EFFORTS TOWARD ANGLO-GERMAN RECONCILIATION, 1898-1901

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EFFORTS TOWARD ANGLO-GERMAN RECONCILIATION, 1898-1901

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Foreword

The victory of Great Britain and her allies in the Crimean War was followed by almost fifty years of abstention from any alliance ventures on the part of England. By keeping her hands free she could enjoy the balance of power on the continent without making any military commitments. It was only when some other Power threatened her maritime supremacy or some part of her far-flung empire, that Great Britain intervened actively in continental affairs. England adhered to this policy even after the Franco-Prussian War despite Bismarck's efforts to make an alliance with her in 1879, 1885, and again in 1889. But each time his efforts were unsuccessful, partly because Lord Salisbury, who was the Foreign Secretary, feared that he could not get Parliamentary approval for the project.[1]

England, however, did depart from her no-alliance

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[1]Lady Gwendolen Cecil, Life of Robert Marquis of Salisbury (4 vols., London, 1921-32), II, 364-9; Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette, 1871-1914 (40 vols., Berlin, 1922-27), IV, 1-4. Hereafter referred to as Grosse Politik; E. T. S. Dugdale, ed., German Diplomatic Documents, 1871-1914 (4 vols., New York, 1928-30), I, 144-54, 207-16, 367-86, Hereafter referred to as German Documents.

policy somewhat in 1887 when she formed an entente with Italy and Austria in which the three countries expressed the desire to maintain the status quo in the Mediterranean and in Turkey. This agreement did not bind England to any military obligations; however, it was an early indication of Britain's predilection for the Triple Alliance.[2] After Bismarck's fall in 1890, this friendship for Germany seemed to continue and was bolstered by the Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty by which England exchanged the small island off the German coast for territory in Zanzibar. Moreover, the young Kaiser's family ties in England seemed to forecast favorable relations between the two countries.

Toward the close of the nineteenth century, however England faced several serious problems throughout the world which began to emphasize her need for allies. Her position in Egypt was extremely weak and created a perfect means by which the continental powers could squeeze concessions from England. In addition England and France were involved in difficulties over the Nigerian boundary; France was extending her influence toward the upper Nile which was dangerously close to the

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[2]Alfred Francis Pribram, The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary (2 vols., London, 1920-1), I, 94-102.

British sphere of control, while in South Africa the friction between the Boers and the English threatened to break out into a full scale war. The situation in this part of the world was not eased by the actions of Dr. Leander Jameson who made a stillborn raid on the Boer city of Johannesburg in an attempt to achieve by force what England had attempted by diplomacy. Aside from the embarrassment to the British government by this action, the famous Kruger telegram from the Kaiser had shown the British that they must nullify any aid which Germany might give to the South African Republics.

Finally in the Far East Germany had made attempts to acquire a naval base in China. Moreover, Russia was obtaining an economic hold on Manchuria through the extension of the Trans-Siberian Railroad; and if she obtained Port Arthur, she could menace Peking and seriously jeopardize England's naval and commercial supremacy in the Far East. It was against this setting that England and Germany began unofficial negotiations for an alliance.

In most discussions of the diplomatic negotiations of the pre-World War I period much attention is focused on the events after 1904. Even in the studies of the foreign policy of William II, the period before the Anglo-French <u>entente</u> is treated as a prelude to the main action. This emphasis is perhaps natural, but it is also

misleading and to a certain extent somewhat false. After 1902 events seem to have moved toward the debacle with the inevitability characteristic of tragic affairs. The forces were already drawn up and the time and place of the break alone remained undetermined. In the late nineties, however, international alignments had a comparative flexibility which they did not have after 1904. The continent was already divided into two hostile alliances, but the solidarity of the Dual Alliance, at least, was yet to be proven. England, remaining aloof, served as a balance wheel. After 1895, as British statesmen began to realize that isolation was neither splendid nor safe, the picture began to change. The next few years are characterized by Britain's efforts to effect an alliance with one or the other of the continental groups. From 1898 to 1901 the dominant element in the Conservative cabinet desired a union with Germany, and it was only when these efforts met with failure that they made their overtures to France.

In my opinion these important negotiations give the events of this period equal importance with the years immediately preceeding the war. Although it may be idle speculation to say what the course of history might have been if the Anglo-German negotiations had been successful, it cannot be denied that their failure made inevitable

the rivalry which paved the way to war. It is the purpose of this thesis to discuss this attempt at reconciliation and to come to some conclusions as to why it failed. The publication of both the German and British documents made this task easier.

The documents from the German archives show, despite a shifting and inconsistent German diplomacy, that there was a certain unity in the policy of the Wilhelmstrasse. The evidence which is now available shows that the ultimate object of German diplomacy was not the destruction of England, as has been frequently stated, but a close alliance. As early as 1893 we find this desire clearly formulated, and during the next ten years this objective was never entirely out of sight.[3] It is, moreover, safe to say that almost every German statesman who had any important part in the formulation of foreign policy during this period was convinced that sooner or later England and the Triple Alliance must join forces.

This desire for British friendship by Germany was frustrated by that combination of swaggering self-confidence and almost abject fear which puzzled and angered the diplomats of other countries. However, in strange

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[3] Grosse Politik, VIII, 240-2, Hatzfeldt to Foreign Office, July 31, 1893.

juxtaposition with the confidence of the Berlin government in the hegemony of Germany was a fear of the power of the Dual Alliance. Germany appeared at times ready to turn against England in order to win either France or to wean Russia away from France. This concern over her relationship with other continental powers placed Germany in an unenviable position and had two important results. In the first place the obvious efforts by Germany to effect a rapprochement with Russia and France naturally alarmed the British and made them suspicious of Germany's protestations of friendship. Even more fatal was the way that fear of Russia affected German attitude toward the English alliance proposals.

The operation of these factors hostile to the desired union is clearly evident in the events of the years 1898 to 1901. For that reason, a study of these years seems valuable. The next four chapters deal with these negotiations from their inception in 1898 to their ultimate failure in 1901. It has been necessary to bring into this discussion a study of certain major events which occurred in several parts of the world where English and German interests met. Investigation has shown that both British and German diplomacy were greatly influenced by these crises. It was these threats to their national security as well as to their commercial ventures that

prompted the two countries to seek an all inclusive agreement in 1898, and to continue that project until its obvious defeat was assured.

CHAPTER I

Early Efforts for an Anglo-German Alliance

In 1895, as a result of the general election, Lord Salisbury was asked by Queen Victoria to form a new cabinet. This he accomplished, but the new cabinet which he managed to put together struggled under three difficulties. First, Salisbury combined the positions of Premier and Foreign Minister--never a good working plan under the English system of government. Second, it was a coalition, and one in which the minor party had far more men qualified for high office. Third, the strongest man in the cabinet, Joseph Chamberlain, was a liberal unionist, and as such ineligible to be premier or even to lead the House of Commons. It was only the fine tact on the part of Balfour and Salisbury which surmounted the last difficulty. They allowed Chamberlain "... usually the power of a co-Premier and on some rare occasions more."[1] It is necessary to understand Chamberlain's position in the cabinet, for he was to play an

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[1]James L. Garvin, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain (4 vols., London, 1934), III, 7. Hereafter referred to as J.L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain.

important and intricate part in the efforts toward an Anglo-German reconciliation.

The incongruity of Chamberlain's office as Colonial Secretary and his attempts at foreign diplomacy immediately strike the reader. However, this was not entirely an expropriation of the Foreign Secretaries' prerogatives, but a juxtaposition of duties. Late in 1897 Chamberlain received an advance from the German embassy in London. The gist of the *pourparlers* was that the German Colonial Secretary, Baron Richthofen, wished a private conversation with Chamberlain. The ostensive reason given was that the German Government was fearful that serious trouble would develop between England and Germany in West Africa. This was a legacy left by Lord Roseberry's government. Baron Richthofen was particularly anxious to settle these differences before this trouble occurred or before any official negotiations were made.

Chamberlain immediately asked Lord Salisbury's consent. The Prime Minister replied that "Your meeting with Richthofen would probably be of value and it certainly would not hinder anything. The Germans have evidently held onto the neutral zone in the hope that they might use it to squeeze us about the Volta."[2]

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[2]Quoted in J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 247.

Unfortunately foreign events were advancing so rapidly that nothing more came of these negotiations. However, we must take this as Chamberlain's early interest in the affair. Chamberlain's necessary interest in British colonial affairs, coupled with his own personal desire to abandon isolation, seemed to indicate that it would be Chamberlain who would play the more important part for the English in any alliance negotiations.

The Colonial Secretary pursued these efforts at an Anglo-German Alliance with forebearance and patience as well as conviction. Until recently this passage of his life work was the least known and appreciated; but when the German archives were thrown open and Eckardstein's memoirs were published--not to mention voluminous subsidiary material--the importance of his part was realized.

The Beginnings

In 1897, by a culmination of events, England faced the necessity of revising her traditional foreign policy. Toward the end of 1897 Germany had descended upon Shantung, China, forcing the Russians to set their plans ahead of schedule and occupy Port Arthur. In the disputes that followed, Great Britain was ignored and her protests flouted. The Kaiser whose fervor for

colonial expansion knew no bounds did not caution moderation but rather wrote, "We shall get nothing willingly, but only what we can take for ourselves with an armed fist."[3] Later, when Salisbury denounced the old Belgian and German treaties which prevented the colonies from giving preference to the mother country, the German Kaiser's wrath burst forth and he wrote: "This is the beginning of war against our flourishing productive State."[4] This was ominous enough on the part of the head of a state, but William added: "Had we fleet strong enough to enforce respect, the notice to terminate the old treaties would not have been given; our answer must be to keep in view a speedy and significant increase of our new construction."[5] Thus the Colonial Secretary was faced with this problem in the Far East while matters elsewhere in the world which concerned the two countries threatened to come to a head.

Three distinct questions were involved. In West Africa the Germans wanted a piece of British territory on the coast, the Volta triangle which cut off their Togoland

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[3] Grosse Politik, XIII, 27, Kaiser's footnote on a letter from Hatzfeldt to Hohenlohe, May 12, 1897.

[4] Ibid., p.34, William II to Hohenlohe, August 1, 1897.

[5] Op. cit., p.34.

from the mouth of that river. They also wanted to extend Togoland to the north by dividing a large neutral zone; while the Kaiser along with Admiral Tirpitz, German minister of marine, wanted, above all, Samoa. Germany at first wanted England to join with her and demand that the United States abandon Samoa as compensation for its ~~recent~~ acquisition of Hawaii. When Salisbury refused to act on this request,[6] Germany then began her negotiations for British Samoa.

The British Colonial Secretary was cool toward these proposals, for he disliked to cede any British territory. If he must relinquish the Volta area to Togoland, he wanted more than the Wilhelmstrasse would offer. Chamberlain, also, knew that he would have to face the antagonism of New Zealand and Australia if the British withdrew from Samoa. However, he was willing to face this ire if he could obtain the German share of New Guinea. He expressed his views to the Prime Minister. "We could not possibly offer Germany more than a free hand in Samoa in return for New Guinea, which is valueless to them and which some day the Australians will take by force if they do not get it otherwise. Even

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[6] Grosse Politik, XIII, 40, Hatzfeldt to Hohenlohe, September 27, 1897.

this concession will make the New Zealanders very angry."[7] Needless to say Berlin refused to exchange New Guinea for Samoa.

At this time, which Chamberlain's biographer places at the end of the autumn of 1897, the first proposal for more direct negotiations with Chamberlain came from Berlin. This first overture originated with the same agent who was later to play an important part in the alliance proposals, Baron Eckardstein, the secretary of the German legation in London. Unfortunately Chamberlain was away at this time and nothing more came of this opening. By the end of 1897 foreign events began to move rapidly and the Colonial Secretary was faced with a new world policy. Fortunately for German plans two German missionaries were killed in the very region which the Kaiser coveted--Kiao-Chau, China. Two years before this crisis arose, the Kaiser had ordered all plans to be prepared for a seizure of Kiao-Chau at a somewhat apt time.[8] Kiao-Chau was seized in late November and in a few weeks the Russian fleet steamed into Port Arthur. Upon the Russian request, two British ships were withdrawn. Even the most sober element of the English

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[7] Quoted in J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 246.

[8] Grosse Politik, XIV, Part I, pp.46-7, footnotes.

public felt that this was an insult to his country. Salisbury in an interview with the German ambassador, Hatzfeldt, stated that "the mode in which the purpose of Germany had been attained impressed me more unfavorably than the purpose itself."[9] He further stated that he could not reproach the Russians for their conduct because they had acted with the utmost correctness, something which he could not say of the German occupation of Kiao-Chau.[10]

It is not the purpose of this essay to discuss at length the Far Eastern policy of the British government, however, it graphically illustrates that by 1898 England realized that she had suffered a major diplomatic defeat. This was especially disconcerting so soon after the grand display made at Victoria's second Jubilee. Chamberlain, as well as other cabinet members, realized that this weakness lay in isolation. There was a Dual Alliance and a Triple Alliance, and Britain was the sole great power without an ally. Chamberlain, casting about for an alliance, decided that it would be of mutual

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[9] G. P. Gooch and Harold Temperley, eds., British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898-1914 (11 vols., London, 1926-38), Salisbury to Lascalles, January 12, 1898, vol. I, no.3, p. 4. Hereafter referred to as British Documents.

[10] Op. cit., p.4.

advantage to effect one with Germany.

Here we enter into a controversy as to who made the first overture for negotiations which were to last for the next three years. Chamberlain's biographer emphatically declared that "The initiative came from the German side. This must be well noted. When British feeling was strongest and the perplexities of the British Cabinet were extreme, Freiherr Von Eckardstein renewed his recent efforts to bring Chamberlain into direct contact with German diplomacy."[11]

Eckardstein's own words in his memoirs seem to validate this assumption, for he reviewed Germany's past attempts at an alliance:

> ... Germany needed a new ally. That was the origin of the secret mission of Lothair Bucher in December, 1875 to London, ... In the following years, 1876, 1877, Bismarck discussed an alliance with Lord Salisbury, then minister of the colonies and with the foreign minister, Lord Derby. During the Berlin Congress he entered into secret negotiations with Lord Beaconsfield as to an Anglo-German-Austrian Alliance.[12]

However, we must early realize that Eckardstein, although usually accurate in details, cannot be trusted in

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[11] J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 255.

[12] Baron von Eckardstein, Ten Years at the Court of St. James (New York, 1922), p.133. Hereafter referred to as Eckardstein, Ten Years.

interpretations. He had an obvious distaste for the German Foreign Office officials whom he called the "lesser live stock."[13] This confessed dislike coupled with the fact that he was married to an Englishwoman help to explain his biased opinions. Also he was an ardent admirer and friend of the Duchess of Devonshire who avidly desired a closer agreement between the country of her birth (Germany) and that of her adoption.

Bülow wrote in his memoirs that it was Chamberlain who "threw us the bait of an Anglo-German Alliance."[14] We cannot place too much confidence in this report as Bülow was writing a justification of his actions as well as those of Germany. Moreover, he takes liberties with dates and events to make his own narrative more plausible. We also have a letter written by Chamberlain and sent to Salisbury which showed that Chamberlain placed the responsibility directly in the laps of the Germans:

> Colonial Office, April 29, 1898, Herewith are the notes of some very curious conversations I have had with the German ambassador and Baron Eckardstein.
>
> You will see that in every case the interviews were sought by the Germans and the initiative was taken by them.
>
> On every occasion I made it clear

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[13] Ibid., p.29

[14] Bernhard von Bülow, Memoirs (4 vols., Boston, 1931), I, 322.

> that I only expressed my personal opinions and could not speak for you or any of my colleagues. ...[15]

It seemed quite evident that both sides desired an understanding of some type. To what degree or to what extent each side wished to go showed the extent of that desire.

Taking Eckardstein's narrative as a guide, the negotiations must have begun in the opening months of 1898. He was present at a small dinner party which was given by Alfred Rothschild. The other guests present were Chamberlain, the Duke of Devonshire [Lord President], and Henry Chaplin [President of the local government board], all members of the cabinet. It does not seem unlikely that this dinner was given especially to bring up the subject of an alliance. It may be true that Eckardstein made the first actual statement for a rapprochement, but doubtless he had enough hints cast his way to justify his proposals. However, as further documents prove, the alliance was as greatly desired by Chamberlain as by the Germans, if not more so.

Hatzfeldt, the German Ambassador in London, telegraphed his foreign office in Berlin on Thursday,

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[15] J.L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 278-9.

March 24 that he had been invited by Baron Rothschild to a luncheon the following Saturday to meet some cabinet members. "I have an impression that the initiative is not Rothschild's alone and that the main object is to make a confidential attempt at a rapprochement with Germany."[16] This meeting was evidently the result of the agreement engendered in the first conference at which Eckardstein was present.

It is important to understand what the situation was in Berlin at this point. For at this time the first Naval Bill was in the Reichstag for passage. William II and his advisers desired nothing so much as a binding treaty with England which would curtail their plans for naval expansion.

> Yet, knowing their own far-reaching calculations and fearing a premature awakening in this country [England], they desire nothing more than to manage England prudently for some years to come. It seemed high policy to keep Britain in play, to evade entanglement, and to work for incidental gains.[17]

Returning to the controversial point as to who

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[16] Grosse Politik, XIV, Part I, pp. 193-4, Hatzfeldt to Holstein, March 24, 1898.

[17] J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 257.

made the first attempt at negotiations, we have Hatzfeldt's dispatch to the German Foreign Office:

> Mr. Chamberlain, whom I met today explained to me in detail and strictly confidentially that a turn had come in the political situation, which no longer permitted England to continue her policy, hitherto traditionally one of isolation. The British Government was faced with the need of soon making far-reaching decisions and would now be able to count on the support of public opinion if it gave up its policy of isolation and looked around for alliances.[18]

This part of the dispatch is interesting when we know that the Chinese situation was fast reaching a climax and that England had sent her Far Eastern fleet to the Gulf of Pechili in order to take Wei-hai-wei. In the face of Russian opposition, England needed a strong ally in this area. Also, two major events were added to the total which gave added impetus to the negotiations. The day previous to the Chamberlain-Hatzfeldt conversation the Chinese garrison had withdrawn from Port Arthur and the Russian troops had occupied that strategic position. Furthermore, the German Reichstag on the same day had passed the bill founding the new German navy.

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[18] E.T. S. Dugdale, ed., German Diplomatic Documents (4 vols., New York, 1930), III, 21, Hatzfeldt to German Foreign Office, March 29, 1898. Hereafter referred to as German Documents.

The German ambassador went on to relate how Chamberlain reviewed Anglo-German relations which had led to their late estrangement. Hatzfeldt stated that Chamberlain expressed the opinion that the two countries possessed the same political interests, and that the few little colonial differences that existed could be settled, "... if only at the same time agreement could be obtained on the great political issues."[19]

Bülow's answer to Hatzfeldt expressed the current fears and objections to such an alliance in Berlin:

> I beg your Excellency to thank Mr. Chamberlain for his confidential overtures and say to him the following which will show him that we also entirely trust his personal reliability and discretion.
>
> Mr. Chamberlain desires to avert the threat to England's peace by making England, in alliance with Germany, stronger than her rivals and so force them to renounce their hostile intentions against her. But the weak point of such an Anglo-German treaty would be that any such agreement would only bind the British Government for the time being. If the enemies of the Anglo-German group wished, after the ancient principle of the Horatii, to fight their rivals singly, and fell first upon Germany, I must certainly say that ... I have no faith that the British party to the treaty would in

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[19] Ibid., III, 21

> this case spring to our assistance. It would be more in the spirit of the British policy up to the present for the government, which has engaged itself to us by this treaty, simply to go out of power and be followed by one, which, ..., would obey public opinion and confine itself to its usual role of a looker-on.[20]

We can readily see that engendered in the German mind was this suspicion of an English political movement which would leave Germany in a diplomatic dilemma. Bülow, when writing his memoirs still held to this position, for he wrote his estimation of an English politician: "In no country is the border-line between private and political morality drawn so sharply and so coldly as in England; and Englishmen of the highest personal probity will resort to the most doubtful expedients in politics as calmly as a doctor, if he thinks the case calls for it, will administer poisons."[21] Bülow made another false assumption, for he believed that time was against England for within ten years England would be in a worse position (he believed) than at the present. By which time the Siberian railroad would be finished and Russian preparations would be completed on the Indian frontier, and thus it would be less easy to deter Russia from

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[20] German Documents, III, 23-24, Bülow to Hatzfeldt, March 30, 1898.

[21] Bernhard von Bülow, Memoirs, I, 322.

taking part in an Anglo-French war "... whereas in ten years time British feeling will still present the same obstacle to a British alliance with continental Powers as it does today."[22]

It has been stated by several authors that this decision and way of thinking was the outcome of a collaboration between Bülow and Holstein. However, I am inclined to believe, in the face of Bülow's own estimation of Holstein whom he referred to as "the incorrigible crank"[23] that such a collaboration for all practical matters did not exist. In fact, Bülow says that Holstein in the beginning was definitely pro-British. Furthermore, although he feared and hated the Bismarcks,[24] he followed their policy of trying to keep England friendly. However, it is not possible to underestimate Holstein's influence, for he remained in the German Foreign Office for several years, making and unmaking diplomats almost at will.[25]

Chamberlain did not take Bülow's answer as final. He made another appointment with the German ambassador

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[22] German Documents, III, 24.

[23] Bülow, Memoirs, I, 330.

[24] Loc. cit.

[25] Ibid., pp. 573.4. An interesting and revealing account of this mystery man of the Wilhelmstrasse is given in G. P. Gooch, Studies in Modern History (London, 1932), pp.1-116.

which was held at once. In his second memorandum Chamberlain took Bülow's arguments one by one and defended Britain's stability and power as an ally. He agreed that the British parliamentary system held certain loopholes, yet for this very reason any treaty would have to be submitted to Commons, where he believed it would pass. He admitted, also, that his opinion, though communicated to his colleagues, did not in any way commit them.[26]

Hatzfeldt's account of this interview was more dramatic but similar in content.[27] But Chamberlain did not show the necessary enthusiasm for a victorious war with France, and Germany, while looking forward to expansion in China was not prepared to force the issue by arms.

The next Bülow dispatch foreshadowed the ultimate failure of the first attempt for an Anglo-German alliance. German policy now was directed toward waiting for time and strengthening the fleet and keeping her hands free. Bülow's text was couched in a tone of semi-hostility. He asked how the German people could forget the recent quarrels with England, especially British abuse of the Kaiser. Germany had no wish to become embroiled with

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[26] J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 263-6.

[27] Grosse Politik, Vol. XIV, Part I, pp. 202-4, Hatzfeldt to the Wilhelmstrasse, April 1, 1898.

Russia and in event of danger from that country common action between England and Germany would come of itself. Bülow regretted that existing circumstances forbade an unnecessary alliance at that time, but the door to such an agreement was not closed. What appeared impractical at the time could in the future prove feasible.[28] Hatzfeldt took this dispatch as indicative of the German Foreign Office's attitude, and in a dispatch dated April 7, he represented Balfour as saying that Chamberlain sometimes wished to advance too fast and that he gave "... the impression that this personal ill-success of Mr. Chamberlain's in this matter was not altogether unwelcome to him."[29]

It was at this point that the diplomats of Germany decided to reveal the proceedings with England to the Kaiser. They placed before him Hatzfeldt's April seventh dispatch and one dated also on April seventh. In the former communication Hatzfeldt made his incorrect estimation of the English Colonial Secretary. This characterization on the part of the German ambassador points out what the further relations between the two men would be. He wrote:

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[28] Ibid., pp. 204-7, Bülow to Hatzfeldt, April 3, 1898.

[29] German Documents, III, 25, Hatzfeldt to Hohenlohe, April 7, 1898.

> In natural intelligence as in energy and great parliamentary skill, he assuredly does not fail, but in respect to foreign policy he makes on me the impression of a raw beginner who follows the dictates of his personal vanity, taking no sufficient account of consequences, in what he does and says. Obviously he would have regarded it as a personal triumph, bringing him a good step nearer the Premiership, could he have succeeded in establishing himself as the author of the English alliance with the Dreibund.[30]

This estimation of Chamberlain was later ridiculed by one of the more outstanding German historians who wrote:

> Chamberlain thus laid his cards on the table, which was characteristic of the man and of his aversion to diplomatic mystery-mongering. But to Hatzfeldt ... this method of pursuing politics seemed amateurish, uncouth and ill-judged. He termed Chamberlain haughtily an 'ignorant novice,' which was certainly unjust. Chamberlain acted like a shrewd experienced business man who was seeking to bring about a fusion of interests ...[31]

The Kaiser was jubilant, for his past animosity toward England was yet to give him some satisfaction, and he wrote that John Bull is in a dilemma and wants someone to get him out. Furthermore the Emperor had no inclination

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[30] Grosse Politik, XIV, Part I, 212-16, Hatzfeldt to Hohenlohe, April 7, 1898.

[31] Erich Brandenburg, From Bismarck to the World War (London, 1927), p.106.

to help England merely on Chamberlain's promises.[32]

William II labored under a dual complexity. Deep seated in him was a hatred for England and Englishmen; however, on the other hand, there was his obviously sincere devotion to his grandmother, Queen Victoria. Partly justified in his resentment because of the attacks about him in the British journals, he complained to Lascalles[33] that for eight years after his accession to the throne, he had tried his best to bring about friendlier relations with England, but what had been his reward? On his last visit to England he had been so attacked personally in the English papers that he had found it impossible to return to England.[34] It is difficult to ascertain to what extent the Kaiser was informed by his ministers, but he remained from this point a key figure in the following negotiations.

Eckardstein's Duplicity

With Bülow's last rejection, this part of the negotiations may be considered closed with the exception of one more event. At Alfred Rothschild's suggestion and with Hatzfeldt's evident approval, Eckardstein made a

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[32] German Documents, III, 25, Minute by the Emperor to a dispatch of April 26, 1898.

[33] Frank Lascalles, British ambassador to Germany, 1895-98.

[34] British Documents, I, No. 63, p. 43, Lascalles to Salisbury, February 1, 1898.

trip to Homburg on supposedly private matters. The real purpose of the journey was an attempt by Eckardstein to approach the Emperor on the matter. After a lengthy discussion with William II, Eckardstein left convinced that the Kaiser was in complete sympathy with Chamberlain's views.[35] It is obvious from the evidence later revealed that he was mistaken.

The next day William wrote to his foreign office giving an entirely different version of his ideas. He said that an Anglo-German treaty at that time was highly undesirable, but "... at the same time it is of great importance to keep official sentiment in England favorable to us and hopeful. A friendly minded England puts another card against Russia in our hands, as well as giving us the prospect of winning from England colonial advantages."[36]

The bewildered Eckardstein recorded that within less than a week after his return to London, Hatzfeldt told him that it was no good to go on with the negotiations, as the Wilhelmstrasse and above all the Kaiser was against an understanding with England. Eckardstein injected a note of irony into this account. He wrote

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[35]Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 94-5

[36]Grosse Politik, XIV, Part I, 217, William II to Wilhelmstrasse, April 10, 1898.

that the Emperor seemed to be influenced by the last person with whom he spoke.[37] Despite the fact that Eckardstein knew that the German foreign policy did not include an agreement with England, he went immediately to the office of Chamberlain to report his conversation with the Kaiser. He neglected to mention that his news was no longer valid. Chamberlain recorded this conversation in his third memorandum and was especially impressed by Eckardstein's statement that the Emperor wanted the affair to be taken care of immediately.[38] Eckardstein's report to Chamberlain seems a direct misrepresentation on his part and can only be explained by his own fervor to see such an alliance become a reality. Whether he was motivated by personal advancement or from patriotic zeal, his misleading report put Chamberlain in a ludicrous position as he continued to work for the alliance.

The next step in the negotiations showed that Eckardstein had also failed to reveal his conversation with Chamberlain to Hatzfeldt. The German ambassador telegraphed to Bülow that Chamberlain still insisted upon another interview on the subject of an alliance and gave the impression that Chamberlain was pushing the matter.[39]

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[37] Eckardstein, Ten Years, p.95

[38] J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 271-2

[39] Grosse Politik, XIV, Part I, 218, Hatzfeldt to the Wilhelmstrasse, April 23, 1898.

Naturally Bülow took the position that it was England who was desperately in need of an alliance. He reiterated his former theme that time was playing against England, and if England desired an alliance, she would have to pay for it in colonial concessions.[40] There was no mention of Eckardstein's glowing account of the Emperor's eagerness to achieve a treaty with England. Nevertheless, Hatzfeldt had Eckardstein arrange another meeting with Chamberlain. At this meeting no one but Hatzfeldt and Chamberlain was present. Hatzfeldt spoke at great length of the difficulties which stood in the way of an alliance. They centered around the German government's fears that the information of the treaty would leak out before it was completed, and the the public of both countries would not favorably receive such an agreement. He was also fearful that such an alliance would place Germany's relations with Russia in jeopardy. He did not think that an alliance was completely out of the question, but it would have to be approached from another angle. Hatzfeldt added that he thought that it was a little premature for these negotiations for a direct defensive alliance.[41]

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[40] Ibid., pp. 218-21, Bülow to Hatzfeldt, April 24, 1898.

[41] J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 273-4.

Hatzfeldt's report of the meeting was identical in essence with that of Chamberlain, but he added a note of warning which he attributed to the Englishman. He stated that the Colonial Secretary had replied to his [Hatzfeldt's] arguments that if England could not arrange an alliance with Germany, "... it would be no impossibility for England to arrive at an understanding with Russia or France."[42] Furthermore Chamberlain did not "... hold it advisable ... to settle the smaller questions by English concessions except in connection with a simultaneous general agreement."[43] In other words if Berlin were prepared for a complete understanding, there would be no difficulty in settling smaller details of colonial concessions.

Within twenty-four hours of this unfruitful interview which he had arranged, Eckardstein hastened to the Colonial Office to protest his bewilderment. He could not understand the Emperor's change of mind and insisted that Prince Hohenlohe[44] had interfered and that the Emperor was unaware of how his foreign office was handling the matter. Eckardstein may have been entirely

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[42] Grosse Politik, XIV, Part I, 221-26, Hatzfeldt to Hohenlohe, April 26, 1898.

[43] J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 276-7.

[44] Prince Chlowig Hohenlohe-Schillingfürst, German Chancellor, October 29, 1894 to October 18, 1900.

misled, for his story was the opposite of what the Kaiser's reasoning represented. Despite his promise to Chamberlain, Eckardstein did not attempt another meeting with the Emperor to discuss the question, but noted in his memoirs that:

> The pourparlers, which at first concerned only the situation in the Far East, eventually assumed the form of negotiations for a general alliance between Great Britain and Germany. But although the prospects were good, by the middle of April, 1898, the negotiations had been wrecked, through the want of any purposeful and practical policy in those conducting affairs in Berlin.[45]

Spanish-American War, Fashoda and Anglo-German Relations

The attention of the diplomats was turned elsewhere by two events which were of utmost importance--the Spanish-American War and the so-called Fashoda incident. Coming at a time when the Anglo-German negotiations were pending, these international upheavals did nothing to ease the situation between the two countries. Rather, the opposite was true, for the feelings between the two countries were greatly strained by the problems which arose out of the crises.

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[45]Eckardstein, Ten Years, p.93.

When the United States went to war with Spain in April, 1898, it was England's friendly attitude toward America which effectively blocked any collective anti-American intervention in the European capitals. However, Germany was not as friendly as England toward the United States, for she dispatched a cruiser squadron under Admiral von Diederichs to Manila with the ostensible purpose of protecting German nationals and their property. Germany did not want a redistribution of Spain's colonies, but if it did come about, she intended to obtain her share. As a matter of fact Germany hoped to receive at least one coaling station,[46] and great was Germany's dismay when it became increasingly evident that the Americans intended to remain in the Philippines. Attempts were made by the German ambassador in London to discover whether England would consent to the Philippines being neutralized. Salisbury showed no interest in the proposal as it was a fixed policy of his government on no account to antagonize the Americans. However, the news was received in the continental capitals that Spain was

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[46]Holstein to Hatzfeldt, August 6, 1898. In this letter (not published in the Foreign Office Records) Holstein says, "Besides, as already said, a coaling station is naturally expected as the result of our participation in the protection of the Philippines." Footnote, Brandenburg, From Bismarck to the World War, p. 124.

seeking to dispose of her colonies to the highest bidder. Therefore, Germany decided to purchase the Mariane and the Caroline Islands further to the south which also belonged to Spain. England and Germany were skating on thin ice, for it was during this engagement that the British naval commander at Manila Bay interposed his ships between those of the American and German fleets to discourage any high-handed action by the latter. It would appear that England's position in this affair was diametrically opposed to her attempts at negotiations with the Germans.

The British attitude toward the United States may be explained by Chamberlain's immense respect for America. He realized that any adverse move on the part of England would mean the loss of favor in America for his country. He, also, knew what the outcome of the conflict would be, and it is always wiser to be on the winning side in any argument.

When a movement by a concert of European nations to register a moral protest to the Americans seemed imminent, Chamberlain cautioned Balfour, who was acting Foreign Minister and inclined toward a moral protest:

> Am convinced Message will do no good and will be bitterly resented. Americans insist that Spain shall leave

> Cuba. Nothing less will satisfy them. Spain will rather fight. Message practically takes part with Spain at critical juncture and will be so understood in America and this country.[47]

This message seemed to be effective, for England's policy in Washington was revised. The British Ambassador in that capital withdrew from his risky association with the ministers of other European countries. Chamberlain, as well as other Englishmen, was enamoured of the new racial "isms" then becoming evident in European thinking. Anglo-Saxonism was the particular interest of the Colonial Secretary. He wished to include Germany, but he did not want to lose the United States. He could not foresee, however, that the British attitude meant more hard feelings with Germany. The Kaiser's desire to acquire more naval bases in the Pacific was a point evidently not considered by Chamberlain. He was motivated by what he thought politics ought to be. He wanted, at this juncture, closer ties with America, because he feared that England's isolation meant danger. He hoped that if in event of hostilities arising, blood would "... be found to be thicker than water."[48] England had yet another problem to face in world politics.

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[47] J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 299.

[48] Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Official Report, Fourth Series, Vol. 58, 1434-7, June 10, 1898. Hereafter referred to as Parliamentary Debates.

At this point it is necessary to recapitulate. In 1885 the English ministry had decided to withdraw the British forces from the Egyptian Sudan south of the Wadi Halfa. However, by 1896, under the direction of Generals Grenfell and Kitchener, the Egyptian army was reorganized and the Government of the Khedive decided to reconquer the Sudan. Under the leadership of Kitchener the force moved slowly toward this goal. By September 1898 the Dervishes were completely scattered and the British general was everywhere victorious.

In June of 1898 the French ministry fell and a new minister of foreign affairs, Théophile Delcassé, was installed at the Quai d'Orsay. He and his predecessor, Hanotaux, agreed on many policies, but on the Egyptian question they did not. Delcassé, declaring that the French had as much right in that area as the British, dispatched an expedition under Captain Marchand. He hoped that Marchand would reach the upper Nile before the reconquest of Sudan brought the British further south. On July 10, 1898 Marchand did reach a point in Sudan, Fashoda, with eight officers and 120 men. Now Delcassé's plan was to extend the boundaries of French Congo, and he hoped that he could settle the situation to France's advantage by negotiations with the English government. However, Salisbury held firmly to the position that all

the territories, lately held by the Khalifa had passed to the British and Egyptain Governments by right of conquest.[49] The situation was allowed to drag on for an extended period until the crisis became acute. War seemed the only solution. However, as England held all the cards (Kitchener's troops even had to rescue Marchand from the Dervishes), France was forced to capitulate as gracefully as possible. She recalled Marchand and signed a comprehensive agreement with England in March of the next year.

Germany's fate was also affected by the Fashoda crisis. For had the war which threatened between England and France materialized, a war of revenge--that old ever present bugbear--would have been impossible for quite some time; for France, even with the help of Russia, could not have fought both Germany and England at the same time. There was even a party in France which advocated an understanding with Germany and regarded England as France's natural enemy. However, "By setting her teeth and suffering the humiliation at Fashoda, France was consciously making a great sacrifice so that she might not forfeit that reckoning with Germany which was the inmost aim of every patriotic heart."[50]

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[49] British Documents, I, no. 196, pp. 160.70, Monson to Salisbury.

[50] Erich Brandenburg, From Bismarck to the World War, p. 119.

Throughout these proceedings Chamberlain had not lost sight of an Anglo-German entente. In May 1898 he made a speech at Birmingham which has since been labeled "the long spoon" speech. Unfortunately his real theme of the growing disadvantages of isolation was lost by his single reference to the Russians. He said:

> Now the point I wish to impress upon you is this--it is the crux of the situation--since the Crimean War, nearly fifty years ago, the policy of this country has been a policy of strict isolation. We have had no allies. I am afraid we have had no friends. ...
>
> All the powerful States of Europe have made alliances, and as long as we keep outside of those alliances--as long as we are envied by all--and as long as we have interests which at one time or another conflict with the interests of all--we are liable to be confronted at any moment with a combination of Great powers. ... We stand alone....[51]

He then passed on to the breakdown in China and the method of the Russian acquisition, and brought in his parable of the devil and the long spoon using it to illustrate his warning against isolation.

He was immediately attacked from all sides. The Opposition charged that he was at variance with the Premier. Chamberlain carried the attack into the enemy's

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[51] Quoted in J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 282.

camp and declared in Commons "I have not resigned. I am not cast out by my colleagues. I am not rejected by the Prime Minister. ... perhaps they [the Opposition] are thinking of some Government--I have heard of such a government myself--in which the Prime Minister was said to be not on speaking terms with one of his principal colleagues; neither Prime Minister nor principal colleague resigned."[52] However, the reaction in the world capitals--Berlin, Paris, Vienna, Madrid, New York, St. Petersburg--was a general commotion. In Germany the press was more derisive than recriminating. They assumed that Chamberlain was revealing England's weakness. Needless to say, there was no support for the alliance, although there were speculations as to the advantages to be obtained from the embarrassed Power. Evidently Chamberlain had said too much for the diplomats and not enough for the English public. He could not reveal what was going on behind the scenes in London, and he did not know what was going on behind the scenes in other capitals.

The diplomatic sequel was never known to Chamberlain. Both parties had stipulated complete secrecy, but within a few days after Chamberlain's speech, the Kaiser had revealed all to the Russian Czar. The German

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[52] Parliamentary Debates, Fourth Series, Vol. 58, 1426, June 10, 1898.

Emperor evidently was moved by the idea that Chamberlain really was the enemy of Germany. He first drew up a secret memorandum in which he reasoned with himself. He decided against England on the hypothesis of naval rivalry and decided for Russia as he did not believe that the Russo-French alliance would hold. He decided with military aid from Russia he could destroy France and save his Reich.[53] To bring this about he decided to sell his information to the Russian Czar. For sheer duplicity and a misrepresentation of facts, his letter was unequaled in diplomatic annals and I think it is important to duplicate it here in part.

> Berlin 30 May, 1898--Dearest Nicky. With a suddenness wholly unexpected to me I am placed before a grave decision which is of vital importance to my country, and which is so far reaching that I cannot forsee the ultimate consequences ...
>
> About Easter a Celebrated Politician propis motu suddenly sent for my ambassador and ... offered him a treaty of Alliance with England! ... After Easter the request was urgently renewed, but by my commands cooly and dilatorily answered in a colourless manner. I thought the affair had ended. Now, however the request has been renewed for the third time in such an unmistakeable manner, putting a certain short term to my definite answer and accompanied

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[53] Grosse Politik, XIV, Part I, 239-40, Secret Memorandum of the Kaiser, May 22, 1898.

> by such enormous offers for my country that I think it my duty to reflect before I answer.
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> Now before I do it, I frankly and openly come to you, ..., to inform you, as I feel that it is a question so to say of life and death. ... I am informed that the Alliance is to be with the Triple Alliance and with the addition of Japan and America. ...
>
> Now as my old and trusted friend I beg you to tell me what you can offer me and will do if I refuse. ...[54]

Nicholas II's reply, written in English, was cold water poured on the scheming Kaiser. He revealed that three months previously England had offered to come to full agreement upon all points where their mutual interests clashed.[55] The Russians were suspicious over an offer from an entirely unexpected quarter and the Czar wrote: "Without thinking twice over it, their proposals were refused ... It is very difficult for me if not impossible to answer your question whether it is useful for Germany to accept these often repeated English proposals, as I have not got the slightest knowledge of their value."[56] In other words Russia too could wait, and although desiring good relations with Berlin, the Czar had no

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[54]Isaac Don Levine, Letters from the Kaiser to the Czar (New York, 1920), p. 47-49.

[55]This was true. In British Documents, I, no. 9, p.8, Salisbury to O'Connor, January 25, 1898, we find that Salisbury suggests a friendly demarcation of respective spheres of influence in China.

[56]Grosse Politik, XIV, Part I, 250-1, Emperor Nicholas II to Kaiser William II, June 3, 1898.

intentions of giving up the French alliance for dependence on a German one. Needless to say the Kaiser was greatly upset by this unexpected reply. Meanwhile Chamberlain continued to pursue the subject.

The English ambassador in Berlin, Lascalles, broached the alliance once more to Bülow. The German Foreign Minister returned the query with one of his own which proved fatal for the negotiations at this time. Were Russia antagonized, what extent of support could England guarantee against an attack on Germany by the Dual Alliance?[57] Lascalles brought this question home to the Colonial Secretary. We have no record of what went on at this meeting at which other cabinet members were present, and must depend on a version given by the Kaiser of a conversation held with Lascalles upon his return to Germany. For the first time the Kaiser claimed that he discovered that Chamberlain and several of his ministerial colleagues were willing for a defensive alliance on the basis that they would make common cause if either were attacked by two powers together. The Emperor appeared for a moment to be attracted by the idea, but then he said that he would only attack France and not Russia if a causus feoderis arose. The next day he sent

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[57] Ibid., pp. 253-5, Bülow's memorandum, June 3, 1898.

the gist of this conversation to the Czar.[58]

Bülow next wrote a highly flattering letter to William in which he said that war between England and Russia must come and that Germany would never pull English chestnuts from the fire; and, furthermore, England could give no practical help in case of a war with Russia. By carefully managing England, while not compromising his relations with the Czar, William II could make himself supreme among rulers. "I hope to God ... that thus in full independence towards both sides, Your Majesty, on the eightieth birthday of Her Exalted Majesty Queen Victoria, will be present as arbiter mundi."[59]

With these words we come to the end of Chamberlain's first efforts for an Anglo-German Alliance. Completely outside of the scope of his office, Chamberlain had attempted to abandon England's traditional policy of "splendid isolation" by an agreement with Germany. This overture had been rejected by the Germans with no little insult to both England and Mr. Chamberlain. However, all hope was not abandoned, for if England and Germany could not make a defensive alliance at this time, they were making headway in another field. In the subsequent

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[58] Ibid., pp. 333-8, Kaiser William II to Czar Nicholas II, August 22, 1898.

[59] Ibid., pp. 339-42, Bülow to William II, August 24, 1898.

chapter I would like to review the next step in the tortuous diplomatic negotiations which had for its basic purpose the realization of Chamberlain's hopes.

CHAPTER II

Colonial Concessions

Chamberlain did not necessarily abandon his hopes for an Anglo-German defensive alliance, but his attention was for a period of time diverted elsewhere. With Salisbury and Balfour, the Colonial Secretary became involved in another phase of Anglo-German relations. This matter, which involved a third country, Portugal, threatened to rupture diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Germany. The Wilhelmstrasse appeared willing to abandon its previous hostile attitude toward England in the African question, but insisted upon compensation in the form of colonial concessions.

At the outset this point of dispute concerned the Portuguese colonies which were in danger of being lost to the mother country. England's specific interest was in the Portuguese possessions in Africa. The British seemed interested in Portugal's keeping her colonies for a very important reason. As the diplomatic negotiations between England and the Boer Republics were seemingly reaching a stalemate and a war seemed inevitable, the

British wished to consolidate their position in Africa. Delagoa Bay, which was the most important outlet for the Transvaal, was the only major harbor not in England's possession. From its port, Lourenço Marques, ran the shortest railroad route from the sea to Johnannesburg and Pretoria. The use of the port facilitated the entrance of supplies and munitions to the Boer Republics. It seemed to the Salisbury government that the control of this port under British lease or by outright purchase might offer the best chance of settling the entire African question without resorting to war.

The above mentioned railroad was built by an American, MacMurdo, who had raised the necessary funds in London by forming an English company. However, in 1889 the Portuguese government had seized the railroad by armed force. Great Britain demanded restitution, and the United States also lodged a similar demand on the behalf of MacMurdo's widow. Portugal finally acquiesced and submitted the case to the arbitration of a group of Swiss jurists. At this point of the narrative the settlement had not been reached, but it had long been certain that the decision would go against Portugal. It was also obvious that Portugal did not have the wherewithall to

meet the payments.[1] To meet the indemnity Portugal decided to raise the money on her colonial assets.

Thus a tense situation ensued while the Berne award impended. Chamberlain, on his part, had considered the question as early as 1896. He knew, as well as did other diplomats, that any attempt to sell Delagoa Bay outright would result in the overthrow of the Portuguese government. However, he believed that, on liberal terms, a lease might be managed.

In 1897 there were several interviews at the Colonial Office between Chamberlain and Luis de Soveral, the Portuguese minister to London. Portugal desired both a large loan and a guarantee of her colonial possessions, but the Lisbon government would not give its pledge that no more concessions would be given to a third power. They were afraid that this would greatly weaken their colonial sovereignty which they passionately desired to preserve.[2] These negotiations proved fruitless, but after the German occupation of Kiao-Chau, Germany's solicitude in regard to Portuguese colonies alarmed the Lisbon

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[1] In 1900 the Berne tribunal's judgement compelled Portugal to pay nearly £100,000 in compensation to the shareholders. British Documents, I, note to No. 65, p. 44.

[2] Ibid., No. 65, pp. 45-6. Mr. Bertie's memorandum on Portugal in Africa.

government.[3] They were ready to conclude an arrangement with England.

Portugal wanted a loan of £8,000,000 at 3 per cent. In return there would be a joint management of Delagoa Bay, the harbor, and railroad. In the areas adjacent to the Bay, no concessions were to be given to a third power without England's consent. The British navy was, also, to have use of the Portuguese ports as coaling stations in time of war. Above all, the British were to assume control of the harbor and railroad in case of war.[4]

This was no small task to accomplish. In working out the details, Chamberlain had the complete confidence and support of the Prime Minister. Mr. Chamberlain, also, kept the High Commissioner in Africa informed as to the proceedings which concerned him. Milner, the High Commissioner, was fully in harmony with the Colonial Secretary. He wrote:

> July 5, 1898--... I look on possession of Delagoa Bay as the best chance we have of winning the great game between ourselves and the Transvaal for the mastery in South Africa without war. I am not sure indeed that we shall

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[3] Ibid., p.45.

[4] Ibid., p.48.

> ever be masters without a war.
> The more I see of South Africa
> the more I doubt it.[5]

It was at this point that the German government became acquainted with the proceedings and intervened. The German ambassador in Lisbon telegraphed to the Wilhelmstrasse that M. de Soveral had been sent to London with instructions to obtain money by mortgaging the revenues of Mozambique, Angola and the other Portuguese colonies. The German government at once decided to bring pressure so as to be admitted as a joint lender to Portugal.

The motives prompting both England and Germany seemed to be opposed to each other. The German government pressed for a speedy conclusion of an agreement by forcing a loan secured on Portugal's colonies in the thinly disguised hope of being able to foreclose on the share of them which were to fall to Germany. England, on the other hand, was anxious that Portuguese finances recover sufficiently to remove the danger of that country's losing her African possessions. England did not want a third power strategically located in South Africa.

From the evidence it is not inconceivable that Germany intended to use this predicament of the Portuguese government as a wedge to pry colonial concessions

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[5]J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 311.

from England. In a dispatch from Bülow to Hatzfeldt we find an extensive list of what Germany would accept as compensation for England's expansion in South Africa:

> In West Africa:
> 1. A naval station in the Canaries or Cape Verde Islands;
> 2. Fernando Po;
> 3. The Volta down to its mouth as the frontier between Togoland and the Gold Coast Colony;
> 4. Angola including the southern part of Mosamedes and Benguella;
> 5. Walfisch Bay.
>
> In East Africa:
> 1. Zanzibar with Pemba;
> 2. The Zambezi and Shiré as southern frontier of German East Africa.
>
> In Asia:
> 1. Portuguese Timor;
> 2. The Sulu Archipelago;
> 3. At least one of the Philippine Islands (Mindanao).
>
> In the Pacific:
> 1. The Caroline Islands;
> 2. The Samoan Islands.[6]

Bülow furthermore warned Hatzfeldt that he was to be especially on his guard against the developments which concerned the Portuguese loan.

Hatzfeldt called almost immediately upon Lord Salisbury and asked the Premier point blank to what extent the negotiations between de Soveral and the English government had progressed. Salisbury's reply was noncommittal as he said that the Portuguese minister was dealing

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[6] German Documents, III, 28, Bülow to Hatzfeldt, June 8, 1898, enclosure.

directly with Chamberlain. He himself knew nothing of the proceedings.[7]

The German ambassador reported this conversation the same day to the Wilhelmstrasse but in greater detail. He wrote that Salisbury claimed ignorance of the proceedings and had suggested that the German Ambassador contact Chamberlain for his information.[8] The Kaiser evidently misunderstood the progress of the Anglo-Portuguese negotiations and especially Chamberlain's role in it, for he attached a marginal note to Hatzfeldt's report: "It is always the same. He wants to be taken by surprise by Chamberlain. He knows perfectly well what is demanded. Salisbury, and not Chamberlain, must decide this question, for it is a political one."[9]

Bülow's next move was in the form of a telegram to Hatzfeldt and showed clearly what his plan of action was to be. For by this time France had become aware of the proceedings and was thoroughly disquieted. Bülow, although reluctant to combine French and German interests in South Africa, instructed Hatzfeldt to make known to the British government that France was looking for help

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[7] British Documents, I, No. 68, p. 48, Salisbury to Gough, June 14, 1898.

[8] German Documents, III, 28-30, Hatzfeldt to the German Foreign Office, June 14, 1898.

[9] Ibid., p. 29, Kaiser's note.

against England. He hoped that this knowledge would make the English more amenable to German demands.[10]

Evidently Hatzfeldt did not follow these instructions, for in his next interview, recorded by Salisbury, he merely asked the Prime Minister if England would join in a common action in regard to the financial operations which the Portuguese government wished to carry through. Salisbury replied that he considered any financial dealings between England and Portugal a matter which exclusively concerned the two powers involved and did not constitute a subject for diplomatic discussion between England and Germany. He further stated that England's motives were to maintain the status quo in respect to the Portuguese colonies and prolong the life of Portugal. If England failed, and if there was a danger that the colonies would pass out of Portuguese hands, then it would be proper for England and Germany to negotiate an understanding. But not until then would it become necessary. Certainly the loan then under consideration did not concern the German government.[11]

Hatzfeldt reported this interview in full to Bülow. He stated that he had explained to Salisbury that

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[10] Ibid., p. 30, Bülow to Hatzfeldt, June 17, 1898.

[11] British Documents, I, No. 67, p. 49, Salisbury to Gough, June 21, 1898.

the transfer of the sovereign rights of Portugal over her colonies to England would produce a very bad impression in Germany unless she were consulted.[12]

The Kaiser's marginal comment on Salisbury's attitude toward Germany's interference showed his dislike not only for the English Premier but his inclination to withdraw from any further attempts at a defensive alliance. "This report and especially the last sentence is evidence of the false and unreliable game Lord Salisbury is playing against us; this is not the way to lure us into an alliance!"[13]

Evidently Bülow shared his Emperor's predilections and decided to abandon his earlier dislike for a Franco-German joint action. He wrote to Count Münster, the German Ambassador in Paris, to approach the French Foreign Minister with his plan. He thought it necessary to completely inform Count Münster as to the gravity of the situation from the German point of view:

> If that Anglo-Portuguese agreement came into being, it would in fact cause a complete revolution to the disadvantage of the Powers with interests in Africa, or whose nationals are creditors of Portugal. In both these respects Germany and France possess an identical interest whether

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[12] Grosse Politik, XIV, Part I, 220-1, Hatzfeldt to the Foreign Office, June 21, 1898.

[13] German Documents, III, 30.

> in preventing or having a say in such an alteration of the Portuguese status quo both in politics and business. If France is clearly still hypnotized by the trouee des vosges[14] and has in consequence no eye free for observing the question of the moment, the Russian alliance will scarcely be able to prevent England from expanding everywhere outside Europe without considering French interests.
>
> Our gracious Master, the Emperor commands you to speak to M. Hanotaux emphatically in this sense. The main object of the conversation, I think, should be to ascertain clearly whether all practical coöperation between Germany and France in all individual questions, whatever they may be, is out of the question as a principle, ... I need not tell you that the clearing up of this point will be of wide importance in the future shaping of our foreign policy.[15]

Unfortunately for Bülow's plans, the Meline ministry, in which Hanotaux was Foreign Minister, resigned on June 14, 1898, and was succeeded by Brisson, with Delcassé as Foreign Minister. As Delcasse was an ardent Germanophobe, Bülow soon concluded that under the new ministry, there was little hope of practical coöperation between France and Germany. He, therefore, decided to return to his original plan of bringing pressure on the governments concerned. In a dispatch to MacDonell

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[14] I.e. the fear of a German invasion.

[15] German Documents, III, 31, Bülow to Münster, June 18, 1898.

Salisbury unfolded Germany's course of action as to Portugal. M. de Soveral had shown the English Premier a telegram from his government stating that the German ambassador in Lisbon had demanded an audience with Dom Carlos, the Portuguese king. Count von Tattenbach had told the king that the Emperor could not continue on amicable terms with Portugal if the negotiations now carried on in London were continued without regard to the "legitimate interests of Germany in her African colonies."[16]

Naturally de Soveral was alarmed and asked Salisbury what his government should do. The Englishman's answer was that it depended entirely on how much Portugal needed the money. Salisbury still held that these negotiations were no concern of Germany. He, furthermore, assured the Portuguese minister that England still respected her "ancient treaties" made with Portugal in the time of Charles II. Salisbury repeated this in a dispatch to MacDonell the next day in which he enclosed the correspondence which had passed between England, Portugal and Spain in 1873.[17] He reassured de Soveral that his government assumed the same position as did Lord Granville twenty-five years previously.

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[16] British Documents, I, No. 68, p. 50, Salisbury to MacDonell, June 22, 1898; German Documents, III, 35, Tattenbach to German Foreign Office.

[17] British Documents, I, No. 69, pp. 51-52, enclosures.

Hatzfeldt went to see Salisbury on the twenty-third of June with two alternate proposals. The first was to the effect that Germany and England would make a loan to Portugal and agree upon the particular custom revenues by which each power would guarantee its loan. The second proposal was wider in scope and more detailed in content. Hatzfeldt proposed that if Germany abandoned Delagoa Bay to England as well as the Mozambique Province up to the Zambesi, then Germany should have the Portuguese provinces beyond the Zambesi up to the Rovuma and the Shiré. He also asked for Angola on the western side of Africa. Salisbury replied that he thought that the German demands were too extensive, but he would have to think them over before he could reply. Hatzfeldt left as a parting shot that it was only Germany that kept Russia and France from attacking Britain in the Suez. This was well-calculated to alarm the Premier and place Germany in a better bargaining position.[18]

The negotiations moved along rapidly, and it appeared that the English intended to exclude Germany. M. de Soveral made his definite overtures to Salisbury on June 29. However, Salisbury believed that the disadvantages outweighted the benefits, but de Soveral assured him

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[18] British Documents, I, No. 70, pp. 52-3, Salisbury to Gough, June 23, 1898. Also see German Documents, III, 34, Hatzfeldt to German Foreign Office, June 24, 1898.

that the Port of Delagoa as well as the railroad would be included as security against the loan.[19]

Mr. Bertie, the Assistant Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs, drew up a memorandum for the Foreign Minister, based upon the assumption that England would include Germany in the Portuguese arrangements and exclude France. He vividly showed the dangers which would be involved, but he drew up a temporary plan as to what Germany should receive. It was this plan that was later used in the final negotiations with Germany. Bertie, too, thought the Portuguese collateral was insufficient, but he raised the question that it would be better to take a general charge on the revenues of all the Portuguese possessions than on the hypothetical estimations of those of Delagoa Bay.[20]

Hatzfeldt continued to press for an Anglo-German joint agreement, but Salisbury could or would not acceed to German demands. However, on July 13, Salisbury did make the German minister a proposal which Hatzfeldt all but refused, but he promised to forward it to his government. Then the affair seemed to be closed by the actions of M. de Soveral.

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[19] British Documents, I, No. 71, p. 53, Salisbury to MacDonell, June 29, 1898.

[20] Ibid., No. 72, pp. 53-4, Memorandum by Mr. Bertie, June 30, 1898.

On the same day as the above mentioned conversation between Salisbury and Hatzfeldt, the Portuguese minister called on the English Premier. He informed Salisbury that in view of all the difficulties which the loan had produced, his government had decided to close the negotiations. This involved the abandonment of all ideas of a loan either from England or any other power.[21]

This decision by the Portuguese government came at a time when the final outcome of the Spanish war with the United States had reached its final catastrophe. This naturally caused the Portuguese to be more sensitive and more wary on the subject of foreign interference. If Germany was dreaded in Lisbon, Anglo-Saxonism was not in a better position. Portugal decided to raise the necessary money on her home revenues. Although Downing Street and the Wilhelmstrasse thought she could not do it, Portugal could and did.

Nonetheless, the English Prime Minister, in agreement with Chamberlain, decided that it would be necessary and even the best thing under the circumstances to face the German proposals. One principle they accepted. If Portugal relinquished, for any reasons, her economic or political control over her possessions, her colonial

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[21] Ibid., Nos. 74 and 75, pp. 55-6.

empire would be divided virtually and formally between England and Germany. Everything, it will be noticed, hinged on an "If." This word was interpreted differently by the two countries. The treaty finally signed was one of the most ironical of the period. It ended on the one hand in an elaborate secret treaty which was stillborn; and on the other hand by the Germans abandoning the Boers. It can easily be seen that it was the British who received the better part of the bargain.

The remainder of the negotiations was between Salisbury and Balfour for the English and Hatzfeldt for the Germans. On July 29 the German Ambassador laid his government's demands before Lord Salisbury. They included Walfisch Bay and the Volta triangle on one side of Africa and for Blantyre and its surrounding part of Nyassaland on the other. This was in addition to two-thirds of the Portuguese colonies.[22] Salisbury considered that these demands were exhorbitant.

The next day, after consultation with his cabinet, Salisbury gave his reply. The cabinet had flatly refused to alienate any British territory. Salisbury did not think that Germany's concessions in regard to Delagoa Bay and the Transvaal equivalent to her demands. Salisbury

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[22] Ibid., No. 77, pp. 57-8. Salisbury to Gough, July 19, 1898. Samoa was also demanded. See map.

based his reasoning on the fact that if he were to alienate any British territories, he would have to deal with the British colonies. Australia would object to the cession of Samoa, whereas the Cape Colony would not stand to lose Walfisch Bay. Furthermore Salisbury believed that France and the Transvaal would raise objections and demand a share. To this the Germans could offer no guarantee.[23]

Hatzfeldt expressed his regret at this decision which he feared would bring the negotiations to an end. He was fearful of the evil results to England and Germany if this opportunity of establishing a hearty accord between them should be lost. In this he referred to Chamberlain's efforts for a general defensive alliance. In parting Hatzfeldt left a warning that if Germany could find no resource in the friendship of England, then she must of necessity turn to Russia.[24]

Chamberlain, himself, was opposed to such extravgant demands. He thought that the request for Blantyre was in itself offensive as it was dear to the entire missionary cause and the the memory of Livingstone. To ask for it would be as though England had asked for

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[23] Ibid., No. 78, pp. 58-9, Salisbury to Gough, July 20, 1898.

[24] Ibid., pp. 58-9. Also see Hatzfeldt's account in Grosse Politik, XIV, Part I, pp. 301-2, Hatzfeldt to Holstein, July 20, 1898.

Wittenberg. In his opinion the Germans had asked for many valuable somethings in return for a cool nothing. He expressed his views to the Prime Minister in two memoranda:

> July 23, 1898--Memorandum to Salisbury. "... Germany must offer territory or positions now in her occupation of equal value to anything in British possession which the Government of Germany may desire to obtain. The present action of the German Government appears to be inconsistent ... with the reported desire of the Emperor for a friendly understanding with this country....
>
> July 25.--To the same,... Unless they [the Germans] are able to modify the opinion they have formed of the value of their neutrality we must certainly look elsewhere for allies.[25]

It is here we discern a possible rupture of Chamberlain's plans. He loathed the abandonment of his cherished plans, but he disliked the haggling and imperious German demands. But for a complete settlement and a certain connection with Germany he was willing to give much, but he was not impressed with the Wilhelmstrasse's squeeze tactics. However, we find him writing to Balfour in August: "... 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

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[25] J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 314-5.

to induce her not to interfere where she has no right of interference. Well! it is worth while to pay blackmail sometimes....[26]

There were several reasons that can be found which changed not only Chamberlain's opinion but Salisbury's as well. On July 27 Hatzfeldt approached Salisbury with a new plan which the Prime Minister considered a little more tenable.[27] Furthermore, the trouble with the Boer Republics was fast reaching the danger point, and it seemed to Chamberlain that Germany must be neutralized at almost any cost. After all, there was the possibility that the Portuguese could maintain their sovereignty, which in actual fact, would negate any understanding with Germany. There was the danger, too, as was pointed out by Bertie, that if Germany were not appeased, she would fulfill her covert threats and join France and Russia to England's detriment throughout the world.[28]

As Lord Salisbury was going on a vacation, the negotiations passed to Mr. Balfour. Hatzfeldt was not entirely pleased with the new arrangements, but he believed that Balfour would be completely fair with him. Hatzfeldt

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[26] Ibid., p.315.

[27] British Documents, I, No. 29, p. 59, Salisbury to Lascalles, July 27, 1898.

[28] Ibid., No. 81, pp. 60-1, Memorandum by Mr. Bertie, August 20, 1898.

then handed Balfour a memorandum which was an amplification of one which he had read to Lord Salisbury on August 3.[29] He also stated that Salisbury had been in full agreement in regard to Timor being included as part of the security for the proposed German loan. Balfour was suspicious at this declaration and telegraphed to Salisbury for his version. Salisbury replied that there had been no mention of Timor between Hatzfeldt and himself. This information Balfour revealed to the German Ambassador.

Hatzfeldt appeared both surprised and disappointed at this answer, for he declared that he had specifically included it in his talk with Lord Salisbury. He said that his government had placed great stress on this one point. He thought that if the English changed their minds about this, the negotiations would have to be broken off. He, furthermore, warned that a great bitterness would be aroused in Germany.[30]

Relations between the two countries seemed to be reaching a deadlock, and a rupture in diplomatic relations was eminent. The Kaiser, in a conversation with Lascalles

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[29] Ibid., No. 82, pp. 62-3, enclosure, Balfour to Lascalles, August 3, 1898.

[30] Ibid., No. 83, pp. 63-4, Balfour to Lascalles, August 11, 1898. Also see German Documents, III, 37-8, Richthofen to Hatzfeldt, August 19, 1898. The instructions from Richthofen were duly delivered to Bertie. It is in this communique that we find a first reference to the abandonment of the Boers. Cf. British Documents, I, No. 85, p. 67, Balfour to Lascalles.

said "... that unless the negotiations in progress during the last few days between my Ambassador and Mr. Balfour lead to no more acceptable result than they had up to the present, the continued presence of my Ambassador in London would be superfluous just now."[31] It seemed that the negotiations which had been entered into with such high hopes and were the object of so much laborious effort were to be lost. What seemed even more perilous was a break with Germany at a most disadvantageous time. However, the matter was settled to the mutual advantage of both parties, for Hatzfeldt telegraphed to Berlin that "Timor was settled, and I am convinced we owe it to Mr. Balfour alone, for he urgently desires a conclusion."[32]

As all difficulties were now removed, it but remained to sign the treaty. As Salisbury had been fearful that Portugal would take umbrage because Germany and England were dividing the spoils before she had floundered, two agreements were signed. The first merely stated that England and Germany would combine if a loan became necessary to Portugal.[33] The second, which was a secret convention,

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[31] Grosse Politik, XIV, Part I, pp. 333-8, William II to Nicholas II, August 22, 1898. Lascalles' account may be found in British Documents, I, No. 87, pp. 68-9, Lascalles to Balfour, August 22, 1898.

[32] German Documents, III, 38, Hatzfeldt to German Foreign Office, August 20, 1898.

[33] British Documents, I, No. 90, pp. 71-2, enclosure, Balfour to Lascalles.

provided that under no circumstances was either contracting party to obtain any partial advantage under the treaty without equivalent and simultaneous compensation by the other.[34] The treaty remained unpublished for over twenty-five years, until World War I.

The immediate result of the treaty justified an earlier pessimism toward the bargain by Chamberlain. He had earlier written to Balfour:

> ... this agreement could be assumed to be the beginning of a cordial understanding with Germany. I should think the price paid was not too high, but I fear that the whole tone of the negotiations shows that Germany feels no particular gratitude to us for our sacrifices, and accordingly on all questions which still remained unsettled we are likely to find them as unreasonable in the future as they have been in the past. On these grounds I cannot be enthusiastic about the agreement....[35]

Although from the beginning of the negotiations, the Germans, as well as the English, had insisted upon complete secrecy, a rumor of the proceedings leaked out on the very day they were signed. The Pall Mall Gazette began a series of sensational articles lauding the close relations recently achieved by the statesmen. Speculation

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[34] Ibid., p. 73. Both the English and German texts for both the convention and the secret note may be found in Grosse Politik, XIV, Part I, pp. 347-55.

[35] J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 315.

arose as to whether an agreement had been reached between England and Germany to block Russia in the far East. This type of speculation was particularly embarrassing to Germany where the results of the Anglo-German agreement had been previously surveyed as damaging to the Russo-German relations.[36] It was, therefore, imperative that this line of thought be effectively squelched.

On September 3 the Kölnische Zeitung published a Berlin telegram flatly denying that there had been a change in German policy. This same telegram appeared in the Norddeutsche which gave it the weight of an official pronouncement. Evidently this same information was given to the other newspapers, for the rumors of a secret alliance ended.

However, curiosity as to the real nature of the treaty did not abate. Newspapers and periodicals in both England and Germany began to issue articles testing the governments to see if they could draw them out to give the agreement away. Finally only the hints as to a South African, Delagoa Bay and Portuguese agreement remained unconfirmed or denied. In October 1898 Lucien Wolf (Diplomaticus) revealed the main outlines of the agreement in the Fortnightly Review.[37] The German

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[36] Grosse Politik, XIV, Part I, pp. 342-4.

[37] Diplomaticus, "The Anglo-German Agreement," quoted in Living Age, 219 (1898), pp. 590-5.

newspapers picked up this lead despite the German government's firm denial. However, enough of the agreement was known to raise a cry in colonial and Pan-German circles. These forces which were represented in such papers as the Lokal-Anzeiger, the Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten, the Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung were extremely vocal and the keynote was "abandonment of the Boers."[38]

The German Foreign Office would and could not give an explanation, for to do so would be publicly disavowing the Kruger telegram and an admission of the policy which it advocated. Also to admit that Germany was withdrawing from South Africa would be impossible without revealing what compensation had been received in return. Diplomatic decorum forbade this as these compensations were to be found in the colonial possessions of a friendly power. Bülow, therefore, remained silent. Yet a course of action had to be initiated.

Bülow believed that the publicity had been inopportune and had created a disadvantage to German diplomacy. He, therefore, urged Hatzfeldt to press the English government for quick action in Lisbon to forestall the possibility that Dom Carlos' government would make a

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[38] I have depended upon Oron James Hale, Publicity and Diplomacy (New York, 1910), pp. 168-189 for the German reaction to the Anglo-German Convention.

loan with any other country.[39] Unforeseen by Bülow, or even by the British Government, was the alarm created in Portugal. The Portuguese king, whose throne was none too steady, and his ministers abandoned the loan altogether and arranged a loan in Paris guaranteed on the domestic revenues. With this unpredicted development, the bottom dropped out of the Anglo-German convention.

The net result of these negotiations, as far as concrete gains were concerned, added up to zero. Germany had won a "fight with shadows," but had gained nothing by way of colonial acquisitions. She had abandoned her protective and Pan-German policy toward the Boers and had received in return the irate ill-will of German public opinion. England had received the best of the bargain. She had removed the threat that Germany or Pretoria, or both, might obtain control of Delagoa Bay and the railway but had raised suspicions at home and in Lisbon. Furthermore, ill-will had been heightened and old wounds reopened between the English and German populations. In addition, it rankled the British diplomats that the Germans had used such high-handed methods to inject their demands where they had no business. The possibilities of an Anglo-German defensive alliance were materially damaged and seemed remote even to Joseph Chamberlain now.

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[39] German Documents, III, 39, Bülow to Hatzfeldt, Sept. 3, 1898.

England Pays Blackmail

The Anglo-German Convention had far from succeeded in removing the sources of friction between the two governments. It became more pronounced as England's troubles increased in South Africa. There were intermittent clashes and crises. The Kaiser even threatened, upon one occasion, to withdraw his ambassador. On another he wrote an undiplomatic,attack on the British Prime Minister in a letter to his grandmother. This attack was greatly resented by Queen Victoria.

This quarrel, which appeared for so many months insoluble, began over the islands of Samoa. These islands had been placed under the tripart control of the United States, England and Germany. This arrangement had never been a happy one, neither for the natives nor for the controlling parties. The situation was fast approaching a climax. Germany desired to control all or at least a larger share of the archipelago. When the United States had annexed Hawaii, Germany ~~now~~ wanted the American share of Samoa as compensation. When the German foreign office approached Salisbury to get him to join in this demand, he flatly refused.

The situation in the islands finally reached a critical state when the native king, Malietoa, died.

The protecting powers were as openly divided as to his successor as were the natives. The Germans supported a pretender who had been in exile, while the English and the Americans supported a son of Malietoa. Through the early months of 1898 squabbles between the Americans and the British on one hand and the Germans on the other eventually resulted in the shelling of the Samoan capital of Apia by the combined forces of England and the United States. This was the event which precipitated the crisis and which Bülow so vividly describes in his Memoirs as having in its solution much that attracted him.[40]

This crisis was as advantageous to Germany's colonial prospects as had been the murder of the two missionaries in the Shantung province. And Bülow intended to make the most of it. Germany had no intention of losing her foothold in the islands.

Why, it might be asked, was Germany so avidly interested in this remote group of islands? This is not very difficult to explain. It becomes increasingly clear what Germany's interests were when we know that the harbor obtained in the Samoas back in 1879 by Bismarck was Germany's initial colonial acquisition. On this account, alone, Samoa would hold strong sentimental attraction.

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[40]Bernhard von Bülow, Memoirs, I, 330.

However, there were other reasons equally as potent. It was a matter of great pride to Germany that it had been the Germans whose commercial success had been more pronounced in the islands; that the firm of Godeffroy, which was German, had put forth the most efforts to develop the trade of the Samoas. Also, added to these reasons, was the fact that to the Kaiser and Admiral Tirpitz the islands had become a means of stimulating naval enthusiasm in Germany.

Berlin early conceded that Salisbury would not give in easily, for he was strongly biased against Germany due to the Kaiser's personal attacks.[41] As early as September 1898 Salisbury had told Hatzfeldt that nothing could be done because of the hostile attitude of Australia.[42] As Salisbury seemed inclined to ignore the matter, it would have to wait further developments.

However, by January of 1899 Holstein took a hand in the negotiations personally. He urged Hatzfeldt to begin work immediately and bring the matter to a speedy and profitable (to Germany) close.[43] After several

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[41] George Earle Buckle, ed., The Letters of Queen Victoria (Third Series, 3 vols., London, 1932), III, 375-9. Hereafter referred to as G. Buckle, Letters of Queen Victoria.

[42] German Documents, III, 45, Hatzfeldt to German Foreign Office, Sept. 8, 1898.

[43] Ibid., p. 46.

attempts, Chamberlain and Hatzfeldt were brought together very privately by Alfred Rothschild. According to Hatzfeldt's account, he told Chamberlain that the results of the situation could be disastrous and could only end in enmity between the two countries. He believed that Sir Pauncefote's suggestion of a revision of the earlier Samoan division act would be the best solution for all parties concerned. Chamberlain acceded to this, but evidently Salisbury could not be moved.[44] Hatzfeldt, therefore, represented to his government that Salisbury was the one who was holding up the proceedings.

Then German diplomacy gave way to violence which threatened to turn the squabble into an international crisis. Bülow, his version of the episode in his Memoirs notwithstanding, gave some very dangerous and imprudent advice to the Kaiser. He counseled the Emperor to withdraw his ambassador from London if the English insisted upon pursuing their own course in the Samoas. Bülow struck a chord dear to the Kaiser's heart by stating that "what is happening in Samoa is a fresh proof that an overseas policy can only be carried on with a sufficiently powerful navy."[45]

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[44] Grosse Politik, XIV, Part II, pp. 585-7, Hatzfeldt to Wilhelmstrasse, March 25, 1899. Also see, British Documents, I, 11, Salisbury to Lascalles, March 3, 1899.

[45] German Documents, III, 56-7. The Kaiser's hearty reply 'What I have been preaching for ten years to those thickheads in the Reichstag.'

The situation now looked like a definite rupture in the diplomatic relations of the two countries was possible. This break did not come because Salisbury gave up his original contention that the problem be settled by a majority ruling of a joint commission. Although the German ambassador was not recalled because of the fact that Salisbury seemed to be relenting, Hatzfeldt found his former welcome at the Foreign Office chilling. Because of the attitude prevailing, nothing could be arranged and a deadlock again seemed imminent. Yet the Germans believed that they had found a solution.

From an entirely unexpected source, a way out seemed to be in the person of the fabulous Cecil Rhodes. Seeking a Cape to Cairo route for his continental telegraph which would have to go through German East Africa, Rhodes was approaching the German Government. Holstein, mistakenly, believed that Rhodes had a tremendous influence in London and sought to enlist his support in approaching Salisbury and Chamberlain for a speedy conclusion to the Samoan negotiations. In exchange for his aid, Rhodes was to receive the telegraph route. Cecil Rhodes easily promised what he could not deliver. Possibly he could have obtained Chamberlain's support, but over Salisbury he had no influence whatever.[46] We do know that the

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[46] Grosse Politik, XIV, Part II, p. 581, Holstein to Hatzfeldt, Feb. 24, 1898.

Colonial Secretary did meet with Rhodes, but nothing came of it. Thus a naive approach which seemed open to the German Foreign Office proved to be a blind alley. Again they had given something and received nothing.

Nevertheless the atmosphere had begun to clear up by May of 1898, and the matter seemed about to be settled with amiable relations restored. Unfortunately for Germany the Kaiser, with typical impatience, charged like the proverbial bull in the china shop and set the negotiations back for months. He wrote a castigating letter about Salisbury to Queen Victoria. In his undiplomatic prose he wrote:

> ... Lord Salisbury has treated Germany in the Samoan question in a way which is entirely at variance with the manners which regulate the relations between Great Powers according to European rules of civility. He not only left my Government for months without an answer to our proposals, dating from autumn last year, but he even refrained from expressing his or the Government's regrets after the first acts of violence by Commander Sturdee and the other ships had occurred at Samoa. A fact the more unintelligible, as the President of the United States of America immediately sent word to say how sorry he was that such acts had happened on the part of American officers and men. The British ships went on for weeks bombarding so-called 'positions' of so-called 'rebels' --though no one knows against whom they rebelled--and burning plantations and houses belonging to German subjects,

> without even so much as an excuse being made, and that on an island which by three fourth is in German hands.
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> This way of treating Germany's feelings and interests has come upon the people like an electric shock; ... the feeling has arisen that Germany is being despised by his [Lord Salisbury's] Government, and this has stung my subjects to the quick. ... A pleasure trip to Cowes after all that has happened, and with respect to the temperature of public opinion here, is utterly impossible now....[47]

The old queen was not to be put upon by this grandson who had already given her so much heartache. She answered him in a rebuking tone:

> Your other letter, I must say, has greatly astonished me. The tone in which you write about Lord Salisbury I can only attribute to a temporary irritation on your part, as I do not think you would otherwise have written in such a manner. And I doubt whether any Sovereign ever wrote in such terms to another about her Prime Minister. I never should do such a thing, and I never personally attacked or complained of Prince Bismarck though I knew well what a bitter enemy he was to England, and all the harm he did.
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> I naturally at once communicated your complaints to Lord Salisbury,

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[47] See footnote no.41. Also compare German Documents, III, p. 64-5. William II to Queen Victoria, May 22, 1899. Queen Victoria to William, June 12, 1899.

> and I now enclose a Memorandum which he has written for my information, which entirely refutes the accusations and which will show you that you are under a misapprehension.[48]

Thus after six months, the affair stood as previously with no real settlement in view.

Chamberlain, however, wanted a public declaration of neutrality in South Africa from Germany, something which had not been obtained in the Portuguese agreement. Eckardstein again entered the picture, for he requested and obtained a meeting with Chamberlain for September 20.[49] Before this meeting took place, however, Chamberlain had made up his mind to pay whatever price was necessary for German neutrality.[50]

As war with the Transvaal was imminent, Chamberlain admitted that time was of utmost value. He drew up two plans for Eckardstein to present to the Wilhelmstrasse. Plan I offered the Germans tempting compensations elsewhere. Plan II was, in effect, a declaration that if Germany still insisted upon Samoa, then she must relinquish the Solomon Islands, her claims to the Tonga group

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[48] G. Buckler, Letters of Queen Victoria, III, 375-9.

[49] J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 334.

[50] Ibid., pp. 334-5.

and expect nothing in the Volta triangle.[51]

Thus Germany was faced with a choice--sense or sentiment. To abandon her claims to Samoa was by far the better choice for commercial Germany. But against cold logic was the full force of feeling. Eckardstein misrepresented Berlin's attitude to Chamberlain, for he reported that not only the German Colonial Office but Holstein and Bülow were in favor of Chamberlain's personal wishes--Plan I. However, this does not appear to be true. There was a hitch in the proceedings. The Kaiser's imagination was entwined with Samoa. Strongly under the influence of Admiral Tirpitz, the tempermental Emperor was wooed from his conciliatory attitude toward England. Tirpitz [illegible] with "tears of blood," condemning the entire convention.[52] The Kaiser, therefore, informed Eckardstein that he would have to cancel a projected visit to England unless the Samoan situation was quickly settled on Germany's terms.

Eckardstein returned to England with the distasteful news that Chamberlain's "Plan I" would be impossible and that "Plan II" was the only acceptable one to Germany. Nothing but the exigencies of war could have forced

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[51] Ibid., p. 337.

[52] Eckardstein, Ten Years, p. 111.

Chamberlain to accept this. Yet he needed a neutral Germany in South Africa and, if possible, an allied Germany in Europe. The German Foreign Office, not content with these extortions, thought that even further concessions could be squeezed from the reluctant Chamberlain, but the Colonial Secretary remained firm and refused to discuss additional blackmail. After this blunt refusal, the German Ambassador was instructed to offer Chamberlain's terms to the English Prime Minister on the condition that they would be accepted before the Kaiser's visit. In a cabinet council of November 1 the settlement was adopted.[53] Nothing more was granted but what had been included in Chamberlain's second plan.

As a diplomatic sequel, Salisbury kept the Kaiser on tenterhooks. He had received gross provocation from William II, and now he repaid in kind. For weeks he surpassed even himself in the tactic of delay.[54] Hatzfeldt, who was quite ill, found himself between two dilemmas. He was under strict instructions to obtain the agreement as soon as possible, whereas, on the other hand, he found that he could not approach the Prime Minister on the subject.

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[53] Grosse Politik, XIV, Part II, p. 675, Hatzfeldt to Wilhelmstrasse, Nov. 1, 1899.

[54] British Documents, I, No. 146, pp. 121-3, Salisbury to Lascalles, Sept. 15, 1899. This dispatch is a masterpiece in the art of stating objections and dissembling.

Finally Hatzfeldt asked Eckardstein to meet with Balfour and Chamberlain and point out to them that the Kaiser's visit was in jeopardy if the agreement were not concluded immediately.

For once Chamberlain seemed reluctant to associate himself with the proceedings. He replied that he regretted the bad feeling between Salisbury and Hatzfeldt. He was afraid that the Prime Minister did not like his [Chamberlain's] or Eckardstein's interference into Foreign Office business. He further cautioned that the German government must realize that the affair was strictly in the hands of Salisbury as Foreign Secretary.[55]

The following day the Kaiser treated the British military attaché in Berlin to a typical tirade against the English "two-headed government." He reiterated his former indictment of Salisbury who now added insult to injury by delaying his sanction of Chamberlain's negotiations. He warned that though he wanted to be friendly with England, he must also remember that he was the German Emperor. He could not "go on sitting on the safety valve forever."[56]

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[55] J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 340.

[56] British Documents, I, No. 154, pp. 129-30, Grierson to Gough, Nov. 6, 1899.

Two days after this unnecessary outburst, the news that the agreement was assured together with a summary of its contents was published simultaneously in London and Berlin. German congratulations showered upon Bülow. Having secured Upolu and Savaii, and regarding them as among the brightest jewels in his crown, William II telegraphed his minister: "Bravo, am most pleased and delighted. You are a real magician granted to me quite undeservedly by Heaven in its goodness."[57]

The English were equally satisfied. Germany had put sentiment before reason and had left Britain with the best of the bargain. Chamberlain hoped that the agreement would do much to unite the two countries in closer bonds of friendship. The Samoan agreement had, for the time, removed existing friction which had greatly impaired friendly relations of the two countries. Chamberlain, unchanged in his contention that England must abandon isolation, still held hopes for an alliance with Germany. Now that the Kaiser's visit was assured, Chamberlain stood to realize two objectives. The visit publicly announced Germany's neutrality in South Africa, and an opportunity to talk with the Kaiser and Bülow about the alliance was now possible. At least to Chamberlain's

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[57]Bernhard von Bülow, Memoirs, I, 321.

way of thinking, the blackmail was well worth paying. It would now appear that the difficulties which had blocked England's joining the Triple Alliance would be easily removed.

CHAPTER III

The Boer War and the Position of Germany

The long awaited and often delayed visit finally took place. The German Emperor, accompanied by his reluctant consort and two of his sons, arrived in England on November 20, 1899 for a ten day visit.

Probably more than any Englishman, in or out of the government, Chamberlain desired this visit. Amidst the general anti-British feeling on the continent, the Kaiser's visit was an open declaration of German official neutrality in South Africa. For the so-called Boer War had broken out on October 11, over a month previous to the Kaiser's visit. England needed a friend and an ally in Europe. Although it was true that Britain had sought, without Germany's knowledge, to gain immeasurable support by a treaty with Portugal, she still needed Germany's neutrality.

This agreement with Portugal was the so-called Windsor Treaty of October 14, 1899. In spite of the fact that the English had bought off German interests in

Delagoa Bay in the agreement of the previous year, this did not give them immediate control of the harbor. In fact, the Transvaal was importing large quantities of armaments and supplies through Lorenço Marques. When the British protested to the Portuguese government, they received an unsatisfactory answer. The Portuguese claimed that the Transvaal was entitled to these privileges under an agreement of 1875.[1] The truth of the matter was that Portugal was none too well-disposed toward England. The facts of the Anglo-German convention had been allowed to leak out and had caused justified alarm in Lisbon. It was, therefore, to the interest of Portugal to safeguard her possessions in any way opened to her.

On September 13, 1899 Soveral approached Salisbury with the suggestion of a close alliance in event of war with the Transvaal. This, he pointed out, would give England control of the Bay and she could attack by railroad.[2] Salisbury agreed almost immediately to an offensive and defensive alliance with the Portuguese against the Transvaal. After some discussion as to the form of the agreement to be used, Salisbury's suggestion that the wording of earlier treaties be used was adopted. The

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[1] British Documents, I, No. 111, pp. 85-6, MacDonell to Salisbury, July 15, 1898.

[2] Ibid., No. 113, p. 88, Salisbury to MacDonell, Sept. 13, 1899.

Anglo-Portuguese Secret Declaration (this is the official title and there is no justification for the name Windsor Treaty) was signed on October 14. It confirmed and renewed the treaties of 1642 and 1661 between the two countries. These included a mutual guarantee of territory, and a Portuguese promise not to let arms pass through Lorenço Marques to the Transvaal. They also promised not to declare neutrality in case of war as this would make it impossible for British warships to use Portuguese ports as coaling stations.[3]

It would seem, as revealed in the above negotiations, that the British foreign policy was paradoxical. Sir Arthur Nicolson once described the Portuguese policy of his government as "... the most cynical business that I have come across in my whole experience of diplomacy."[4] It did not seem likely that England in 1898 could agree with Germany to partition the possessions of a power which, under previous treaties, she was bound to maintain. The partition treaty was not in keeping with Britain's obligations to Portugal, and the declaration of 1899 was entirely incompatible with it. It may be argued that

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[3]For the negotiations of the convention together with the text, see British Documents, I, Nos. 113-121.

[4]Harold Nicolson, Portrait of a Diplomatist (New York, 1930), p. 393.

England never intended to partition the Portuguese colonies but was, more or less, forced into the agreement by pressure from Germany. Or it may be suggested that the situation in South Africa necessitated the Anglo-Portuguese Declaration of 1899. However, even these considerations do not completely exonerate Salisbury from the accusation that he was playing a two way game. The net result of this chicanery was that it had an adverse effect upon the Anglo-German relations when it became known.

Unfortunately in the early 1890's, secret diplomacy was not very secret. Conversation had reached a high point, and often stupid, or at the least, indiscreet men, divulged, in moments of loquaciousness, state secrets. In any event, the German Foreign Minister, Bülow, wrote that at the turn of the century he had learned from an indiscreet diplomat (presumably English) of the secret agreement between England and Portugal. He said:

> The conclusion of the Treaty of Windsor had largely been promoted by the then Prince of Wales, of whom the Marquis Soveral, ..., was a personal and intimate friend. This treaty of Windsor was, of course, in flagrant conflict with the spirit of the British-German agreement concerning the Portuguese colonies. It was not only a guarantee for Portugal, but actually an encouragement to that country not to mortgage her colonies.

> It increased the old tendency of the Portuguese to give preference to Britain in all economic questions. To say nothing of the fact that the Treaty of Windsor further substantially increased the political dependence of the Portuguese on Britain.
>
> At the end of the last century, ..., it was natural that after such an experience I should have felt, ..., that caution was necessary when Chamberlain threw us the bait of an Anglo-German Alliance.[5]

Fortunately for Chamberlain, neither Bülow nor the Kaiser had yet learned of the Anglo-German Declaration. Otherwise, it may be speculated, the visit would have been cancelled. It was indeed in jeopardy, from the misunderstandings arising over the Samoan question as well as those of a personal nature. The Prince of Wales refused to receive the Emperor if a certain Admiral von Senden were included in the Emperor's suite. Through Chamberlain's intermediaries, the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, the matter was cleared.[6] Unfortunately, the visit was viewed with suspicion and distaste by the Emperor's

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[5]Bernhard von Bülow, Memoirs, I, 321-2. It is interesting to note here that the Germans believed that Edward exercised a vast amount of influence in English foreign policy. This was a mistake of which the German government, and especially the Kaiser, long remained convinced. Edward, unlike his mother, had neither the temperment nor the inclination to delve in foreign documents. The influence of the monarchy decreased rather than the opposite after Victoria's death. Also see A. W. Ward and G. P. Gooch, The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy (3 vols., New York, 1923), III, 615.

[6]Sir Sidney Lee, King Edward VII (2 vols., New York, 1925), I, 746-7. Hereafter referred to as S. Lee, Edward VII.

subjects. This journey to England appeared more unpopular than anything the Kaiser had done since ascending the Imperial throne.

Yet it was sound policy, in view, not only of the Samoan treaty, but for soothing British opinions on an even more dangerous question. The new and portentous navy bill was pending before the Reichstag. William II greatly resented his naval inferiority. On one occasion he had said "Bitter is our need of a strong fleet."[7] After the Boer conflict had begun, he had reproached the French ambassador in Berlin for France's failure to follow him after the policy of the Krueger telegram. He admitted that Germany's naval position made strict neutrality necessary, but within twenty years he promised that his naval program would have greatly enhanced his position and then he could speak with a different voice.[8]

William was greatly under the influence of the German naval secretary, Tirpitz. Admiral Tirpitz's one aim was to build a great German navy to offset England's superior force. He based his reasoning upon the fact that without a great fleet Germany would be condemned to "... vegetate as a small nation," economically as well as

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[7] Kaiserreden (Leipzig, 1920), p. 268. Quoted in J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, I, 497.

[8] Grosse Politik, XV, 406-8, William II to Bülow, Oct. 29, 1899.

militarily.[9] He firmly believed that England was Germany's greatest enemy and that the situation had become one of fighting for existence.[10] He further believed that there existed but one means of improving Germany's position--the creation of a large fleet which would make an attack on German trade and Germany a risky matter.[11]

The Emperor was easily persuaded, for he had long harbored a grudge against England and had nurtured a growing feeling of inferiority to England's might. To protect his naval plans, therefore, was one of his prime objectives during his stay in England. For if the British became alarmed and began to increase their naval program, Germany could not compete. It was, also, true that earlier in the year at the First Hague Peace Conference Germany had greatly alarmed the other powers by her refusal to discuss disarmament.[12] Therefore, one of the fixed ideas in German diplomacy seemed to be that until Tirpitz had created the new fleet capable of holding the balance of naval power, Britain must be kept persuaded that the goodwill of Germany was genuine though conditional. The only fly

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[9]Grand Admiral Tirpitz, My Memoirs (2 vols., New York, 1919), I, 143-4. Hereafter referred to as Tirpitz, Memoirs.

[10]Ibid., p. 257.

[11]Ibid., 255.

[12]The Hague conference is adequately covered in Frederick W. Holls, The Peace Conference at the Hague (London, 1900); British Documents, I, Nos. 261-84.

in the ointment was the Kaiser. His undiplomatic outbursts often proved embarrassing to his ministers. Mindful of this, Holstein had prepared a memorandum which had been checked by Hohenlohe as an outline for the Kaiser's political talks while in England.[13]

Against this background of intrigue and counter-intrigue, the Kaiser was received by the Prince of Wales at Portsmouth and conducted to Windsor. The Kaiser was accompanied by Bülow as well as other top government officials. As Lord Salisbury was in retirement due to the death of his wife, Balfour and Chamberlain came up to Windsor for political talks. Unfortunately Chamberlain left no record of these conversations and we are dependent upon Bülow's reports in the German documents and in his Memoirs.[14] Naturally Bülow gave all due credit and glory to himself.

After a state banquet given by Queen Victoria on November 29, the Kaiser engaged Chamberlain in a long conversation. Chamberlain repeated his well-known desire for a general understanding between Germany and England as well as America. The Emperor countered this by an argument

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[13]Bernhard von Bülow, Memoirs, I, 364-6.

[14]German Documents, III, 108-14. Also Bernhard von Bülow, Memoirs, I, 367-83.

for keeping a "free hand." While it was not in the British tradition to formulate alliances, Germany's policy was determined for some time to come by her excellent relations with Russia. Yet, there were other points on which England and Germany could agree as they turned up. Both countries could use the Samoan arrangement as a model. It would, also, assist good relations if the English would remember that the Germans were a "touchy race." He evinced a desire to see the Colonial Secretary at a later date. In fact, he received him three days later. Several new points were then brought up.

The Englishman said that he hoped British capitalists would support the Bagdad railroad project [a pet project of the Kaiser]. Chamberlain would rather have seen Germany in Asia Minor than the Russians or the French. It would seem that Chamberlain hoped by this concession to drive a wedge between Berlin and St. Petersburg thereby driving Germany closer to England. Next Chamberlain turned to Morocco. He said that though England must have Tangier, Germany might have wide concessions on the Atlantic Coast. The Emperor replied that confidential negotiations on these matters could be carried on through the German Embassy in London. Chamberlain, however, warned the Emperor that he must avoid everything which would

excite the jealousy or mistrust of Lord Salisbury.[15] That point was cast in a better and somewhat truer light by Hatzfeldt at a later date when he wrote his own impressions of Chamberlain and Salisbury:

> Mr. Chamberlain ... who was already coming more and more to the front here, and showed the liveliest wish for a close approach to Germany, let me know that he was ready to negotiate an understanding between Germany and England on Morocco upon condition that I gave him time for it, but especially and above all that I left to him to arrange with the Prime Minister. Mr. Chamberlain indicated at the same time that Lord Salisbury was difficult to deal with. He, [Mr. Chamberlain], would succeed sooner than I in influencing him.[16]

Strange to say, both the Kaiser and Bülow seemed particularly uninterested in the possibilities of the Moroccan question.

Bülow gave a more substantial account of his separate interview with Mr. Chamberlain. This conversation was, indeed, the principle event of the Kaiser's visit. It shed broad light on world politics at that time and it soon led to reverberating consequences.

Fortunately, we have ample information about this conversation. However, again we are dependent upon Bülow's

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[15] Grosse Politik, XV, 418. Compare, German Documents, III, 112.

[16] Ibid., XVII, 304-7, Hatzfeldt to Hohenlohe, May 21, 1900.

versions. We must remember that then and later in all his accounts of his political actions, Bülow magnified his own cleverness. He wrote that Chamberlain began by stating that sooner or later England and Germany would have to come to a general understanding since they needed each other. He readily admitted that England needed Germany, and a day would come when Germany would need England. Bülow hedged with the comment that Germany's need for England was not in the immediate future. Germany's relations with Russia were excellent and those with France were improving. France no longer was thinking in terms of a war of revenge. This was not, of course, Bülow's real opinion, for shortly after this conversation he expressed a contrary opinion to the Russians. When Bülow was discussing with the Russians the possibility of continental intervention in the Boer war, he based Germany's refusal to enter such an arrangement on her lack of security against French desires for revenge.[17]

Bülow's emphasis upon the necessity of maintaining good relations with Russia should have indicated to Chamberlain that his plans had little prospect of success, for they hinged upon common action against Russia. However, Chamberlain pursued the subject despite these

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[17]Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 164-5.

warning signals. The Colonial Secretary promised that England would raise no opposition to German aspirations in Asia Minor, if Germany would be agreeable on other points. Furthermore, good relations with the United States were vital, and he could arrange such an agreement. Bülow answered that if Chamberlain were really interested in an Anglo-German-American rapproachement, he ought to see that misunderstandings did not recur between the Germans and the Americans.

This inclusion of the United States in these deliberations was a new and striking addition and had scarcely been considered the previous spring. However, recent American action had placed her in a prominent position in Eastern Asia and the South Seas, a position which could not be ignored.

Chamberlain's failure to grasp the fact that Germany could not risk the alienation of Russia, proved to be of immeasurable injury to later negotiations. He claimed that Bülow had suggested that he make some public pronouncement about the mutual interests of England, America and Germany to prepare public opinion.[18] However, this could not have been interpreted as an invitation to say what he did at his famous Leicester speech. Presently the talk took another turn.

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[18] Ibid., p. 130.

The English minister complained of the violent Anglophobia in the German press. Chamberlain warned that if this continued, the English people would come to regard Germany as a settled enemy whose hostility must be faced. Bülow countered with an attack on the Berlin correspondent for the London Times, Saunders. The German government feared Saunders' knowledge. They accused him of collecting the worse attacks on England in the German newspapers to forward to his own paper.[19]

Bülow was correct to a certain extent. There had been, in times past, a strong anti-German feeling expressed in the British papers. This had greatly pained Queen Victoria, for many of her family as well as personal ties were in Germany. Therefore, early in January of 1898 the Queen dared to enter a closed field as far as the English monarchy was concerned. She asked Sir Theodore Martin to visit the different editors of the London papers. She wished him to present her personal request that they abate somewhat their anti-German attacks. Sir Martin soon reported that he had assurances from the editors of all the leading journals that they would adopt a more conciliatory attitude toward the German Emperor and the German people.[20]

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[19] German Documents, III, 112. Memorandum by Bülow, Nov. 24, 1899.

[20] G. Buckle, Queen Victoria's Letters, III, 224-5.

Bülow had to admit, therefore, that the public opinion in England was less hostile to Germany than German public opinion to England.[21]

From these conversations Bülow concluded that Chamberlain was the "... modern merchant, very decided, very shy, very scrupulous, very much aware of his advantage, and yet sincere, for he knows that without sincerity there can be no big business."[22] However, well he liked the Englishman, Bülow felt that Germany's future policy would be to possess herself of a strong fleet, maintain good relations both with England and Russia and to await further developments.

Looking back with hindsight so valuable in rationalizing, Bülow wrote as justification for refusing Chamberlain's proposals at their meeting at Windsor:

> How would events have shaped themselves if we had followed Mr. Chamberlain at the turn of the century? ... if we had followed Chamberlain's blandishments, we should have fared as Japan did, only with the essential difference that Japan was virtually out of Russia's reach, which we were not. Moreover, in the event of war, Japan had only Russia to deal with.

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[21] German Documents, III, 114.

[22] Idem.

> ... We had to reckon that, if we were involved with war with Russia, the French would assail us in the rear[23]

Unfortunately, these exchange of views between the two statesmen aroused great hopes in London. Chamberlain evidently misunderstood Bülow and believed that they had agreed on all cardinal points. Taking advantage of what he thought was an overture from the German Foreign Minister, Chamberlain delivered a speech at Leicester on November 30, just after the Emperor and his party had left England. Chamberlain was always ready for criticism, but he did not foresee the storm that this address would raise. Prefacing his remarks with a warning to the French newspapers to cease their attacks on the Queen and with a compliment to the United States for its friendly attitude, he finally turned to the relations with Germany. He said:

> There is something more which I think any far seeing English statesman must have long desired, and that is that we should not remain permanently isolated on the continent of Europe; and I think that the moment that aspiration is formed it must appear evident to everybody that the natural alliance is between

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[23]Bernhard von Bülow, Memoirs, I, 382.

> ourselves and the great German Empire. We have had our differences, our quarrels, misunderstandings, but at the root of things, there has always been a force which has brought us together. What interest have we which is contrary to the interest of Germany? I can foresee many things which must be a cause of anxiety to the statesmen of Europe, but in which our interests are clearly the same, and in which that understanding of which I have spoken in the case of America might, if extended to Germany, do more perhaps than any combination of armies to preserve the peace of the world.[24]

This remarkable appeal created somewhat of a furor in England, and in Germany it was received with obvious hostility. This speech by Chamberlain was one of the greatest disservices to Anglo-German relations that he could have performed. In view of the embarrassing position that the German Foreign Office found itself as a result of the attitude taken by the German press on the Boer War, the speech was a castastrophe. Bülow put it mildly when he called it a "gaucherie."[25] Under the then existing circumstances, Chamberlain's use of the word "alliance" was certainly a bad choice. But just what were the circumstances?

For weeks the German Foreign Office had been

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[24]Quoted in Willam L. Langer, The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890-1902 (2 vols., New York, 1935), II, 658-9.

[25]Bernhard von Bülow, Memoirs, I, 385.

giving out through the press that the Emperor's visit was nothing more than a family affair. Furthermore, this visit had been planned long before the Boer conflict, and the Foreign Office promised that no political commitments of a far reaching nature would be discussed. This was necessary to make the visit more agreeable to a hostile public. The very fact that the visit had taken place was highly significant, for it amounted to an official announcement that Berlin would remain neutral in the South African conflict. Any attempt by British journalists to make political capital of the visit was highly resented in Berlin.

The speech was received in England by the journalists who had grasped the situation with some alarm. From the Pall Mall Gazette to the London Times the verdict was the same. The general feeling was that Chamberlain had made as grave a blunder as the funny gentleman who had entered the drawing room on all fours, under the impression that he had been invited to a children's party.[26]

Indeed the Colonial Secretary had made a grave blunder, for the German papers were almost unanimous in their denunciations. Typical of the reception was the sarcastic editorial in the Lokal-Anzeiger which stated

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[26]Quoted in Hale, Publicity and Diplomacy, p. 212, from Pall Mall Gazette, Dec. 2, 1899.

that probably Chamberlain meant something nice when he called the Germans his allies, but "... we wouldn't be proud of it if it were true."[27] It became increasingly evident to the German Foreign Office that something must be done to still the uproar. The final coup de grace was administered by Bülow.

The occasion was a Reichstag speech delivered by the German Foreign Minister. He appeared before the lower house of the German parliament on behalf of the second navy estimate. Evidently motivated by fear of the intense Anglophobia in Germany, Bülow made capital of the situation for naval expansion. He spoke frigidly of England by comparison with France, the United States and Russia. He indirectly referred to England's envy as that of a sinking nation for a rising one. He continued by emphasing Germany's dependence on a large army and navy. "In the coming century the German nation will be either the hammer or the anvil."[28] He made his hearers feel that the new navy was meant as a check on the British fleet. "As for England," he said, "we are ready and willing, on a basis of full reciprocity and mutual consideration, to live with her in peace and harmony. But just because the

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[27] Ibid., p. 213.

[28] Bernhard von Bülow, Memoirs, I, 415.

foreign situation is at present favorable, we must utilize it to secure ourselves in the future."[29] Needless to say, this address met with wide approval in Germany. For with a few words Bülow had stilled the verbose opposition to the pro-English policy of the German government. Moreover, the ill will over the Emperor's visit to England evaporated. Unfortunately, the reception in England of Bülow's speech was of a different nature.

If the Leicester speech was an error, then Bülow's response was almost fatal. From this moment the conviction grew in the minds of a growing school of English statesmen--Chamberlain as yet was not one--that England was in peril. The necessity of settling differences with France and Russia was forcibly brought forward. They believed that England could not permit her fate to be decided by a super-armed Germany. Furthermore, if the projected new German navy became a reality, it would be supreme in the North Sea and place the Island Kingdom in jeopardy. It was known that Tirpitz believed that the English fleet could not maintain supremacy in the North Sea as long as her squadrons were dispersed throughout the world by existing and arising antagonisms.

Although Chamberlain did not lose for a moment

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[29] Quoted in J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 511.

his prime objective, personally he was chagrined. He wrote his version of the talks at Windsor in a letter to the English ambassador in Berlin. This letter was written immediately upon the publication of Bülow's speech in the London papers. Chamberlain repeated his former statements that Bülow had favored an Anglo-German-American agreement, and hoped that Chamberlain would use his vast influence in America to bring it about. He concluded that he felt that Bülow had used him to pull his own chestnuts out of the fire.[30] Furthermore, Chamberlain was in complete ignorance of his betrayal by the Kaiser to the Czar in 1898 and could not fathom the apparent duplicity of the German government. However, Hatzfeldt's summary on the Leicester speech showed definitely what line of action the German Foreign Office was taking. He wrote:

> If I may allow myself an opinion, it can only be useful for us if, without our committing ourselves to any engagement, Mr. Chamberlain clings to the hope that we shall end by being persuaded to come in with his wishes for an alliance or a close understanding. At any rate as long as he clings to this hope, he will be accomodating to us in the colonial questions which will probably continue to turn up, and will--as in the Samoan question, try to influence the Cabinet, and especially Lord Salisbury, in our favor.[31]

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[30] J. L. Garvin, Joseph Chamberlain, III, 512.

[31] German Documents, III, 114-5, Hatzfeldt to German Foreign Office, Dec. 20, 1899.

Even modern German historians have remarked that this attempt to trade upon Chamberlain's frankness without considering his other characteristics was bound to result in ruin.[32] This was another miscalculation which helped to doom the proposed alliance.

After Bülow's Reichstag speech, Hatzfeldt realized that irreparable damage had been done to Anglo-German relations. He tried to convince Chamberlain, through Eckardstein, that domestic politics had made the seemingly abandonment of England necessary.[33] However, Chamberlain remained unimpressed, for toward the end of December 1899 he wrote to Eckardstein in stern yet regretful terms:

> I will say no more here about the way in which Bülow has treated me! But in any case I think we must drop all further negotiations in the question of the Alliance. Whether it will be possible to return to them after the end of the South African War that has raised so much dust--must be left for further consideration.
>
> I am really sorry that all your hard work should have been in vain; but I am also sorry for myself. Everything was going so well, and even Lord Salisbury had become quite favorable and in entire agreement with us as to future Anglo-German relations. But alas it was not to be.[34]

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[32]Brandenburg, From Bismarck to World War, p. 139.

[33]Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 144-6.

[34]Ibid., p. 151.

These last words had more meaning than he guessed. Bülow had already written that "... the greater number of soldiers here believe that the war in South Africa will end in complete defeat for the British. No one at the moment believes in a British advance on Pretoria."[35] It would seem that Germany was ready to cast her influence with the South Africans.

From this situation, and events which immediately followed, Anglo-German relations never recovered. In the eyes of not only Germany but other continental powers as well, British arms were already defeated and disgraced when the first battles went against the English. Count Münster soon reported from Paris that "... hatred for the English is almost greater than it was for us."[36] It appeared certain that Germany was all too willing to lead a continental clique to take advantage of a British defeat in South Africa.

The English had never been too certain of Germany's position in the Boer conflict. The sensational Kruger telegram, after the ill-fated Jameson raid, had fanned a latent Germanophobia to fiery pitch. Yet the recent visit

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[35] German Documents, III, 118, Minute by Bülow on a dispatch of Hatzfeldt, Dec. 26, 1899.

[36] Grosse Politik, XVIII, 763, Münster to German Foreign Office, Jan. 21, 1900.

of the Kaiser had seemed to alleviate this feeling and had been interpreted as a public announcement of neutrality. However, as Bülow stated, the present situation should be used to gain advantages for Germany. By advantages, he meant more colonial concessions. On Christmas Day of 1899 Bülow telegraphed his minister in Lisbon to declare to the King's government that if the Portuguese allowed Delagoa Bay to fall to a third party, he would consider it an unfriendly act.[37] Thus Germany effectively vetoed England's acquisition of this important port and now thought of gaining further colonial concessions as the price of neutrality. However, Hatzfeldt cautioned moderation, for he did not believe that the British had been driven to the extremity of relinquishing any crown property. He telegraphed: "I think we must go slowly and get the British to meet us half way. They are not yet reduced enough to think of giving up Zanzibar."[38]

Soon after this warning, Anglo-German relations received another jolt, for England intended to stop the importation of arms to the Boers which was being done through Delagoa Bay. Salisbury hoped to effect a blockade

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[37] German Documents, III, 117, Bülow to Tattenbach, Dec. 25, 1899.

[38] Idem., German note.

by searching each vessel which was bound for the port to ascertain whether it was carrying contraband. As a consequence of this order the German mail boats Bundesrath, General and Herzog were detained. The latter two were soon released, but the Bundesrath was brought before an English Prize court. The case was important in International Law as it raised the question as to how far steamers carrying mail should be immune from detention and search. This was a good occasion for the German navy men to propagandize, and they made the most of this unexpected opportunity.

According to Eckardstein, detailed and exhaustive research finally proved conclusively that the original information given to the British about the Bundesrath was false. It was believed to have been the work of the Boer propaganda agent, Dr. Leyds.[39] His purpose to entangle Germany in the dispute on the side of the Boers was so obvious that it almost succeeded. Nevertheless, during the first weeks of January, the incident threatened to reach the proportions of a first rate crisis. When Salisbury did not immediately reply with satisfaction to the German protests, Holstein tried to frighten him.

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[39]Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 152-63.

He telegraphed Eckardstein that the Kaiser was considering the possibility of sending a special envoy to London to obtain satisfaction. If this envoy did not obtain a speedy answer, he was to break off diplomatic relations with England.[40] However, such threats were unnecessary, for on January 16, 1900 the British government acquiesced to the German demands. It admitted that no contraband had been found and promised that the Bundesrath would be released. Furthermore, the English agreed to pay an indemnity, not to stop other ships at a great distance from the scene of combat and not to detain mail steamers on mere suspicion.[41]

This settlement came just in time, for Bülow had postponed as long as possible explanations in the Reichstag. On January 19 he spoke on the matter, and to appease German public opinion, stressed the fact that England had given in on all points to the German demands. These remarks were very impolitic for they drew forth so much criticism in England that the government felt constrained to publish a Blue Book. The strong German notes

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[40] Ibid., p. 121. There seems to be no evidence that the Emperor really proposed such a mission,.... From what can be found in the Records, the Foreign Office appears not to have laid the documents before the Emperor at all, the object being to avoid unconsidered steps by him. German note.

[41] Grosse Politik, XV, Chapter 102; British Documents, I, Nos. 304 and 306; Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 152-161.

were reproduced in detail in this publication.[42] Although the British statesmen were thankful for Bülow's earlier handling of the Bundesrath incident, the Reichstag speech caused many English, Chamberlain included, to complain of the sharp treatment England had received. Particularly were the ministers concerned with the rather unnecessary ultimatums. Chamberlain, himself, declared that as long as such a feeling existed, better relations would be impossible.[43]

The Bundesrath incident was a most unfortunate affair. However, it did illustrate the tenuity of Anglo-German friendship. The Prime Minister admitted in a letter to Queen Victoria that the ship had been stopped "... on very inadequate evidence," and that the mistake might prove a costly one.[44] He was right, for it not only injected a further cause of friction into the Anglo-German relations, but greatly facilitated the passing of the new German naval bill. Also, the stopping of the German ships revived the question of international action against England.

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[42]Harold Temperley and Lillian M. Penson, A Century of Diplomatic Blue Books, 1814-1914 (London, 1938), p. 463; "Africa No. 1, Correspondence respecting the Action of H. M.'s Naval Authorities with regard to Certain Foreign Vessels," Parliamentary Debates, Series Four, Vol. 80, 547, 1177.

[43]Grosse Politik, XV, 484-91, Metternich to Bülow, March 19, 1900.

[44]G. Buckle, Letters of Queen Victoria, III, 462.

Since Chamberlain's Leicester speech, the French press had become increasingly more anti-British. The entire country, wrote the British ambassador in Paris "... appears to have gone mad with jealousy, spite and resentment."[45] Many Frenchmen thought that this was the opportunity to take revenge for Fashoda. The German ambassador in France reported that in January of 1900 the French now hated the British with the same intensity that they once held for the Germans.[46] England was in a more perilous position than she realized.

Although many members of the English Cabinet were not fearful of hostility on the part of the continental powers, precautionary measures were taken to protect the colonies. Some consternation was felt by the Opposition, however, for Lord Roseberry warned of the danger and urged that conscription be considered. The entire matter rested upon what decisions were made in Berlin. It was unlikely that France would move unless she were certain of the safety of her eastern frontier. For these reasons the Bundesrath incident was fraught with danger.

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[45] British Documents, I, No. 300, p. 242, Monson to Salisbury, Dec. 1, 1899.

[46] Grosse Politik, XVIII, Part II, pp. 765-6, Münster to Hohenlohe, March 3, 1900.

During the height of the crisis Bülow had suggested the possibility of Germany's joining a combination against England. Russia particularly was interested in making some gains at the English expense. The Russian Czar was very interested in joining a combination against the British, for he believed that the combined fleets of Germany, Russia and one more North Sea power would be more than a match for the British fleet.[47] It was considered an opportune time to attack England either in open battle or by more subtle means. The favorite game of twisting the lion's tail never appeared more fascinating. Although nothing materialized, the danger remained imminent. England's relations with Germany were definitely and irreparably damaged by the Bundesrath crisis.

Anglo-German relations had reached a new low. There seemed little possibility that the statesmen of the two countries could meet on a middle ground. The Leicester speech had been received with hostility and antagonism in Germany. Bülow had permitted Chamberlain to believe that an understanding was possible and then had abandoned him. Furthermore Bülow's aggressive telegrams sent after the seizure of the Bundesrath had moved Lord Salisbury to such a resentment as he had ever evinced.

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[47]Lee, Edward VII, I, 762-3; British Documents, VI, No. 129.

Evidently, definite security for Britain must be found in a settlement with France and Russia if Germany continued to prove more aggressive than reliable. However, the opening of a new century brought not only new problems but another opportunity for England and Germany to work for reconciliation.

CHAPTER IV

The Last Bid for a German Alliance

Between the years 1890 to 1904 many problems faced the European governments. Of all these problems, the Far Eastern question proved to be the most dangerous and complex, for the integrity of the Chinese Empire was in jeopardy. Unlike other trouble spots, there were no spectacular characters to deal with if we eliminate the Empress Dowager, Tsze Hsi, but the conflicting interests of no less than five major powers threatened at any moment to disrupt the peace of the world.

After the occupation of Kiao-Chau, Port Arthur, Wei-hai-wei and Kuang-Chow in 1898, there had been a general scramble by the major powers for further concessions. The utter helplessness of the Chinese government to thwart these foreign enroachments was apparent to all. Even the Emperor Kuang-hsu could no longer shut his eyes to the situation. It was obvious that he would have to do something drastic in order to forestall the partition of his empire. His solution was a westernizing reform of China along the lines which Japan had earlier taken.

However, he advanced entirely too fast. Like all reformers the Emperor had more zeal than caution. He had failed to reckon with the Dowager Empress, Tsze Hsi, and her Manchu followers who were all conservatives. A plan was instigated to remove the old Empress, but she obtained knowledge of it and overturned the government. The European powers had given no support to the Emperor's reform movement, for they were chiefly interested in gaining more and more concessions. This oversight was to cost the European powers dearly in the future. They had allowed the Dowager Empress to gain control of the Chinese government, not realizing that of all people she held the most bitter emnity toward them.

The Far Eastern crisis of the winter of 1897-1898 had left as the two chief rivals Russia and England. Both the Russians and the English had joined in the race for commercial and territorial concessions but had not arranged a compromise between themselves. Furthermore, as we have seen, the British had been unsuccessful in obtaining allies to assist them in blocking Russia's advance into China. The Russians had not only planted themselves securely in Manchuria, but were now invading central China. On June 27, 1898 the Franco-Belgian syndicate, which was backed by the Russo-Chinese Bank, secured the all important concession for the Peking to

Hankow railroad. When this line was completed, it would bring the Russian influence and interests to the Yangtze River which England considered her own sphere of influence. British protests were ignored by the Peking government which ratified the concession. Therefore, the British did the next best thing.

The English government gave its support to the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank which was trying to finance a railroad from Tientsin to Shankaikwan and thence to Manchuria. The road was to be built by the Chinese but the Bank was to hold a mortgage on it. The Russian minister in China immediately registered a protest against the agreement. However the British were determined to remain firm. They intended to make an issue of it if possible. Lord Salisbury telegraphed to his minister at Peking:

> If you see no objection to doing so you may inform Yamen that Her Majesty's Government will support them against any Power which commits an act of aggression on China because China has granted to a British subject permission to make or support a railroad or similar public work.[1]

However, this assurance proved of no avail for the Russians obtained an agreement to stop the railroad at Shanhaikwan.

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[1] British Documents, I, No. 55, p. 36, Salisbury to MacDonald, July 22, 1898.

However, as Russia was unprepared to force the issue to the point of an international crisis, she approached the British Foreign Office with a plan for conciliation. It soon became evident that the British no longer had hopes of maintaining an Open Door in China. They were almost equally interested in obtaining spheres of influence and more concessions. The Russians were willing to recognize the Yangtze Basin as a British sphere if the British in return would recognize Manchuria as a Russian sphere. Negotiations between the two countries began in February 1899 and concluded with an exchange of notes in April 1899. The two powers agreed on three major points as follows:

> 1. Russia engaged not to seek for herself or on behalf of Russian subjects or other railroad Concessions in the Yangtze basin[2] and not to place obstacles either directly or indirectly in the way of railroad enterprises in that region supported by the British government.
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> 2. Similar engagement, mutatis mutandis by Great Britain with regard to railway concessions north of the Great Wall.

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[2]In answer to a question in the House of Commons on May 18, it was stated that "... the Yangtze Basin has been defined as the provinces adjoining the Yangtze River, and Honan and Chekiang." Parliamentary Debates, Fourth Series, Vol. 71, 20.

> 3. The two powers having no intention of infringing in any way on the sovereign rights of China or existing treaties, agreed to communicate to the Chinese Government the present arrangement, which, by averting all cause of complications between them, is of a nature to serve the interests of China herself.[3]

It will be noticed that this agreement covered only railroad concessions. As no other power had recognized the agreement, the Russian acceptance was of little value. No guarantee, furthermore, had been received for trade opportunities. The weakness of this agreement was apparent to all. It soon necessitated further understandings with Russia which were not forthcoming. England realized that she had obtained no material advantage from this arrangement. She soon had to cast about for new securities.

Not long after this agreement was signed, Russia made moves to acquire more concessions in China which would represent a definite threat to British interests. England's only hope was to set aside the Yangtze Valley as a sphere of influence. However, the seemingly inadequate policy of the British government gave rise to severe criticism in Parliament. Sir Charles Dilke accused the

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[3] British Documents, I, No. 61, pp. 40-41, Salisbury to Bax-Ironside, April 30, 1899.

government of trying to "ride two horses." He said that the attempts by the government to hold to the Open Door policy while at the same time working for the Yangtze sphere had caused confusion and failure of both policies.[4] Much the same attitude was taken in the periodical press.[5]

The government's reply was not very reassuring. Broderick, who soon was to be the new Secretary for War, stated that "We cannot make the Yangtze Valley a province like Shantung or Manchuria, first because it is infinitely larger, and secondly, we are not prepared to undertake the immense responsibility of governing what is practically a third of China."[6] In other words the government was continuing its two way policy. Nonetheless, the situation still remained tense, whereas new problems appeared in a neighboring state.

Since the seizure of Port Arthur, Japanese influence had replaced that of Russia in China. Therefore, the Russians turned their interests to Korea. Since 1895 the Russian naval authorities had been interested in Nasampo and the nearby island of Kargodo as a possible

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[4] Parliamentary Debates, Fourth Series, Vol. 72, 778 ff.

[5] Senex, "The White Man's Burden in China," Contemporary Review, LXXVI (1899), pp. 318-22. R. S. Gundry, "The Yangtze Region," Fortnightly Review, Vol. 66 (1899), pp. 448-64. R. S. Gundry, "China: Spheres of Interest, and the Open Door," Fortnightly Review, Vol. 66 (1899), pp. 37-52.

[6] Parliamentary Debates, Series Four, Vol. 72, 803 ff.

naval base. For several months during the year 1899, Russian attempts to obtain the base had failed, because Japan had interfered. However, on March 16, 1900 a Russian squadron anchored off the coast of Korea. The admiral went to Seoul and there obtained the desired concession. News of this success caused great consternation not only in Japan but in England as well. The British ambassador in Tokyo reported that "... this establishment unimportant in the beginning, might later on assume a more formidable character, constituting a permanent menace to Japan."[7] The situation nearly brought on war, for the Japanese navy wasmobilized and part of the army placed in readiness.

It is necessary to understand this brief sketch of how affairs stood in the Far East. For the events had direct bearing upon Anglo-German alliance which began in 1898. A breakdown which was to be complete and irrevocable.

The Boxer Uprising

Against this background of imminent disaster, a storm of an entirely different nature broke. This was the so-called Boxer Rebellion. There seems little doubt that the Chinese Government, and especially the Dowager

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[7] British Documents, II, No. 39, p. 32, Satow to Salisbury, March 31, 1900.

Empress, had a hand in the uprising. It was, in fact, not an uprising against the government so much as an active protest against the foreigners. The result was that the foreign legation was surrounded and besieged with loss of life to the foreigners. It was against this background that Chamberlain decided to make a final bid for an Anglo-German alliance.

The question of relieving the besieged legation became of paramount consideration in the European capitals and in the United States. This emergency momentarily united the great powers of Europe with each other as well as with the United States. The selection of a supreme commander of the forces of the allies proved a ticklish one. The German Emperor demanded that his candidate, Count Waldersee, should have the position. The Kaiser had grandiose hopes that his field marshal would rescue the foreigners. He hoped, thereby, to add more laurels to his great army by a victory over the "Yellow Peril." Bülow obtained the somewhat reluctant consent of the other powers, and Waldersee became the Supreme Commander.[8] All these fancies and hopes on the part of William II were annulled by actual events. Count Waldersee did not arrive in China until September 27, whereas the allied troops had

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[8]Bernhard von Bülow, Memoirs, I, 427.

entered Peking and rescued the ministers on August 15. The German Emperor's demands and boasts had greatly irritated the other powers, and now they took comfort in his obvious embarrassment. Later events placed him in a ludicrous position.

Hardly had the legations been relieved than the Russians decided to withdraw their troops. Count Waldersee found himself in an invidious position. The French would in all events follow their ally, Russia, and the United States, on the eve of a presidential election, wanted to escape from their unpopular position. The Germans had from the start been the driving force in the International Relieving Force. However, they had gone into the affair with more greed than caution; they now found that their whole position in China depended on England. With the support of the British, they might be able to maintain themselves, but if the British withdrew along with the other allies, the Germans faced a humiliating defeat. This was important in a country where prestige counted for so much.

Chamberlain saw a golden opportunity to use the predicament of the Germans to advantage and obtain his long desired alliance. As the minister responsible for Malaya and Hongkong, Chamberlain was very interested in the British policy in China. Although the South African

War made any fresh commitments in the Far East impossible, Chamberlain decided to cooperate with the Germans in China. He believed that it was only by combination with Germany that Russia could be prevented from consolidating the occupation of Manchuria with further gains.

Several of Chamberlain's colleagues in the cabinet agreed with him. They found fault with Salisbury's hostile attitude toward Berlin and his acceptance of Russian encroachments. They also criticized his failure to give more sympathetic support to Waldersee, whose difficulty seemed a golden opportunity for Britain to improve relations with Berlin. Several of the more prominent cabinet members expressed their feelings in letters to Chamberlain. These men were afraid that Salisbury would let his personal dislike for the Emperor and for the Germans overrule his better judgment, and thereby fail to make political capital of the situation in China.[9]

Prompted by these letters, Chamberlain stated the views of the dissident ministers in a lengthy memorandum at a cabinet meeting (September 10). He pointed out that

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[9]Julian Amery, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, (New York, 1951), IV, 138-40. Goschen was First Lord of the Admiralty and Broderick became Secretary for War in October, 1900. See Appendix for text of letters.

Russia by withdrawing her troops from Peking would place the Emperor in a very humiliating position. If Britain would stand by him, his position would be more tenable. England could thereby do a great service to Germany and receive in return satisfactory assurances. Chamberlain stressed the fact that England was not strong enough by herself to contain Russia in China. In the long run England and the United States would have to work for the Open Door, but this would take time. Meanwhile, by working closely with Germany (and Japan), England could meet the immediate threat of Russian expansion.[10]

The Yangtze Agreement

Not all of the government shared Chamberlain's optimism. Mr. Bertie in a memorandum of September 13, 1900 stated that "As to making use of Germany to come between the Russians and ourselves in China, we are not likely to have much success."[11] Disregarding this warning, and outnumbered by his colleagues, Salisbury reluctantly yielded to pressure. Negotiations began for an Anglo-German agreement to maintain the principle of the Open Door in China. The course of events seemed to confirm Salisbury's misgivings. The Germans wanted to confine the agreement

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[10] Ibid., p. 140.

[11] British Documents, II, No. 12, p. 11.

solely to the Yangtze Valley, but Salisbury told Hatzfeldt that he "... could not accept any special stipulation in favor of the principle of free trade in the Yangtze Valley or in any other particular part of China, for its effect would be held to be, and, in fact, would be to abandon free trade in the other parts of the Chinese dominions."[12]

The German request was all too plain. They were not prepared to resist Russia's advance in the northern provinces. However, they proposed a rigid, but local, application of the Open Door principle, and thereby exclude England from Central China. This was not what Chamberlain had intended, but rather the opposite. Needless to say Salisbury refused this proposal. Finally the two countries agreeded to maintain the Open Door policy throughout the territories of China "... as far as they can exercise influence."[13] When the agreement was made public, John Hay, the American Secretary of State, wrote:

> When the Anglo-German Pact came out, I took a day or two to find out what it meant. I soon learned from Berlin that it meant a horrible practical joke on England. From London I found

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[12] Ibid., p. 12.

[13] Ibid., No. 17, enclosure, pp. 15-16. Oct. 15, 1900. I have included the English draft of the agreement in the appendix.

> out what I had suspected, but what it astounded me after all to be assured of--that they did not know! When Japan joined the pact, I asked them why. They said, 'We don't know, only if there is any fun going on we want to be in.'[14]

Although Hay's comment was somewhat exaggerated, there was a great deal of truth in it. The agreement was so vague that trouble was bound to be forthcoming. Salisbury wrote to the German ambassador: "I confess that since you have altered it to make it more agreeable to Russia, I am not very much in love with this agreement. It is liable to so much misunderstanding."[15] Furthermore most of the English statesmen were dissatisfied with the agreement. They did not think that it would in any way deter Russia from her advance on China. In addition the agreement contained no guarantee that Germany would take a firm stand against Russia. The Duke of Devonshire, one of Germany's best friends in England, wrote that he could not understand why Salisbury had permitted Manchuria's being excluded from the agreement. "In consequence of this restriction the whole agreement is not worth the

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[14]William R. Thayer, Life and Letters of John Hay (2 vols., Boston, 1915), II, 248.

[15]British Documents, II, No. 38, p. 31, enclosure 6, Salisbury to Hatzfeldt, Oct. 6, 1900.

paper it is written on."[16] It was obvious that if any gains were made they were made by Germany. The Germans had succeeded in stopping England from establishing herself in the Yangtze, while securing British assurance of the maintenance of the Open Door in the important areas. All this had been achieved without committing Germany to oppose Russian designs.

Salisbury's and other Englishmen's fears that the agreement would prove ineffectual in stopping Russia soon proved well founded. The reply from the Russian capital regarding the agreement was evasive but the meaning was clear:

> The arrangement concluded between Germany and England does not perceptibly modify from our point of view, the situation in China.
>
> The first point of this agreement, stipulating that the ports on the rivers and littoral of China wherever the two Governments exercise their influence should remain free and open to commerce can be favorably entertained by Russia, this stipulation not prejudicing in any way the status quo established in China by existing treaties.[17]

In other words the Russians chose to interpret this

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[16]Eckardstein, Ten Years, p. 177.

[17]British Documents, II, No. 20, p. 17, Hardinge to Salisbury, Oct. 28, 1900.

article as restricting the Open Door to those areas in which England and Germany had special interests. Evidently Russia did not intend to be forestalled by the agreement.

The New Year brought matters to a head and settled the worth of the Yangtze Agreement. On January 3, 1901 Russia had extorted the so-called Alexieff-Tseng agreement from China. This agreement gave Russia the right to virtually annex Manchuria under a thinly disguised protectorate. Actually Russia was to obtain control of the Manchurian railway system, which would mean a considerable extension of Russian influence. Britain now had every right to call upon Germany to join her in a joint protest against this encroachment. This Germany did not do. In fact Bülow declared openly in the Reichstag that "... we shall take good care not to do other people's business in China. We have no thought of serving as a lightning rod for any other power."[18] This reply coupled with Waldersee's obvious inclination toward the Russians to England's detriment, created a very unfortunate impression in London. The grave and urgent nature of the Far Eastern situation caused Chamberlain to attempt another bid for reconciliation.

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[18] Grosse Politik, XVI, pp. 259, 281-6, Bülow to the Kaiser, Nov. 19, 1900.

Last Attempt and Failure

Two considerations seemed to have encouraged Chamberlain to make his final efforts toward Anglo-German reconciliation. After a tremendous ovation and welcome in France, President Kruger had reached Germany in the first week of December 1900. He proceeded to Berlin expecting a similar reception. However, on the advice of Bülow, the Kaiser declined to receive him. Bülow was fearful that if Kruger were received, it would have an adverse effect of Anglo-German relations.[19] This seemed to Chamberlain a good sign.

The second consideration concerned the conduct of British foreign policy. In October of 1900 a general election had taken place in England. Salisbury's majority fell from 152 to 128. As a result, the Prime Minister reconstructed his cabinet. Nearing his seventy-second year, he at last relinquished the Foreign Office to Lord Lansdowne who had been in the War Department. This was a happy change, for Lansdowne was known to sympathize with the pro-German element of the Cabinet.

However, these were only incidental considerations. The primary cause of Chamberlain's decision still concerned as always with the urgent need for Britain to abandon isolation which no longer was splendid or secure.

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[19] Bernhard von Bülow, Memoirs, I, 544.

On January 9, 1901 Eckardstein, who had again been chosen as intermediary, received a letter from the Duchess of Devonshire. She invited him to the Devonshire estate, Chatsworth, for a weekend visit. "Pray come without fail," she wrote, "as the Duke has several urgent political questions to discuss with you. You will also find here Joseph Chamberlain."[20] Eckardstein was then in active charge of the German Embassy due to the protracted illness of Hatzfeldt. He seemed a good choice as an intermediary for two reasons. He was sincerely anxious to bring England and Germany together, and his personal ambition to succeed Hatzfeldt as ambassador.

The conversation between Chamberlain and Eckardstein took place in the library of the Devonshire home on the evening of January 16. No mention of the meeting has been found among the Chamberlain papers, and our information is based upon a version framed by Eckardstein and Hatzfeldt.

> At a recent meeting of Freiherr von Eckardstein with Mr. Chamberlain at the country house of the Duke of Devonshire, the Colonial Minister made among other statements the following important declaration:

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[20]Eckardstein, Ten Years, p. 184.

> He and his friends in the Cabinet had made up their minds that the day of "splendid isolation" was over. England must look about for allies for the future. The choice was either Russia and France or the Triple Alliance. Both in the Cabinet and in the public there were those who wished for and eagerly worked for an understanding with Russia; and who were moreover ready to pay a very high price to obtain this object. He himself did not belong to those who wished for an association with Russia; he was rather convinced that a combination with Germany and an association with the Triple Alliance was preferable. He himself would do everything to bring about a gradual advance in this direction. For the present he was in favor of arranging a secret agreement between Great Britain and Germany with reference to Morocco on the basis that had already been put forward. His advice was that the matter should be taken up as soon as Lord Salisbury left for the South, and that details should be negotiated with Lord Lansdowne and himself. So long as he, Mr. Chamberlain, was convinced that a permanent partnership with Germany was possible he would absolutely oppose any idea of an arrangement with Russia. But should a permanent partnership with Germany prove unreliable, he would then support an association with Russia in spite of the excessive price that England would probably have to pay for it in China and the Persian Gulf. He wished these remarks of his, except in so far as they bore on the Morocco question, to be considered for the present not as an overture but only as an academic subject for discussion.[21]

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[21] Ibid., pp. 185-6. Grosse Politik, XVII, 14-16, Hatzfeldt to the Foreign Office, Jan. 18, 1901.

It was plain from this message that Chamberlain's purpose was to ally England with the Triple Alliance. However, as he knew that it would be impossible to obtain either the public's approval or the Cabinet's consent, he suggested another point as a beginning. This was to be a secret treaty over Morocco, a transaction to which he and Lansdowne could bring the Cabinet in the absence of Salisbury. Furthermore public opinion need not be consulted. Chamberlain knew that an immediate alliance was out of the question for two reasons, Salisbury was still Premier and there was too much hostility between the two countries over the Boer War. But the Colonial Secretary hoped that from a Moroccan agreement, the general alliance would eventually grow.

Anticipating that the dreaded Holstein would object to Chamberlain's proposals, Hatzfeldt sent a separate telegram to him along with the dispatch to the German Foreign Office.

> You and I are entirely in agreement that the idea of an Alliance is still premature. Chamberlain, however, seems to share this view, desiring that particular agreements about Morocco etc. shall lead up to the later general understanding. That might suit us. Meanwhile, it is to be hoped that the coolness between England and America, resulting from the growing intimacy of the latter with Russia, will still increase, and that then, more and more, England will have to depend on us.

> The hope Chamberlain almost openly expresses of soon becoming free of Lord Salisbury and remaining master of the situation is worthy of careful note. It seems likely that when Salisbury goes South, as he will for several months, Chamberlain and his friends--Lansdowne is one of the chief-- will take the initiative.[22]

This telegram is very important, for it represents the clearest approach to Chamberlain's proposal that would be made by the Germans. However, Bülow, who by now was German Chancellor, saw only difficulties in the proposal. His first reply to it was evasive. He thought that it would be better to wait and leave the initiative to England. He did not think England could be trusted in a new agreement after the experience over the Portuguese colonies. The Chancellor did not believe that England and the Dual Alliance would ever come to an understanding. He hoped to gain by later English discomforts.[23] Although this reply was in the negative, it did leave the matter open for further discussion.

While these negotiations were getting under way, tne Kaiser was celebrating the two hundredth anniversary of the Prussian Kingdom. However a telegram from

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[22] Grosse Politik, XVII, p. 17, Hatzfeldt to Holstein, Jan. 18, 1901. Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 186-7.

[23] Grosse Politik, XVII, pp. 17-18.

Eckardstein caused the Emperor to cut short the celebrations and make preparations to leave immediately for England. Baron Eckardstein had telegraphed the news that Queen Victoria was dying. With characteristic impulse, William II booked passage on a channel boat immediately. Accompaniedby his uncle, the Duke of Connaught, the dutiful grandson rushed to the dying Queen. All the Kaiser's advisers were against the trip. They knew that the journey would be unpopular with the German public. Bülow attempted to get his master to delay his departure but without success.[24] Even the Kaiser's consort was fearful that his stay in England would be misinterpreted at home.[25]

Nevertheless, the Emperor did reach his grandmother in time to see her before she died. His action in rushing to the bedside of the Queen was appreciated tremendously by the English people. For some days to come he was the center of the nation's affection.

It was while he was in London that he learned for the first time of the Chatsworth proposal. Evidently moved by his kind reception in England, he was inclined to accept the offer. However, his ardor was soon dampened by Bülow who cautioned that a waiting policy was

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[24]Bernhard von Bülow, Memoirs, I, 578.

[25]Ibid., p. 581.

best. The Kaiser obeyed and in a long conversation with Lord Lansdowne, he warned against both Russia and the United States. The best hope for Europe was to work together against Russia and America.[26] But he made no commitments.

The day after Victoria's funeral, the Kaiser left for Germany. His visit marked a turning point in the negotiations. Had he been wise enough to follow his own instinct and encourage Chamberlain, something would have come of the proposal. Had he and Chamberlain reached an understanding then on China and Morocco, possibly they might have concluded a full alliance. Here seems to have been a wonderful opportunity. However, the Wilhelmstrasse had decided against such an alliance. Influenced by Bülow's advice, the Kaiser made no attempt to see Chamberlain. This omission on the part of the Emperor appeared as a direct rebuff to the proposals. There never appeared another chance to repair the damage done.

After the Kaiser left England, the affair seemed for awhile to have been dropped. But in March the two countries entered into direct negotiations for an alliance. According to Chamberlain's biographer, the

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[26]Lord Thomas W. Newton, Lord Lansdowne (London, 1929), p. 199.

responsibility for this movement lay with Eckardstein.[27] Hoping to effect an alliance between Germany and England, he took a personal initiative. Although his motives may have been high, his methods were dubious. His first step was to see Chamberlain. A meeting was finally arranged for March 18, 1901. In a telegram to Holstein, Eckardstein reported the conversation. The telegram read in part:

> The efforts that are being made in Russian official quarters are shown by what Chamberlain said to me today: 'We would gladly approach Germany with far-reaching proposals which would assure it as great advantages as, or even greater advantages than ourselves. But as we know for a fact that everything that Berlin hears is at once passed on to Petersburg, no one can wonder if in the future we maintain the greatest reserve towards Germany.'
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> In the further course of conversation, Chamberlain said that he held in principle the same views about Germany that he had expressed to the Kaiser and Count Bülow at Windsor the year before; but that he was not particularly anxious to burn his fingers a second time over the same business.[28]

From this unrewarding meeting, Eckardstein went to one with the Foreign Minister. The German was careful

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[27] J. Amery, Joseph Chamberlain, IV, 153.

[28] Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 204-5.

to emphasize that he spoke only for himself. He suggested that:

> ... the German Government, ..., would entertain favorably the idea of an understanding ... with this country.
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> The kind of an arrangement which he contemplated might be described as a purely defensive alliance between the two powers, directed solely against France and Russia.
>
> So long as Germany or England were attacked by one only of the other two Powers the Alliance would not operate, but if either Germany or England had to defend itself against both France and Russia, Germany would have to help England or England Germany as the case might be.[29]

Eckardstein in his official report to Holstein states that Lansdowne suggested the alliance. However, the Foreign Minister emphatically concludes a letter to Lascalles with the words "... I feel no doubt that he [Eckardstein] has been desired to sound me."[30] It is obvious from Eckardstein's memoirs that Lansdowne's version was the true one. For the German wrote that on the sixteenth of March he had given Lansdowne a strong hint to approach "... us with an offer of alliance."[31]

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[29] British Documents, II, No. 77, p. 61, Lansdowne to Lascalles, March 18, 1901.

[30] Idem.

[31] Eckardstein, Ten Years, p. 208.

He also shows that the idea of a defensive alliance had been suggested by Holstein in a communication of a few days earlier.[32]

As before, Eckardstein's deception mislead both the German and British foreign offices. Each thought the other side was eagerly seeking the alliance. In London the Cabinet was none too enthusiastic. Although they wanted an understanding, they feared any far reaching international arrangement.[33] The German government, however, thought that now was the moment of England's extremity. It was a propitious opportunity to raise the terms. Not only must England join the Triple Alliance and this agreement be ratified by Parliament, but all future negotiations must be directed to Vienna.[34] This was by way of reassuring Austria that she was still an important member of the Alliance.[35]

Negotiations, however, with Germany be way of Austria were impossible. It was hardly feasible that Parliament would agree to Britain's joining the Triple Alliance, and even less likely that a guarantee by

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[32]Ibid., p. 203.

[33]British Documents, II, No. 79, p. 62, Lansdowne to Lascalles, Mar. 29, 1901.

[34]Eckardstein, Ten Years, p. 209.

[35]German Documents, III, 144, Richthofen to Hatzfeldt, April 14, 1901.

the internally discordant Dual Empire would be acceptable. Diplomatically such an arrangement would, no doubt, have embroiled Britain more deeply with Russia.

Eckardstein did not mention this Vienese proviso in a subsequent conversation with Lord Lansdowne. Negotiations were held up at this point by Germany's demands for compensation for the destruction of German private property and loss of trade in South Africa as a result of the Boer War. Also the Germans were trying to exact a larger war indemnity from China. Many of these demands were considered unjustified and extravagant.[36] Matters seemed to have reached another stalemate.

However, by mid-April Lansdowne told Eckardstein that he was consulting with Chamberlain and Devonshire about the alliance. He gave the German the most encouragement he was to receive. Lansdowne said that he, Chamberlain and Devonshire were for the alliance and "As for Lord Salisbury, I do not doubt that he will also decide in favor. Times have changed."[37] Eckardstein was the narrator of this conversation and even its authenticity is doubted. Having embarked on a program of deception, he had to make his story as good as possible. Contrary

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[36]Eckardstein, Ten Years, pp. 212-213.

[37]J. Amery, Joseph Chamberlain, IV, 156.

to his instructions from Berlin, Eckardstein was also prodding the Japanese minister in London, Count Hayashi, to take the initiative in proposing an Anglo-German-Japanese alliance. Eckardstein told him that Lansdowne, Balfour, Chamberlain and Devonshire had for some time desired such an alliance and recently Salisbury had also accepted the suggestion.[38]

The final crisis came in May. Hatzfeldt who had returned to London after a visit to Germany for his health, took personal control of the negotiations. He knew that to mention that the negotiations should be carried on through Austria would be fatal to the alliance. However, he did appreciate why the Wilhelmstrasse should adhere to the demand that England should join the Triple Alliance. Therefore, he asked Lansdowne for a meeting in order to discuss fully the alliance. A fruitless conversation took place. The German ambassador insisted that unless England joined the Triple Alliance, there could be no agreement. Without this conditio sine quo non, Germany would be compelled to look elsewhere for an alliance.[39]

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[38] E. A. Pooley, ed., The Secret Memoirs of Count Tadasu Hayashi (New York, 1915), p. 119.

[39] British Documents, II, No. 82, pp. 64-5, Memorandum by Lansdowne, May 24, 1901.

In the course of the conversation, Lansdowne indicated that he was interested in getting something down on paper. This is proved by his request to one of his undersecretaries, Lord Sanderson, to draw up a draft outlining the possible terms of the projected alliance.[40] Far more important was the memorandum drawn up by Lord Salisbury himself on May 29. In it he questioned the advantages of an agreement for England:

> The liability of having to defend the German and Austrian frontiers against Russia is heavier than that of having to defend the British Isles against France. Even, therefore, in its most naked aspect the bargain would be a bad one for this country. Count Hatzfeldt speaks of our "isolation" as constituting a serious danger for us. Have we ever felt that danger practically? ... 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.
>
> But though the proposed arrangement, even from this point of view, does not seem to me admissible, these are not by any means the weightest objections that can be urged against it. The fatal circumstance is that neither we nor the Germans are competent to make the suggested promises. The British Government cannot undertake to declare war, for any purpose, unless it is a purpose of which the electors of this country would approve. If the Government promised to declare war for an object which did not commend

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[40] Ibid., No. 85, pp. 66-8.

> itself to public opinion, the promise would be repudiated, and the Government turned out.... We might, to some extent, divest ourselves of the full responsibility of such a step, by laying our Agreement with the Triple Alliance before Parliament as soon as it is concluded. But there are very grave objections to such a course, and I do not understand it to be recommended by the German Ambassador.[41]

Germany's terms were unacceptable to the inner Cabinet consisting of Salisbury, Lansdowne, Chamberlain, Balfour and Hicks Beach [Chancellor of the Exchequer].[42] Salisbury would not guarantee such an agreement. He did not believe that Parliament would sanction an open connection with the Triple alliance. Neither would he undertake a secret contract which might not be upheld by a later government. It seems apparent that Lansdowne had been promised a memorandum by Eckardstein on just exactly what the German terms were to be. However, the Foreign Minister never received this memorandum. The Salisbury memorandum and the failure to receive the promised German draft spelled finis to the negotiations.

This was the end of the attempts to revive an alliance between the two countries. It was true that

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[41] Ibid., no. 86, pp. 68-9, Memorandum by Salisbury, May 29, 1901.

[42] Ibid., pp. 64-71.

Germany, under the misrepresentations created by Eckardstein, continued to press the issue. However, Lansdowne met each proposal with courtesy, but the matter was closed. As Bertie wrote "If once we bind ourselves by a formal defensive alliance and practically join the Triplice, we shall never be on decent terms with France our neighbor in Europe and in many parts of the world, or with Russia whose frontiers are coterminous with ours... over a large portion of Asia."[43] This was indeed the end. Eckardstein had received in June his last communication revealing that Chamberlain had lost all heart for the alliance and would have nothing more to do with the German government.[44]

Chamberlain's last bid for a German alliance probably marked a great turning point in history. Had it come about, no doubt history would have been greatly altered. The greatest sea power would have been allied with the greatest land army. Together their combined industrial might was unmatched. Behind Germany were her two allies, Italy and Austria; behind Britain would have been Japan. The support of the United States would hardly have been withheld. This grouping, inclined by its interests and

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[43] Ibid., no. 91, p. 76, Memorandum by Mr. Bertie, Nov. 9, 1901.

[44] Eckardstein, Ten Years, p. 221, Alfred Rothschild to Eckardstein, June, 14, 1901.

backed up by its power could have maintained peace in the world and have controlled the events which led to the first World War. It remains but to draw some conclusions as to why this momentous project failed.

CONCLUSION

When the German government evaded the advances made by Chamberlain, the negotiations came to an end. It would appear, from all the evidence, that both England and Germany had much to gain by such a partnership and very little to lose. The failure of the negotiations described in the preceeding chapters had several causes, and it is difficult to assign a definite pattern to them. However, I think that primarily we must consider the wide divergence in the aims of the two countries.

Chamberlain had come to the realization that isolation was a dangerous luxury which England could no longer afford. However, he never considered for a moment that England's sun was setting. Nor did he contemplate surrendering British supremacy as the price for an alliance. He had approached the Germans with two purposes in mind. He wanted Germany's aid in those regions where the situation seemed uncertain; China, the Middle East and the Moorish Empire. He, also, desired an alliance with Germany to forestall the formation of a hostile coalition of Russia, Germany and France against Britain. It is

obvious that Chamberlain wanted Germany's aid to help England out of her difficulties. Bülow and Holstein were sharp enough to recognize the Englishman's purpose, but they made a drastic mistake when they assumed that it was his sole purpose. Chamberlain knew that Germany would not enter such an arrangement and receive nothing in return. Therefore, as he told Eckardstein at Chatsworth, his ultimate goal was a complete juncture with the Triple Alliance.

Herein lies the prime weakness of the entire project. Chamberlain was not in control of British policy when the crisis in China arose. Therefore, he was not in a position to grant a full alliance, which is what the Wilhelmstrasse demanded. All that lay in his power he did. He offered a mediation of local issues in Morocco and China. He was certain that he could get the Foreign Office to support this project. He hoped that this in turn would lead to the general alliance. In setting forth this plan, he was, in reality, asking the Germans to take two things on trust. First, he was sincere in declaring for the alliance, and second, the British government would come around to a full alliance eventually. However, to have accepted Chamberlain's proposals with so little guarantee would have taken a great deal of faith on the

part of Berlin. In fact, too much faith was needed, for the Kaiser's counsellors vetoed the project. Mistrust was one motive, but it was not their primary one.

We must recognize that Germany was never in a position to reject an alliance offer, for none was ever made. I, furthermore, believe that they never wanted one, certainly not for the same reasons that Chamberlain wanted it. Their primary political aim, which was ill-concealed, was to succeed England as the supreme power in Europe. They already had the strongest army. Had not this been proven in the Danish, Austrian and French wars? They already had a powerful industrial development which rivaled and even surpassed that of the British.[1] The Germans were also building a fleet. Once it was launched, Germany, indeed, would have surpassed England materially. However, the building of the fleet would take time. Therefore, it was to Germany's interest to avoid any commitment which might embroil her in a war with France or Russia. This possibly explains the apparent reluctance to take up Chamberlain's proposals concerning Morocco and China. They needed time; time in which to build up a fleet.

The German government was certain that they were

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[1]See appendix.

following the right policy. For they believed that they were safe from any hostile coalition and, therefore, needed no more allies. Having stirred up Anglophobia in Germany in order to gain passage for the Navy Bill in the Reichstag, an English alliance would have been politically embarrassing. Furthermore, beset with the idea of a decadent England, they were convinced that the future would bring Britain to her extremity. Then Germany could exact an immense price in colonial concessions in return for the alliance. This brings us to the duplicity of Eckardstein.

The misapprehension of the German Foreign Office was due largely to the reporting of Eckardstein. Without documentary evidence to prove his flagrant violation of diplomatic traditions, it would be difficult to believe. I am convinced that his actions were well meant, but inexcusable. He violated everything which good diplomacy stood for.

Eckardstein deliberately led his government to believe that England was making the advances for a general alliance and that even Lord Salisbury was in favor of it. It is apparent that this was a gross fabrication, for Salisbury was as much an isolationist in 1900 as he was after the Crimean War. It is a conjecture, but supported by his action, that Salisbury, if forced by extremities

which he could not control, would have preferred an alliance with either Russia or France rather than with Germany. He sincerely distrusted and personally disliked the Germans. We can see that it was not good will that was lacking in Germany but understanding. The Wilhelmstrasse believed that England had projected an alliance and then had abruptly dropped negotiations. Bülow felt that since England had made the first overture, she should make the second.

In London, however, the government thought that Germany had launched the idea only to follow it with impossible conditions. They became convinced that Germany was playing a questionable game. The net result was that both sides were left suspicious and distrustful.

It seems that, as far as the Germans were concerned, they had gambled on one conjecture and had lost. They did not believe that England would ever pay the price for an alliance with Russia. At least, never while the hope of a German alliance was possible. As Bülow wrote, revealing his plan: "We must let hope shimmer on the horizon. In this hope lies after all the surest guarantee that the English will not surrender to the Russians."[2]

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[2] Grosse Politik, XVII, 109, Marginal note to a memorandum by Holstein, Nov. 1, 1901.

This, I think, was a blunder for which Bülow has received the most blame. For as he, himself, later confessed, the Germans had completely underestimated the English.[3] Bülow's scheme to raise the price for an alliance never materialized, for as we know the British and the Russians did come together.

In retrospect we can see that Germany's diplomats made a serious blunder. Yet, misledby Eckardstein and convinced that Salisbury was entirely too anti-German to give his support to such an agreement, they were not entirely to blame. Had the Wilhelmstrasse followed Hatzfeldt's advice and changed their methods without changing their ultimate goals, they might have gained in peace the supremacy they lost through war. Had they taken their share of China, Morocco and the Middle East in conjunction with England, they would have blocked England's approach to the Dual Alliance. Increasing their fleet in the meanwhile and expanding their trade might have made them the dominant party in any Anglo-German alliance. I think that we may justly conclude that Bülow and his counsellors would have been well advised had they responded with more warmth to Chamberlain's proposals.

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[3]Bernhard von Bülow, Memoirs, I, 494.

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In writing history, it is of prime importance to have available the best and most reliable materials with which to work. Such sources of information are published documents, monographs and special historical studies, memoirs, and periodicals. I have been fortunate in finding these available in the Michigan State College and the University of Michigan Libraries.

The most important source available is published documents, and for this particular essay the British Documents on the Origin of the War 1871-1914, edited by George P. Gooch and Harold Temperley (11 vols., London, 1926-1938) proved of inestimable value. These volumes contain not only the official dispatches but also confidential minutes written on them, together with letters and intimate papers of various kinds. These are arranged on the basis of topics for easy reference. In writing this paper, I have used Volumes I and II almost exclusively.

Another publication which preceeded the British Documents and upon which they were to a considerable extent modelled, reveals the German side of the story.

This was Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914, edited by Johannes Lepsius, Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy and Friedrich Thimme (40 vols., Berlin, 1922-27). These greatly amplified the information given in the British Documents and help reveal German policy from the Franco-Prussian War to the outbreak of World War I. A selection of some of the more interesting documents in Die Grosse Politik has been translated into English by E. T. S. Dugdale entitled German Diplomatic Documents 1871-1914 (4 vols., New York, 1928-1930). I have used these whenever possible.

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APPENDIX

YANGTZE AGREEMENT[1]

Agreement between England and Germany, Signed at London, October 16, 1900.

Article 1. It is a matter of joint and permanent international interest that the ports on the rivers and littoral of China should remain free and open to trade and to every other legitimate form of economic activity for the nationals of all countries without distinction; and the two governments agree on their part to uphold the same for all Chinese territory as far as they can exercise influence.

Article 2. The Imperial German Government and Her Britannic Majesty's Government will not, on their part, make use of the present complication to obtain for themselves any territorial advantages in Chinese dominions, and will direct their policy towards maintaining undiminished the territorial condition of the Chinese Empire.

Article 3. In case of another Power making use of the complications in China in order to obtain under any form whatever such territorial advantages, the two contracting Parties reserve to themselves to come to a preliminary understanding as to the eventual steps to be taken for the protection of their own interests in China.

Clause 4 simply provided for the communication of this agreement to the other powers and for an invitation to them to accept the principles recorded in it.

LETTERS FROM THE CHAMBERLAIN PAPERS[2]

Goschen to J. C.--Confidential--Hawkhurst, September 1, 1900.--I sent you a telegram, thinking you would be wondering whether any attempt was being made to induce Salisbury to reciprocate to some extent the Emperor's advances. [I.e. requests for support for Waldersee]

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[1] British Documents, II, no.38.

[2] J. Amery, Joseph Chamberlain, IV, 138-40.

... I enclose his reply to the letter. It makes one despair. A non-possumus in every direction. It is quite possible the Emperor has some designs that are not clear: but we shall not thwart them by standing aloof.

I do not know what more can be done. If some policy is forced on Salisbury, which he disapproves of, it breaks down in execution.

... The latest Russian move as to retreating from Peking which is distasteful to Germany, furnishes a good opportunity for opening of conversations and exchange of ideas with the Emperor, but we hang back, are open with nobody, and shall practically stand alone, or come in at the tail of other Powers on every occasion.

If I see any opening that may be utilized I would ask you and Balfour to come to London to meet Lansdowne and G. Hamilton, who, like myself, are in despair of our present attitude. But the difficulty lies not in any one step which we might jointly persuade Salisbury to take, but in his whole attitude in this question. He himself views the situation, as he wrote to me, "with the gravest apprehension."

Goschen to J. C.--Secret.--Admiralty, September 2, 1900--I am troubled about much graver things. Salisbury, as you will have seen, sent some kind of answer to Berlin, but it was almost worse than silence.

... Whatever harm might come from pourparlers at Berlin, our present attitude does more harm; but pressure on Salisbury does not produce any real change of attitude, though he may take some small step.

I cannot help exresssing myself strongly....

Absolute isolation is playing the devil....

Goschen to J. C.--Sunday, September 4, 1900.--... Salisbury's answer to our joint telegram was not satisfactory. He agrees to our troops not being withdrawn from Peking, but will make no capital of it. And, so far as I can see, he has not notified this decision to Germany or to any other power....

Broderick to J. C.--Dartmouth, September 7.--Yacht Mera.--Private.--One line to say Arthur Balfour generally concurs with you re Peking and Germany. I have sent his letter to Goschen with a request to forward to you....

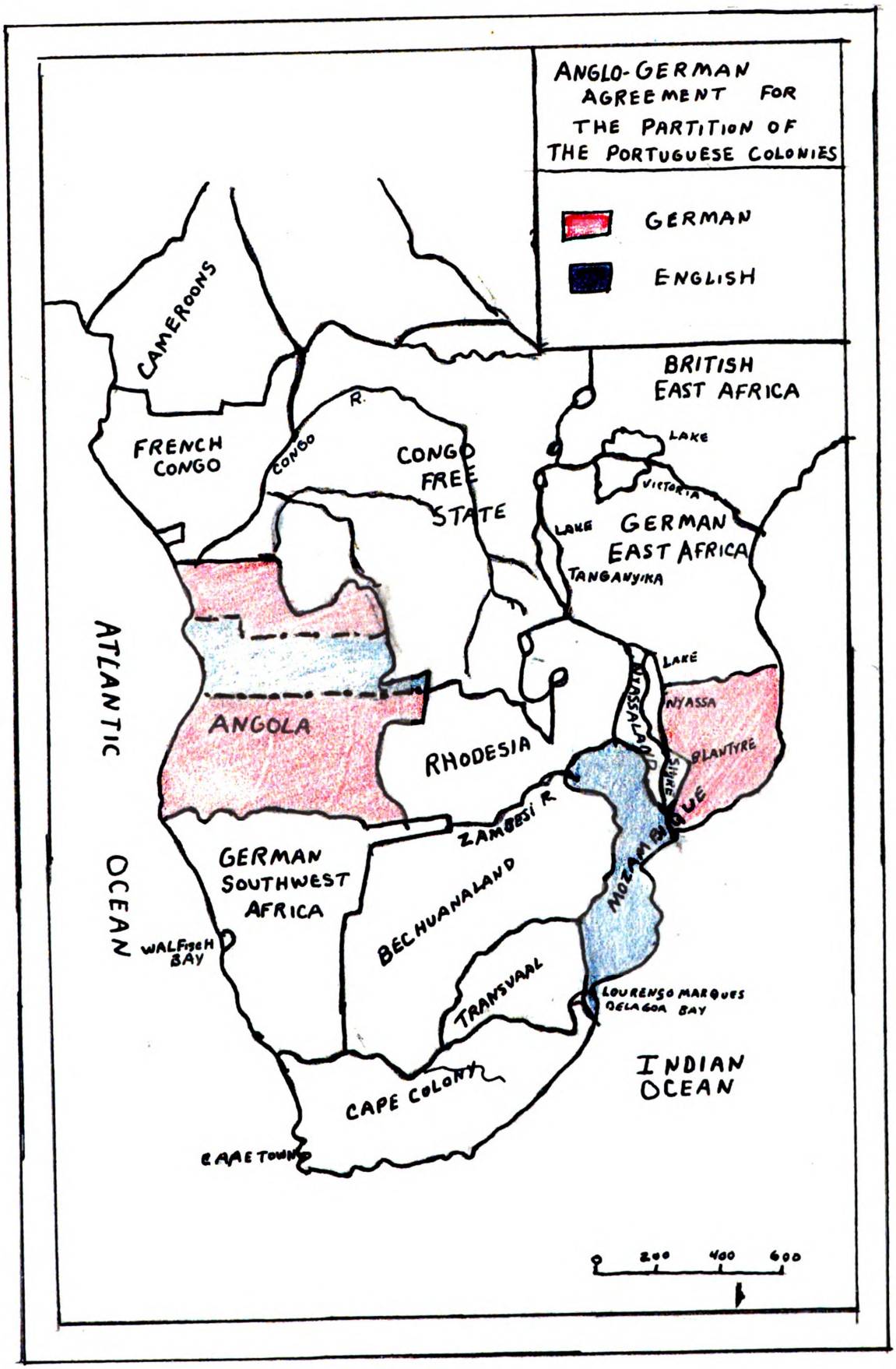
The latter part of Salisbury's reply is characteristic and I think unlucky. We do what is needed and get nothing for it. We could surely get some credit, if nothing else.

I feel assured we shall ultimately have to make some overtures to Germany when the grace of them is past....

INCREASES PER CENT. 1893-1913[3]

	United Kingdom	Germany
Population	20	32
Coal production	75	159
Pig iron	50	287
Crude steel	136	522
Exports of raw materials	238	243
Exports of manufactures	121	239
Receipts from railway goods traffic	49	141

[3] R. C. K. Ensor, England, 1870-1914 (London, 1936), p. 503.


ANGLO-GERMAN AGREEMENT FOR THE PARTITION OF THE PORTUGUESE COLONIES
GERMAN
ENGLISH
CAMEROONS
FRENCH CONGO
CONGO R.
CONGO FREE STATE
BRITISH EAST AFRICA
LAKE VICTORIA
LAKE
GERMAN EAST AFRICA
TANGANYIKA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
ANGOLA
RHODESIA
LAKE NYASSA
NYASSALAND
SHIRE R.
BLANTYRE
ZAMBESI R.
MOZAMBIQUE
GERMAN SOUTHWEST AFRICA
BECHUANALAND
WALFISH BAY
TRANSVAAL
LOURENÇO MARQUES
DELAGOA BAY
INDIAN OCEAN
CAPE COLONY
CAPE TOWN
200
400
600