British treatment which was poor return for French confidence during the

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1. B.D.X(1) No.357; cf. D.D.FIX No.10 De Manneville to Doumergue, Jan.2, 1914.
2. D.D.F.3rd Series IX No. 256 Doumergue to P. Cambon, Feb. 10, 1914.
3. D.D.F.3rd Series IX No. 35. Cambon to Doumergue, Jan. 8, 1914.

Agadir crisis.[1]

Of course, the colonial talks were not the only subject which worried Poincare. This combative lawyer from Lorraine who assumed the premiership, after the hostile reaction to the disclosures of Caillaux's behind the scenes negotiations with Germany which led to his resignation, was committed to strengthening French defences. Under him, France embarked on a programme of shipbuilding and military reorganisation. On foreign policy he was inclined to favour a stronger relationship with Britain through the formalisation of the Entente, as one more insurance against Germany, though he appeared to have distrusted Grey's imprecise assurances of friendship and support for France. Alarmed by the Haldane mission and the naval/political talks which followed it, he and Cambon, encouraged by Bertie, had pressed for a more definite assurance of support from Grey.[2] The Foreign Secretary (it was clear in his own mind that if it came to the crunch Britain would be bound to support France against Germany) and the majority of the Cabinet were unwilling to commit Britain to a definite promise of support; but, just as in 1906, and the summer of 1911, military talks and contigent plans for co-operation were allowed to proceed. Although the Grey-Cambon letters of November 22nd and 23rd, emphasised that they were nonbinding on the two powers, they pledged that both powers should consult together if either feared unprovoked attack or a breach of the peace. British Naval requirements, as a result of the increase in the German Navy, further led to agreements (July 1912-February 1913) about the disposition of their fleets in the Mediterranean and the North Sea. To all ~~ends~~ intents and purposes the forces of the two nations were one. But the French were still unsatisfied and they continued to fret over every Anglo-German discussion for some understanding.[3]

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1. B.D.X(11) No.362 Bertie to Grey, Feb.12,1914; R.Poincaré, Au Service de la France: L'Union Sacrée (1927) Vol.IV pp. 56-57 and also pp. 52-55.
2. Poincaré, Au Service de la France, Vol.I p.1ff, gives an account of his assumption of power and his views on the entente; cf. Fleurion, Joseph Caillaux,p.119ff. An abbreviated and edited version of Poincaré's account can be found in Sir George Arthur, The Memoirs of Raymond Poincaré (1912) London (1926)p.1ff. Also Lowe and Dockrill, Mirage of Power, p. 53.
3. Background of this episode can be read in Ibidem; Keith Robbins, Sir Edward Grey, pp.260-263; Grey of Fallodon, Twenty-five Years, pp.96-99; Churchill, War Crisis, I, p.98ff. B.D.X.(11)Chpt.XCVI; D.D.F.3rd Series, Vol.V(1912-1913).

On the other hand, however disappointed and hurt the French were over these colonial talks, they would not bring an open rupture with the British: "For we maintain the belief that we should live with England in the most perfect accord (car nous tenons à demeurer avec l'Angleterre dans le plus parfait accord)" wrote Doumergue to Cambon.[1]

And Grey could not remain insensitive to French representations either. Although he still maintained that he could do nothing about the treaty which had been signed by a previous government, his own contribution being to revise it and make it known to the world, he conceded that the feeling of his entente partners must be taken into account; and he told Cambon (February 13, 1914) that if the Germans showed any desire for publication, he would talk to him again. Cambon reported that this signified new intentions and that it seemed that publication, which they were afraid of, had been renounced: "C'est un premier résultat acquis et pour cette fois je ne suis pas allé plus loin."[2] It is pertinent to note that this "new departure" antedated the formal request by Germany not to publish the treaty. Indeed, it would seem that private individuals were used by both Paris and London to keep each other in good humour. Coudurier, the London Correspondent of Figaro, allegedly inspiredby Poincaré, entered into correspondence with Sir Frederick Ponsonby, the King's private secretary, entreating the British government to delay the publication until after the King's visit. Henry Wickham Steed, Correspondent of The Times, (a rather conceited individual who always prided himself on fore-knowledge of events of great political importance about which he had always tried to warn his less perspicacious brethren) was commissioned by

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1. D.D.F. 3rd Series VIII No. 640 Doumergue to Cambon, Dec. 17, 1913.

2. B.D.X. (11) No. 361 Bertie to Grey, Feb. 11, 1914. Minute by Grey; B.D.X. (11) No. 366 Grey to Bertie, Feb. 18, 1914; Cf. D.D.F. 3rd Series IX No. 333 P. Cambon to Doumergue, Feb. 19, 1914.

Grey, at the instance of Tyrrell to prepare the ground in Paris for a good reception of the King and Queen's visit.[1]

It was not likely that these two journalists had an opportunity of influencing the course of the treaty. On his own account, Steed knew about the matter just when he was about to leave for Paris to interview Professor Ernest Lavisse, Secretary to the French Acadmey, whose views on the Entente he wanted to publish on the anniversary of the Anglo-French accord. On immediate enquiry he found to his relief that "the question of signing the Treaty had been shelved." Still, he told Bertie that it was lucky negotiations had been broken off, "for if they had been completed and it became known at Paris that the result was detrimental to French interests there would have been considerable ill feeling and possibly disagreeable incidents during the King's visit."[2]

Coudurier's correspondence was later denied and Grey complained to Cambon about the use of "a journalist, even one as trustworthy and good as I believe M. Coudurier to be."[3] Be that as it may, the evidence does suggest that these men were inspired from above. For their part the French believed that they were responsible for the suspension of the publication as a result of the representations of Cambon, Doumergue and Poincaré. It was even believed that these representations reached the ears of the King who had a talk with Grey.[4] Thus, after the German request of March 3rd,

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1. (Bertie Papers) FO800/176 Tyrrell to Bertie, March 4, 1914; Bertie to Tyrrell, March 9, 1914, encl. memo of conversation with Steed; cf. (Bertie Papers) FO800/176 Grey to Bertie, March 4, 1914 and March 9, 1914.

2. Henry Wickham Steed, Through Thirty years 1892-1922: A Personal Narrative, (1924) Vol. I, pp. 387-392; (Bertie Papers) FO800/176 Bertie to Tyrrell, March 4, 1914.

3. See note 1 above. Poincaré's Memoirs do not say anything about Coudurier, but the French Prime Minister did express grave concern over the secret treaty during his interview with Bertie on Feb. 10, 1914. Poincaré IV op. cit. p. 57; cf. (Bertie Papers) FO800/176 Memo by Bertie, Feb. 23, 1914.

4. D.D.F. 3rd Series IX No. 392 Doumergue to Daeschner, March 3, 1914; P. Dubois, op. cit. pp. 365-366.

Grey was anxious to impress on Cambon that there should be no leakage lest the French press might claim it as a victory: "This would have to be disavowed by us," he warned.[1]

It seems fair to conclude then that though the German refusal coincided with French representations it was more likely that French pressure influenced Grey in acquiescing in the German request not to publish the treaty.

The practical implementation of the revised agreement was rendered nugatory by the decision not to publish the treaty and the consequent delay in signature. Yet the Germans made efforts to invest capital in Portuguese colonies. As the situation after the 1913 agreement, Germany appeared to be pushing its concessions, impatient to inherit her own portions of Portugal's African Empire. But it was doubtful which treaty was regarded as still operative. The Foreign Office, in particular Crowe, believed the 1898 agreement was still binding while the 1913 (which was considerably more advantageous to Germany) had not yet been signed. Jagow's enigmatic remark that Berlin regarded the 1913 convention as "morally binding" heightened the suspicion about German designs.[2] This feature is illustrated by the attitude the Foreign Office adopted with reference to reported German schemes in the Portuguese colonies.

In mid 1914, the British Minister in Lisbon, Lancelot D. Carnegie, reported certain German schemes in Angola. A German technical mission of Engineers arrived in Lisbon on April 17th, on their way to study the terrain

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1. (Bertie Papers) FO800/176 Tyrrell to Bertie, March 4, 1914; B.D.X.(11) No. 368 Grey to Bertie, March 4, 1914; cf. D.D.F.IX No. 401 Cambon to Doumergue, March 5, 1914; (Bertie Papers) Grey to Bertie, March 4, 1914.

2. B.D.X.(11) Nos. 361 and 374, Feb. 13 and April 2[illegible], 1914 respectively. Minutes by Crowe.

for a projected railway from Mossamedes or Port Alexandre to connect the Otavi Mines in German South West Africa. Apparently, this mission received the blessing and approval of the Lisbon government. The members were introduced to Portuguese statesmen and two Portuguese officers were assigned to the mission (although the Portuguese Prime Minister and Colonial Minister assured Carnegie that the Portuguese officials had nothing to do with the German mission; they had been sent to study the economic development of Southern Angola. Possibly they might give assistance to the mission if required).[1]

A month later a fuller report reached London. It was revealed that a po erful German group (Uebersee-Studiensyndikat), which included the Deutsch: Bank, Disconto Gesellschaft and certain leading German houses in Lisbon, had been formed to obtain from the Portuguese government a concession for constructing a railway in Southern Angola, already referred to Perhaps frightened by the sensational press reports of the Anglo-German "agreement" on their colonies which were given credence by the German mission to Angola, and probably spurred on by royalist jibes, the Portuguese government decided to take measures to develop their colonies and to block efforts by foreign capitalists, especially Germans, to acquire their African territories.[2]

The Portuguese railway systems were the most important item in the Lisbon government's economic plans. The Malange (Ambaça) railway (in the British sphere under the 1893 agreement, and in the 1913 Convention, in the German sphere) were not paying working expenses and they were costing the state heavily. The Benguela (Lobito) railway had a marginal chance of being a

1. FO371/2085/19558 Carnegie to Grey, April 18, 1914. Cf. F.W. Pick, Searchlight on German Africa, pp. 107-115; P. Dubois, op. cit. p. 362.

2. FO371/2085/24449 Carnegie to Grey, May 21, 1914; FO371/2085/26309 Carnegie to Grey, May 31, 1914. These are not printed in B.D.X, the following despatch being sufficiently explicit: B.D.X.(11) No. 376 Carnegie to Grey, June 23, 1914; cf. Pick, Ibidem.

paying concern. To make them commercially viable they would have to be extended into the hinterland to connect richer foreign territories.

Thus, the Republican government took over the Ambaca railway in March, although a group with strong German backing had offered to put up £80,000 to revitalize the railway. A Bill was introduced in the Portuguese parliament empowering the government to raise a loan of £8 million to develop its colonies, especially railways. The government enunciated its policy, namely, that it would not give concessions of any sort in Angola to a purely German group. It would, however, welcome German participation in the loan as well as in concessions, provided that they had an international character and a Portuguese "facade".[1]

Apart from German groups there were others which showed an interest in the Portuguese colonies, viz. the Bleck group, which included Bleck, President of the British Chamber of Commerce in Lisbon, and other English, French and Belgian financiers. This group was opposed to an entirely German concession and it was willing to help the Lisbon government to block German capitalists; although it would welcome German participation, it must be on equal footing. The alertness of this group, in some ways, prevented certain German schemes from going through.[2]

At first the Foreign Office tended to play down the German 'menace' and to look at their efforts with generosity. Rowland Sperling, Senior Clerk (1913-1919), offered the opinion that it did not appear that His Majesty's Government could properly object to the German schemes (which were, in any case, not clear to him). Grey commented: "South Angola is in the German sphere under the 1898 agreement." Another minute by an official predicted that Lisbon would seek London's support against the Germans, whilst another noted that Britain should not give any appearance

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1. B.D.X(11) Carnegie to Grey, June 23, 1914. Minutes by Orde, the 10th Earl of Drogheda, Vansittart, Crowe, Nicolson and Grey; FO371/2085 Carnegie to Grey, May 31, 1914.

2. Ibidem.

of putting spokes in the German wheel, Langley summed up the situation: "We cannot support any opposition to German enterprise in South Angola."[1]

There was a perceptible change of attitude when the Portuguese began to show some anxiety over the increased activities of the Germans in their colonies. Already, the Portuguese Foreign Minister, Freire D'Andrade, had foiled an attempt by a German syndicate to acquire some cocoa plantations in Sao Thome and Principe, through a Frenchman. D'Andrade was concerned lest the German Ambassador, Dr. Rosen, should make highpitched demands on the government. He told Carnegie that Lisbon might not be able to resist such demands under the threat of a Panther. The Portuguese government, therefore, wanted to know how far the British government would support it if it had to resist German claims. Would His Majesty's Government entirely disinterest themselves about the fate of Angola or would they view with equanimity the germanisation of Angola? Or was there a point beyond which Britain would not wish Portugal to go, for instance the grant of a port to the Germans, and would her ally support her if she refused to give a port to Germany? This was not mere sensationalism; after all the bullying of the Portuguese King by Tattenbach in 1898 was not so far away for the Portuguese to forget what the Germans were capable of doing. It was also true that the Germans were making inroads in different parts of the Portuguese African colonies, and the reference to a port was calculated to touch a sensitive point of Britain's armour, for it was British policy to seek assurances from successive Portuguese governments that they would not cede a port to a hostile power on the Atlantic coast.[2]

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1. Minutes on FO371/2035/19558 Carnegie to Grey, April 10, 1914; FO371/2035/24449 Carnegie to Grey, May 21, 1914.

2. B.D.X.(11) No. 376 Carnegie to Grey, June 23, 1914. See also pp. 78, 287 - 289.

Although the junior clerks in the African department, Earl Drogheda and C.W. Orde tended to dismiss Portuguese fears, seeing in them an attempt to find out more about the 1913 Convention, which in fact they knew all about, they conceded that Britain would have to support her ally if Germany aimed at forcing her to give up a port.

On the other hand, went on Vansittart, the Bill, already referred to, was designed to keep the Germans out, and unless the Portuguese were "going to funk it", it should do precisely what they wanted it to do. Besides, His Majesty's Government could not object to German private capital in the Ambaca railway (though they naturally would not wish to see an exclusively German financed show in the Ambaca sphere), because Germany had not objected to the Williams concession - the Benguela railway - (in the sphere of Germany both in the 1898 and 1913 treaties).[1]

Indeed, because of this factor when Williams wanted capital to finish the railway in 1911 he had been advised by Grey to look for it in Germany. Williams was not keen on the idea because he had become distrustful of German designs in Central Africa, but he took Grey's advice and went to Berlin in February, 1913. He had talks with Solf and Gwinner, but nothing came out of them. The Germans made it known that they would only invest in the railway if they were given a controlling interest.[2]

Crowe's reaction to Portuguese fears was predictable. In a draft letter, couched in fine diplomatic language but with the unmistakable intention to encourage Lisbon to resist German pressure, he pointed out

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1. Ibidem.

2. For background history of Williams' concession, S.E. Katzenellenbogen, "The Building of the Benguella Railway," pp. 70-85; pp.162-171; Robert Hutchinson and George Martelli; Robert's People: the Life of Sir Robert Williams, London (1971) pp. 185-190. Grey's suggestion to Williams and its consequences can be traced in FO367/342/3217 R. Williams to Crowe, Dec. 21, 1912; F.O. to Williams, Dec. 19, 1912; FO367/342/3354 Grey to Williams (Private), Feb. 21, 1913; Grey to Goschen, Jan. 17, 1913; also FO367/342/54138, 54139; FO371/2085/7208 Carnegie to Grey, April 15, 1914 reporting conversation with Rosen.

that His Majesty's Government would be happy if Portugal could rely on her own resources to develop Angola. Although Britain would not object to the investment of German capital in territories contiguous to German colonies in South Africa, in view of her treaty engagements to Portugal, she"would naturally wish to be informed of any definite concession of ports, railways, etc., which the Portuguese government (may) contemplate granting to foreign subjects other than British."[1]

While he conceded that Britain could not oppose German schemes in the Portuguese Islands, since they were not in the 1898 agreement, Crowe's real plan was to have an opportunity to make it clear to the German government "that the draft convention of 1913 represents an abortive scheme which has been dropped and withdrawn because Germany has refused to sign it on the condition on which His Majesty's Government from the beginning insisted as a sine qua non: i.e. publicity."[2]

It is to be wondered what the effect on Anglo-German relations would have been if the situation which Crowe hoped for had arisen and the 1913 treaty, which its German supporters welcomed as being more generous than the 1898 version had been withdrawn ~~and~~ thereby frustrating once more the hopes for a German mittel Afrika.

Yet Grey broadly agreed with Crowe, and when a confidential report told of German pressure to get a sizeable proportion of the Portuguese loan, Harcourt was informed that the Foreign Office was going to explain the British government's attitude to Lisbon per Crowe's minutes.[3]

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1. Minute by Crowe on B.D.X.(11) No. 376.
2. Ibidem.
3. FO371/2035/30954 Carnegie to Grey, July 2, 1914; B.D.X.(11) No. 377; No. 378 F.O. to C.O. July 19, 1914. C.W. Orde, in a minute, recalling Jagow's decision to postpone the signature of the agreement, i.e. "... namely, when German colonial territory had reached larger dimension" urged his senior colleagues to get the Colonial Office's acquiescence in the letter to Carnegie, respecting H.M.G's policy to the Portuguese colonies as prescribed by Crowe.

The Colonial Secretary approved of the Foreign Office despatch but he thought that it was "most desirable that the whole question of the secret agreement of 1898 and the revised convention should be considered and decided by His Majesty's Government without further delay." On July 15th, Grey sent the despatch based on Crowe's draft (with a slight addition "... in the Portuguese African Colonies") to Carnegie for the information of Senhor Freire D'Andrade.[1]

British policy was not clear cut. The minutes of the Foreign Office Staff would suggest that Britian would not and could not oppose German concessions in Angola (provided, as in the case of the Ambaca railway it was private capital; and even then the Foreign Office would not be happy to see an exclusive German concern). On the other hand, if the Portuguese could keep out German control, as they appeared determined to do, it would be all the better; and it would appear that the Foreign Office was prepared to support Portuguese resistance.

The British government was, however, ready to give support to efforts by British capitalists to gain a controlling interest in the Mozambique Company when one of the Directors, Mr. Gilmour, reported that because of disunity amongst the British Directors in the Company, control was slipping into the hands of the French and Portuguese Directors, who had no interest in developing the territory for which the Company had received a charter. Gilmour claimed that the policy of his colleagues might lead to disaffection locally which might result in a unilateral declaration of a republic by the Portuguese colonists or a "Jameson Raid" by South Africans. The consular reports confirmed Gilmour's picture of maladministration and ineffective control in Mozambique.[2]

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1. B.D.X.(11) No.379 C.O. to F.O., July 13, 1914; No. 380 Grey to Carnegie, July 15, 1914.
2. F0367/342/2775 C.O. to F.O., Jan. 27, 1913. (Secret) encl. memo by Gilmour. Crowe's minute on this document shows that he can be critical of French policy as well:"This is a good illustration of what invariably happens when French capital is associated with British in joint enterprises ... e.g. China and Persia." See also F0367/3412/7206 C.O. to F.O., Feb. 12, 1913 (secret) copy of letter to Lord Gladstone.

Grey thought it was desirable to make British influence preponderant by increasing British shares in the Company. This could be secured by a wealthy South African buying large blocks of shares. Probably the preference for a South African had two advantages. He could technically claim that he was not a British subject, thus forestalling an objection by the Germans. And what was more important, he could secure British interests without the Foreign Office incurring the accusation that it had supported a British scheme.[1]

But this was rather splitting hairs. The end result in the cases of Angola and Mozambique would have been a German controlled territory and a British controlled territory respectively. Perhaps the only plausible reason for the Foreign Office support in the Mozambique case and disapproval of an anticipated German government support in Ambaca was the fear that maladministration in Mozambique might lead to revolution and then a declaration of a republic which in turn might have resulted in a scramble for the Portuguese colonies. For it was precisely this reason which made the Germans insist on including Articles 8 and 9 of the revised treaty.

The attitude of the Foreign Office in the cases discussed above is curious, considering that it did not block a deal which virtually ensured possession by Germany of the province of Nyassa (73,000 square miles) in Northern Mozambique - "a valuable colony with one of the finest natural harbours in the world"; though at the outbreak of war on the instigation of Robert Edgecombe, a Director of the Nyassa Company, Grey made representations to Lisbon to rescind the take-over.[2]

The Companhia do Nyassa was one of those nominally Portuguese Companies with semi-sovereign rights over extensive territories. The Company's bailiwick was the territory bounded by Lakes Nyassa and Shirwa in the west, River

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1. Ibidem.

2. FO371/2006/40353 Robert Edgecombe to Grey, August 16, 1914.

Rovuma in the north, River Lurio in the south, and the Indian Ocean in the east coast. As was the general case with such concerns the Companhia was incapable of developing the resources of the territory under its control. It did not have adequate capital and most of what it had came from foreign financiers. In one of its many crises of collapse the Portuguese Company was saved by the creation of a British Company, the Nyassa Consolidated Company, Limited, in 1908, which bought over half of the shares issued by the Companhia do Nyassa and hence the controlling interest.[1]

Towards the beginning of 1914 certain German financial groups, whose moving spirit was M. M. Warburg and Co. of Hamburg ("Bankers of the German Foreign Office") represented by Dr. W. Regendanz, Deutsche Bank, Disconto Gesellschaft, Mendelssohn and Bleichroder, backed by the Auswartige and Kolonial Amte began to show strong interest in the Companhia.[2] Since the Nyassa Consolidated Company held the largest number of shares it was with them that Dr. Regendanz, the Syndicate's negotiator, did business. Sir Edmund Davis, an influential British financier and a close associate of German companies, e.g. the German South West Africa Company, together with Bernato Newman, Messrs. Lewis and Marks, Limited, who had the majority shares in the British Company, sold them to the German Syndicate. The exact figures are not definite. F.W. Pick gives the Nyassa Consolidated shares as 218,390 out of 436,530 shares issued by the Companhia. The German syndicate paid between £120,000 to £150,000 for control of the shares. Edgecombe, however, gives these figures: the British Company issued 368,844 shares of which 230,000 at 10/- each were sold to the Germans who paid the sum of £115,000.[3]

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1. F.W. Pick, op. cit. pp. 115-170.

2. Pick, pp. 122-126; cf. FO371/2086/13243 R. Williams to Secretary of State, March 24, 1914, enclosing a series of letters relating to the projected deal

3. Pick, pp. 123-129; Cf. FO371/2086/13243 R. Williams to Secretary of State, March 24, 1914; FO371/2086/40353 Robert Edgecombe to Grey, August 16, 1914.

Be that as it may, by an agreement signed between a Dutchman, Pieter Vuyk, on behalf of the syndicate, and Lewis and Marks on May 20, 1914, the controlling interest of the Nyassa territory, which incidentally was in the German sphere under both treaties, passed to Germany.[1]

Sir Robert Williams, who feared that the aim of the Germans in acquiring the territory was to divert labour to German East Africa and so deprive Williams' Tanganyika Concessions of labour supply, tried to block the German take over by interesting Belgian financiers in the Company, but he failed.[2]

The Foreign Office knew of these activities as early as April 1914, and though there is no written evidence to suggest that this department and the British financiers who sold their shares were in communication or that the latter consulted the former, the minute of Sperling and a letter from the Colonial Office suggest that the British government did not oppose the deal. Harcourt was quite clear about the transaction: "It is not a case in which the government could or should intervene."[3]

This implied tacit approval of the execution of the terms of the agreement with Berlin, but the Foreign Office letter of July 15th also gives the impression that there was some reserve. Thus one cannot say with any definiteness that Britain was coming around to executing the secret treaty. Rather, there is some evidence to show that the Foreign Office would have liked to postpone the amortization of the Portuguese territories. For example, the Foreign Office did not favour an attempt by Johann Franz to invest in the Mozambique Company (which in any case was in the British sphere; and Franz was later discouraged by the German Colonial Office).

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1. Pick, p. 128.

2. See note 3, p. 442; FO371/2086/21546 C.O. to F.O. May 13, 1914. Observations on Williams' letters.

3. Minute by Sperling on FO371/2085/7203 Carnegie to Grey, April 15, 1914; FO371/2086/21564 C.O. to F.O., May 13, 1914.

Orde minuted: "... But even supposing German participation to be the last chance of effective administration and consequent prosperity with the resultant advantages to our neighbouring territory, it would seem distinctly preferable, if I may venture to express an opinion, to stop it and wait for the probable necessity the Company, or the Portuguese government would find themselves in, of inviting financial assistance on a large scale which it ought to be possible to secure for British subjects only."[1]

The outbreak of war, however, put an end to whatever trends that were leading toan implementation of the colonial agreement. Grey found it necessary to withdraw from the former position not to intervene in the Nyassaland deal, since the "war (has) altered the situation," and Harcourt agreed with him that they should make representations to Portugal. In Angola, the German mission also received a setback. By the latter part of 1914 the members were scattered in various parts of the country and in Walfisch Bay, cut off and isolated from each other by the Portuguese forces.[2]

If there had been no old treaty to revise, would there have been any colonial deal at all? There were few possibilities open: there was no chance at all of Germany getting Walfisch Bay, in which she was obviously very interested, or the Penguin Islands or satisfactory frontier rectifications with South Africa for reasons already discussed. In Liberia, American

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1. FO371/2038/31996 Johann Franz to H.D. Hodgkinson, Secretary of the Mozambique Company; FO371/2038/34740 C.O. to F.O., July 29, 1914; Minutes by Orde and Sperling.

2. FO371/2036/40353 F.O. to C.O. Aug. 22, 1914; FO371/2036/42803 Grey to Carnegie, Aug. 25, 1914; FO371/2036/49726 Carnegie to Grey, Sept. 15, 1914; The Minister reported that the Lisbon government had agreed to postpone the meeting of the Company. See Pick, p. 129ff for the subsequent history of the transaction.

influence had replaced British, and although the Germans appeared to have stepped up their activities in the territory in the last years before the war, no serious consideration was given to the idea of Germany acquiring Liberia. For reasons already discussed in an earlier chapter, Britain and Germany were very careful about a deal on the Belgian Congo. It was not until April 1914, when the ratification of the revised Anglo-German treaty was still in abeyance, that Golf prepared a scheme for the eventual partition of the Congo. Jagow at first demurred, but he later agreed to bring up the matter for negotiations.[1] There was no chance of the scheme succeeding, however. The French and Belgians were alarmed and the former made moves to block a German attempt to get a foothold in the Congo.[2]

Abyssinia was in a different category. It had been partitioned into spheres of influence in 1906 between France, Britain and Italy. Although political instability and the stresses in the economic rivalries of the three powers threatened partition in 1913, Britain was unwilling to precipitate its division. Indeed, contingent plans were made in case partition was after all unavoidable. In none of these was there any suggestion of giving Germany a "place in the sun."[3] It was most unlikely that France would have agreed if such a thing had been suggested.

In other words, in the absence of any conceivable basis for a colonial agreement, the 1898 treaty served as a convenient means for Britain to show accommodation to German colonial drives. The long drawn out negotiations and the indefinite result together with the outbreak of war less than a year later, made it difficult for the treaty to have any practical meaning.

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1. Williquet, La Conco Belge, pp. 171-172 and 356-360; C. Bloch, op. cit. pp. 175-176; Prince Von Bülow, Memoirs, 1909-1919, (1932) pp. 80-81; D.D.F. 3rd Series IX No. 335 De Manneville to Doumergue, March 1, 1914.

2. See note1, p. 429.

3. Caplan, "British Policy towards Ethiopia", pp. 76-81; see note 2 p. 300.

Moreover, this did not give the British government or rather the Foreign Office time enough to crystallize its policy; and it does not afford the historian an opportunity to make a definite comment on British policy and to say whether there was, in fact, a re-orientation after the Agadir crisis.

Certainly, the case of the Nyassaland concession indicates a flexible attitude, but it does not explain British policy; and the minutes of the permanent officials do give the impression that they were not reconciled to the idea of Britain making concessions to Germany. In fact, Grey seemed to have lost all interest in a colonial deal by the beginning of 1914. This was probably due to French pressure against publication or because he never really believed in the efficacy (although he would make the attempt) of a colonial agreement as a prelude to rapprochement, especially when there had been no agreement on the Naval issue. It would seem that while tension existed Grey was willing to go along with Harcourt, but once this relaxed he could afford to be less enthusiastic for a colonial deal. For, according to Bertie, who visited London in the middle of February, 1914, Grey had expressed the hope that the German Chancellor would not accept publication, for the agreement would then be dropped.[1] Hence, Grey was relieved when the Germans conveniently suggested that matters be left as they were. In any case, Grey's view on the deal had always been that he merely revised a treaty which had been negotiated by a previous government.[2]

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1. There was some misunderstanding in the reports of Bertie and Cambon to Poincaré. Cambon said that Grey would not publish the treaty at all, while Bertie told Poincaré that the King had expressed the wish that the treaty would not be published before his visit. Poincaré, Au Service, IV pp. 69-70; Lowe and Dockrill, pp. 125-126. Bertie's account in his memo is the more plausible report. See (Bertie Papers) FO300/176 Memo by Bertie, Feb. 24, 1914.

2. B.D.X.(11) No. 364 Grey to Bertie, Feb. 18, 1914.

In broad political terms the colonial deal had a negative effect on Anglo-German relations from the Foreign Office point of view. Failing the understanding on a Naval agreement it had been the hope of people like Harcourt, Solf, Lichnowsky and Kühlmann that a colonial deal would be a stepping stonetowards a closer understanding between Berlin and London which might lead to wider areas. Indeed, Grey hinted as much during his interviews with Metternich on the 16th, 19th and 29th of March, 1912.

On the other hand, the deadlock on the Naval issue, which for many Britons was the stumbling block to rapprochement with Berlin, and the Franco-British Naval arrangements crystallised a situation where two power blocs, in great measure irreconciliable, coexisted. Mutual suspicions of each other's policies further barred any possibility of a realignment or a less rigid polarisation of the two blocs.

At the same time, as noted earlier, the colonial deal elicited a lively fear from the French. It was an ironic situation. The entente had evolved from a colonial understanding, yet in the case of Germany certain developments had occurred (e.g. the Naval rivalry, the Moroccan crises, etc.) which made it difficult for a colonial understanding "à l'Entente Cordiale" to be possible. Furthermore, it was unwelcome. German policy was not to be trusted; once an entente, the Foreign Office feared, was arrived at, there would be no guarantee that Germany might not use the opportunity for attacking France; and a defeated France was not in the interest of Britain. Indeed, the abortive Anglo-German negotiations do seem to have weakened French confidence in Britain especially during October 1913 and March 1914.

Although Sir John Tilley has warned us about taking minutes written by officials at their face value, it is fair to say that these minutes, admittedly subject to the final decision of the Foreign Secretary, very often foreshadowed the policy eventually to be adopted. The minutes of Crowe and Nicolson on two press reports, which spoke of the colonial agreement in approving terms, are, therefore, significant since they

reflected the real attitude of the Foreign Office to the colonial deal as a prelude to an understanding with Berlin.[1]

The first of the reports, an article by Professor Schiemann, suggested that the agreement on the Portuguese colonies indicated that Britain and Germany could reconcile their interests not only to their advantage, but to that of the world in general. He went on further to urge an Anglo-German alliance which would put an end to rivalry in armaments, Franco-German bitterness and the aggressive policy of Russia. Crowe commented that this "clumsy feeler" was a new attempt to drive a wedge between England on one side and France on the other.[2]

His view on the other article was more picturesque. The Cologne Gazette of May 1, 1914, allegedly semi-officially inspired, declared that while Germany was determined to maintain the politico-military security of her continental position unimpaired, she had embarked on a period of pacific negotiations which would ensure her economic and intellectual spheres of action, and in this she had found a meaningful assistance from Britain in the Bagdad Railway and the African question. It was gratified by the friendly attitude of Britain during the Balkan crisis and by her refusal to change the constitution of the Triple Entente in order not to upset the equilibrium. Crowe's comment:"Words for the gallery." Nicolson observed that the article endeavoured to show that the European peace was preserved by the Triple Alliance and Britain and thereby implying that France and

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1. Sir John Tilley and Stephen Gaselee, The Foreign Office, London (1933) p. 169; cf. pp. 156-166, ibidem.

2. F0371/1937/7300 Goschen to Grey, Feb. 15, 1914. Minute by Crowe. Schiemann was not alone in holding the view that the colonial deal was some kind of détente. The well known publicist, Naumann, told the Austrians in July that Britain would not intervene in the coming war, because of the accord on the Portuguese colonies. See P. Dubois, op. cit. p. 368. This thinking probably moved Bethmann to authorise the signing of the treaty on July 27, 1914. See Fischer, op. cit. p. 39ff.

Russia had to be restrained: "A perversion of the facts ... fortunately all the Powers were anxious for peace and Russia perhaps in the forefront," he concluded.[1]

Perhaps these complaints were expressions of dissatisfaction with Grey, who, it has been suggested, disgusted by Russian actions in Persia and French attitudes to Spain in Morocco, was willing to adopt a more flexible attitude to Germany during 1912-1913. For this reason he co-operated with his German counterpart, Jagow, who seemed to have impressed Grey favourably, to contain the Balkan War which erupted in 1912. His astute statesmanship in the Ambassadors Conference in London in 1913 (called to effect a peace settlement in the Balkans) earned him a great international standing.

All this was watched with deep distrust and anxiety by Nicolson (who had his final breach with Grey because he felt his Chief should have given more support to Russia) and Crowe, hence their caustic remarks on the suggestions made by the German papers.[2]

But the difference between Grey and his senior staff was one of emphasis rather than basic disagreement. Grey was still distrustful of Germany and he firmly believed that Britain should maintain her naval supremacy; what he did not want was to be too committed to France or Russia. At the same time he wanted to maintain the entente unimpaired as an insurance in case friendship with Germany proved illusory. It was not a secure position, for he could not please Germanophobes like Nicolson and Crowe, nor Germanophils like Harcourt, who remained suspicious of

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1. FO371/1990/20065 Goschen to Grey, May 4, 1914 forwarding article in Cologne Gazette. Minutes by Crowe and Nicolson.

2. On the Balkan Wars see Luigi Albertini, The Origins of the War of 1914, London (1952) p. 364ff; Lowe and Dockrill, op. cit. p. 107ff. On Grey's attitudes to Germany in this period with reference to the Balkan questions and indeed general policy, and also the disagreements with his staff see Z. Steiner, The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, p. 127ff; Robbins, Sir Edward Grey, pp. 260-271; Lowe and Dockrill, Ibidem. Grey's opinion about Jagow can be read in B.D.X. (11) pp. 662-664.

Grey's entente policy.[1]

In January, 1914, Harcourt and Grey had some sharp exchanges. The Colonial Secretary objected to the phrase Triple Entente on the ground that "this mischievous and misleading phrase" carried "an idea of a triple alliance opposed to the German bloc." He was alarmed when the Russian Foreign Minister hinted that if Britain failed to support Russia "on the German military mission to Turkey", it would be an end of the understanding. Harcourt demanded that it be made absolutely clear to France and Russia that they could expect no help from England in the event of a war. The entente with each of them, he argued, was derived from colonial understandings, and it "entailed no community of action between the three in European diplomacy."[2]

In his reply Grey was apologetic, but he could do nothing about the phrase. He himself had deprecated the use of it before; in its proper sense, he argued, it was quite accurate, but it was a new phrase without a settled meaning. He was sure that France and Russia knew full well that Britain did not owe any obligations to them, but if Harcourt desired a new declaration defining the meaning of the phrase (though Grey would personally like things to be left as they were) the alternatives for Britain would either be complete isolation, or an alliance with one group or another. He concluded that he had endeavoured all along not to bring these two alternatives to an issue. In a further letter he told Harcourt "... I begin to think there is more divergence of view between us about foreign policy than I had thought."[3]

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1. Ibidem. Byron Dexter, "Lord Grey and the Problem of an alliance", Foreign Affairs, (Jan. 1952), pp. 299-309. While Grey appreciated the moderating influence of Jagow on German policy, he, however, warned:"We must keep ahead of the Germany Navy ... The Prussian mentality is such that to be on really good terms with it one must be able to deal with it as an equal." B.D.X.(11) No. 455 Grey to Rodd, January 13, 1913.

2. (Grey Papers) F0800/91 Harcourt to Grey, Jan. 8 and 9, 1914. Also printed in Lowe and Dockrill, Mirage of Power, IIIpp.481-2. See also Vol. I p. 121 of work cited.

3. (Grey Papers) F0800/91 Grey to Harcourt, Jan. 10 and 11, 1914; Harcourt to Grey, Jan. 14, 1914; Lowe and Dockrill, op. cit. Vol. III pp. 482-

Thus, Grey re-emphasised his adherence to the Entente policy, indeterminate as it was, and the exchanges with Harcourt revealed a wide gap in their views on foreign policy. While Harcourt did hope that a colonial détente might lead to a shift in British policy vis-à-vis Germany, Grey and his staff did not intend to change the basic lines of British foreign policy. The colonial deal was an incidental gesture which the situation had demanded and thus the attempts by certain German circles to point to this deal as an index of a closer Anglo-German relationship was roundly deprecated by the senior members in the Foreign Office.

On the other hand, apart from the rather insecure basis for a rapprochement with Germany, Harcourt's arguments were illogical. He complained that the ententes with France and Russia did not entail obligations in European diplomacy.[1] But the policy he was advocating, a colonial détente with Germany, given similar circumstances in which those with France and Russia had developed, would have approximated to the situation he was strongly criticising.

No doubt this ghost of a political rapprochement derived from a colonial détente was a factor which perturbed the French and this partly accounts for their strong representations against the Anglo-German Convention, 1913-1914. It was even possible that the Germans by agreeing to the talks did hope to strain the Entente Cordiale.

In other words, the African deal was not merely confined to territorial questions, it had important implications in European diplomacy. A colonial deal could not be made without the partners of Britain wondering what would follow next. Grey was careful to stress that he was only revising an old treaty which had existed before the Entente with France.

It must be emphasized, however, that the colonial deal did create a climate of détente and though Grey would not change his foreign policy, he did co-operate with Germany on several issues, e.g. in the Balkans; and

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1. See note 2, p. 450.

another extra European question - the Bagdad Railway - was settled to the satisfaction of both powers.[1] In the colonial field the visits by Solf to British territories, 1912-1913, to study British colonial methods, as England's junior partner, and the friendship he struck with Lugard, High Commissioner of Nigeria, would suggest that, given time, this colonial co-operation might extend to Europe.[2]

Perhaps, in the light of the Foreign Office attitude discussed here, and the fact that Germany and its rivals continued to arm themselves despite protestations of peace, the hopes of Solf and Harcourt for a European rapprochement based on a colonial agreement were too optimistic. Nevertheless, when war was threatened twenty years later, the idea of appeasing Germany and of establishing a rapprochement by giving that power certain African territories, including its former colonies, found strong advocates. Only this time there were equally strong opponents, including Lugard, and very strong material and moral reasons against allowing Germany to establish herself in Africa.[3]

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1. See note 2, p. 449. The course of the negotiations on the Bagdad Railway can be traced in B.D.F.A. II Chapters XCI-XCIV; G.P. XXXI Chapter CCXLIV and G.P. XXXVII(1) Chapter CCLXXXV; Lichnowsky, My Mission to London, pp.19-20.

2. Colin Newbury, "Partition, Development, Trusteeship: Colonial Secretary Solf's West African Journey, 1913," Gifford and Louis (Eds.) Britain and Germany in Africa, pp. 455-477; Vietsch, Wilhelm Solf, p. 102ff; Hatton, op. cit. pp. 125 and 141-145; FO371/1939/12052 Lichnowsky to F.O., March 13, 1914; F.O. to German Ambassador, April 16, 1914.

3. Wolfe W. Schmokel, "The Hard Death of Imperialism: British and German Colonial Attitudes, 1919-1939," Gifford and Louis, op. cit. pp. 301-335; W.R. Louis, Germany's Lost Colonies, passim. Although this work deals exclusively with the territorial rearrangements after the end of World War I, it does illustrate some indications which foreshadowed British attitudes to the idea of remapping Africa in the '30s. See also an article by J.B. Firth in the Daily Telegraph, Oct. 21, 1933. "Germany's prewar aims in Africa:" Negotiations with Britain for expansion at the expense of Portugal. (Colonial Office African pamphlet Collection, Africa M.P. 69, Af. No. 59 Folio). The article opposed a return of the German colonies to her former owners or to cede other African territories to her, on the grounds of strategy, and because of Germany's wartime plans for a Mittel Afrika.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion: Some comments on British policy towards territorial change.

The foregoing chapters have sought to put the questions left by the partition in the context of the changed diplomatic situation following the Entente Cordiale. As Professor Stengers has pointed out in his excellent summary of Anglo-German rivalry in Africa, it is often difficult to disentangle general problems in European politics in the period under review: "In many cases the general aspects of the rivalry in fact invaded the colonial field. This became marked after 1904, when the Entente Cordiale resulted in an alignment of powers."[1]

This aspect has been made clear in this study. But British policy should not be viewed entirely in the light of its pro-French or anti-German tendencies. In spite of her moods of disillusionment and torpidity, Britain with her long experience as a colonizing power and imbued with a moral conviction that was nurtured by a sense of racial pride which presupposed that she had a destined role to civilise "backward peoples", had come to regard her African Empire as an inalienable property, whether useful or not, which was to remain British.[2]

Although the liberal governments of Campbell-Bannerman and Asquith did not show much interest in tropical Africa outside South Africa, and although their attitudes were characterised by an abnegation of further increase of the Empire, especially in the tropical regions, the acquisitive psychology of the scramble, with some modifications, was still detectable.[3]

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1. J. Stengers, "British and German colonial rivalry: a conclusion," Gifford and Louis, op. cit., p. 344.
2. On this see Bernard Porter, Critics of Empire: Radical attitudes to colonialism in Africa, 1895-1914; Ronald Hyam, Elgin and Churchill; Max Beloff, Imperial Sunset: Britain's Liberal Empire, 1897-1912, London (1969).
3. Ibidem.

In 1893 Rosebery had observed: "It is said that our Empire is already large enough and does not need extension. That would be true enough if the world were elastic but unfortunately it is not elastic and we are engaged at the present moment in the language of mining, in pegging out claims for the future. We have to consider not what we want now but what we shall want in the future";[1] while The Times had remarked that "Britain could not allow any section even of the Dark Continent to believe that our imperial prestige is on the wane."[2] Such sentiments were still largely applicable to this period.

There was a widespread assumption that it was better for rich territories, especially those which, it was believed, would one day slip through the feeble grasp of their owners or disintegrate through internal causes, to be British. And so, despite his oft repeated disinterest in tropical territories, Grey never failed to make it clear that if the Portuguese colonies and the Belgian Congo changed hands Britain would like to secure Southern Mozambique and Katanga for herself. With regard to Ethiopia, Britain was prepared to adjust her colonial frontiers with that Empire, for strategic reasons (i.e. the security of the Nile waters) and perhaps for the mere sake of having her share of the territory, if it disintegrated.[3]

Thus when this contingency was being considered and J.H. Read noted: "We scarcely want to increase our commitments in the desolate country in the north of the E(ast) A(frican) P(rotectorate), although we should like some adjustments of the frontier so as to make it easier to patrol," and another official remarked: "We don't want anything more". Harcourt could

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1. Quoted in Beloff, op. cit., p. 41.

2. Quoted in R. Hyam, "The partition of Africa," Historical Journal VII (1964) pp. 154-169.

3. See Caplan, "British Policy towards Ethiopa," p. 14ff. for British interests in the Nile waters.

say, "Are you quite sure? I have no land hunger - but Mr. Byatt tells me that the Eastern frontier of Abyssinia contains a wonderful country in which you can grow two crops of everything every year."[1] In other words, it is clear that imperialism, or the desire for more territories, albeit selective, died hard.

Even anti-imperialist radicals and liberals, with all their different shades of outlook and attitudes, who were wont to question the desirability of an African Empire, eventually came to accept its existence. And the two decades preceding the Great War saw some discussions on how to improve the lot of the indigenous population and how to develop the resources of the British tropical territories. The pressures these radicals, among whom were Mary Kingsley, John Holt, the Liverpool trader, and Morel, put on the government can be followed elsewhere;[2] but it is relevant to point out that some of these men, such as Morel and J.H. Harris, imp ressed by the efficiency of German colonial administration especially in the commercial sphere in West Africa, advocated the appropriation of the Belgian and Portuguese colonies by Germany, who, they were convinced, would put them to good use.

Professor Madden and others have stressed that although the liberal government, taken up as it was with social and parliamentary reforms and the problem of safeguarding the security of Britain and her Empire, could scarcely spare the time to devise a constructive programme or policy for tropical Africa, successive Liberal Ministers, Elgin, Crewe and Harcourt did take an active interest in railway and agricultural development and

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1. Ibidem; CO533/145/10731 F.O. to C.O., March 20, 1914. Minutes by Read and Harcourt. See also CO533/127/13855 F.O. to C.O., April 24, 1913; CO533/145/36940 F.O. to C.O., 26/9/14. Harcourt minuted: "If Italy joins us in the European War and when it is over, I should like to divide Abyssinia between U.K., France and Italy and have done with the thing!"

2. Porter Critics of Empire, p. 84ff; K.K.P. Nworah, "Humanitarian pressure groups and British attitudes to West Africa, 1895-1915" Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, London (1966) passim; J.H. Harris, Dawn in Darkest Africa, p.83ff.

the establishment of medical schools in Britain's tropical dependencies.[1] This interest in developing her African colonies perhaps partly explains why it was difficult to cede or exchange territories, even to an entente partner like France. For when France put in a request for the Gambia and Northern Nigeria, it was found, according to the annual reports, that these colonies had gone some way in improving themselves.[2] Anyhow, governments, least of all Colonial Offices, for prestige and material reasons did not readily agree to ceding their territories, even though their retention might be of dubious value.

One or two reservations can be made on this generalisation. While the Foreign Office was more ready to consider exchanges of territory with France, if the price was adequate, in order to adjust British interests elsewhere, the Colonial Office took a much more dogmatic stance. In the frontier questions the latter department took a more rigid view of its case against both Germany and France. On the other hand, when the move for a more accommodating attitude to German colonial desires was being agitated, the Colonial Office, in certain respects, under its responsible head was more responsive than the Foreign Office; and it was even prepared to give concessions in questions on which former colonial Ministers had upheld the views of the colonies concerned.[3]

The hostility of South Africa, whose loyalty and attachment to Britain was anxiously cultivated by Whitehall, to further extension of German power in Africa, and also questions of strategy, were two considerations which influenced British policy. As Professor Beloff has noted and as I have indicated in this study, suspicion of German policy in Southern Africa remained a strong factor in British and South African thinking. And so

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1. A.F. Madden, "Changing attitudes and widening responsibilities, 1898-1914" in Cambridge History of the British Empire, Vol. III, (1959) p.382ff; Hyam, Churchill and Elgin, p. 428ff.

2. See Chapter III, pp.335-336, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. LVIII (1912-13) Cd 6007, Northern Nigeria, Annual Reports for 1910 and 1911.

3. See minute on CO551/19/29710 F.O. to C.O., Sept. 9, 1911; also pp. 234-235.

by "the time the question of African boundaries became alive once more the South Africans were in a position to claim not only an independent but, in some respects, a decisive voice."[1] This decisive voice was recognised by Grey on the question of giving concessions to Germany in Walfisch Bay.

With regard to the strategic factor one cannot say anything definite because of the ambivalent attitude of Whitehall. The Admiralty sometimes submitted memoranda stating that British Naval Strategy would not be affected by the presence of Germany in this or that port; on the other hand, there were times when it demonstrated strong disapproval of Germany acquiring a coaling station on the African coast. Grey himself sometimes deprecated the strategic factor in British policy, but his permanent staff and even some of his Cabinet colleagues were alive to the dangers which a strong Naval power established in a strategic corner could pose to Britain. Thus Lloyd George would talk of not wanting Germany to "cut our trade routes"; while he did not think German presence in Angola would adversely affect Britain, Churchill did point out the inconveniences of having a great Naval power near the trade routes of Britain; the Admiralty showed concern over a German port in Walfisch Bay and the Foreign Office opposed the cession of Zanzibar on strategic grounds, despite an Admiralty memo pointing out that a German Zanzibar would not be fatal to British interests.[2] The list is endless. What needs to be appreciated is that in spite of all these inconsistencies, strategy did play a role in the configurations of policy.

Public opinion and parliamentary opposition were usually given as a factor militating against cession of territory, but this contention can be qualified. While the Foreign Office was not necessarily influenced by

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1. Beloff, op. cit., pp. 122-126 and 149.

2. See pp. 327-328; B.D. VIII Nos. 33-50; B.D.X(11) Nos. 316 and 310; CAB37/100/11 Feb. 5, 1912; CAB37/109/29 Feb. 26, 1912. Foreign Office and Admiralty memoranda on Zanzibar. The C.I.D. should have resolved these differences, but it does not appear that this Committee dealt with the question, according to the index in P.R.O. Handbook, No. 6 (1964).

public opinion, it, ———, preferred to avoid putting a proposal through parliament except it was confident that the advantages of a territorial deal were such that they would overcome possible opposition by group interests. Curiously enough, until 1911, there was scarcely much public interest shown in African colonial questions apart from South Africa (up to 1906), the agitation for Congo reform and the press campaign waged by Strachey and Harris in this period.

Of course there was the occasional letter to the Foreign Office or a Newspaper Editor by an irate correspondent, indignant at some rumour of a cession of British territory. And newspapers sometimes gave reports (as indeed they did on foreign territories) on Nigeria or Walfisch Bay, for instance. The Aborigines Protection Society did make a show of defending Gambian interests, but it was not of much effect. In any case, such negotiations were usually secret and the Foreign Office always endeavoured to give evasive answers to inquisitive enquiries.

In the House of Commons the occasional question by somebody interested in protective tariff or imperial matters was the norm, though this is not saying that the paucity of questions indicates a readiness to acquiesce in the cession of a British territory.[1] By and large, however, there was less public euphoria than in the scramble days. It was the Agadir debacle and its aftermath that stimulated public discussion of colonial questions.

The Foreign Office does not seem to have succumbed to blandishments of capitalists and financiers for more extensive inroads in foreign territories. Rather, it decided which interests justified its support and intervention. Of the cases noted, Grey did not want Liberia and although

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1. See pp. 96-97, 100, 103, 105, 107 cf. pp. 110-114. The following quotations give an idea of how the Foreign Office viewed public opinion. In 1907 Edgar Wallace, a correspondent of the Daily Mail went to the Congo and was disgusted by what he saw. He vowed that he would commence a campaign against the Congo Free State to stop the state of affairs in that territory. A.A.Clarke minuted:"No doubt Wallace is young and enthusiastic, when he grows a little older he will realise that it takes an even more skilful and energetic David than the Daily Mail to floor such a Goliath like Leo." And Grey noted: "The result will not be helpful." FO367/38/10945 Nightingale to Grey, March 10, 1907.

Johnston and Clarke impressed upon him the advantages that would accrue to British trade through more commitment in this territory, the Foreign Secretary refused to be drawn. And he was glad to wash his hands of the D'Erlanger loan. The soundings of the British Bank of West Africa in Liberia received no response either. Louis Ochs, a British financier who attempted to make plans for the furthering of British interests in Ethopia, based on the assumption that the Tripartite agreement indicated future partition of the territory, was discouraged by Charles Hardinge.[1] Arnold's scheme was also rejected. But it must be emphasised that when in the judgement of the Foreign Office, British interests could be served resort was made to the employment of financiers, as was attempted in more than one case in Mozambique.[2]

If the above summary seems rambling, it merely reflects the multiplicity of factors, each with varying degrees of importance, which influenced British policy; the ambiguities towards Empire in British political thinking; and the not clearly defined role of Africa in international relations.[3]

Britain, as one of the leading European Powers in Africa, preferred to maintain the territorial status quo, and apart from minor frontier rectificati she believed Africa had been partitioned and that little more could be done about it. But the partition left certain unresolved questions which demanded attention; in resolving those she had to deal with a power, Germany, which not only felt that she did not have a fair share of Africa, but which also appeared to challenge the very basis of British power by building a high seas fleet. The suspicion of German policy was translated into the African scene; some people even believed that the German Navy was being built with the aim of wresting Britain's Empire from her.

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1. (Grey Papers) F0800/40 Wohler to Hardinge, June 22, 1907. Minute by C. Hardinge.

2. See page 299.

3. Beloff, op. cit. passim; Peter Rowland, The last liberal governments, p. 89ff; R. Ryam, Elgin and Churchill, p. 207ff and passim.

Such a suspicion was proved by the writings of Pan-Germans who hoped for a larger African Empire as a result of a successful war. But during the two years before war broke out, statesmen in Britain and France, for example Caillaux, felt that by making colonial concessions to Germany, she might modify her extreme demands in Europe. It was also hoped in certain circles in Britain that these concessions could divert her from more harmful pursuits. It was a naive assumption; for in the end Germany refused to modify her Naval programme and it did not foreswear its political objectives. This indicated, some would argue, that Europe was still the centre of political affairs, and that no amount of colonial concessions would divert Germany from her striving towards European and world hegemony.

On the other hand, there were objections to the policy of colonial concession to Germany. Not only did France begin to worry that a colonial rapprochement was one more step to co-operation in other areas (which might not be consistent with French interests and might indeed be detrimental to her) but there were objections also to a powerful Germany established in the centre of Africa. She might even train a black army;[1] with this and a strong fleet she might be able to contain Britain outside Europe while she herself remained strong in the continent. The relatively rapid capitulation of German forces in Africa (with the exception of East Africa where the German colonial troops contained allied troops for four years) need not blind us to the real dangers which seemed to have existed for many contemporaries. These were re-emphasised when the idea of repartitioning Africa came up again in the inter war years.[2]

What is being suggested here is that although decisions were still made in Europe, it was not only European factors which influenced policies or events. The European statesystem had widened into one of global politics

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1. B.D.X(11) No. 299 Harcourt to Grey, May 26, 1912. Minute by Crowe.

2. Kenneth Ingham, A History of East Africa, London (1962) p. 260.
A.L. Bullock, Germany's Colonial Demands, (1939) p. 140ff.

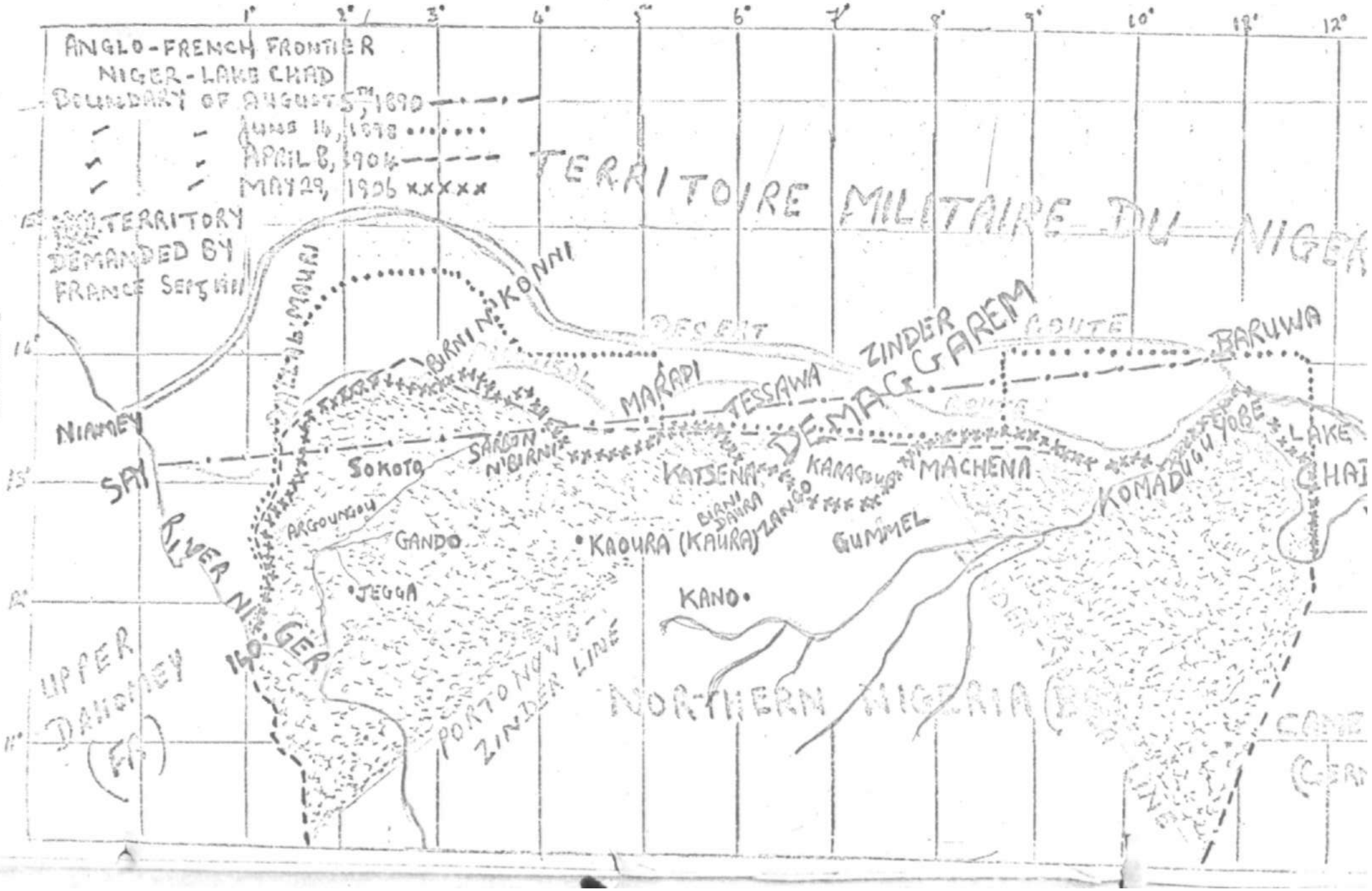
and little incidents outside the continent had their repercussions, however minor, on European politics.[1] The problem of satisfying German colonial drives was caught up in a vicious circle of European and imperial politics. When Britain started discussions for the revision of the 1898 treaty South Africa was consulted, and as has been noted, the Union was hostile to an extension of German territory. Indeed, Smuts, in an after dinner speech in 1913, declared that the territories south of the equator were destined to be part of the Union.[2] Also when the European implications of the colonial deal, which Grey had felt was mainly concerned with the colonial sphere and which, if at all, would have only an indirect effect on European politics, were pointed out to the Foreign Secretary, he became less enthusiastic for it. He was relieved to drop the matter as the Germans requested. It seemed that a repartition of Africa would affect the balance of power in Europe.

Although I will not go as far as to say that the "clash of European interests in Africa, and the feeling they called forth, were among the determining causes of the war of 1914",[3] it will be fair to conclude that African questions in this period of study did affect European politics.

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1. See also G. Barraclough, An Introduction to Contemporary History, (1964) Chapter IV, p. 93ff.
2. FO367/344/54615 C.O. to F.O., Dec. 2, 1913 forwarding despatches from South Africa. Smuts' reported statement was vague enough to include both French and German territories. Indeed, the Belgian and Portuguese Ministers enquired at the F.O. about the real meaning of the speech. They were assured that the Boer leader was referring to British territories adjacent to South Africa. There were no representations from Germany or France.
3. C.P. Lucas, "The Scramble and Franco-German National Problems" in Raymond Betts, (Ed.) The 'Scramble' for Africa, p. 18.

SKETCH MAP OF NORTHERN NIGERIA



APPENDIX II

Gambian Trade Figures for 1906 - 1911

Year	Imports	Exports	Remarks
1906	£447,657	£428,678	Groundnuts accounted for a large percentage of the export trade, while cotton goods, mainly from Britain, topped the imports table.
1907	£445,359	£408,476	Cotton goods amounted to £81,711, shared between Britain, France and Germany. Groundnuts: 38,091 tons (£237,236) exported to France 480 tons (£3,998) to Britain.
1908	£390,740	£374,138	Groundnuts: 26,601 tons sold for £204,888 to France 733 tons (£8,239) to Britain 1,115 tons (£8,364) to Germany. The disparity in value of the British and German totals is explained by the fact that the pick of the groundnuts were sent to Britain. The general fall in the export and import trade was due to the falling off of the value of cotton goods, short crops of groundnuts and the reduction of rubber export owing to stringent rules imposed by the French prohibiting rubber across the frontier from Casamance.
1909	£404,560	£477,964	Total tonnage of groundnuts exported was 53,644. 82% went to France, 7% to Britain and 4% to Germany. There was also an increase in cotton goods, tobacco, etc. imported.
1910	£573,963	£535,447	A further increase in both cotton goods and groundnut production. Britain accounted for 40.3% of the imports, France and her colonies 22.8% and British colonies 18%. France took 84.2% of the exports and Great Britain only 9.3%.
1911	£807,118	£632,036	Imports on Tobacco and Sugar increased; cotton decreased but sold for £130,324. Most of it came from Britain. Exports: The third largest recording of groundnuts produced was 47,391 tons which sold for £437,472. Rubber exported was 10,733 lbs.

APPENDIX III

"In considering what Germany may claim to acquire if the Congo territories should be put up for distribution it must be borne in mind what her attitude in 1895 in regard to an agreement of that year with the Congo State for the Cape to Cairo Railway, and what are the terms of the secret agreement which she made with us in August in September 1898 for the contingent reversion of Portugal's possessions in Africa.

I believe that the ambition and ultimate aim of Germany is to extend her African possessions from sea to sea, viz: from the Indian Ocean to the South Atlantic and that the real motive of her objection to our lease of a band of Congo territory for the Cape to Cairo Railway was that it would stand in the way of her extending her East African possessions westwards between Lake Tanganyika and Uganda... I do not say that she will do or attempt to do all those things but if we begin by disclaiming all territorial desires we leave the cake to be cut up between France and Germany, and if later on we make objections to a prospective allotment between those two Powers, France would have reason to say you told me that so long as the natives were secured in their rights and the Berlin Act trade arrangements were observed you had no desires. What have you to complain of?"

(Memo on German Mittel Afrika by Sir Francis Bertie, Nov. 25, 1907, Bertie Papers, FO800/176.)

"I am not anxious personally, to see us assume the responsibility for more territory in tropical Africa. But if France proceeded to make a deal with Germany about the Congo we should have to consider how our frontiers would be affected and put in our word according to what our interest seemed to require."

(Memo by Grey, enclosed in Tyrrell to Bertie, Dec. 16, 1907, Bertie Papers FO800/176.)

APPENDIX IV

"...of course what the Germans would value most would be Walfisch Bay, but this would produce almost a revolution in South Africa! Unless at the same time we cd (sic) publish the 1898 (treaty) giving us Delagoa Bay and Beira in the event of the break up or sale by Portugal. This would give such relief and satisfaction that it might cover Walfisch Bay. But what would Portugal say? Of course, their government know all about it ..."

(Harcourt Papers, Box 12, Harcourt to Anderson, Dec. 24, 1911.)

"The Germans should be given to understand from the outset that Walfisch Bay is outside discussion. Its cession would require not only the consent of the Union of South Africa but of parliament under the Colonial Boundaries Act of 1895. I doubt if any Union government would consent, and I am sure no parliament would, to the cession of Walfisch Bay, unless as the price to be paid for Delagoa Bay. The publication of the secret convention would show that we are secure in the reversion of Delagoa Bay and that the Germans have nothing more to offer us there.

It must be remembered that every European in the Dominions is convinced that German and French occupation of territory in their neighbourhood is only temporary, and that all such European occupation must ultimately be abandoned or terminated in favour of the sons of the Empire. The South African is convinced that Ludewitz-land will one day belong to the Union, just as the Australian and New Zealander is convinced that the Australian and New Zealand flag will one day fly over German New Guinea and New Caledonia.

Hence they will agree to nothing that would be likely to delay that consummation. It is a sort of Monroe doctrine applied to what they regarded as their legitimate sphere of influence.

There is nothing that Germany has in the way of colonial possessions that we covet, and that would be of any use to us, and speaking frankly I don't see what scope there is for a deal with them.

They no doubt covet the Trans-Volta district of the Gold Coast which would round off Togoland nicely, but greatly to the detriment of the Gold Coast. But I can think of nothing we could ask for in exchange. The breakdown of Portuguese finance is imminent, and that will in all probability mean an application to us and Germany for help. If so the secret agreement would come into play, and in working it out there might be scope for doing something for Germany. You will see that under the agreement Angola is to be cut into three parts, the two outside parts falling to Germany and the central part, including St. Paul de Loanda falling to us. I presume the Admiralty attach importance to St. Paul, which is the starting point of a railway, originally intended to run across the continent, but has only got some 300 miles from the coast yet. St. Paul is the centre of a very large and important trade, and the railway if pushed on would no doubt be the outlet of the trade of the south of Congo.

But, unless there are important strategic considerations involved - it ought to be made something of a coaling station - I can see no reason why we should wish for it, if Germany as she is bound to do keeps the 'open door' policy there.

I am afraid this is not very helpful, but the one thing, Walfisch Bay, which the Germans really covet and which so far as we are concerned they might have, we cannot give without the consent of the Union parliament and the Germans know as well as we do that that will never be forthcoming."

(Harcourt Papers, Box 12, Anderson to Harcourt, Dec. 27, 1911.)

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

A. UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

Official British Archives (Public Record Office, Chancery Lane and Portugal Street, London).

1. Foreign Office (F.O.)

F.O. 27 France
/3765 General Correspondence, Anglo-French Agreements, 1902-1905.
/33107 General Correspondence respecting Anglo-French frontier delimitations on the Gambia, 1901-1905.

F.O. 47 Liberia
/38 General Correspondence, Integrity of Liberia and French encroachments, 1898-1905.
/39 General Correspondence, Boundary questions, 1903-1905.

F.O. 367 Africa, 1905-1913 (New Series)

The documents in this series have been my main source of information. The volumes are arranged, in succeeding years, under the name of the respective Power with whom the subject was being discussed. I have consulted almost all of them, though I cannot claim to have made an exhaustive analysis of them. The footnotes have indicated the ones which were relevant to this study.

F.O. 371 Political

After 1913, papers relating to Africa are found in the Political Class. The volumes in this class are arranged alphabetically under names of countries and subjects. I was selective in my use of the documents in this series. The following were useful:

Ethiopia:	F.O.371/1 (1906) F.O.371/1570-1572 (May, 1913-Dec., 1913)	Correspondence on the tripartite agreement and the expected disintegration of the Ethiopian Empire.
France:	F.O.371/1120 F.O.371/1169-1170 (Moroccan Prints)	Oct., 1911-Dec., 1911. Correspondence on the Moroccan crisis and the Franco-German settlement.
Germany:	F.O.371/75, 1129, 1372, 1987, 1990, 2083	1906-1914. Various correspondence on Anglo-German colonial discussions.
Liberia:	F.O.371/187/1745	General correspondence, 1906.
Portugal:	F.O.371/2085-2086, 2088	March, 1914-Aug., 1914. Correspondence on German activities in the Portuguese colonies.

F.O. 401 Confidential Prints, Abyssinia.
/12 Correspondence, 1909.

F.O. 403 Confidential Prints, Africa
/350 Memo on Liberia, 1904
/354 Mfumbiro, Correspondence (May 1, 1900-Dec. 5, 1901)
/390 Memo on Liberia, May 1907
/402 Confidential Print on Liberia, Dec. 31, 1908.
/403A/9267 Memo on Mfumbiro, May 26, 1908.

F.O. 458 Consular Reports, Liberia
/21, 24-25 (1908-1909).

2. Colonial Office (C.O.)

C.O. 87 Original Correspondence, The Gambia /93, 172-3, 184, 187 (1870-1911).

C.O. 417 Original Correspondence, High Commissioner of South Africa (1884-1924). /469, 490, 501, 517 (March, 1909-June, 1912).

C.O. 446 Original Correspondence, Northern Nigeria (1900-1913) /39, 52, 101 (May, 1904 - July, 1911).

C.O. 533 Original Correspondence, East Africa Protectorate. /127 and 145 (April, 1913 - September, 1914).

C.O. 535 (Somaliland 1913) /32/7299 F.O. to C.O., Feb. 20, 1913.

C.O. 551 Original Correspondence, Union of South Africa (May, 1910-1922). /15, 18-19, 32, 47-48 (1911-1913)

C.O. 879 Confidential Prints (These formed an important part of my primary sources. There are 116 Volumes of these documents, and they are available in Microfilm. Microfilm copies are deposited in King's College Library, Aberdeen University, Aberdeen, Scotland. The originals are in P.R.O., Portugal Street, London.)
The following were relevant to the Nigerian, Gambian, Anglo-Liberian frontier, Walfisch Bay, and the Caprivi Zipfel and Orange River questions: Volumes 27, 29, 34, 51, 53, 80, 86, 88-89, 91, 96-97, 102, 107, 110. (1887-1912).

C.O. African Pamphlet Collection, in microfilm, King'sCollege Library, Aberdeen.

3. Cabinet Papers

CAB 37 Memoranda printed for the use of the Cabinet.
Memoranda on the Muscat-Gambia Negotiations (F.O.) CAB37/93/85 (June 23, 1909); CAB37/99/85 (April 14, 1909)
Memoranda on Anglo-German Naval negotiations and Agadir: CAB37/107/60, (24/5/11); CAB37/107/75 (10/7/11); CAB37/107/87 (27/7/11).
Memoranda on the Haldane Mission and the Negotiations following it: CAB37/109/16 and 19 (7/2/12) and (13/2/12); CAB37/110/46 (7/3/12); CAB37/110/50 (15/3/12); CAB37/110/52 (19/3/12); CAB37/115/22 (11/4/15); CAB37/119/43 (March, 1914)
Notes on Zanzibar CAB37/109/11 (Feb. 11, 1912) (F.O.); CAB37/109/24 (Feb. 19, 1912) (R.O.C.); CAB37/109/29 (Feb. 26, 1912) (Admiralty).
Memorandum on the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance CAB37/116/53 (July 30, 1914) (circulated by Grey).
Extracts from German Newspapers circulated to the Cabinet by Grey: CAB37/108/173 (2/12/11); CAB37/108/186 (22/12/11).

CAB 41 Report of the Prime Minister to Sovereign.
Report on the Gambia-Muscat negotiations CAB41/31/160 (June 24, 1909); CAB41/32/14 (April 30, 1909)
Report on Naval questions CAB41/32/4 (15/2/09); CAB41/32/5 (5/3/09); CAB41/33/4 (1/3/11); CAB41/33/5 (9/3/11); CAB41/33/15 (17/5/11).

Report on the question of recognising the Republic of Portugal CAB41/32/69 (13/10/11).
Report on the Agadir crisis CAB41/33/20-24 (July 4 - August 17, 1911); also CAB41/30/2-4 (July 11 - July 26, 1911).
Report on Cabinet decision on military conversations with France CAB41/33/21 (November 2, 1911).
Report on the Haldane Mission and Anglo-German talks CAB41/33/34-41 (Feb. 3 - March 16, 1912); CAB41/33/51, 61, 71 (June 4 - Nov. 21, 1912). See also CAB41/34/1, 10 (January 9 - March 20, 1913).

4. Private Papers (unless otherwise indicated these papers are all deposited in the archives of the F.R.O. at Chancery Lane and Portugal Street, London).

Bertie Papers

F.O. 800/160 Correspondence, Abyssinia and Africa (1903-1915)
/171 Correspondence, Germany (1903-1918)
/176 Correspondence, Portugal (1896-1917)

Austen Chamberlain Papers (Birmingham University Library)

AC 13/1/1-6 Correspondence with F.D. Achland, "Anglo-German Negotiations 1890-1914", ref. to limitations of armaments and cognate matters.

Cromer Papers

F.O. 633/
19 Correspondence with Lord Crewe, June 11, 1909
21 Correspondence with Lee Strachey, Travers Buxton, The Revd. J.H. Harris, Lord Curzon, E.D. Morel, etc. Feb., 1912 - Nov., 1912 } On African Affairs, including the Congo and Portuguese slavery questions.
22 Correspondence with Lee Strachey and Travers Buxton Oct. 1913

Crowe Papers

F.O. 800/243 Crowe to Dilke, Oct. 15, 1907. Miscellaneous Correspondence (1907-1925). The collection is rather disappointing in view of Crowe's role in the Foreign Office, both as an administrator with an undoubted skill of penmanship and as an adviser to Grey.

Grey Papers (These have been very useful in this study, especially his correspondence on France.)

F.O. 800/40 Correspondence, Abyssinia, 1905-1911
/50-54 Correspondence, France, 1906-1913.
/62 Correspondence, Germany, 1910-1914.
/71 Correspondence, Portugal, 1905-1916.
/87 Correspondence, Admiralty, 1905-1913.
/91 Correspondence, Colonial Office, 1905-1916.
/93 Foreign Office Memoranda, 1909-1911.
/97 Correspondence, Home Office, 190 -1916.
/99 Correspondence, Irish Office, Lord Chamberlain's Office, Lord Chancellor, Lord Chief Justice, Lord Privy Seal, Ministry of Munitions, and Office of Works, 1905-1916.
/111 Miscellaneous correspondence, 1905-1916.

Haldane Papers (National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh).

Volumes 5975-5991 Letters to his Mother (January, 1911-July, 1914).
5907 Correspondence with Sir Edward Grey, (1906-1907).
5919 Memo of Events (1906-1915).
5923 Notes on Asquith, Grey, Rosebery, Balfour and Morley (1926).
6009 Letters from his Mother (1908-1912)
6011 Letters to his Sister, Elizabeth Haldane, (1904-1912).

Harcourt Papers In 12 Boxes (By courtesy of Lord Harcourt, Stanton Harcourt, Oxon.)

Box 1 Dossier regarding terms of the proposed revision of the secret treaty of 1890.

Box 2 Correspondence with Lord Gladstone, Private and Personal, (November, 1910 - July, 1913).

Box 6 Official Correspondence, D to H, Vol. II.

Box 12 Correspondence, (1911-1914).

C. Hardinge Papers

F.O. 800/24 C. Hardinge to Villiers, Feb. 20, 1903. Hardinge's papers are not grouped together, but are included in the papers of other former officials in the Foreign Office. They are a mine of Foreign Office gossip.

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Map References: Some of the maps in this study are based on archival sources in the P.R.O. and Maps in the Geography Department, University of Aberdeen. The Nigerian and Senegambia sketches are based on maps in Ministère des Colonies, Documents Scientifiques, between pp. XII and XIII; James, Boundary Marking, p. 70; Riembau, De Dakar au Niger, p. 22, respectively.