This is to certify that the

dissertation entitled

THE SULPHUR WAR (1840): A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE KINGDOM OF THE TWO SICILIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

presented by

Dennis W. Thomson

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in History

Donald Lammers
Major professor

Date 11/17/88

THE SULPHUR WAR (1840): A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE KINGDOM OF THE TWO SICILIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

By

Dennis W. Thomson

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of History

1989

ABSTRACT

THE SULPHUR WAR (1840): A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE KINGDOM OF THE TWO SICILIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

By

Dennis W. Thomson

The Sulphur War resulted from a quarrel between Great Britain and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies over a monopoly on Sicilian sulphur granted in 1838 by Ferdinand II to the French firm Taix-Aycard. The British government claimed that the monopoly damaged the interests of its nationals in Sicily and violated the Treaty of 1816. The Neapolitan government insisted that the contract was necessary to solve the problems of the sulphur industry and rejected the charge of treaty violation. When negotiations failed to persuade Ferdinand to cancel the monopoly, Lord Palmerston ordered the fleet to initiate hostile operations.

This event exemplified the transition from control through commercial treaties to "gunboat diplomacy." It also underlined the length to which Great Britain would go in an area where its control of the seas would be the decisive factor. While the British were in the process of extending formal control over Hong Kong, Natal, and the Sind, the sulphur crisis indicated that they were willing to pursue their interests aggressively against a European country.

The crisis also suggested the plight of an under-developed country seeking to implement economic reforms

which threatened the interests of a major power. As the demand for sulphur rose in industrial markets, Ferdinand missed the opportunity to exploit fully a domestic natural resource. The regulation of the Sicilian sulphur industry could have improved the kingdom's balance of trade and contributed to the development of the domestic economy.

This work describes and interprets the background and significance of the crisis both from the British and Neapolitan perspectives. More specifically, it addresses the following questions: What considerations influenced Ferdinand's decision to approve the Taix-Aycard contract? Did the sulphur monopoly violate international law? What factors motivated the British government to resort to "gunboat diplomacy"? What is the larger significance of this episode against the background of post-Restoration Europe?

Interest in the fields of British Imperialism and Italian Risorgimento motivated this work. Research was conducted at the National Registry of Archives and the Public Record Office in Great Britain and the Archivio di Stato, Naples, Italy.

To My Parents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work owes a debt of gratitude to several persons who guided, encouraged, and assisted me along the way. While it is impossible to thank everyone, I would like to mention those who have been especially helpful. First, I wish to thank my doctoral advisers, Professors Donald Lammers and David LoRomer; and the other members of my committee at Michigan State University, Professors David Robinson and Gordon Stewart. Without their guidance and support, I would not have been able to undertake and complete this work. For my archival research, I am grateful for the permission to examine the Broadlands Papers at the National Registry of Archives in London and the records of the Admiralty, the Board of Trade, and the Foreign Office at Kew. Mr. C. K. Wollgar, the Director of Archives at Southampton University, kindly assisted me in locating some important information in the Palmerston papers. Doctor Renato Grispo, Direttore Generale del Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, facilitated my research in Italy. Doctor Maria Antonietta Arpago, Director of the Sezione Affari Esteri at the Archivio di Stato, Naples, deserves a special note of thanks, as does the entire staff at the Archives. My appreciation is also directed to the people at the libraries of Michigan State

University and Mercy College of Detroit, and especially to Elizabeth Szalay, who patiently hunted for the books and articles indispensable to my research. For typing cheerfully and efficiently the many revisions of my manuscript, I thank Elaine Mooney. A busy schedule notwithstanding, my old friend Professor David G. Cylkowski of the English Department at Mercy College of Detroit read this dissertation and made several stylistic suggestions. To everyone who helped me, my sincere gratitude for having contributed so generously to the finished product. Of course, I assume responsibility for all that is contained in this work, particularly any errors of fact or interpretation.

This note of thanks would not be complete without recognizing the support of my parents, Walter and Juliana Thomson, who were always there when I needed them.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

ARCHIVAL SOURCES

1. British documents are located in the following collections and files:

   Admiralty (ADM)

   Public Record Office (PRO), Kew, London, United Kingdom; 1/4365, 1/5499-5500.

   Board of Trade (BT)

   Public Record Office (PRO), Kew, London, United Kingdom; 1/357, 1/359, 2/11.

   Broadlands Papers (BP)

   University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom; BD/SI/1-24, GC/BE/5-568, GC/GR/99-1824, GC/KE/2-36, GC/LA/1-31, GC/LU/5-22, GC/ST/ 121-123, GC/TE/2-372.

   Foreign Office (FO)

   Public Record Office (PRO), Kew, London, United Kingdom; 70/137, 70/149, 70/155, 70/166.

2. Neapolitan documents are located at the Archivio di Stato of Naples (ASN), Italy, in the following sections and files:

   Archivio Borbone (AB)

   ff. 1013-1020.

   Ministero Affari Esteri (MAE)

   ff. 4124-4132.

   Ministero Agricoltura, Industria, e Commercio (MAIC)

   ff. 173-175.

CHAPTER I

THE INDUSTRY

"Fra tanti doni di cui fu prodigo
il Cielo in verso la Sicilia vi
è quello dello zolfo."[1]

Large deposits of sulphur are a natural resource of Sicily. Mining probably began in the sulphurous plateau between the Platani and Salso rivers in the central and southwestern regions of the island long before existing written documentation.[2] Archaeological evidence indicates that at least four mines operated in the province of Agrigento at the end of the second century.[3] Most of these mines were imperial property and employed salaried

---

[1]("Sulphur is one of the many God-given gifts to Sicily.") "Memoria sulla controversia per l' appalto de' solfi in Sicilia," ASN/MAE, f. 4130, p. 4.

[2]The fact that there was no documentation of a sulphur industry during the pre-Christian era is not proof that extraction had not begun. The ancient Mediterranean world was familiar with sulphur, which is mentioned in Deuteronomy, the Book of Job, and Homer's Odyssey.

[3]The names of the mines (officinae) were Porciana, Cassiana, Gellia, and Fortunato. T. Mommsen, Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, p. 858, and A. Salinas, Notizie e scavi di antichità, pp. 36-37; quoted in Maurizio Colonna, L' Industria zolfifera siciliana (Catania: Università di Catania, 1971), pp. 7-9.

personnel, slaves, and convicted criminals.[4] Others were run by entrepreneurs (conductores) who employed the managers (mancipes) and acted as liaison between the owners and the staff.[5] Imperial Rome imported most of its sulphur from Sicily, using it for medicines, farming, and industry.[6] It was useful as a disinfectant and a hemostatic, and farmers employed it in viticulture and as an effective method of pest control. In industry, sulphur served to bleach wool and in the manufacture of the forerunners of today's matches.

The Arabs contributed to a revival of the industry which declined after the fall of Rome. Their interest focused upon the development of the "Greek Fire" which was first used by the Byzantines in naval warfare. Evidence also suggests that by the eleventh century the Arabs knew the properties of Sicilian sulphur along with the methods of extraction.[7] The subsequent diffusion throughout Europe of black powder revolutionized war and promoted the use of this product.[8]

---

[4]Mommsen, p. 858; quoted in Colonna, p. 8.

[5]B. Pace, Arte e civiltà della Sicilia antica, vol. 1, pp. 394-395; quoted in Colonna, p. 9.

[6]Rome imported sulphur exclusively from Sicilian mines according to Michele Rostovtzev, Storia economica e sociale dell' Impero romano, p. 75; quoted in Colonna, p. 9.

[7]Abû al Hukm' ibn Galandah described the Sicilian "yellow sulphur," its methods of excavation, and health hazards faced by the miners such as the loss of hair and nails. Ibid. pp. 9-10.

[8]Black powder was a mixture of saltpeter, sulphur, and coal.

Throughout the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Period, the industry developed at a slow pace, hampered by crude methods, low profits, and high transportation costs from the mines to the coast.[9] At the beginning of the eighteenth century, there were only six mines operating in Sicily.[10] By the end of the same century, the number of mines increased substantially, and the export of sulphur rose to 90,000 cantars.[11]

Major discoveries in chemistry and their subsequent application stimulated this growth. By the third decade of the eighteenth century, the Cornelius Debb method facilitated the manufacture of sulphuric acid in Great Britain.[12] Sulphuric acid was also used to extract soda from common salt. In 1791 Nicholas LeBlanc registered this method in France and the first plant for the production of artificial soda opened in Marseilles in 1797. Eventually, British and French industrialists joined forces to exploit the advances of chemistry and their applications to industry.

---

[9]In 1781, the price of sulphur was only ten tari per cantar. Ibid., p. 14. See Appendix A.

[10]Federico Squarzina, Produzione e commercio dello zolfo in Sicilia nel secolo XIX (Turin: I.L.T.E., 1963), p. 19.

[11]There was an increase in the number of mine sites during the second half of the eighteenth century. Colonna, table 1, p. 16; and Squarzina, p. 19.

[12]This method was originally developed in France by Lefèvre and Lemery during the seventeenth century. The first plant for the manufacture of sulphuric acid in England appeared near Richmond in 1740. The manufacture of textiles, brass, tin, and bleach all required the use of sulphuric acid.

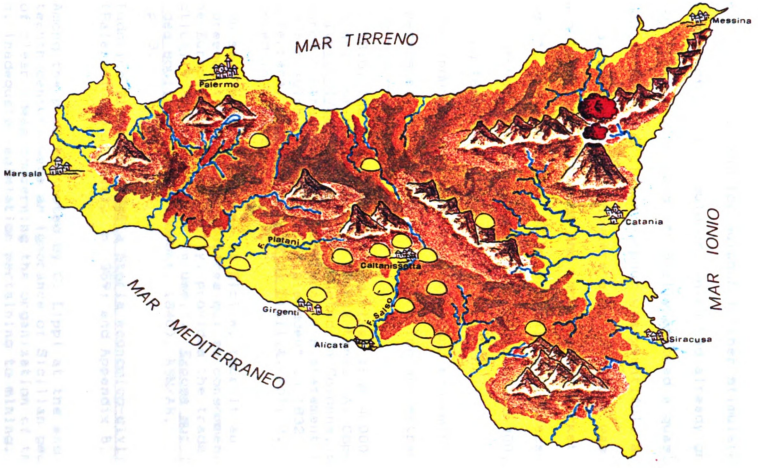

Figure 1. SULPHUR MINING AREAS IN SICILY 1840

In 1825 the first plant for the manufacture of surrogate soda in the British Isles opened in Glasgow.

The increased demand for sulphur further stimulated the production of Sicilian sulphur, which had already grown steadily during the war years.[13] Sicily enjoyed a quasi monopoly on sulphur. Sicilian sulphur was plentiful, accessible, and of good quality. Nowhere else in Europe was sulphur available in thick beds and under better market conditions.[14] The production of sulphur hit an unprecedented high of 900,000 cantars and exports totalled 400,890 cantars during 1832.[15]

As the industry expanded, technical and economic problems persisted.[16] Methods of exploration and extraction

---

[13]By 1815, the yearly export had risen from 4,000 tons at the beginning of the century to 23,802 tons. A. Coppi, Annali d' Italia 1750-1860, p. 479; quoted in Colonna, p. 17. These figures contradict Francesco Ferarra's statement that the demand for sulphur rose "all of a sudden" in 1832. Francesco Ferrara, Storia generale di Sicilia, vol. 9, p. 34; quoted in Squarzina, p. 22.

[14]"Un seul pays d' Europe, la Sicile, fournit au commerce la presque totalité des souffres qui se consomment." ("Only one European country, Sicily, provides the trade with practically all the sulphur in use.") Exposé sur la question des souffres (Paris: Dupont, 1840), ASN/AB, f. 1017, p. 3.

[15]Ludovico Bianchini, Della Storia economico-civile di Sicilia (Palermo: n.p., 1841), p. 359; and Appendix B, table 1.

[16]Among the problems noted by C. Lippi at the end of the eighteenth century were an ignorance of Sicilian geology, absence of clear ideas concerning the organization of the operation, inadequate legislation pertaining to mining, and lack of investment capital. C. Lippi, Memoria relativamente alla cultura delle miniere in Sicilia, p. 115; quoted in Colonna, pp. 16-17.

continued to be primitive and uneconomical. Workers, barely familiar with the rudiments of geognostics, often searched for new deposits on a hit-or-miss basis. A particular type of gypsum called brescale, brownish-yellow, spongy, and located in conjunction with blue clay and sulphurous waters, tipped off the searchers to the presence of sulphur. Exploration therefore remained as close to the surface as possible in order to minimize cost and hazards. If the results were unsatisfactory, the mine owners would simply move the operation.

The use of the bore, as in Great Britain and France, would have made the search less haphazard and reduced labor costs. However, the mine owners were reluctant to invest in new techniques. They were not concerned with competition and preferred to rely upon a plentiful and cheap commodity--Sicilian labor. The methods of processing sulphur were also about one hundred years behind those of the British and the French.[17]

The pickman (picconiere) mined the raw material and supervised the fusion process in the calcarella, a round furnace with a bottom slanted toward an exit. Workers ignited the ore from above so that the sulphur would separate from the gypsum and other minerals. Now in liquid form, the sulphur would then descend toward the exit and

---

[17]J. Delabretoigne et J. De Rechter, Industrie soufière de Sicile, son état actuel, son avenir, p. 6; quoted in Colonna, p. 45.

fill wooden molds called gaviti. Once cooled and in solid form, the sulphur was ready for transportation to the docks for subsequent sale.

Pickmen were paid on a piece-work basis.[18] Consequently, they were interested in mining as much sulphur as possible in the shortest time and at the easiest location. Most of them came from rural communities and worked for a period of six months, usually three or four days a week.[19] Distances prevented them from commuting so they lived near the pits for long periods of time. As the pickmen went deeper, they labored in an environment which was either too hot or too cold, dimly lit, and badly ventilated.[20] Collapsing galleries, gas explosions, and accidental fires

---

[18]On January 1, 1838, approximately 814,845 men comprised the labor force. Their daily wages were: five carlins for pickmen, two carlins for their carusi (assistants), four carlins for the arditori (burners), and six carlins for overseers and others. "Delle Solfatare in Sicilia e de' nuovi provvedimenti per la industria e lo spaccio del solfo," ASN/AB, f. 1018, pp. 4-5. Miners' wages compared favorably with other industries. Silk workers in Palermo earned between 3.12 to 4.11 tari a day for twelve hours of work. Cacioppo d'Antalbo, "Sull' Opinione di uno scrittore intorno all' industria siciliana," Giornale di Statistica (1853), pp. 5-6; quoted in Colonna, p. 98.

[19]The opening of several mines around Caltanissetta created higher wages and a labor shortage, prompting an 1833 proposal by the Intendant to recruit vagrants and the unemployed for work in the pits. This would make labor available, lower the wages, and relieve the township's financial burden. ASC, Fondo Intendenza Borbonica, f. 1082, Colonna, pp. 100-101.

[20]John Goodwin, the British Consul General in Sicily, expressed the different view that the "hardy and healthy looks of the burners" compared favorably with the "sickly aspect of the southern population." Raleigh Trevelyan, Princes Under the Volcano (New York: Morrow, 1973), p. 485, n. 3.

were occupational hazards.[21] Also, the mines were likely to fill with water thus forcing the miners to bail with terracotta containers (quartare) or manual wooden pumps (trombe).

Young boys between the ages of ten and fifteen (carusi) had the unenviable task of carrying the sulphur to the surface. In most cases, their indigent families indentured them to the pickmen for this service. These youngsters shared the danger and work with the pickmen. Poor pay, however, prevented them from repurchasing their contracts. They grew up in the pits stunted, deformed, illiterate, victims of malaria and malnutrition, overworked, and often abused.[22] Their plight did not attract sympathetic attention until after Unification.[23]

The rising demand for sulphur did not generate an interest in improving the methods of production and working conditions. In fact, it reinforced mining techniques which were crude, haphazard, wasteful, and dangerous. By the

---

[21]Officials expressed concern with accidents in the pits caused by fires, explosions, and flooding. ASC, f. 1082, Colonna, pp. 100 and 143-144.

[22]Evidence of the physical damage suffered by young workers emerges from Colajanni's study which showed that military recruits declared unfit in 1872-1873 were more likely to come from the ranks of sulphur workers than farm laborers. Nicola Colajanni, "I Lavoratori delle zolfare in Sicilia," La Riforma Sociale (1894); quoted in Colonna, table 40, p. 145.

[23]The problems of the carusato received official notice at an 1868 physicians' congress in Agrigento. By 1875, the Italian government adopted some legislation for the protection of adolescent miners. Colonna, p. 147.

third decade of the nineteenth century, there were no plans for the improvement of exploration, the introduction of machinery, or the training of specialized personnel.[24] The economic structure of the industry did not encourage initiative and advancement as "cheap labor and a guaranteed export meant that there was no incentive to improve methods of production."[25] The mine owners lacked entrepreneurial ability, investment capital, technical expertise, and the spirit of adventure necessary to launch a modern industry. Frequently, they were content with leasing the pits to a concessionary (gabelloto) for a rent which fluctuated between 20 and 30 percent of the total output. The gabelloti in turn bore the burden of the operational cost and had to respond to pressure from the owners to extract as much as possible from the mines before their leases expired. The concessionaries lacked the resources and expertise necessary to direct a successful enterprise and the capital for day-to-day operations. Hardly experts in the mining of sulphur, they entrusted the process of exploration and extraction to the miners. Like the gabelloti, the landowners were more likely to speculate than to invest.

The lack of clear and specific legislation imposing limits on the unrestricted use of the undersoil by the

---

[24]The first improvement was the introduction of the calcaroni which replaced the caldarella in the fusion process (1851). Ibid. p. 46.

[25]Denis Mack Smith, Modern Sicily after 1713 (New York: William Morrow, 1969), p. 385.

landowners aggravated the problem. Since the medieval period, royal jurisdiction over all mines was neither clear nor consistent. Theoretically, mines were among the regalie or rights of the sovereign.[24] The charter Quia Non Decet, issued by Charles of Anjou in 1289, clearly listed all the resources of the undersoil under the regalie.[27] In practice, the interpretation of feudal land rights generated a controversy regarding the ultimate jurisdiction over the mines of the kingdom. A compromise eventually allowed the Sicilian landowners to dispose of their sulphur with the permission of the Crown and a one-time fee of thirty ducats.[28]

The strength of several landowners and the indifference of some administrators to this arrangement made enforcement of the law difficult. Independent-minded landowners did not ask permission to operate the mines on their land.[29] It was also unclear whether the sulphur pits were mines or simply surface caves expressly exempted from legislation on mines. This distinction remained vague and worked in favor of the owners. A royal ordinance of 1754 mandated the disclosure of mines operating without permits. Yet twenty-five years later, the Prince of Trabia and other

---

[24]Bianchini, p. 357.

[27]"Risposta a' 4 quesiti fatti dall' Ambasciata di Francia in ordine ai diritti di regalia," ASN/MAE, f. 4129.

[28]"Prammatiche 15 e 17 del 1383 e 1388," Ibid.

[29]Colonna, p. 23.

landlords sued for an exemption from this ordinance and won. Arguing that the 1754 law did not apply to surface caves, the landlords continued to harvest their sulphur and were eventually excused from the obligation.[30]

During the first decades of the nineteenth century, the question of royal jurisdiction over the sulphur mines continued to be debatable. In 1806, the Treasury proposed a tax of 10 percent on the total output of sulphur, but the Tribunal of Patrimony rejected this new tax on the grounds that it would have been a departure from precedents and would have increased the burdens of an industry already beset by transportation costs. This decision reaffirmed the principle of regalia, exacting the payment of ten onze for the opening of a mine. The king concurred and commented that "under the circumstances" the proposed tax would have hampered the growth of "a branch of commerce most useful to the nation."[31] Although the desire to encourage trade may well have prompted his decision, it is safe to assume that the overriding factor here was the position of the king and his family, who had sought shelter in Sicily to escape the French occupation. The new tax would not have been popular with the barons who were in firm control of the land.[32]

---

[30]Squarzina, pp. 7-9.

[31]"Real dispaccio del 20 settembre 1808 sul diritto dell' Aperiatur," ASN/MAE, f. 4129.

[32]"La nobiltà . . . teneva saldamente in mano la terra che costituiva la principale fonte di lavoro e di produzione; possedeva il monopolio dello zolfo." ("The nobility . . . firmly controlled the land which was the main

After the Restoration, the mine owners received confirmation for their claims to surface and undersoil resources, and exemption from the restrictions which applied to the others.[33] For all practical purposes, these ordinances placed the control of sulphur in the private sector, perhaps in the mistaken assumption that it would most appropriately oversee the future development of the industry. However, private control did not translate into efficiency and modernization, nor was the state able to address the need for improvements. The network of roads connecting mine sites with the coast was grossly inadequate, making transportation slow and costly.[34] Official interest focused upon the protection of the environment and public health, a worthy program, but one not likely to improve the management of the sulphur mines.[35]

---

source of work and production; it had a monopoly on sulphur.") Francesco Renda, La Sicilia nel 1812 (Caltanissetta: Sciascia, 1963), p. 51.

[33]Third parties could take over the operation of idle mines, but not sulphur pits. Code of March 26, 1819, Article 477 and Law of October 17, 1826; Squarzina, p. 13.

[34]The Bourbon administration had been aware of the need to build roads. "Sicily must build roads at all costs." Minister Luigi de'Medici to the Crown Prince Francis, December 6, 1817, Rosario Romeo, Mezzogiorno e Sicilia nel Risorgimento (Naples: E.S.I., n.d.), p. 92. Transportation counted for 30 percent of the cost of sulphur. Colonna, p. 108.

[35]This interest prompted the ordinances of 1757 and 1778 which forbade the opening of mines near fields and dwellings, and limited the excavation and fusion seasons from May to September. Similar guidelines were issued in 1809, 1811, and 1813. Ibid., pp. 29-30. Another ordinance in 1830 prescribed appropriate methods of fusion. Bianchini, p. 358.

The demand from foreign buyers generated a false sense of security which stimulated interest in the opening of new mines. By 1834, approximately 150 owners operated 196 mines concentrated primarily around Girgenti (90), Caltanissetta (88), and Catania (11).[34] Consequently, the volume of export increased steadily. Between 1834 and 1837, 3,049,736 cantars were sold to foreign buyers.[37] Great Britain alone bought 1,653,425 cantars during the same period.[38] French imports climbed from 14,000 tons in 1832 to 41,000 tons in 1838.[39]

What appeared as a positive development for the economy had negative effects. Greedy speculators, negligent overseers, and unskilled workers damaged the environment in their search for new sulphur deposits. According to a contemporary source, the demand for mine workers deprived farming of needed manpower.[40] During 1838, the production of 814,845 cantars in the three leading provinces required a

---

[34]Vincenzo Giura, La Questione degli zolfi siciliani (Geneva: Droz, 1973), p. 19.

[37]See Appendix B, table 1.

[38]See Appendix B, table 2.

[39]R. W. Rawson, "On the Sulphur Trade in Sicily and the Commercial Relations between that Country and Great Britain," quoted in Giura, p. 16.

[40]F. P. Mortillaro, Saggio economico-statistico-politico sui provvedimenti della mercatura degli zolfi in Sicilia, p. 99; quoted in Colonna, p. 55.

total of 6,500 workers.[41] The resulting farm-labor shortage reduced agricultural output for local consumption and the production of cash crops.

To make matters worse, the chase for a quick profit and the resulting intense production surpassed the demand for sulphur. This demand could absorb only between 600,000 and 700,000 of the 900,000 cantars produced in a year. As a result, there were 950,000 cantars of sulphur on hand by January 1, 1838. If we subtract from this figure the 700,000 cantars absorbed by the market and the 300,000 held in reserve by consumers and then add the 850,000 cantars produced that same year, we can estimate the sulphur reserve at the end of 1838 to be about 1,000,000 cantars.[42] Over-production led to falling prices. The price of sulphur in 1833 reached an unprecedented high of forty-five tari per cantar.[43] By 1836, it fell to 16.75 and plunged to 13.50 the following year.[44]

At this juncture, one obvious solution was to develop and implement plans which utilized these reserves. Refineries constructed in Sicily could have solved the problem by

---

[41]"Delle Solfatare in Sicilia," p. 4; "Quadro Sinottico delle solfare in Sicilia," ASN/MAIC, f. 174; and Gino Arias, La questione meridionale (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1921), p. 158.

[42]Giura, p. 21.

[43]See Appendix B, table 3.

[44]Ibid.

manufacturing sulphuric acid and artificial soda.[45] Unfortunately, the sulphur producers were isolated and divided by competition.[46] They also lacked the investment capital and expertise necessary to launch such a program. Another solution could have been to decrease production. This action would have reduced the surplus and restored a certain equilibrium between supply and demand, thus stabilizing prices. But the great majority of mine owners, anxious about their losses, continued to excavate and prices further declined. Producers who failed to show a profit abandoned their mines. By 1838, the number of mines dwindled to 140: 63 in Girgenti, 64 in Caltanissetta, and 13 in the valley of Catania.[47] The producers also had the option of leasing or subletting their operation to British or French businessmen who had the resources to succeed. Indeed, foreign investors profited handsomely from the sulphur boom of 1832-1834. When prices began to fall, they bought vast amounts of sulphur, held it in reserve, and waited for an eventual rise in price.

British businessmen in Sicily were a prosperous and closely knit group which mingled with the uppercrust of

---

[45]As late as 1864 there were only two such refineries in Sicily, mostly the result of low domestic demand.

[46]The absence of a cooperative spirit (spirito di associazione) exacerbated competition. Colonna, p. 106.

[47]"Notizie statistiche sullo stato delle solfare di Sicilia al gennaio 1838," ASN/MAIC, f. 173.

local society.[48] They acted as bankers for debt-ridden barons, made marriage alliances with prominent families, and became partners with Sicilian businessmen. Benjamin Ingham, William Dickinson, and William Morrison shared a shipping venture with the princes of Campofranco, Scordia, and Cutò. They purchased a steamship built in Scotland, changed its name from the potentially controversial Indipendenza to Palermo, and placed it in service. Among the co-directors of this venture were Duke Ettore Pignatelli di Monteleone and Baron Gabriele Chiaramonte di Bordonaro. Vincenzo Florio, a shrewd Calabrese who eventually became a well-known Sicilian capitalist, was also part of this group.[49]

It is debatable whether or not a "vague sense of kinship" between the British and the Sicilians grew from their common Norman heritage.[50] More likely, other circumstances shaped British sympathies for the Sicilians, such as the memories of past slights by Queen Maria Carolina and some ministers.[51] Moving in aristocratic quarters where

---

[48]The traveller John Galt observed in 1812 that "The general foreign trade is in the hands of the British." Trevelyan, p. 12. Until 1838, "The sulphur trade in Sicily was almost entirely in English hands." Exposé, p. 4.

[49]Trevelyan, p. 80; and p. 85, n. 20.

[50]Ibid., p. 13.

[51]Apparently the queen did her best to make life difficult for British merchants and even went as far as "despoiling" a large British merchant vessel in 1811. Robert Fagan, the British consul in Palermo, wrote to Lord Amherst in 1809 that "The conduct in general of most of the Ministers appears to be studiously directed to give disgust to the British." Ibid., pp. 20-21.

anti-Bourbon sentiments were common, some of these foreign businessmen adopted a critical attitude toward the court which degenerated into open hostilities during the sulphur crisis.[52]

Some pro-Bourbon sources have expressed a severe judgement on the commercial activities of these businessmen, representing them as ruthless and unscrupulous speculators who intended to prey upon "public distress," hoard sulphur, and establish a "monopoly of foreign gold upon Sicily's poverty."[53] Consequently, "the fruit of Sicilian land and labor" which could be bought so cheaply "went to increase the deposits of Marseilles and Liverpool."[54] With milder language, the economist Ludovico Bianchini pointed to the fact that these investors gained a great deal from the crisis. As producers, they controlled the output of the major mines; as buyers, they had access to sulphur at depressed prices; and as sellers, they set the price of sulphur on foreign markets.[55]

As the crisis continued, the producers looked to the

---

[52]Nevertheless, Ferdinand conferred upon Benjamin Ingham the order of St. Ferdinand in recognition of the fact that his brig, the Elsa, was the first to complete a voyage from Sumatra to Sicily in 1839. Ibid., pp. 79-80.

[53]"Giovandosi . . . della miseria pubblica, tennero modo come riunire in poche mani l' incetta del solfo, per imporre legge e fondare il monopolio dell' oro straniero sulla povertà siciliana. "Delle Solfatare in Sicilia," p. 6.

[54]"Memoria sulla controversia," p. 6.

[55]Bianchini, p. 360.

government for help. Suggestions ranged from the extreme to the moderate. One proposed that the government should assume the operation of all the pits, with a yearly compensation designated to the owners.[54] A more moderate proposal came from the Duke of Villarosa on behalf of several mine owners. It suggested that all mines should be closed for eight months rather than the customary six.[57] Another came from John Wood, the owner of several mines, who proposed that operations should shut down during 1837.[58]

The government did not react favorably to these proposals. Limiting the mining season would not necessarily reduce production, since it was possible for the mines to produce more in less time. A shorter mining season would increase unemployment, create an imbalance between supply and demand, and violate the rights of the owners to dispose of their property. Closing the mines for a year could also force prices to rise, thus increasing the profits of speculators holding large quantities of sulphur in reserve.[59] This rejection did not indicate the government's indifference for the plight of the industry, but rather a lack of confidence in the proposed methods.

At the same time, the Neapolitan government was

---

[54]Ibid.

[57]Exposé, p. 5.

[58]John Wood to Antonino Franco, Minister of Sicilian Affairs, March 30, 1837, ASN/MAE, f. 4132, Giura, p. 24.

[59]Exposé, p. 6.

concerned with other problems which were related to the sulphur industry. Farming, the backbone of Sicily's economy, suffered from the damage to arable land caused by the intensive, haphazard excavation and the loss of manpower. In addition, the activities of foreign merchants hurt the state since neither custom duties on exports nor a tax on operating mines existed at that time.[40]

There were a number of suggestions to solve these problems. Luigi de'Medici, the protectionist minister of Ferdinand I and Francis I, was the first to propose in 1825-1826 a monopoly for the sulphur industry without result. In 1831, Messrs. Chauvenet and Aycard presented a similar proposal which failed to secure the approval of the Neapolitan government because of the persisting opposition from the supporters of free trade.[41] In 1833 Aimé Taix, a financier from Marseilles, advanced another project and later resubmitted it with some modifications.[42]

The first Taix proposal presented several major points. The production of sulphur would be strictly controlled by allowing the mines to operate between mid-July and mid-December and suspending operations altogether whenever production exceeded set limits. The firm would have the exclusive right to purchase all the available

---

[40]Ibid.

[41]Squarzina, p. 23.

[42]"Primo progetto del Sig. Taix," ASN/MAIC, f. 174.

sulphur on the island at the price of one ducat per fifty kilograms and to sell it at 36-38 carlins per cantar (approximately .46 carlins per kilogram). Taix believed that this plan would offer economic and political advantages. Private funds would finance the building of roads connecting the excavation sites with the coast, thus decreasing transportation costs. Improved communications would deprive revolutionary propaganda of a pretext to attack the Bourbon administration.[63] This proposal went to a commission of Sicilian merchants, producers, and experts who rejected it primarily on the grounds that it was a monopoly.[64]

The same commission also evaluated the second proposal submitted by Aimé Taix and his partner Arsène Aycard on May 1, 1836. The two businessmen knew that there was as yet no viable solution for the problems of the industry and that some influential individuals supported their project.[65] This time the commission approved the proposal by the narrow margin of seven to five. The minority claimed that the

---

[63]"La mancanza delle comunicazioni interne della Sicilia ha servito di pretesto alle furibonde declamazioni dei Rivoluzionari nella loro Ligua [sic] fanatica contro i Borboni." ("The lack of internal communications in Sicily has provided the pretext for the irate ranting of the revolutionaries in their fanatic attacks against the Bourbons.") Letter from Aimé Taix to Ferdinand II, August 27, 1833, delivered verbally on September 6, 1833. Ibid.

[64]"Risoluzione del Consiglio di Stato, 15 Dicembre, 1834," ASN/MAIC, f. 174.

[65]Antonio Lucchesi-Palli, the Prince of Campofranco and Lieutenant General of Sicily since 1834, was a foremost supporter of this proposal.

contract would violate free trade, antagonize foreign governments, and encourage the search for a sulphur surrogate.[44] The majority believed that the gravity of the situation required strong measures. In support of their position, they cited the precedents established by the British, Dutch, and French governments which adopted similar protectionist programs.[47]

The plan had advantages and disadvantages, and appeared to be the lesser of two evils when compared to the crisis in the industry.[48] It would generate capital, provide for the construction of roads, facilitate the collections of revenues, lend support to the kingdom's merchant marine, and create jobs in industry, trade, and farming. On the other hand, the fears of an intensified search for a sulphur surrogate were premature and exaggerated because sulphur had unique qualities as a natural resource and even the Continental Blockade had failed to produce a substitute.

A modified version of this proposal went to the Council of State, which in turn sent it to the Consulta for

---

[44]"Parere dei cinque dissidenti," ibid. The Camera Consultiva di Commercio di Messina also opposed the proposal on the grounds that it would place both Sicilian industry and the Neapolitan merchant marine at a disadvantage.

[47]"Delle Solfatare," pp. 7-8.

[48]In April 1837, even John Wood felt that a monopoly was a preferable alternative to the ruin of the industry. John A. Davis, "The South, the Risorgimento, and the Origins of the 'Southern Problem'," in John A. Davis (ed.), Gramsci and Italy's Passive Revolution (London: Croom Helm, 1979), p. 70.

evaluation.[69] To turn down a certain benefit for uncertain losses was like "jumping in a river to avoid getting drenched by the rain."[70] With one exception, the Consulta was favorably impressed with the proposal and recommended its adoption with some modifications.[71] Continuing discussions, revisions, and delays postponed the signing of the final agreement between the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and Taix-Aycard until July 1838.[72]

The contract consisted of twenty-seven articles which set forth in detail the nature of the monopoly. For a period of ten years, Taix-Aycard agreed to contribute a capital of 1,200,000 ducats to a central fund and the Neapolitan government would add 600,000. The mine owners and producers would receive a compensation of four carlins

---

[69]In order to take care of business on both sides of the Beacon, the Consulta was established on July 26, 1821. On June 24, 1824, the two branches merged under the title Consulta Generale. With headquarters in Naples, it contained the Departments of Justice, Ecclesiastical Affairs, Interior, and Finance. The Council of State assumed the name Consulta on November 9, 1852. Iole Mazzoleni, Fonti documentarie e bibliografiche dal secolo X al secolo XIX (Naples: Arti Tipografiche, n.d.), pp. 257-258.

[70]The date of the document is December 11, 1837, followed by the Consulta's approval on December 15, 1837. "Privativa degli zolfi chiesta per la Sicilia oltre al Faro dal Sigg. Taix-Aycard," Archivio di Stato di Palermo, Consulta Siciliana, f. 16, Opinion 1639; Squarzina, pp. 24-28.

[71]Fearing that the proposed contract would violate free trade, the Duke of Cumia cast the dissenting vote. "Avviso della Consulta con unito il parere unico del consultore, Duca di Cumia," ASN/MAIC, f. 174.

[72]The notarized agreement and the contract registered on July 9, 1838, are in ASN/AB, f. 1015, and ASN/MAIC, ff. 173 and 174.

per cantar for not exceeding a set limit of production which was equal to two-thirds of the average yearly output of each mine during the period 1834-1837.[73] The company would buy the sulphur necessary to replace the amount sold, so that there would always be 150,000 cantars in reserve. Producers were free to sell to anyone, providing that they paid a surcharge of twenty carlins per cantar. In exchange, the Royal Treasury would receive 400,000 ducats from Taix-Aycard every year. Should the company sell more than 600,000 cantars, this premium would increase proportionately. In addition, Taix-Aycard would finance the establishment of chemical-industrial factories and assume the responsibility for the training of Sicilian personnel.[74]

Not only did the contract offer a solution to the problems of the sulphur industry, but it also addressed the larger questions of Sicilian economic and political conditions. There were provisions for agricultural improvements, the introduction of new industries, technological guidance, and invitations for needed capital. Moreover, the government was in the position to gain from Sicily's stability and prosperity and would benefit from what amounted to an export duty on sulphur which would facilitate the abolition of the grist tax.

But all these advantages did not eliminate domestic

---

[73]Squarzina, p. 29.

[74]Taix to Ferdinand, November 23, 1837, submitted to the Consulta on December 6, 1837, ASN/MAIC, f. 174.

criticism of the project. Along the way to final approval, the proposal encountered considerable opposition from influential quarters.[75] One objected to the idea of tampering with free trade and another was reluctant to grant a monopoly to a foreign firm. There was also an apprehension of foreign reaction, and events proved the validity of this last consideration. While the proposal was still in the planning stage, rumors concerning the possibility of a monopoly being granted to a French firm began to circulate in diplomatic circles. The British and French envoys reacted with dismay and indignation, and pressured the Neapolitan government to reject the proposal. The question of Sicilian sulphur was about to erupt into an international confrontation.

---

[75]Among the opponents were Antonino Franco; Antonio Statella, the Prince of Cassaro and Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Onorato Gaetani, the Duke of Laurenzana, who replaced Campofranco as Lieutenant General of Sicily in 1837.

CHAPTER II

THE ARENA

> ". . . all those rulers who landed by main force from every direction, who were at once obeyed, soon detested and always misunderstood . . . ."[1]

The Straits of Messina represent more than a mere geographical accident separating an island of 9,830 square miles from the Italian peninsula. Although for centuries a succession of foreign rulers competed for control, Sicily was a separate entity shaped by an unique cultural tradition. This situation persisted after the Treaty of Vienna (1738) which gave Sicily to the Spanish Bourbons. Henceforth, these rulers had to contend with a strong local aristocracy bent on preserving traditional institutions and sharing power with the Crown. The Napoleonic Wars further isolated Sicily from the rest of Europe, exacerbated the difficulties between the Crown and baronage, and opened the

---

[1]Giuseppe Tommasi di Lampedusa, The Leopard (New York: Pantheon, 1960), p. 208. In ancient times, Greeks, Phoenicians, Carthaginians, and Romans occupied Sicily at one time or another. During the Middle Ages, Vandals, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, Angevins, and Aragonese ruled the island in succession. In modern times, Sicily passed from Spain (1504-1713) to Austria (1713), Savoy (1713-1720), and again Austria (1720-1738). The Bourbons governed Sicily from 1738 to 1861, when it became a part of the Kingdom of Italy.

door to British occupation of the island. By that time, Great Britain had become concerned with the strategic importance of Sicily and the rapidly expanding economic interests of its nationals in the Kingdom of Naples.

For all these reasons, Sicily became an arena in which diverse interests pursued mutually exclusive goals. The barons resisted reforms which would erode their political and economic privileges and championed autonomy from Naples. The monarchy strove to implement a program of reforms and strengthen the central government. During the war emergency, Ferdinand IV welcomed British protection, but resented their interference in domestic affairs. On the other hand, the British preserved their economic privileges established by a series of commercial agreements even after the end of the war.

The political strength of the Sicilian barons rested upon their control over a parliament which had functions similar to the French Estates General, the Spanish Cortes, and the Scandinavian Things. The Sicilian parliament had the prerogative of approving and managing taxes and grants to the Crown; most of its members enjoyed immunity from taxation. So long as parliament granted whatever the viceroys requested, baronial privileges could continue undisturbed.[2]

---

[2]For a good description of the Sicilian parliament to 1812, see Emilio del Cerro (Nicola Niceforo), "La Sicilia e la costituzione del 1812," Archivio Storico per la Sicilia, vols. 39-46 (1914-1916, 1922, 1924-1925). There is also useful information in the work by Ernesto Pontieri, Il Tramonto del baronaggio Siciliano (Florence: Sansoni, 1943), pp. 127-

The Sicilian parliament was divided into three estates or bracci.[3] The feudal or military braccio was the largest and the most powerful of the three. Its members were hereditary lords who represented the townships (università). The high clergy constituted the second estate which was smaller than the first but just as prestigious. Under the leadership of the Archbishop of Palermo, its membership included archbishops, bishops, and abbots. The interests of the second estate coincided with those of the feudal braccio, and the two often joined forces when voting on fiscal matters, since both were exempt from taxation. The third estate (demaniale) was the only elected body. It was also the smallest and least consequential of the three.[4] In theory, it represented the interests of the king's subjects living on state lands (demanio). In practice, it was subservient to the first two orders and had to assume the fiscal burden voted by the first and second estates. The estates deliberated separately but met in joint session for the final vote which was by estate. Consequently, the third estate did not have a fighting chance against the privileged orders.

140; and in Giacomo Giacomazzi, Il Parlamento siciliano (Palermo: Instituto Bibliografico Siciliano, 1960).

[3]The division into three estates originated in the reign of Roger de Hauteville (died 1111). He created divisions for the Church, the barons, and those who lived on Crown lands. Ibid., p. 10.

[4]In 1812, the braccio demaniale had 45 members compared to 114 in the feudal and 54 in the ecclesiastical estates. Del Cerro, vol. 41 (1916), pp. 338-344.

An institution dominated by special interests would resist any attempt at reforms which combined the ideas of progress and common good under the leadership of a strong state. Apparently, the Bourbons failed to understand the "values and functions of parliamentary assemblies."[3] They regarded the Sicilian parliament as a feudal relic which limited royal authority and perpetuated the dominance of vested interests.

The earliest challenge to the barons' position came from Domenico Caracciolo, a disciple of the Enlightenment and viceroy from 1781 to 1786. Caracciolo wanted to restore the authority of the Neapolitan state which was weakened by centuries of baronial abuse. He envisioned a program of reform which would modernize the administration of Sicily. Foremost among these proposed reforms were a redefinition of the aristocracy's juridical position and a redistribution of the fiscal burden according to more equitable principles. The barons viewed this plan as an attack on their privileges, because fiscal reform would end their immunity from taxation and deprive parliament of its right to levy taxes.[4] Furthermore, the proposals were sponsored by a "foreign" dynasty which was insensitive to Sicilian aspirations. The

---

[3]Ernesto Pontieri, "Aspetti e tendenze dell' assolutismo napoletano," Il Riformismo Borbonico nella Sicilia del Sette e dell' Ottocento (Naples: E.S.I., 1965), p. 18.

[4]The barons defended their tax-immune status on the ground that their military service satisfied their feudal contract.

barons reacted by using parliament as a shield against reform and rallied conservative interests around the banner of Sicilian separatism. The sustained opposition and hostility of a powerful minority defeated the Caracciolo experiment.[7] In his enthusiasm for reform, he was years ahead of his time, never understanding that Sicily was not France.[8] He had the problem of being an outsider who represented a foreign dynasty, and his style antagonized rather than conciliated his opponents.[9] Finally, the administration never gave him unqualified support, and his enemies had powerful allies in Naples. Foremost was the prime minister, the Sicilian Marquis della Sambuca.[10]

Differences between the Crown and the barons became more acute during the difficult years of Ferdinand's Sicilian "exile." When the royal family initially sought refuge on the island, parliament tied the approval of a substantial subsidy to the establishment of a permanent court in Palermo under a royal prince. This would have replaced the Viceroy and recognized Sicilian hopes for an

---

[7]He never understood how "seventy families could devour one million and a half people." Pontieri, "L' Esperimento riformatore del Marchese Domenico Caracciolo Vicerè di Sicilia (1781-1786)," ibid., p. 105.

[8]Ibid., p. 110.

[9]His characterization of Sicilians as cani arrabbiati ("mad dogs") did not make him any more popular in that quarter. Rosario Romeo, Il Risorgimento in Sicilia (Bari: Laterza, 1982), p. 61.

[10]Pontieri, "L' Esperimento," Il Riformismo, p. 140.

autonomous government. However, when Ferdinand left Sicily in 1802, he conveniently forgot his side of the bargain.[11] The king's second and more prolonged visit generated further friction. Squabbles between Sicilians and Neapolitans continued in 1806 and gave the impression that the Neapolitans were more alien in Sicily than the British.[12] Old disagreements concerning the amount and use of Sicilian revenues and the queen's open hostility to anything Sicilian aggravated the situation.[13]

The ensuing struggle for power between king and parliament was rooted in the weakness of the court which was struggling with the loss of Naples and the need for revenue. Under these circumstances, any reform program had little chance for success. By February 1810, Ferdinand was as usual hard-pressed for money and requested an extraordinary subsidy of 360,000 onze a year to be assessed equally among

---

[11]Pontieri, "Un Retroscena nel conflitto costituzionale del 1811 in Sicilia tra la corona e l' aristocrazia," Il Riformismo, p. 210. The Archbishop of Palermo was appointed Lieutenant General and was succeeded by the Prince of Cutò in 1802.

[12]Giacomo Bianco, La Sicilia durante l' occupazione inglese 1806-1815, p. 263; quoted in Pontieri, Il Tramonto, p. 363. Neapolitan and Sicilian courtiers held different views regarding the best government for Sicily. The former favored Vincenzo Cuoco's solution of an unitarian state similar to the Napoleonic Empire; the latter supported Paolo Balsamo's idea of an autonomous state based on the English model. Ibid, p. 364.

[13]There is ample evidence of Maria Carolina's dislike for Sicily, "a poor land, inhabited by beggars." Antonio Capograssi, Gl' Inglesi in Italia durante le campagne napoleoniche (Bari: Laterza, 1949), p. 28. See also Pontieri, Il Tramonto, p. 363, n. 3.

the estates.[14] This move, which reopened the question of the fiscal reforms proposed by Caracciolo, sought approval of a sizeable subsidy as a trade-off for a more equitable redistribution of taxes. It also had the potential of decreasing the power of parliament by eliminating its traditional role of voting subsidies.[15] Parliament reacted to this incursion on its prerogatives and took the initiative away from the Crown by reducing the subsidy to 150,000 onze and abolishing baronial immunity from taxation.[16]

At this point, the king decreed taxes which did not have parliamentary support and provided for the confiscation of ecclesiastical lands, a lottery to compensate the owners, and a tax of one percent on all money payments. Up in arms, forty-six barons signed a petition against illegal taxation.[17] One of their leaders, Giuseppe Ventimiglia the Prince of Belmonte, opened secret negotiations with the British and requested protection from the king.[18] Discovery

---

[14]Pontieri, "Un Retroscena," Il Riformismo, p. 213.

[15]The architect of this proposal was Luigi de'Medici, the Minister of Finance. He was a Neapolitan champion of enlightened absolutism and centralization and was understandably unpopular with the Sicilian barons.

[16]The economist Paolo Balsamo drafted this counter-proposal which had a strong anti-monarchial tone.

[17]According to the constitution of James of Aragon, the king could raise taxes in times of emergency without the consent of parliament. Pontieri, Il Tramonto, pp. 356-357.

[18]Belmonte went so far as to accept the notion of a new sovereign selected by the British, "even if necessary a Protestant." Mack Smith, p. 341. According to Amherst's

of this conspiracy led to the arrest of Belmonte and four other barons, including Carlo Cottone the Prince of Castelnuovo, and Belmonte's uncle. At this juncture, British intervention led to the release of the five barons from prison, the suspension of Ferdinand from his royal duties, the exile of Maria Carolina from the court, the repeal of the one percent tax, and the dismissal of unpopular ministers. The intervention also paved the way for the constitutional revolution of 1812-1813.

This baronial rebellion, supported by a foreign power, weakened the Bourbon state and favored the interests of its opponents. The barons surrendered the appearance of privilege, but managed to keep the substance.[19] They controlled the island, limited the power of the monarchy, and remained "the strongest force in the land."[20] The slow and cumbersome process of reform implementation had worked in their favor. In contrast to Naples, Sicily did not have by 1820

---

letter to Wellesley of July 28, 1810, the king had already "been guilty of gross violations of the constitution under which he holds the crown." The barons were no longer protected against "a tyranny wholly repugnant to the original freedom enjoyed by the inhabitants of Sicily." If England refused to intervene, the barons would be driven to rebellion and "perhaps even ultimately into the arms of France." Harold Acton, The Bourbons of Naples (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1956), p. 578.

[19]This was the opinion of Carlo Afan de Rivera, the Director of Roads, Waters, and Forests, Pensieri sulla Sicilia al di là del Faro (Naples: n.p., 1820), p. 19. The barons probably agreed to share the tax burden because they knew that reforms would most likely remain meaningless. Romeo, Il Risorgimento, pp. 135-136.

[20]Mack Smith, p. 351.

an implementation deadline. An operation which was completed in Naples had thus not even begun in Sicily.[21]

Paradoxically, the Restoration of 1815 weakened the position of the barons without strengthening the Crown. Any notion of preserving the Constitution of 1812 over strong Austrian opposition had no chance of success. Great Britain, the patron saint of the Sicilian constitution, did not undertake any diplomatic action in its favor and was content with protecting its economic and strategic interests in the Mediterranean. The barons could no longer rely upon the constitution as a base for their political power; nor could they entertain hopes for Sicilian autonomy.

Even the restored monarchy did not operate from a position of strength. King of two kingdoms, Ferdinand I was in fact the undisputed ruler of neither.[22] The Great Powers backed his restoration according to the principle of legitimacy and for the sake of European stability.[23] While these considerations preserved the Bourbons' dynastic rights, their prestige was low in Europe. During wartime, they were

---

[21]Pontieri, Il Tramonto, p. 368.

[22]Walter Maturi, "La Politica estera napoletana dal 1815 al 1820," Rivista Storica Italiana, vol. 4 (1939), p. 227.

[23]"The Congress of Vienna has recognized as King of the Two Sicilies the present monarch and has also supported the union of the two countries in a single kingdom. This union is tied with its other political view and so many powers have participated in such a general organization that we could not alter it without fearing upheavals and without upsetting the equilibrium of an area of Europe." Duke Armand de Richelieu, French prime minister (1815-1818), to Count de Narbonne-Pelet, French ambassador to Naples, January 30, 1816; Maturi, p. 233.

under British protection. In peacetime, they passed under Austrian tutelage.

In Sicily, the king faced the charge of treason because of the abrogation of the constitution and the suppression of parliament. Raising the old war cry against a "foreign" dynasty, the barons led the attack and found support for the claim that Ferdinand I had destroyed ancient privileges and the gains of 1812. According to the historian Nicolò Palmeri, the king and his ministers had deprived Sicilians of all political rights and reduced "a kingdom with a seven-century-old constitution to the lamentable condition of a province . . . ruled by a tyrannical and absolute prince."[24] The demotion of Palermo from capital city to provincial seat symbolized the diminished status of the barons. A centralized administration deprived them of the exercise of patronage in the provinces. The owners of large estates assumed a heavier tax burden, while at the same time the abrogation of entail threatened the integrity of their landholdings.[25]

The restored monarchy could have strengthened its position against the barons by cultivating support from

---

[24]"Ridurre un regno, che per sette secoli avea avuto una costituzione, alla lagrimevole condizione di provincia d' un regno governato dall' assoluto arbitrario potere del principe. . . ." Nicolò Palmeri, Saggio storico-politico sulla costituzione del regno di Sicilia; quoted in Romeo, Il Risorgimento, pp. 158-159.

[25]After the abolition of entail, younger sons were frequently persuaded to remain single in order to maintain the integrity of the estate. Mack Smith, p. 363.

other quarters. Moderate reformists, professionals, small landowners eager to acquire more land, and civil servants concerned with career opportunities within the new bureaucracy could have looked to the Crown as their protector against baronial abuse. This alliance might have outweighed their dissatisfaction concerning the mode and substance of several reforms.[24] However, the political philosophy of the Bourbons' program blocked progress in this direction.[27]

Even after the Revolution of 1820, anti-feudal legislation did not guarantee economic progress, and the Sicilian economy and society remained more or less what they were in the eighteenth century.[28] The reforms failed to redistribute the land and improve the conditions of the peasantry.

---

[24]The new taxes, the conscription law, and the manner of the reform process were especially unpopular. "Nulla rimase esente da riforma, come se la Sicilia ad una grande rivoluzione fosse soggiacluta o regno di conquista del cav. de'Medici fosse divenuta" ("Nothing was exempt from reform as though Sicily had suffered a great revolution, or become a conquest of Cavalier de'Medici"). Francesco Paternò Castello, Saggio storico-politico sulla Sicilia dal cominciamento del secolo XIX al 1830; quoted in Romeo, Il Risorgimento, pp. 176-177.

[27]Romeo, Il Risorgimento, pp. 176-177.

[28]The baron's disappointment over the abrogation of the constitution, popular dissatisfaction with the reforms of the preceding five years, and anti-Neapolitan sentiment are some of the causes for the Revolution of 1820 in Sicily. The more democratic Spanish Charter was chosen over the Constitution of 1812, and urban artisan guilds participated in the struggle. However, leadership remained in the hands of aristocrats, a fact which led the Neapolitan revolutionaries to suspect a separatist agenda. Municipal rivalries, divisiveness among the leaders, and the uncertain direction of the movement prevented the revolution from becoming an "expression of conscious political will." Ibid., p. 168.

Impoverished barons were more likely to sell their land to more affluent noblemen than to subdivide it into smaller holdings. The law of subjugation, which assigned lands in payment for debts, did not redistribute those lands across class lines, since creditors were mostly members of either the aristocracy or the clergy. The peasants did not benefit from the abolition of manorial rights, which survived in practice. The right of the landlord to buy the crops of his tenants at a fixed price continued because the peasants were hard pressed for money and willing to accept the conditions of sale imposed by the landlord.[29] The abolition of "promiscuous rights" damaged the interests of the peasants who relied on the use of pastures, woodlands, and marshes.[30] All this played into the hands of the landowners, who sabotaged or delayed reform. Land reform, which was so important for the economy, failed because "it was anathema to the only people who counted."[31]

To make matters worse, the transition to a peacetime economy at the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars had a negative impact on Sicily. For several years Sicily was a base for military operations against the French and a center of Mediterranean trade. The British presence in Sicily generated a strong demand for foodstuffs, which

---

[29]Pontieri, Il Tramonto, p. 370.

[30]Promiscuous rights applied to those lands where ownership coexisted with usage rights. Not until 1825 did the peasants receive some compensation for their losses.

[31]Mack Smith, p. 409.

raised the price of crops and the value of the land.[32] After their departure, falling demand caused a decline in crop prices and land values.[33]

Sicily's export trade, facing competition from Russian wheat and Spanish olive oil, was also in trouble. In addition, the commercial agreement with Great Britain on September 26, 1816, reduced the tariff on British goods entering Neapolitan ports by 10 percent.[34] Luigi Blanch called the treaty a "Navigation Act in reverse" because it promoted British commercial interests in the Mediterranean and gave them a clear advantage in Sicilian markets.[35] Neapolitan commerce did not enjoy the same advantages in British markets, and Neapolitan shipping could not carry goods to Sicilian ports as cheaply as the British.

The trade policies sponsored by Luigi de'Medici in 1823-1824 were indications of his concern for the plight of

---

[32]Until 1815, the British spent about £12,000,000 per year in Sicily. Ibid., p. 255. Luigi de'Medici calculated that Sicily's income from 1806 to 1815 exceeded expenses by 20,000,000 onze. Romeo, Mezzogiorno e Sicilia, p. 93.

[33]According to the historian Palmeri, the value of land decreased by two-thirds from 1810 to 1825. This meant a loss of 30,000,000 onze. Romeo, Il Risorgimento, p. 179.

[34]For a detailed account of the trade agreement and its negative impact on the Neapolitan economy, see Pontieri, "Sul Trattato di commercio Anglo-Napoletano del 1845," Il Riformismo, pp. 281-297. See also Gaetano Cingari, Mezzogiorno e Risorgimento (Bari: Laterza, 1970), pp. 158-164.

[35]Pontieri, "Sul Trattato," Il Riformismo, p. 288. A discount on the tariff was an improvement over the old flag privilege which exempted vessels from customs inspection, thus increasing the opportunities for contraband which was very costly to the Neapolitan treasury.

the Neapolitan traders and merchant marine. He was philosophically opposed to trade restrictions, but the British domination prompted his shift to protectionism.[36] De'Medici may have considered these policies as bargaining chips to encourage British acquiescence in a reciprocity agreement which would include the abolition of the 10 percent tariff reduction, but the British government reacted by standing firm and a customs war followed. The British adopted punitive measures against Neapolitan imports carried by Neapolitan vessels and the Neapolitans employed subterfuge by rerouting their exports to British ports through Trieste.[37] De'Medici died in 1830 without seeing any positive prospects for trade parity. At the end of that same year, Ferdinand II succeeded to the throne and inherited both the unresolved Sicilian Question and the thorny problem of Anglo-Neapolitan trade relations.

British economic interests in Sicily commenced with the treaties of Madrid (1667) and Utrecht (1713). The former treaty with Spain gave Great Britain flag privileges in the ports of the Neapolitan Kingdom and the latter reinforced the British exemption from customs inspection.[38] Toward the end of the eighteenth century, British statesmen

---

[36]These policies extended the 10 percent tariff reduction to Neapolitan vessels, reduced customs on exports, and increased them on imports. Ibid., p. 293.

[37]Among the British reprisals was an import tax of £10 per ton on Sicilian olive oil imported on Neapolitan vessels. Ibid., pp. 294 and 297.

[38]Ibid., p. 283.

began to question the value of a restrictive trade policy. At that time, William Pitt laid the foundations of an empire based on foreign trade and not military power.[39] Part of his program became clear when his government negotiated the 1786 commercial treaty with France, which substantially reduced trade barriers between the two countries.[40] However, the French Revolution and Napoleon's Continental System forced the cancellation of this policy. Under a treaty negotiated with Naples in 1793, the British agreed to protect Neapolitan merchantmen trading in the Mediterranean. In return, the Neapolitan government pledged to suspend trade with France.[41]

The war with France had an impact on British trade in the Mediterranean. On the one hand, Sicily became a focal point for British commercial activity.[42] British

---

[39]Bernard Semmel, The Rise of Free Trade Imperialism (London: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 13, n. 1. See also Peter Marshall, "The First and Second British Empire: A Question of Demarcation," History, vol. 49 (February 1964), pp. 13-23; and G. C. Bolton, "The Founding of the Second British Empire," Economic History Review, vol. 19 (April 1966), pp. 195-200.

[40]W. O. Henderson, "The Anglo-French Commercial Treaty of 1786," Economic History Review, vol. 10 (August 1957), pp. 104-112.

[41]The King of Naples pledged some military assistance and could not make a separate peace without British consent. Great Britain promised to maintain a fleet in the Mediterranean throughout the period of emergency and to give special consideration to Neapolitan interests at the conclusion of the war. Acton, p. 256.

[42]"In the beginning of the present century. . . Sicily became with Malta the depot of English trade. From those places the products of British colonies as well as of British industry were smuggled into the blockaded ports

trade with Sicily remained strong to the eve of the Sulphur War, when British manufactured goods accounted for more than 32 percent of Sicilian imports. At the same time, Great Britain imported wine, oil, citrus fruits, and sulphur, absorbing more than 40 percent of Sicily's exports.[43]

British nationals doing business in Sicily formed the core of this commercial activity. Several merchant groups had been active in Sicily since the last quarter of the eighteenth century and were concentrated mainly in the port cities of Palermo and Messina. Others operated along the coastal areas of Licata and Girgenti. The Woodhouse family, whose first shipment of wine went to Liverpool in 1773, was perhaps the first to gain a measure of notoriety. The presence of the British navy in the Mediterranean had a positive effect upon their business, as British warships called frequently at Sicilian ports. This development placed the Woodhouse enterprise in the enviable position of not being able to keep up with the demand for its wine.[44]

Woodhouse was only one of many British nationals who

---

along the coast of the Mediterranean." Comment by Julius C. Kretschmar, American consul in Palermo, writing in April, 1854; quoted in Trevelyan, p. 475, n. 33.

[43]Trade statistics for the years 1834 and 1838-1840 are in Romeo, Il Risorgimento, pp. 220-221.

[44]In addition to establishing a wine industry in Sicily which was quite able to expand to meet this demand, Woodhouse created what was, in effect, the beginnings of a complete agrarian revolution. His business provided loans to farmers so that they could clear their wheat fields and olive groves, replacing them with vineyards. Trevelyan, pp. 15-16.

gradually constructed for themselves a substantial vested interest in Sicily at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Morrison, Routh, Valentine, Jeans, Horner, Taunton, and Rose were some of the biggest names among the new merchants.[45] In innovation and diversity, Benjamin Ingham perhaps represented the best success story of British enterprise in Sicily.[46] At the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars, Ingham and his fellow merchants generated enough activity to draw the appointment of no less than thirty British consuls or vice-consuls to the island at various times.[47]

There is little evidence to suggest, however, that as of the first decade of the nineteenth century the British government supported a formal program to promote trade with Sicily. British merchants pressed hard for commercial advantages, especially the 10 percent reduction in the tariff on imported goods from Great Britain; but Richard Wellesley, the foreign secretary in the Percival cabinet, did not respond to these requests and apparently gave

---

[45]There was also a Sanderson who greatly extended his oils business in Messina. Now Italian owned, his firm is still flourishing under the name W. Sanderson and Sons. Ibid., p. 48.

[46]Ingham's major claim to fame was making Marsala wine famous. Other business activities included the export of citrus fruit, olive oil, sumac, and barilla, with sidelines in almonds, filberts, manna, liquorice, pumice, and currants. Ibid., p. 6.

[47]Ibid., p. 12.

"little thought" to commercial advantages.[48]

The British government's indifference to the wishes of these merchants ended with the conclusion of the war. As the Bourbons reclaimed Naples, the merchants once again pressed for the restoration of flag privileges in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. At the same time, the Neapolitan government perceived the advantage of conciliating Great Britain in order to ensure that nation's concurrence in the abolition of the Constitution of 1812. The commercial treaty signed on September 26, 1816, establishing a 10 percent reduction in the tariff on all British imports into the kingdom, was the resultant compromise between the governments of Great Britain and Naples. In return, the British government abstained from any opposition to the demise of the Sicilian Constitution.

In their analysis of the British "informal empire" during the nineteenth century, John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson note that imperialism is not a necessary function of economic expansion. They argue that, "whether imperialist phenomena show themselves or not is determined not only by the factors of economic expansion, but equally by the political and social organization of the regions brought into the orbit of the expansive society, and also by the

---

[48]John Rosselli, Lord William Bentinck and the British Occupation of Sicily 1811-1814 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 20. Petitions to the Foreign Office and the Board of Trade from the merchants of Exeter, Leeds, Nottingham, and Sheffield can be found in FO 70/49.

world situation in general."[47] In the case of Sicily, the British government was also concerned with maintaining political influence and a strategic presence in the area. During the reign of Ferdinand IV, the practice of monitoring developments at the Neapolitan court enabled the British to exercise a measure of control through the actions of John Acton and William Bentinck. Both men successfully worked within their respective capacities to insure that the policies of the Neapolitan government were compatible with the interests of Great Britain.

John Acton was born in Besançon, France, and eventually served the Grand Duke of Tuscany as a soldier of fortune. Ferdinand IV appointed him minister of marine in 1779 with the intent of reorganizing the Neapolitan navy. From there Acton rose to the rank of foreign minister and then finally in 1785 to prime minister. Sir William Hamilton, the British envoy to Naples, recognized the significance of Acton's position when he implied that Acton relayed military intelligence to the British on a regular basis.[50] The French also understood the effects of Acton's presence in Naples. Baron Alquier, the French ambassador to Naples, came to the conclusion that as long as Acton continued as prime minister, Naples would never become attached

---

[47]John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, "The Imperialism of Free Trade," Economic History Review, vol. 6 (1953), p. 6.

[50]Acton, p. 182.

to France.[51] Even Hamilton's successor, Hugh Elliot, admitted that Acton's presence was the best safeguard for British interests in the area.[52]

The British government decided to intervene formally in the internal affairs of Sicily in 1806 as the peace negotiations with France came to a halt. By the time William Bentinck, the former governor of Madras, assumed his position as Commander-in-Chief of British forces in Sicily during the Napoleonic Wars, most contemporary observers were beginning to see an elaborate struggle taking shape between Bentinck, representing the causes of the British alliance and a constitution for Sicily, and his antagonist, Queen Maria Carolina, representing the forces of reaction and anti-British sentiment.[53] The emergency created by the war with France appeared to justify more than a military presence on the island. The tension between the Crown and baronage, and Maria Carolina's alleged collusion with the enemy persuaded Bentinck to act. By aiding and abetting the barons, he interfered with the domestic affairs of Sicily,

---

[51]Alquier added "You may depend upon it that in the Sicilian Cabinet Chevalier Acton is only a member of the British Cabinet. What can we expect from the Court of Naples when it is directed by a British subject? Everything about Chevalier Acton is English: titles, hopes, speeches, and material fortune. His wife has no other title but Milady; he has just put his nephew in the British navy; when he speaks of the British he says we. . . ." Ibid., p. 465.

[52]Ibid., p. 489.

[53]H. M. Lackland, "The Failure of the Constitutional Experiment in Sicily, 1813-1814," English Historical Review, vol. 41 (April 1926), p. 210.

and exceeded his mandate to defend Sicily from a French invasion.

Perhaps Bentinck's boldest activities related to the deposition of Queen Maria Carolina. He complained often of the queen's opposition to his plans for governing Sicily and went on to say in a letter to her that "If . . . Your Majesty has been carrying on a direct correspondence with our enemy . . . I leave to Your Majesty to judge whether it will not be prudent for Your Majesty to retire in time from Palermo before these circumstances can become the subject of further discussion and irritation."[54] Almost one year later, the British foreign secretary tried to convince the Neapolitan ambassador in London, the Prince of Castelcicala, that the British government "insisted on nothing less than the queen's departure for Vienna."[55] She left for Vienna the following June.

After the departure of the queen, Bentinck continued to interfere in Sicily's internal affairs. When he suspected in October 1813 that reactionary ministers might assume control of the Sicilian cabinet, he ceased caring for constitutional niceties and "began to take an active part in the negotiations for forming a ministry."[56] In another controversy over the budget and, in the final analysis,

---

[54]Bentinck to the queen, March 16, 1812, FO 70/51, Rosselli, p. 185.

[55]Castlereagh to Bentinck, Private Letters, February 9, 1813, FO 70/59, Rosselli, p. 195.

[56]Lackland, p. 229.

executive power, "Bentinck felt that the task of bringing the recalcitrant members of parliament to reason would be impossible if parliament were able to meet at once, and he therefore demanded . . . a further prorogation of a week."[37] Bentinck was also active in controlling Sicilian elections, and left little doubt concerning his intentions in the minds of local politicians.[38] He announced that he was the "strongest man in the country, that he regarded himself as the advocate of the nation whose interests they were betraying by their factious conduct, and that he was determined to dictate the law to them."[39]

From the beginning of Bentinck's tenure, inconsistencies in British Sicilian policy became apparent. One source relates that the British government "gave William Bentinck new instructions which emphasized the necessity of Sicilians sharing in the government of Naples."[40] According to another source, the British felt that baronial privileges were harmful to Sicily and ought to be curbed in the interests of national defense.[41] It is clear at this point that strategic interests overrode any concern for a constitution which gave political power to the barons. Lord

---

[37]Ibid., p. 227.

[38]Mack Smith, p. 349.

[39]Lackland, p. 228.

[40]Charles K. Webster, The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh 1812-1815 (London: Bell and Sons, 1931), p. 76.

[41]Mack Smith, p. 341.

Castlereagh, the foreign secretary in the Liverpool cabinet, stated that Ferdinand was Sicily's lawful sovereign who should be "restored" and not "elected."[42] As the war drew to a close, he wrote to Bentinck that "it is not insurrection we now want in Italy . . . we want disciplined force under sovereigns we can trust."[43] This may explain why Castlereagh welcomed Austrian influence in Naples. When Ferdinand promised not to introduce a constitution without Austrian consent, the British government acquiesced without debate.

After the Congress of Vienna, Castlereagh's alignment with progressive groups became more apparent. His efforts to restore independence to the territories conquered by Napoleon are well documented.[44] The Neapolitan Revolution of 1820 served further to define Castlereagh's position regarding liberalism and forced him to confront the dilemmas now facing British foreign policy.[45] He had to acknowledge both growing domestic support for liberal causes and Austrian fears of progressive influence in the Neapolitan state.

---

[42]Webster, p. 84.

[43]Ibid., p. 260.

[44]Stephen R. Graubard, "Castlereagh and the Peace of Europe," Journal of British Studies, vol. 3 (November 1963), p. 82.

[45]"The old struggles between Austria and France for power and influence in Italy, and between Britain and France for supremacy in the Mediterranean were complicated by the new doctrines of Liberalism and Nationality, and the new system of the European Alliance." Charles K. Webster, The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh 1815-1822 (London: Bell and Sons, 1925), p. 259.

Although Castlereagh never disputed Austria's right to intervene, he made it clear that any action taken in this direction should have the support of other European powers and especially Great Britain's.[46] In response to Austrian, Prussian, and Russian plans for a concerted intervention in the internal affairs of Naples at the Congress of Troppau, Castlereagh emphasized that the exclusion of states from the European system and the altering of their institutions by force would violate international law.[47] The Austrian ambassador to London attributed Castlereagh's position to the "disguised liberalism" which was making itself felt among the supporters of the Liverpool ministry.[48] George Canning, Castlereagh's successor at the Foreign Office, did not support the idea of a congress system to maintain the status quo. Addressing the House of Commons on March 29, 1821, in an apparent reaction to the popular movements in Naples, Piedmont, Portugal, and Spain, Canning stated "I see the principles of liberty in operation and shall be one of

---

[46]The Neapolitan king broke the treaty which bound him "not to allow any changes in the political system of his dominions inconsistent with their ancient monarchical institutions or with the principles adopted by His Austrian Majesty for the internal administration of His Italian Provinces." W. Alison Phillips, "Great Britain and the Continental Alliance 1816-1822," in Adolphus W. Ward and George P. Gooch (eds.), The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy: 1783-1919 (New York: MacMillan, 1923), vol. 2, p. 34.

[47]Webster, The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh 1815-1822, p. 303.

[48]Ibid., p. 271.

the last to restrain them."[69]

This "disguised liberalism" was beginning to infiltrate institutions within the British political system. The Whigs often supported measures sympathetic to liberal causes. In a speech before the House of Commons on February 21, 1821, James Mackintosh voiced great concern over the goals supported by the Holy Alliance at the congresses of Troppau and Laibach. He also moved to demand a full disclosure of the intentions of His Majesty's Government, "emphasizing that if the principles of national independence had been trampled underfoot by one nation of Europe, the more it behooved the others to look with jealous anxiety to the safety and the preservation of their own inviolable rights."[70] Castlereagh addressed the House of Commons in response to these developments, saying that he was perfectly willing to join in many of the sentiments Mackintosh expressed.[71] Although this motion fell to defeat by a margin of 69 votes, 125 members of the House of Commons supported it.[72]

---

[69]This statement reflected only a part of Canning's political philosophy. He also regarded the Spanish Constitution as a very improper and dangerous model, but a lesser danger than the congress system and the Holy Alliance. Harold Temperley, "The Foreign Policy of Canning," in Ward and Gooch (eds.), p. 112.

[70]Thomas Curson Hansard (ed.), Parliamentary Debates, (London: Baldwin, 1821), vol. 4, p. 838.

[71]Ibid., p. 865.

[72]Ibid., p. 894.

the last to restrain them."[69]

This "disguised liberalism" was beginning to infiltrate institutions within the British political system. The Whigs often supported measures sympathetic to liberal causes. In a speech before the House of Commons on February 21, 1821, James Mackintosh voiced great concern over the goals supported by the Holy Alliance at the congresses of Troppau and Laibach. He also moved to demand a full disclosure of the intentions of His Majesty's Government, "emphasizing that if the principles of national independence had been trampled underfoot by one nation of Europe, the more it behooved the others to look with jealous anxiety to the safety and the preservation of their own inviolable rights."[70] Castlereagh addressed the House of Commons in response to these developments, saying that he was perfectly willing to join in many of the sentiments Mackintosh expressed.[71] Although this motion fell to defeat by a margin of 69 votes, 125 members of the House of Commons supported it.[72]

---

[69]This statement reflected only a part of Canning's political philosophy. He also regarded the Spanish Constitution as a very improper and dangerous model, but a lesser danger than the congress system and the Holy Alliance. Harold Temperley, "The Foreign Policy of Canning," in Ward and Gooch (eds.), p. 112.

[70]Thomas Curson Hansard (ed.), Parliamentary Debates, (London: Baldwin, 1821), vol. 4, p. 838.

[71]Ibid., p. 865.

[72]Ibid., p. 894.

This formal condemnation of the principles which guided the Holy Alliance with respect to the Neapolitan Revolution parallelled Castlereagh's strategy toward Naples. He reacted vigorously to the challenges and entreaties presented by the Holy Alliance. As a result, the British government officially stood apart from the Holy Alliance's concerted efforts to preserve the conservative spirit in Naples. The overarching significance here was that Castlereagh regarded the Holy Alliance's actions as not only repugnant to the fundamental laws of Great Britain but also in conflict with the system of international law.[73] Castlereagh seemed to emerge from all this as a defender of liberal ideals as his condemnation of the Holy Alliance's conduct toward Naples evoked the "applause of Liberals all over Europe."[74]

More support for liberal movements came from Henry John Temple, the Third Viscount Palmerston, the successor to Castlereagh and Canning at the Foreign Office. Palmerston expressed sympathy for Belgian independence and welcomed the July Revolution in France, calling it a "triumph for the principles of free discussion and the diffusion of knowledge."[75] His reputation in Italy as a friend of

---

[73]Webster, The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh 1815-1822, p. 321.

[74]Ibid., p. 323.

[75]Christopher Bartlett, "Britain and the European Balance 1815-1848," in Alan Sked (ed.), Europe's Balance of Power 1815-1848 (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), p. 152.

liberalism began in 1832 when Metternich sent Austrian troops to occupy the Papal States. On that occasion, Palmerston criticized Metternich for failing to make the Pope reform the administration of the Papal States.[76] This policy statement did not endear Palmerston to the Austrians, as Metternich accused the British of being more subversive in Italy than the French.[77]

In addition to the growing economic and political involvement with the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, the British were also establishing a strong strategic presence in the area. In 1814, the British had seized the island of Malta from the French with the concurrence of the Maltese assembly. This development gave the Admiralty access to an island which was strategically located in the central Mediterranean, only sixty nautical miles from the Sicilian shore and slightly farther from the Italian peninsula. More importantly, the British became the dominant sea power in the area. During the years 1835 and 1836, there were 23 ships of the line on the Mediterranean station, increasing to 25 British ships in 1837, 29 in 1838 and 1839, and finally

---

[76]"The short argument seems to be that unless reforms are made, Austrian interference will be perpetually required to preserve order, but that other powers cannot be expected to look on quietly. . . and there will arise imminent danger of war." Palmerston to Sir Frederick Lamb, British ambassador to Vienna, April 15, 1832, The Papers of Queen Victoria, Kenneth Bourne, Palmerston: The Early Years 1784-1841 (New York: MacMillan, 1982), p. 366.

[77]Palmerston to Lamb, March 13, 1832, BP, Bourne, p. 367.

expanding to a peak strength of 37 ships of the line by 1840.[78]

The direction of British foreign policy was another factor which determined British naval strength in the Mediterranean. In 1831, Palmerston reacted to what he perceived to be French and Austrian interference in central Italy with six sail of the line at his disposal.[79] The fate of the Ottoman Empire and political instability of the Iberian peninsula were also matters of concern to Palmerston. In August 1836, he sent a British naval force under Admiral Rowley to the Tunisian coast to remind France that "she was not the sole power in the Mediterranean."[80] Thus "Italy, Greece, the Ottoman Empire, the North African coastline . . . were the objects of much British diplomatic activity, often reinforced by the British navy."[81]

The protection of trade routes and the welfare of British nationals in the area also dictated the disposition of the Royal Navy in the Mediterranean. Discussions in

---

[78]Christopher Bartlett, Great Britain and Sea Power 1815-1853 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), Appendix II, p. 341.

[79]Palmerston happily added that "We shall be strong enough in the Mediterranean to do what we like with any fleet the French can have in that sea." Graham to Malcolm, March 15, 1831, ADM/1/4365, ibid., p. 85.

[80]Palmerston felt that "Rowley should take care not to assume a menacing appearance, but when there is the beginning of a row, it is natural that the Police Man should walk up to the spot, to see what is going on." Palmerston's minute on a letter from Minto, August 2, 1836, ELL/217, Bartlett, Great Britain and Sea Power, p. 117.

[81]Bartlett, Great Britain and Sea Power, p. x.

the House of Commons focused not only on the importance of the Indian trade but also on the development and protection of the routes to India through the eastern Mediterranean.[82] Two routes were under consideration by 1835, one through Syria, Mesopotamia, and the Persian Gulf via the Gulf of Antioch, the other through the Isthmus of Suez and the Red Sea via the port city of Alexandria. Although a parliamentary committee favored the development of the latter at the expense of the former, both routes together contributed to the development of Malta as a way-station through which the bulk of British Mediterranean commerce passed.[83]

British strategists planned to protect British nationals trading in the Mediterranean region. Immediately after the Congress of Vienna, Castlereagh believed that political concerns took precedence over economic

---

[82]A parliamentary committee issued a report which emphasized the importance of a "rapid communication with India." Mr. Charles Grant, speaking in support of a motion that £20,000 be granted to "assist in the experiment of a more rapid communication with India by steam conveyance," declared that "it was equally the duty and the interest of England to watch all the modes of access to India, with a view to the political and economic prosperity and the mutual advantage of both countries." Hansard, (ed.), vol. 25 (1834), pp. 930-931.

[83]Royal Mail service to India began in 1835 and became available on the first of every month. Dispatched from Falmouth to Malta in the steam packets of the Royal Navy, the mail would then go to Alexandria by branch steamer whenever the appropriate vessels were available. "That this plan was looked upon as being more than a temporary trial is indicated by the fact that the Admiralty Board simultaneously placed orders for the building of six new steamers expressly for the Mediterranean service." Hanford L. Hoskins, British Routes to India (London: Frank Cass, 1966), p. 211.

considerations, but shortly thereafter ministers began to narrow the gap between these priorities.[84] In 1820, Castlereagh dispatched a ship of the line and two frigates to the Mediterranean as reinforcements for the ship of the line already there in response to the trouble in Naples. The foreign secretary sent these ships to "protect British commercial interests."[85]

There is little doubt that the British government had more than a passing interest in the movements of foreign ships along the Mediterranean coastline. France was the most likely candidate to upset the favorable balance of British commerce in this area. The London Times supported a more active government role in the defense of British commercial interests against French interference.[86] When the sulphur crisis challenged British economic interests, the British negotiator, James MacGregor, became "one of the firmest advocates of the use of force."[87]

---

[84]Bartlett, "Britain and the European Balance," in Sked (ed.), p. 147.

[85]Bartlett, Great Britain and Sea Power, p. 65.

[86]A September 11, 1838, editorial declared, "Let the merchants of Great Britain look around them. Let them turn their eyes to Senegal, Oran, Algiers, Constantine, Tunis, Greece, Naples, La Plata, the Amazons, the Gulf of Mexico, the Gulf of California, and they will perceive in each of these regions France established as the avowed enemy of British commerce." James Swain, The Struggle for the Control of the Mediterranean Prior to 1848 (Boston: Stratford, 1933), p. 108.

[87]"I beg leave to assure your Lordship that my best judgement shall be exerted to assist in carrying through these measures which, considering the great natural

The Bourbon Kingdom in Sicily during the period immediately preceding the Sulphur War represented an arena in which the British either made use of favorable circumstances or directly acted to secure a measure of control over a sovereign state to further British plans. Long before the outbreak of the Sulphur War, a growing awareness of British commercial interests in Sicily resulted in the creation of an economic sphere of influence. The presence of a John Acton at the Court of Naples, the appointment of William Bentinck as the Commander-in-Chief in Sicily, and the disassociation of Castlereagh, Canning, and Palmerston from the philosophy of the congress system also helped define a British political sphere of influence in Sicily. All these circumstances combined with broader developments elsewhere, such as the concern for the disposition of the Ottoman territories and the protection of the British trade routes to India, to form a strategic presence in the area.

The British position complicated the Bourbon program of reform and control in Sicily. Ferdinand had to struggle not only with the barons who impeded reform and a closer union with Naples, but also with British economic, political, and strategic domination. After the Restoration, the Bourbons had to cope with persistent internal opposition

---

Resources of the Two Sicilies hitherto by restrictions and other Administrative means paralyzed as to their commercial development, will . . . be attended by the greatest practical advantage to British trade and navigation." MacGregor to Palmerston, September 20, 1839, PRO/BT/2/11/492-493, Davis, in Davis (ed.), p. 87.

following the repeal of the constitution and the abolition of parliament. In addition, the implementation of economic reforms which were so important to the modernization of Sicily was limited while British trading privileges guaranteed by the Treaty of 1816 continued.

The strong British presence in Sicily and the Bourbon struggle to solve the Sicilian Question against internal and external opposition defined the arena within which the Sulphur War unfolded. This confrontation provides insights regarding Gallagher and Robinson's description of the relationship between political control and economic expansion.

> Economic expansion. . . will tend to flow into the regions of maximum opportunity, but maximum opportunity depends as much upon political considerations of security as upon questions of profit. Consequently, in any particular region, if economic opportunity seems large but political opportunity small, then full absorption into the extending economy tends to be frustrated until power is exerted upon the state in question.[ee]

[ee]Gallagher and Robinson, p. 6.

CHAPTER III

THE LIONS

> "Let but a hand of violence be laid upon an English subject, and the great British lion, which lies couchant in Downing Street, begins to utter menacing growls and shake his invincible locks."[1]

For a long time prior to the Sulphur War, Great Britain possessed an informal empire in Sicily. As the sulphur crisis loomed on the horizon, the British government shifted its policy of informal control over Neapolitan affairs to one of "gunboat diplomacy." Palmerston, realizing that a peaceful solution to the problem was improbable, ordered the British navy to blockade the port of Naples. This action did fall short of annexation, yet was one in which the use of British power came to play a central role.

The following analysis of the transition to a policy of "gunboat diplomacy" should reveal several characteristics of British imperialism during the first half of the nineteenth century. Although strategic considerations were

---

[1]Hillard, a Bostonian, quoted in Trevelyan, p. 486, n. 19.

important factors in the British opposition to the French presence in the Mediterranean, controversy still surrounds the relative importance of economics to strategy in the determination of British foreign policy. For example, British policy-makers had economic as well as strategic reasons for supporting Abl-el-Kader in Algeria.[2] Were they motivated by the same considerations in the controversy over the Sicilian sulphur? Who were the individuals responsible for this policy, and from where and to what degree were they influenced by groups and agencies within or outside the government?

Any attempt to answer these questions must be preceded by a discussion of the political decision-making process within the British government, specifically in the area of international relations. During this period, the administration of British foreign policy was in a state of transition. It was a time when the influence of the monarch was on the decline and that of a group of cabinet ministers, especially the foreign secretary, was on the rise.[3] It was also a time when parliament may indeed have been more than "peripherally involved" in the decision-making process as it

---

[2]Palmerston seemed particularly "prone to abandon non-intervention" when other European nations threatened to establish monopolies. It was this, "as well as the implications for the strategic command of the Mediterranean that made him so anxious about French expansion beyond Algeria." Bourne, p. 626.

[3]Charles Middleton, The Administration of British Foreign Policy 1782-1846 (Durham: University Press, 1977), p. 4.

related to the formation of foreign policy.[4]

The struggle between the forces of reaction and change over the passage of the Reform Bill of 1832 resulted in a shift of political power. Charles Grey, the prime minister who supported reform of the electoral system, called for a new election in the process and together with a group of leading Tories prevailed over a hesitant king and an obstructionist House of Lords. The passage of this legislation increased the representation of the urban middle class in parliament. The prime minister, with the support of the majority in the House of Commons, could now "wield his authority more strongly than even George III would have found possible."[5] As a result, the cabinet became more responsive to pressures from parliament and parties.

At the same time, the responsibility for the development of foreign policy fell on a small coterie of senior cabinet officials who made the "vast majority of the decisions taken by any cabinet."[6] During the 1830s, Palmerston worked to consolidate his position of influence and retained major responsibility for the direction of

---

[4]Middleton admits that "Parliamentary support became increasingly important as the ability of the Crown to influence elections declined, and parliamentary control of the purse always loomed as a potential check to too ambitious a foreign policy." Ibid., p. 7.

[5]Ibid., p. 66.

[6]Ibid., p. 65.

foreign policy in the Melbourne cabinet.[7] The prime minister may even have gone so far as to give his foreign secretary a free hand. When France seemed ready to extend its territorial control beyond Algeria, Palmerston responded by sending a British officer to reorganize the Bey of Tunis' army without even consulting his prime minister.[8] This style was based on the Palmerstonian conviction that there were "very few public men in England who follow up foreign affairs Sufficiently to forsee [sic] the Consequences of Events."[9]

A forceful and pragmatic politician, a convert to the ideals of George Canning, Palmerston was foreign secretary for the duration of the sulphur crisis.[10] He was about

---

[7]A. J. P. Taylor saw Melbourne as having little influence over the direction of foreign policy during his tenure in office (1835-1841), and remarked that Melbourne "made scarcely any attempt to wield power while he was in office." Taylor also posed the question, "What does he tell us about the political world in which prime ministers are supposed to rule supreme?" Dorothy Marshall, Lord Melbourne (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1975), pp. vii-viii. On the other hand, Palmerston's authority was checked on occasion. When British businessmen failed to receive payment on outstanding debts in Portugal, Palmerston composed a "strong letter" to the Portuguese government and even went so far as to threaten seizure of Portuguese colonies. This message never reached Lisbon, and it was Melbourne who "insisted . . . on submitting the matter to the cabinet." Bourne, p. 588.

[8]Ibid., p. 557.

[9]Palmerston to Granville, FO, June 5, 1838, PRO 30/29/423; same to same, FO, June 5, 1838, PRO 30/29/413; and Palmerston to Russell, March 7, 1836, Private, PRO 30/22/2A, ff. 274-277; Middleton, p. 47.

[10]John Henry Temple, the Third Viscount Palmerston (1784-1865), began his career with election to parliament in 1807 and retired after his second term as prime minister (1859-1865). At the time of the sulphur crisis, he was in

to lead his nation into a war over an issue which was apparently economic: the award of the Sicilian sulphur contract to a French company. Palmerston opposed the contract from beginning to end. At first he endeavored to persuade the Neapolitan government to reject the Taix-Aycard contract. After the signing, he pressed for its cancellation.

This position rested upon the Treaty of 1816. According to Palmerston, the contract violated Article IV of the treaty which stipulated that British commerce and subjects in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies should be treated "upon the same footing as the commerce and subjects of the most favoured nations," and Article V which allowed British subjects to dispose of their personal property in any way whatever and "without the smallest loss or hindrance."[11] Palmerston felt that British merchants were the victims of an arbitrary act which challenged the concept of private property and was hostile to manufacturing countries.[12] To the Neapolitan charge that salt and tobacco

---

his second of three terms as foreign secretary (1830-1834, 1835-1841, and 1846-1851) and later presided over the Home Office (1852-1855).

[11]Palmerston to Sir William Temple, British envoy to the Court of Naples, October 27, 1837, Papers Relative to the Sulphur Monopoly in Sicily, (London: n.p., 1840), no. 2, p. 2, ASN/AB, f. 1013. Palmerston to Count Ludolf, the Neapolitan ambassador to London, October 12, 1838, ibid., no. 26, p. 47; see Appendix F. For the specific wording of Articles IV and V, see Appendix C.

[12]John Kennedy, British chargé in Naples, to Palmerston, July 14, 1838, Papers, no. 16, p. 24. Palmerston objected very strongly that at the "very moment when these British subjects have completed their preparation and outlay, and when they are about to derive therefrom

monopolies had existed for some time to which the British government offered no objections, Palmerston replied that those monopolies predated the Treaty of 1816, and on that basis "cannot be made the ground of complaint on the part of Her Majesty's Government."[13] Palmerston's "demand" that British nationals engaged in commerce with Sicily should receive permission to "continue to work their mines" and sell their sulphur without being exposed to "any interference or restriction" irritated the Neapolitan government.[14]

Further examination of the diplomatic correspondence during the sulphur crisis raises the question of strategic motivation. Palmerston was suspicious of French intentions in the Mediterranean since the invasion of Algeria in 1830 and was already poised to oppose Austrian meddling in the

---

those advantages which their personal exertions and pecuniary expenditure entitled them to expect, the Neapolitan Government steps in, limits the quantity which such persons are to raise to two-thirds of the average quantity hitherto raised, during the time that some of the mines . . . had been completely unproductive, and with respect to this limited quantity, forces the British Lessees, either to sell their sulphur to a private Company, and at a price arbitrarily fixed, or to pay on exporting their sulphur themselves, a duty more than double the amount which a privileged Company is to pay." Palmerston to Ludolf, October 12, 1838, Ibid., no. 26, pp. 46-47. The possibility of a monopoly was mentioned in French diplomatic quarters since March, 1837. Auguste Tallenay, French chargé in Naples, to Louis-Mathieu Molé, French foreign minister, March 7, 1837; Armando Saitta (ed.), Le Relazioni diplomatiche fra La Francia e il Regno delle Due Sicilie (Rome: Instituto Storico Italiano per l' Età Moderna e Contemporanea, 1973), vol. 2, pp. 67-68.

[13]Palmerston to Ludolf, October 12, 1838, p. 47.

[14]Ibid., p. 48.

affairs of Naples.[15] He also alluded to a French threat to British interests in Sicily.[16] As the sulphur crisis became more acute, Palmerston expressed a concern for the "unpromising . . . commercial disposition of the French" and urged a quick renegotiation of the 1816 agreement "before we speak to France on the subject . . . for that France would endeavor to throw every difficulty our way."[17] Palmerston expressed a deeper concern for the overall activities of the French in the Mediterranean.[18] The French government responded quickly to this deteriorating relationship by making every effort to mediate the crisis between Great

---

[15]This was an indication that Palmerston was ready to use the British navy for the purpose of "cutting off communications between Naples and Sicily." Palmerston to Temple, September 1, 1837, BP, GC/TE/263.

[16]Palmerston feared that the proposed monopoly would be detrimental to the interests of British traders in Sicily since all foreigners would be excluded from the sulphur trade with the exception of the "original founders" who happened to be French. He further declared that "It would be impossible to maintain . . . that British interests would not specifically suffer by the establishment of the proposed monopoly." Palmerston to Temple, January 26, 1838, Papers, no. 4, p. 5.

[17]Palmerston to Lamb, April 22, 1839, BP, GS/BE/511/2. Although France and Great Britain jointly opposed the Taix-Aycard contract, their commercial rivalry continued in the Mediterranean.

[18]"I said certainly, events ought to be prevented in the Levant; but that the only way of preventing events of a very serious nature is to reduce Mehemet Ali to a state of occupation compatible with his condition of subject--with respect to the intentions attributed to France. I said that such schemes have been openly proclaimed in many of the French papers, which are the organs of that party to whose

Britain and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Palmerston may have taken this effort as a signal that the French government was inclined to cooperate with the British to resolve the crisis.[19]

Although the strategic issue seemed to fade as the sulphur dispute continued, the overall British concern for commercial advantage remained constant throughout the crisis. In order to justify military action, Palmerston declared that "in the interests of British commerce . . . and the honour of Her Majesty's Crown," Her Majesty's Government must compel the Neapolitan government to respect the Treaty of 1816, and "to make reparation for the great injuries which Her Majesty's subjects resident in the Neapolitan dominions have sustained."[20]

---

opinions and influence the French government say they are obliged to defer. That those papers plainly say that the Mediterranean ought to be made a French lake; that Mehemet Ali should be rendered independent sovereign of Egypt, Syria, and Arabia; and should be the protected ally of France; and that thus with Algiers and Egypt and Syria and with Tunis and Tripoli which would of course be swallowed up, France would virtually command the whole of the southern shore of the Mediterranean from Tangiers to Adana." Palmerston to Lamb, March 12, 1840, BP, GC/BG/527/3. For a more thorough discussion of the Eastern Question, see R. L. Baker, "Palmerston and the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi," English Historical Review, vol. 43 (January 1928), pp. 83-89.

[19]"I send you by messenger copies of the communications which have passed between us and the French about Neapolitan affairs, and copies of despatches which I have sent you through the French government--you will see that we have accepted the good offices of the French government for the attainment of our demands." Palmerston to Temple, April 20, 1840, BP, GC/TE/285/1.

[20]Palmerston to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, March 10, 1840, ADM, 1/5499/73268.

Palmerston confronted other issues which pertained to British economic interests within the kingdom during this critical period. He strongly believed that the Treaty of 1816 was not ideally suited to the economic needs of both countries, and pressured the Neapolitan government to negotiate a new treaty based on the principle of reciprocity.[21] He hoped to continue the program for the liberalization of British trade generally initiated by William Pitt and fostered by William Huskisson's Reciprocity of Duties Act of 1823.[22] More importantly, a new commercial treaty between Great Britain and the Neapolitan Kingdom would remove barriers to free exchange, thus benefiting both countries. Palmerston suggested a reciprocal decrease in duties paid on Sicilian olive oil imported to Great Britain and on British commodities exported to the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies such as fish, cotton, and iron.[23] To accomplish this task, James MacGregor went to Naples as a special envoy during the summer of 1839 with the explicit instruction to negotiate only the tariff rate.[24] After extensive talks with the Neapolitan

---

[21]Palmerston threatened to purchase oil from Greece or France if the Neapolitan government would "not agree to our proposals." Palmerston to Temple, April 21, 1834, BP, GC/TE/219/2.

[22]Judith Blow Williams, British Commercial Policy and Trade Expansion 1750-1850 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), pp. 451-452.

[23]Palmerston to Temple, October 30, 1835, BP, BD/SI/1.

[24]This was an important instruction, since Palmerston strongly felt that a new treaty was impossible without a new tariff rate. Palmerston to Temple, January 1840, ibid., BD/SI/8/2.

foreign minister, MacGregor returned to London with a revised tariff and new articles which Palmerston found unacceptable.

Palmerston directed his main objections to Article III which failed to provide British subjects with sufficient protection against forced loans, and Article XII which implied that monopolies existed only in England. He reserved his most strenuous disapproval for Article XVIII which annulled the Treaty of 1816 forever, while limiting the duration of the proposed treaty to twelve years. It was "absurd" to expect that "Great Britain should consent to forego advantage permanently secured to her, for others which it would be at the option of the Neapolitan Government to abrogate after a time."[25]

Palmerston was not only disappointed with the substance of the agreement but also by the conduct of the negotiators. He made it very clear that MacGregor did not have the authority to negotiate the terms of the treaty, and that he was "distinctly and expressly told by me before he left England" to confine himself to the tariff and "not to enter into any description about the articles of the treaty." In a reference to the Neapolitan representative who was Antonio Statella, the Prince of Cassaro and Neapolitan foreign minister, Palmerston exclaimed that the documents had "no force or value whatever," and presumed that Cassaro was "fully aware that Mr. MacGregor had neither the powers

---

[25]Palmerston to Temple, January 1840, ibid., BD/SI/9/4.

nor instructions to negotiate.[24] The negotiations for a new treaty continued until 1845, long after the sulphur controversy ran its course.

The failure to establish an economic relationship with the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies based on the principles of free trade was only one of the factors which threatened British economic interests in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Palmerston expressed concern with the revocation of a Neapolitan ordinance issued in February, 1838, which allowed the free export of corn and pulse until December 31. British merchants had purchased "large quantities" of these commodities before the deadline, but suffered losses after the Neapolitan government announced the immediate repeal of this ordinance on December 1. Palmerston conceded that the revocation was legitimate because "a due regard to the wants and interests of the Neapolitan people require such measure," but insisted on compensation for the losses of the investors.[27] At the time when the Neapolitan government challenged British commercial interests, powerful forces began to press Palmerston for a solution to the sulphur dispute.

Long before Palmerston became involved with the sulphur crisis, British commercial interests in the Kingdom

---

[24]Palmerston to Temple, January 1840, ibid., BD/SI/8/2 and BD/SI/8/3.

[27]Palmerston to Temple, March 7, 1840, ibid., BD/SI/13/1-2. Two experts on international law, Sir Frederick Pollock and Dr. Joseph Phillimore, supported Palmerston's contention. November 29, 1839 and January 29, 1840, BT/1/359.

of the Two Sicilies and at home pressed the British government to maintain the favorable conditions of trade established by the Treaty of 1816. The treaty guaranteed a 10 percent reduction on the tariff for British imports into Sicily, a competitive advantage which British merchants, manufacturers, and shipping interests were very reluctant to surrender.

A favorable trade climate prompted a group of Manchester merchants to look at the Neapolitan Kingdom as a market for their textiles. Their hopes quickly faded with the announcement of a second Neapolitan tariff increase in 1823.[28] The merchants reacted to this assault upon their interests by protesting to the British government that these measures would have a disastrous impact on their exports to the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.[29] The government responded by successfully negotiating with the Neapolitan government for the removal of the new duties. However, the same commercial interests in Manchester were not satisfied with the mere restoration of the old rates and pressed for compensation for "losses sustained through the unfair impositions."[30] This tactic proved successful when the

---

[28]On July 13, 1823, the Neapolitan government raised import duties from 13 to 18 percent. A second tariff followed a month later which "considerably increased" those duties. Arthur Redford, Manchester Merchants and Foreign Trade 1794-1858 (Manchester: University Press, 1934), p. 87.

[29]Proceedings of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, December 31, 1823, ibid., p. 88.

[30]June 29, 1825 and July 26, 1826, ibid.

Neapolitan government eventually indemnified the merchants for the expenses incurred by the additional duties.[31] This was an early indication that British commercial interests had the power to influence decisions at the highest level of the government.

British trade also faced a sharp decline in sulphur imports to Great Britain as a result of the Taix-Aycard monopoly. In 1838, sulphur imports totalled 44,595 tons, but dropped to 20,361 tons in 1839, and to 10,150 tons between January and April, 1840.[32] This decline in the sulphur trade affected two main groups within the British commercial community: the sulphur merchants in Sicily and commercial and manufacturing interests in Great Britain. In 1823, cotton merchants and manufacturers had successfully pressed the British government to intervene. A similar pattern emerged during the sulphur crisis. British merchants and manufacturers sought and received support from the British government for their claims against the Neapolitan government. Approximately nineteen British firms claimed damages of 373,978 ducats or £65,610.[33] From

---

[31] Ibid.

[32] See Appendix B, table 2.

[33] Giura, p. 99. The decline in the amount of sulphur exported to Great Britain not only marked a general decrease in trade between the Neapolitan Kingdom and Great Britain, but also signalled declining revenues for British shipping companies. Goodwin compared the number of ships which left Sicilian ports bound for Great Britain during the three years preceding the establishment of the monopoly with the

March 1838 to January 1840, they sent petitions to the British government protesting the establishment of the monopoly.[34] Six hundred and thirty-one mercantile and manufacturing firms in the United Kingdom also exerted pressure by submitting petitions which deplored the new contract.[35]

These protests closely paralleled the objections offered by the British government. The merchants were concerned with preserving their investment in the production and trade of sulphur. They spoke reverently of free trade and protested the violation of Article V of the treaty which guaranteed the "disposing of their property . . . without

---

three-year period following the award of the contract. From January 1, 1835 to July 31, 1838, 2,756 ships left Sicily for the British Isles loaded with sulphur, as compared to 1,488 ships from August 1, 1838 to December 31, 1841. "Remarks on Recent Changes in Sicilian Commerce," September 21, 1842, PRO/FO/70-183, Giura, p. 50, n. 3.

[34]Agents of the following British firms in Sicily signed those petitions: William Abbott; Caillers and Company; M. S. Craig; William Craig; William Dickinson; O. E. Franck; Gardner, Thurburne, and Rose; P. P. B. Ingham and Company; William Leaf and Company; Matthey, Dates, and Company; Morrison, Brikerton, and Company; Morrison, Valentine, and Company; J. Nicholls; Prior, Turner, and Thomas; Henry Newton Reid; W. Sanderson; Joseph Smithson; Joseph Whitaker; George Wood and Company. British merchants of Palermo to Goodwin, March 27, 1838, Papers, enclosure no. 1 in no. 7, Temple to Palmerston, April 9, 1838, pp. 12-13; British merchants of Palermo to Kennedy, July 31, 1838, ibid., enclosure in no. 20, Kennedy to Palmerston, August 14, 1838, pp. 33-35; and same to same, November 1, 1838, ibid., enclosure in no. 31, Kennedy to Palmerston, November 3, 1838, p. 52.

[35]These petitions came from London, Edinburgh, Leith, Glasgow, Kirkaldy, Dundee, Arboath, Carlisle, Belfast, and Montrose. Palmerston to Temple, January 28, 1840, BP, BD/SI/10.

any hindrance or obstacle."[36] The merchants were also upset with the idea that a French company would now reap the benefits of an industry which was developed by British capital. Messrs. Cumming and Wood complained of a "most arbitrary act" on the part of the Neapolitan government which now exposed British commercial interests to "most serious" losses.[37]

These commercial interests communicated their position to the British government through petitions. Usually composed by a group of merchants, these letters went to the British consular representative in Sicily, who in turn forwarded them to the British embassy in Naples. In March 1838, British merchants in Palermo expressed the hope that the British government would take some steps to "avert a measure fraught with so much injury to British commerce."[38] They voiced similar sentiments in a July memorial, while Cumming, Wood, and Company wanted an assurance that "Her Majesty's Ministers will not see us sacrificed in the way contemplated by the powers here."[39] Palmerston strongly

---

[36]Memorial of the British merchants of Palermo to Kennedy July 31, 1838, Papers, enclosure in no. 20, Kennedy to Palmerston, August 14, 1838, p. 34.

[37]Messrs. Cumming, Wood, and Company to Kennedy, August 10, 1838, ibid., enclosure in no. 21, Kennedy to Palmerston, August 14, 1838, p. 37.

[38]British merchants of Palermo to Goodwin, March 27, 1838, ibid., enclosure no. 1 in no. 7, Temple to Palmerston, April 9, 1838, p. 13.

[39]Memorial of the British merchants of Palermo to Kennedy, July 31, 1838, ibid., enclosure in no. 20, Kennedy to Palmerston, August 14, 1838, pp. 33-35; and Messrs.

supported the positions of British merchants in Sicily with his October 12 letter to the Neapolitan government. The merchants appreciated the firm position taken by the foreign secretary against the monopoly, and expressed a "deep sense of gratitude" for the "timely interference and security for our interests in Sicily."[40]

The failure of the MacGregor mission in 1839, the delaying tactics of the Neapolitan government during the negotiations for a new tariff, and the Neapolitan king's order of December 1838, which nullified Palmerston's initial effort in support of the British sulphur interests by extending the contract for another six months, forced the merchants to consider the possibility that the monopoly might continue for an indefinite period. With a sense of frustration, the British merchants in Palermo then petitioned the Board of Trade with the hope that the Board would expedite a solution to the problem and that "steps may be taken for our being informed as to the intended changes in the existing state of things."[41] Shortly thereafter, Palmerston pressed hard for abolition of the monopoly.

Cumming, Wood, and Company to Kennedy, August 10, 1838, ibid., enclosure in no. 21, Kennedy to Palmerston, August 14, 1838, p. 35.

[40]British merchants of Palermo to Kennedy, November 1, 1838, ibid., enclosure in no. 31, Kennedy to Palmerston, November 3, 1838, p. 52.

[41]Petition from the British merchants of Palermo to the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, January 11, 1840, ibid., sub-enclosure in no. 50, MacGregor to W. Fox Strangways, Office of Committee of Privy Council for Trade, February 12, 1840, p. 69.

In general, recent scholarship suggests that commercial interests played a very minor role in determining policy at the Board of Trade.[42] In their correspondence with the Foreign Office, Board officials do admit to pressure from trade organizations, yet "this is mentioned comparatively rarely as the underlying reason for a course of diplomatic action."[43] The conduct of the Board of Trade during the sulphur crisis, however, seems to deviate from this interpretation. Not only was the Board of Trade aware of and sympathetic to the urgent demands of the sulphur interests during the crisis, but it made specific recommendations on foreign policy to support these interests. Henry La Bouchere, the president of the Board of Trade, acknowledged the great amount of British capital invested in the sulphur properties. He also made note of the "hostile" and "powerful" influences which made the "consequences of delay . . . most serious."[44] He warned Palmerston of the "very strong" feelings at Manchester and Liverpool on the subject and went even further by urging him to accept the reciprocity treaty with the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies as negotiated by James MacGregor.[45] A sense of urgency and authority characterized La Bouchere's letter to Palmerston; he expressed the hope

---

[42]Lucy Brown, The Board of Trade and the Free Trade Movement 1830-1842 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 135.

[43]Ibid.

[44]La Bouchere to Palmerston, December 28, 1839, BP, GC/LA/7.

[45]Ibid.

that the foreign secretary would come to the conclusion that the treaty must be ratified "however impulsively it may have been signed by MacGregor."[44] In this instance, the president of the Board of Trade was concerned with the problems of the sulphur interests. More importantly, he made a strong attempt to influence Palmerston, and as a result became part of the foreign policy decision-making apparatus.

Meanwhile, Palmerston began to feel pressure from another quarter. In a limited fashion, the question of Sicilian sulphur came before parliament when the contract became official in July 1838. There was a brief discussion in the House of Commons and the president of the Board of Trade had to answer some questions on the subject.[47] As the monopoly continued for the next eighteen months, British diplomats pressed for its termination. Although MacGregor had already persuaded the British merchants in Sicily to drop their plans to petition parliament directly, by the end of 1839 a "numerous" and "influential body" of merchants was in the process of reconsidering this course of action.[48] MacGregor admitted that this situation could be very embarrassing to Her Majesty's Ministers, and Palmerston shared his sentiments.[49] As soon as he saw the possibility

---

[44]Ibid.

[47]Hansard (ed.), vol. 44 (1838), p. 792.

[48]MacGregor to Palmerston, November 3, 1839, BT/2/11.

[49]Ibid.; Palmerston to Temple, January 28, 1840, BP, BD/SI/10.

that British sulphur interests might present their grievances before parliament, Palmerston felt compelled to solve the problem once and for all. He wrote to Temple on January 28:

> The injury which the sulphur monopoly is occasioning to British merchants is so great that the matter will soon be brought under discussion in Parliament, and unless Her Majesty's Government are enabled without any further delay whatever to announce to Parliament that the monopoly has been put an end to, Her Majesty's Government will be compelled to take measures which would be very painful to Her Majesty's Government. . . .[50]

Within a month, merchants from London, Liverpool, and Glasgow joined the British merchants in Sicily in stating their case before parliament.

The time had come for Lord Lyndhurst, a Tory who had a reputation for obstructing Whig policies in the House of Lords, to champion the cause of the sulphur interests by bringing more pressure to bear on Palmerston.[51] His speech in the House of Lords on March 2, 1840, was remarkable for a number of reasons. It was a vigorous defense of British commercial interests, a part of the ongoing debate between Tories and Whigs on how to best serve these interests, and an attempt to influence foreign policy by making specific recommendations for a course of action.

---

[50]Palmerston to Temple, January 28, 1840, ibid.

[51]John Singleton Copley (1772-1863), the First Baron Lyndhurst, served as Chancellor (1827-1831) and (1841-1846). A staunch Tory, he was a consistent and unrelenting leader of the opposition to Whig legislation and a sharp critic of the Melbourne government during the sulphur crisis.

Lyndhurst was well aware of the pressure being exerted by the British sulphur community as he rose to present his speech in the House of Lords. He lamented the end of the sulphur trade and underscored the fact that the price of sulphur on the British market was "double what it was at the end of 1837."[52] Lyndhurst went on to mention the failed diplomacy of the last eighteen months which, he claimed, was directly responsible for the financial losses of British subjects.[53] He attacked a governmental policy which did "nothing effectual" to solve these problems.[54] Lyndhurst proceeded to exhort the government to "afford to its subjects and merchants who had embarked in this branch of commerce . . . protection to which they had a right," but he was also aware that a resolution of the problem was nowhere in sight and that the monopoly could continue for an indefinite period.[55] His impatience with the monopoly and his resolve to force the government to take a particular course of action became very apparent when he closed his speech with the suggestion that "six line-of-battle ships sent to Naples would settle the matter in a fortnight."[56]

Although it is hard to specify the degree to which

---

[52]Hansard (ed.), vol. 52 (1840), p. 805.

[53]Ibid. Lyndhurst had information that British merchants suffered losses of £1,000 per day. Ibid., p. 808.

[54]Ibid., p. 805.

[55]Ibid., p. 807.

[56]Ibid., p. 808.

Lyndhurst's speech was responsible for Palmerston's order to go to war, it is clear that parliament joined the Board of Trade as a part of the foreign policy decision-making process. There were several reasons for this development. Commercial interests were better represented in parliament as a result of the electoral reforms of 1832. Also, the position of the government was not strong. Melbourne's moderate Whig faction had a slim majority in the House of Commons and was vulnerable to attacks, not only from the Tory opposition, but also from groups within his own party. The depression and the debate over the Corn Laws, which Melbourne initially favored, further weakened his position.

So far, the evidence suggests that the British fought the Sulphur War primarily for economic reasons. Palmerston perceived that the sulphur monopoly which the Neapolitan government granted to a French company jeopardized the British commercial position in Sicily. British commercial activity and trade with the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, which had been growing at a fast pace since the late eighteenth century, faced the prospect of a decline. Indeed, Palmerston's letter to Temple on January 28 seems to confirm that he acted strictly in the interests of the British sulphur community.

Although evidence of economic causation is very strong, a more thorough examination of the diplomatic relationship between governments and Palmerston's opinion of Ferdinand II raises the possibility that other factors may

also have had a bearing on the decision to go to war. Palmerston may indeed have succumbed to pressure from the sulphur interests, but he also responded to political considerations such as the rights and responsibilities of nations under the terms of international law. Palmerston's disapproval of the methods by which the Neapolitans conducted their foreign policy was exceeded only by his personal dislike for Ferdinand II. These personal feelings were never a part of a basically economic interpretation of the cause of the Sulphur War. Although these feelings may have strengthened the foreign secretary's resolve to order the fleet into action, economic considerations still played a dominant role.

The treaties of Madrid (1667) and Utrecht (1713), the defense pact of 1793, and the Treaty of 1816 legitimized a wide range of British economic privileges in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. As soon as he became aware of the sulphur monopoly, Palmerston immediately cited the Treaty of 1816 as the basis upon which the Neapolitan government was at fault for the award to Taix-Aycard. In his rush to the defense of the British sulphur community, did Palmerston have a valid claim that the award violated the terms of the Treaty of 1816?

In order to answer this question, it is necessary to understand whether the British government possessed a legitimate claim under the terms of international law. The British position throughout the entire crisis rested upon

the assertion that the sulphur monopoly violated Articles IV and V of the 1816 treaty. Palmerston contended that the monopoly forced British nationals to sell their sulphur to a privileged group, and was therefore a violation of Article IV which guaranteed that British subjects and their articles of commerce be treated on the same footing as those of the most favored nations. Palmerston also believed that the monopoly forced British nationals to dispose of their property at a fixed price, a clear violation of Article V which guaranteed British nationals the right to dispose of their personal property "without the smallest loss or hindrance."[57]

The British government did not readily find legal support for this position. Two international law jurists claimed that the sulphur monopoly granted by the Neapolitan government to Taix-Aycard was not a violation of the Treaty of 1816. Sir Frederick Pollock offered the following opinion on March 12, 1840:

> The decree creating the Brimstone Monopoly is not in any respect an infraction of the Treaty between this country and the Neapolitan Government, either with reference to British Subjects interested in Mines in Sicily or to British Subjects, holders of Brimstone at the date of the decree. The Treaty puts the subjects of the Crown of England on the footing of the most favoured nations, and it seems to me to do nothing more. A decree which applies equally to the Subjects of the King of Naples and to all foreigners without distinction, cannot, I think,

---

[57]"An Analysis of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between His Britannic Majesty and the King of the Two Sicilies," ASN/MAE, f. 4130. See Appendix C.

be regarded as a violation of such a treaty.[58] Dr. Joseph Phillimore's analysis specifically addressed Articles IV and V of the treaty. He dismissed the idea that the monopoly violated the "most favored nation" status of British nationals under Article IV. Dr. Phillimore observed that the terms of the monopoly applied to all residents of Sicily, including the Sicilians themselves. He also dismissed the argument that the monopoly opposed the spirit and intent of Article V, which entitled British subjects to dispose of their "personal property of every kind and description . . . without the smallest loss or hindrance." Dr. Phillimore made the distinction between "personal" and "real" property and placed the sulphur mines in the latter category. With respect to the sulphur already in the possession of British nationals, he also commented on the fact that "British Subjects are in no way" more affected "than the Subjects of all other countries as well as those of the Neapolitan Dominions."[59]

The analyses of Sir Frederick Pollock and Dr. Joseph Phillimore have withstood the test of time. Almost a century later, another international law jurist addressed the issue of expropriation from another perspective and arrived at the same conclusion.[60] This interpretation offers two

---

[58]"Sulphur Trade of Sicily," ASN/MAE, f. 1430. See Appendix D for the Pollock-Phillimore opinions.

[59]Ibid.

[60]Alexander P. Fachiri, "Expropriation and International Law," British Yearbook of International Law, vol. 6

propositions associated with a general law of nations:

> 1. A state is entitled to protect its subjects in another state from injury to their property resulting from measures in the application of which there is discrimination between them and the subjects of such other state.
>
> 2. A state is entitled to protect its subjects in another state from gross injustice at the hands of such other state, even if the measure complained of is applied equally to the subjects of such other state.[41]

According to the first proposition, Palmerston did not have the right to issue an order for intervention on the basis of international law since the terms of the monopoly applied equally to all residents of Sicily. Palmerston could not act upon the conditions of the second proposition either, since the Neapolitan offer to compensate British businessmen ruled out the notion of "gross injustice," and Palmerston had been aware of those proposals for some time.[42] Controversy surrounds the opinion of John Campbell, Queen Victoria's Attorney General. According to a Neapolitan

---

(1925), pp. 159-171. Fachiri was a barrister at the Inner Temple and wrote in response to the expropriation dilemma resulting from the First World War.

[41]Ibid., p. 160.

[42]Ibid., pp. 170-171. Palmerston abrasively replied to the Neapolitan government's suggestions for compensation: "The only full and just compensation which can be afforded them for the outlay that they have made . . . would be a permission to continue to work their mines and sell their sulphur, without being subject to any interference or restriction on the part of Taix and his Company." He added, "Such permission the British government demands." Palmerston to Kennedy, October 12, 1838, Papers, no. 28, p. 49. Cassaro to Kennedy, August 27, 1838, ibid., enclosure in no. 24, Kennedy to Palmerston, September 1, 1838, p. 39, documents the Neapolitan proposals.

source, Campbell found that the monopoly did not violate the Treaty of 1816.[43] On the other hand, a modern biographer of Palmerston states that the Queen's Advocate justified the British position under the terms of international law.[44]

If the opinion of expert jurists cannot support the thesis that a British foreign secretary was merely responding appropriately to a violation of international law, Palmerston may indeed have had other political reasons for the pursuit of an aggressive foreign policy against the Neapolitan Kingdom. He was consistently in practical and philosophical disagreement with Ferdinand, and may have regarded these developments as a threat to longstanding British political interests within the Neapolitan Kingdom. The Neapolitan tactic of delay during the sulphur negotiations, Palmerston's negative perceptions of the Bourbon government, and his dislike for Ferdinand set the stage for the deteriorating relationship between Great Britain and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies during the period immediately preceding the Sulphur War.

In the flurry of diplomatic activity during the crisis, Palmerston experienced the same frustrations which had marked his unsuccessful attempts to renegotiate a new commercial treaty with the Neapolitans. Since the beginning

---

[43]Paolo Ruffo, the Prince of Castelcicala and Neapolitan envoy to London, to Fulco Ruffo, the Prince of Scilla and Neapolitan foreign minister, May 15, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4130, Giura, p. 83.

[44]Jasper Ridley, Lord Palmerston (London: Constable, 1970), pp. 230-231.

of 1839, Cassaro carefully reassured British diplomats that Ferdinand had every intention of cancelling the sulphur contract with Taix-Aycard and insisted that he had spoken to the king on the subject "with more than ordinary energy."[45] Vacillations continued as Cassaro was still optimistic about the cancellation of the contract, yet refused to set a date for its demise.[46] When Cassaro failed to respond to a number of British direct inquiries concerning its status at the close of 1839, it became clear that the Neapolitans did not intend to negotiate in good faith.

The Neapolitan game of vacillation and delay had a deleterious effect upon the conduct of Palmerston. He vented his frustration in the January 28 letter which threatened "very painful" measures if the matter was not resolved.[47] Cassaro feared that the abrasive note would upset Ferdinand and played for more time. He asked the British envoy to hold the note until the Council of State meeting on February 21, and on that date told Kennedy that the council had decided to set aside the contract. Once again, Cassaro stalled for more time, adding that this decree would not be issued until the Council of Ministers

---

[45]Kennedy to Palmerston, May 27, 1839, Papers, no. 36, p. 57; and Kennedy to Palmerston, August 29, 1839, ibid., no 37, p. 59.

[46]Kennedy to Palmerston, November 5, 1839, ibid., no. 42, p. 63. Cassaro stated that it would be better not to insist on a written answer which could wound Ferdinand's personal honor. MacGregor to Palmerston, November 13, 1839, ibid., no. 44, p. 64.

[47]Palmerston to Temple, January 28, 1840, BP, BD/SI/10.

appointed a committee to review the Taix claims the following week. At this point, Kennedy insisted on a written verification of cancellation. At the Austrian embassy that evening, Cassaro asked the king for an appointment the following morning. After that meeting, Cassaro met with Kennedy at 4 p.m. and reported that Ferdinand had approved a written reply which would not be forthcoming until 7 p.m. This deadline also passed without concrete results. In fact, Kennedy received no further information until he met Cassaro on the street the following day. During this casual meeting, Cassaro gave Kennedy written verification of cancellation, but without a firm date.[68]

It was only a matter of time before Ferdinand would reveal his intentions to the British government. On March 8, he received Temple very graciously, but insisted on the "right to adopt in his own dominions any measures . . . for the benefit of his subjects."[69] On March 16, he blatantly announced at the Council of State meeting that the monopoly would continue.[70] Ferdinand defied Palmerston for almost a year and a half after the foreign secretary sent his first letter urging immediate cancellation, and for a month after Palmerston issued his "very painful measures" threat. With

---

[68]Kennedy to Palmerston, February 25, 1840, Papers, no. 53, pp. 71-73.

[69]Temple to Palmerston, March 12, 1840, ibid., no. 59, p. 76.

[70]Ibid.

the failure of extensive diplomatic action and the Neapolitan show of bad faith during those negotiations, Palmerston proceeded with his plans for military action. Although there is no direct evidence to support the contention that Neapolitan duplicity pushed Palmerston to the breaking point, it nevertheless left an unfavorable impression, and prompted Metternich's remark to Ferdinand that, "You are right on the issue, but always wrong in the form."[71]

More tension came from political developments in Spain. Palmerston sided with the constitutionalist supporters of Isabella when Ferdinand VII died without leaving male issue in 1833. He disassociated himself from the Wellington government's policy of providing support to the legitimist claimant Don Carlos and allowed detachments of the British army to serve with the constitutionalist forces in Spain. Ferdinand did not openly side with the Carlists, but the episode left Palmerston with the impression that the King of Naples was actively supporting the forces of reaction against those of progress, and was thus acting in opposition to British policy in Spain.[72]

To make matters worse, Naples had a reputation as a hotbed for legitimist intrigue. It was the residence of the Duchess of Berry, half-sister of Ferdinand II, standard-bearer of the French legitimists and a supporter of Don

---

[71]Pietro Calà-Ulloa, Giuseppe de'Tiberiis (ed.), Il Regno di Ferdinando II (Naples: E.S.I., 1977), p. 90.

[72]Ibid.

Carlos in Spain.[73] The duchess was also a major supporter of Aimé Taix, thereby establishing a link between the politics of conservatism and what Palmerston believed was an assault upon British interests in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.[74]

Against this background, Palmerston frequently expressed a general disgust for political conditions in Sicily. He remarked to Temple that, "It is not possible that the Sicilians who have habitually so much intercourse with the peninsula populations should long continue satisfied with their present condition."[75] He went as far as to "strongly urge" Count Ludolf to:

> Recommend to his government to appoint some able enlightened and impartial men, to act as commissioners to inquire into the present state of Sicily, to report upon the grievances and abuses which they might find to exist in that island,

---

[73]Maria Carolina Ferdinand Luisa (1798-1870) was the eldest daughter of Francis I and of his first wife, Maria Clementina of Austria. Her marriage to a son of the future Charles X produced an heir to the throne whom the legitimists supported after the Revolution of 1830. She led the Vendeans in an unsuccessful campaign against Louis-Philippe and survived imprisonment in the castle of Blaye.

[74]Aimé Taix was clearly a protegé of the Duchess of Berry. In a letter to Ferdinand, Taix referred to the duchess as "my august protectress." Taix to Ferdinand, July 29, 1838, ASN/AB, f. 820, Giura, p. 36, n. 3. Palmerston knew that Taix was a "known partisan of the Carlists" who employed legitimist refugees to fill vacancies in his firm and received financial assistance from a "Carlist House in London." Kennedy to Palmerston, July 24, 1838, Papers, no. 18, p. 33; and Kennedy to Castelcicala, April 4, 1839, ASN/AB, f. 1013. Mention of a linkage between Taix and legitimist groups emerges in non-diplomatic sources. Calà-Ulloa, pp. 59 and 81.

[75]Palmerston to Temple, March, 1837, BP, BD/SI/4/1.

> and to suggest such measures as might appear to them best adapted to remedy present evils.[76]

Palmerston was prepared to go much further in defense of political rights. When he became aware that civil disturbances in Sicily might invite Ferdinand's military intervention, he warned that such an action must receive the "consent or acquiescence of the great maritime powers of Europe."[77]

The sulphur crisis reinforced Palmerston's convictions. In a long and forceful letter to Temple, he responded not only to the commercial limitations imposed upon British citizens engaged in the sulphur business, but also to the denial of the British nationals' right to assemble freely for the performance of their religious duties.[78] This infringement upon the rights of British citizens within the Neapolitan Kingdom infuriated Palmerston. Yet, he was not particularly surprised that such an injustice would occur in a country which did not have a free press or a representative assembly, and where supreme authority in all legislative matters resided with the sovereign.[79]

Finally, Palmerston intensely disliked the King of Naples. In a letter to a close friend, he described

---

[76]Palmerston to Temple, May 1, 1837, ibid., BD/S8/4.

[77]Ibid.

[78]Palmerston to Temple, January 1840, ibid., BD/SI/8/4.

[79]Ibid.

Ferdinand as an "ignorant, uneducated, violent, passionate, and weak" person, a "crowned and sceptered Lazzarone." In the same letter, he justified the Sulphur War by saying that Ferdinand "has yet to be taught many of those things which he ought to have learned in his childhood; and our ships must begin this part of his education."[80]

Palmerston may indeed have seized the opportunity to humiliate a king who refused to favor British interests in his kingdom. The strained relationship between the British foreign secretary and the Neapolitan king, the distance between their positions on the ideological spectrum, and the negative aspects of Neapolitan diplomacy during the sulphur crisis lend support to the theory that Palmerston had political as well as economic reasons for his actions.

Several conclusions concerning the behavior of the British government emerge from the sulphur crisis. In part, Palmerston clearly reacted to pressure from the sulphur interests who perceived that the Taix-Aycard monopoly threatened their trading privileges in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. British businessmen in Sicily sent letters through foreign office channels; when this method failed to produce results, they petitioned the Board of Trade. Merchants at home petitioned their representatives in parliament. In turn, both the Board of Trade and parliament strongly supported sulphur interests and forced Palmerston to acknowledge the seriousness of the situation; thus both

---

[80]Palmerston to Lamb, April 11, 1840, ibid., GC/BE/529.

became a part of the foreign policy decision-making process during the sulphur crisis.

Yet, it would be a mistake to view the intervention entirely as a response to a threat to British economic interests. It is true that Palmerston acknowledged pressure from the sulphur interests and government agencies by sending the Neapolitan government a strong letter which called for the cancellation of the sulphur contract. It is also true that Palmerston initiated the Sulphur War when the Neapolitan government failed to cancel the monopoly. However, a strict economic analysis fails to consider other aspects of the period which created more tension between Palmerston and Ferdinand.

Palmerston had good reasons to suspect that the British political position in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies was in sharp decline. Acton was no longer an influential minister at the Court of Naples and Bentinck did not have an army in Sicily to protect British interests. Palmerston saw Ferdinand apparently flaunting the Treaty of 1816, while Neapolitan diplomats negotiated in bad faith. He looked to Spain and saw Ferdinand in an apparent alliance with the forces of reaction against the forces of progress. In the Neapolitan Kingdom itself, British diplomats had to defend vigorously the right of free assembly for British residents. When confronted with an independent-minded Ferdinand, Palmerston labeled him a <u>Lazzarone</u> and sent ships to the Bay of Naples to teach him lessons which Palmerston claimed

should have been learned in his childhood.

The sulphur episode is one example of British imperialism determined by political, economic, and personal factors. It is also a case study in the transition from informal control through treaties to "gunboat diplomacy," and gives further definition to the Gallagher and Robinson observation that when the political situation of any particular region fails "to provide satisfactory conditions for commercial or strategic integration . . . power is used imperialistically to adjust those conditions."[81]

---

[81]Gallagher and Robinson, p. 6.

CHAPTER IV

THE COURT

Je resterai maître chez moi. . . .
Ferdinand II.[1]

The emerging international crisis over the sulphur monopoly coincided with a troubled period in the history of Sicily. In spite of all the sanitary precautions adopted to contain it, a cholera epidemic which had begun in Naples in the fall of 1836 reached Palermo the following June.[2] Panic and the belief that the government was responsible for the spread of the disease provoked rioting in Palermo, Messina, Syracuse, and Catania.[3] Popular protest focused upon two

---

[1]"I shall remain master in my home. . . ." Tallenay to Molé, November 3, 1838, Saitta (ed.), p. 159.

[2]Some foreign diplomats thought that these precautions were excessive. Temple complained about the fumigation of diplomatic pouches. Harold Acton, The Last Bourbons of Naples (London: Methuen, 1961), p. 101.

[3]Ten percent of Sicily's population died. Gaetano Cingari, "Dalla Restaurazione all' Unità," Rosario Romeo (ed.), Storia della Sicilia (Naples: E.S.I., 1977), vol. 8, p. 30. During a five-month period, Palermo lost 24,000 citizens from a population of 166,000. Among the casualties were Gaetano Maria Trigona, the Archbishop of Palermo; the historian Nicolò Palmeri; the Princess of Campofranco, wife of the Lieutenant General of Sicily; and Domenico Scinà, Chancellor of the University of Palermo, and leader of the separatist movement.

constant themes of discontent: economic distress and anti-Neapolitan sentiment.

Contemporary observers described the economic and administrative problems of Sicily. Pietro Calà-Ulloa, a Neapolitan magistrate stationed in Trapani, presented a dismal picture of the conditions in Sicily.[4] Large tracts of arable land were abandoned and overrun with weeds. The barons, who remained in control of the land, did not permit the subdivision of their large estates while a dispirited peasantry lived at a subsistence level. Inefficiency and corruption prevailed at all levels of government. Industry and trade suffered for lack of an active urban middle class. British interests still dominated the economic scene and did not permit the growth of Sicilian manufacturing "nor would they for a long time."[5] Sicily's public works were inadequate. The island was "without roads, commerce, and industry" and remained "an anachronism in European civilization."[6] Calà-Ulloa identified other problems such as the survival of feudal privileges and persistent Sicilian separatism. He concluded that the most appropriate solution was the establishment of a strong centralized state. These

---

[4]Pietro Calà-Ulloa, "Considerazioni sullo stato politico e economico della Sicilia," in Pontieri, "Ferdinando II di Borbone e la Sicilia: momenti di politica riformatrice," Il Riformismo, pp. 232-242. At that time, Calà-Ulloa was one of the Neapolitan magistrates assigned to a Sicilian post in accordance with the law of exchange (promiscuità).

[5]Ibid., p. 233.

[6]Ibid., p. 232.

comments may have reflected the bias of a Neapolitan bureaucrat who was a loyal supporter of the king. Another contemporary source, however, pointed to the shortcomings of the Bourbon administration. A French diplomat stationed in Naples mentioned the misuse of public funds, the abuse of public credit, and a corrupt and inefficient judicial system. He concluded that Ferdinand was indifferent to the plight of Sicily, which he considered a land of conquest rather than a loyal component of his domain.[7]

But it would be difficult to argue that Ferdinand was not interested in the welfare of Sicily. Since his accession in 1830, he counted the unresolved Sicilian Question among the "deep wounds" (piaghe profonde) mentioned in his inaugural address.[8] This twenty-year-old, vigorous, determined monarch initiated a new administration which promised to establish fiscal responsibility and eliminate inefficiency and corruption from all levels of government.[9] Sicilian-born, he envisioned reforms which would consolidate

---

[7]Tallenay to Molé, November 17, 1837, Saitta (ed.), p. 126.

[8]Acton, The Last Bourbons, p. 48.

[9]Ferdinando Carlo was born in Palermo on January 12, 1810. He was the third child and first son of Francis, then Duke of Calabria, and later Francis I, by his second wife Isabella, Infanta of Spain. Styled Duke of Noto at birth and Duke of Calabria after the accession of his father, he succeeded to the throne on November 8, 1830. In 1832 he married Maria Cristina of Sardinia (1812-1836), and in 1838 Maria Theresa of Austria (1816-1867). He died in Caserta on May 22, 1859.

the good will of his subjects on the other side of the Beacon and strengthen the unitarian monarchy.

These principles guided Ferdinand's Sicilian policy until 1837. Immediately after his accession, he appointed his brother Leopold, the Count of Syracuse, Lieutenant General of Sicily, replacing the unpopular and corrupt Marquis Pietro Ugo delle Favare. The Sicilians applauded the appointment of a Sicilian-born Prince of the Blood who had intelligence and style and liked the islanders. On Leopold's advice, Ferdinand revived the Ministry for Sicilian Affairs in Naples and appointed as its head a Sicilian, Antonino Franco. In addition, two Sicilians held seats on the Council in Palermo.[10]

During his first state visit to Sicily in 1831, Ferdinand received a very warm reception. On that occasion, a volcanic island emerged in the waters around Sciacca and Pantelleria. Immediately christened Ferdinandea, it appeared to be a good omen for both the new king and Sicily.[11] In a spirit of goodwill, the king granted amnesty to political exiles, reinstated army officers of liberal

---

[10]This council assisted the Lieutenant General, and included the directors of four departments: Justice, Interior, Foreign Affairs, and Ecclesiastical Affairs. Its president was a Sicilian, Antonio Mastropaolo, who shared this office with the Prince of Campofranco after 1832.

[11]The island was approximately 1.25 miles in circumference. It emerged in two phases between July 18 and August 3 following seismic activity. It soon disappeared, but re-emerged for a short time in 1863. The British claimed the island in the name of William IV and called it Graham Shoal.

persuasion, and abolished the military tribunals established in 1826. Ferdinand shared with his brother a sincere concern for the economy of Sicily, evidenced by the establishment of six economic societies in provincial capitals and the Palermo Institute for the Encouragement of Agriculture and Industry.[12] These policies did not represent a radical shift in the administration of Sicily and were consistent with the enlightened reform program of the Bourbons. Yet autonomy was still out of the question. When the popularity of the Count of Syracuse fueled rumors of his becoming king of an independent Sicily, Ferdinand promptly replaced him with the Prince of Campofranco.[13]

The civil disturbances of 1837 marked the end of this conciliatory phase of Ferdinand's Sicilian policy. Disappointed and angry, he stifled rebellion, tightened control, and reinforced centralization. General Del Carretto

---

[12]These actions seemed to contradict negative French judgements such as the allegation that Ferdinand could not identify the roots of the Sicilian problem and apply the appropriate remedies. Tallenay to Molé, April 13, 1837, Saitta (ed.), p. 75.

[13]These rumors probably contributed to the failure of the proposed marriage between the Count of Syracuse and Marie Christine of Orléans, a daughter of Louis-Philippe. Leopold left Sicily on April 22, 1835, two months after a masquerade featuring Roger of Hauteville unwisely reminded the Sicilians of their independence under the Normans, thus increasing Ferdinand's ill feelings toward his brother. Acton, The Last Bourbons, p. 79. Some say that the dismissal of the Count of Syracuse was one of the causes of the riots of 1837. Niccola Nisco, Storia del Reame di Napoli dal 1824 al 1860 (Naples: Lanciano e Varaldi, 1908), p. 46. Campofranco did not compare favorably with his predecessor and seems to have been "short on knowledge and natural talent." Ibid. p. 37.

ruthlessly re-established order in Sicily within three months.[14] To erase any misunderstanding about a measure of autonomy for Sicily, the king abolished the Ministry for Sicilian Affairs and the Council in Palermo. He also limited the authority of the new Lieutenant General, Onorato Gaetani, the Duke of Laurenzana, abolished the office of Superintendent of Sicilian Roads, and opposed the plan to build a memorial to the Catanese composer Vincenzo Bellini.

Particularly unpopular was the exchange of civil servants between the mainland and Sicily. Sicilians had enjoyed the privilege of holding administrative posts on the island, a practice which fostered nepotism and inefficiency. Ferdinand ordered Sicilians to posts on the continent and assigned Neapolitans to positions in Sicily. On the surface, this appeared to be a wise decision which would promote a better understanding among the king's subjects. In reality, there were serious problems. The exchange involved an equal number of Neapolitans and Sicilians, but since there were more posts to be filled on the mainland than on the island, the Neapolitans maintained a stronger overall position in the administration of the kingdom. In addition, those reassigned resented being uprooted from their homeland.

The end of Ferdinand's conciliatory policy did not,

---

[14]There were 750 arrests and more than 100 death sentences, some of them for common crimes. Nisco mentions 133 executions and compares the repression to Judge Jeffreys' "Bloody Assizes" in seventeenth century England. Ibid., p. 55. Other sources cite 120 capital sentences. Bianchini, quoted in Cingari, "Dalla Restaurazione," Romeo (ed.), Storia della Sicilia, p. 30.

however, diminish his interest in alleviating the "deep wounds" noted in his inaugural address. He visited Sicily in 1838 in order to investigate local problems, and the reforms which followed (1838-1841) addressed a variety of matters associated with law enforcement, public works, and charities.[13] Death by starvation was not uncommon for the depressed peasantry, and Ferdinand reacted by lowering the unpopular grist tax (macinato) which fell so heavily on the poor.[14] A new levy on the mine owners compensated the treasury for the resultant loss in revenues.

Other areas of the Sicilian economy needed attention. The rural masses' low standard of living, their self-sufficiency in manufacturing, and the lack of communication between townships prevented the growth of internal markets. A backward technology, a dearth of investment capital, and the domination of foreign interests, especially British, limited industrial development. Ferdinand's interest in finding a solution to some of these problems prompted his negotiations with Taix-Aycard, and ultimately precipitated a confrontation with Great Britain.

Ferdinand's goals and personal style played an important role in the conduct of foreign policy. Circumstances

---

[13]Pontieri, "Ferdinando II di Borbone e la Sicilia," Il Riformismo, pp. 258-262.

[14]Ferdinand also addressed the problem created by the slow implementation of the anti-feudal laws. He ordered the subdivision of vast ecclesiastical estates in royal patronage and instructed local authorities to protect the peasants' rights of access to common land and water. Mack Smith, p. 407.

had forced his predecessors to accept foreign protection and control. In contrast, Ferdinand aimed to assert the independence of his kingdom.[17] He proceeded to avoid a firm commitment to either Austria or France, a difficult task in view of the tension between the archconservative Hapsburg empire and the "revolutionary" July Monarchy. Metternich noted with alarm the King of Naples' conciliatory gestures toward political dissidents, his intention to remain neutral in the event of a Franco-Austrian conflict in Italy, and his choice of France as the guardian of Neapolitan interests in Morocco.[18] On the other hand, France noted with concern the legitimist sympathies of the King of Naples and his anti-constitutional sentiments.[19] On a more personal level, Louis-Philippe resented the failure of the matrimonial plans

---

[17]According to Ludwig Lebzeltern, the Austrian ambassador to Naples, Ferdinand was dominated by the fear of being influenced. Lebzeltern to Metternich, December 31, 1830, Ruggero Moscati, Ferdinando II di Borbone nei documenti diplomatici austriaci (Naples: E.S.I., 1947), p. 15.

[18]At a meeting of the Council of State, Ferdinand allegedly stated that had he not been the King of Naples he would have been the world's greatest republican. Ibid., p. 25. During a visit to France in 1836, Ferdinand doffed his hat to the statue of Napoleon in Place Vendôme. Calà-Ulloa, de'Tiberiis (ed.), Il Regno, p. 64. Although this was merely a polite gesture toward the French people, it is fair to assume that Metternich, had he heard of this episode, would not have been amused.

[19]"I would surrender the Crown, would abandon Naples rather than approve a constitution; in the backward state of civilization of this country, it would only encourage excesses and disturbances in the kingdom." Moscati, p. 22.

between his house and the Bourbons of Naples.[20]

Walking a tightrope, Ferdinand frequently gave impulsive and contradictory signals, which led the Austrian ambassador to complain about the absence of "solid principles" in Neapolitan foreign policy.[21] Actually, this spirit of independence, often combined with stubbornness and conceit, remained a consistent trait of Ferdinand's foreign policy. He was intent on achieving the goal of a nonaligned foreign policy which had eluded both his father and grandfather. Consequently, he did not reveal those "solid principles" or dependable subordination which would have pleased Metternich.

Ferdinand differed from his predecessors in other important ways. One was the low esteem in which he held diplomacy and diplomats.[22] Another was his determination to conduct his foreign policy directly, thus avoiding the ministerial influence exercised at other Bourbon courts. He did not seek the advice and guidance of a Bernardo Tanucci, John Acton, Donato Tommasi, or Luigi de'Medici. Furthermore, the king took pleasure in withholding vital

---

[20]In addition to the rumored marriage of the Count of Syracuse, there had been talk of a similar alliance between Ferdinand and another daughter of Louis-Philippe--Louise Marie of Orléans.

[21]Lebzeltern to Metternich, November 15, 1833, Moscati, p. 29.

[22]"Le roi de Naples a . . . un mépris affecté pour la diplomatie et les relations diplomatiques auxquelles il affècte de n' attribuer aucune part d' importance et aucune utilité effective." Joseph d'Haussonville, French chargé in Naples, to Nicholas-Jean Soult, Duke of Dalmatia, French foreign minister, March 4, 1840; Saitta (ed.), p. 217.

information from his ministers and cut them off from deliberation and decision.[23] His secretive nature, mistrust of others, and unwillingness to share authority may have partially accounted for this behavior.[24] Unfortunately, these circumstances deprived Ferdinand of the assistance of knowledgeable and honest counsellors, and opened the door to the influence of self-serving courtiers who agreed with his moods of the moment.

Especially responsible for this situation was an inner circle led by Monsignor Celestino Cocle, the king's confessor; the Abbé Giuseppe Caprioli, his secretary; General Giuseppe Filangieri; and Nicola Santangelo, the Minister of Interior. French diplomats called this group the "resistance party" because it supported Ferdinand's resolve to resist British pressures for the abolition of the monopoly. Its members represented conservative interests which opposed innovations, whether political or economic,

---

[23]Even a sympathetic observer detected this secretive style of the king, who took offense when someone guessed his thoughts ("s' offendeva d' essere indovinato."). Calà-Ulloa, de'Tiberiis (ed.), Il Regno, p. 63. French diplomats were even more explicit, commenting that Ferdinand derived pleasure from leaving his ministers in the dark ("prend plaisir à laisser même ses ministres dans l' ignorance."). Tallenay to Molé, July 26, 1837, Saitta (ed.), p. 90.

[24]Ferdinand wanted to take all the initiatives and disliked the appearance of sharing authority. Tallenay to Molé, April 13, 1837, ibid., p. 77. The same source commented that "The king (of Naples) is little disposed toward listening to the advice of good men. . . . His excessive diffidence and contempt for people . . . makes him see in his advisers only persons who are ready to deny him power." Tallenay to Molé, August 25, 1837, ibid., p. 106.

and wished to curry favor by championing their master's causes.[25]

But there were other items on their secret agenda. Members of this group favored the sulphur monopoly because they supported protectionist policies which insured the survival of a number of business enterprises. There were rumors that some of them had reaped illicit gains for supporting Taix.[26] According to the Sardinian ambassador, Cocle provided speculators with confidential information about the sulphur crisis which enabled them to profit from the Neapolitan stock market.[27] This cabal worked diligently to discredit Cassaro, who favored a more prudent and conciliatory policy toward Great Britain and the abolition of the monopoly as a step in the direction of free trade. It influenced the king against Cassaro, portraying him as being unconcerned with the preservation of royal dignity and national honor. Its members stoked the fires of Ferdinand's wrath by informing him of the debates in parliament and the inflammatory items purposely inserted in the Gazette du Midi

---

[25]Haussonville to Adolphe Thiers, French foreign minister, April 14, 1840, ibid., pp. 250-252. French diplomats refer to "intrigues of private interests" which supported Taix. Molé to Tallenay, April 10, 1837, ibid., p. 74.

[26]Santangelo had the reputation of being an unscrupulous profiteer. Haussonville to Thiers, April 14, 1840, ibid., p. 253.

[27]Luigi Crosa di Vergagni to Clemente Solaro della Margherita, Sardinian foreign minister, April 16, 1840; Nicomede Bianchi, Storia documentata della diplomazia europea in Italia (Turin: Unione Torinese, 1867), vol. 3, pp. 288-289.

by Taix himself.[28] This situation was bound to isolate the king from most of his ministers and facilitated the influence of his personal style over the conduct of foreign policy.

Ironically, Palmerston once commended the "independent spirit of the King of Naples which . . . deserves encouragement."[29] Ferdinand himself originally professed an admiration for "anything English," and showed himself a courteous and congenial host to the British colony in Naples.[30] Other members of his family shared his sympathies, especially his brother, the Prince of Capua, who was obsessively fond of the English language and customs even before his elopement with Penelope Smith.[31]

Capua provided the occasion for the first clash between Palmerston and Ferdinand.[32] Before becoming an

---

[28]Haussonville to Thiers, April 14, 1840, Saitta (ed.), p. 251.

[29]Augustus Craven (ed.), Lord Palmerston: Sa Correspondence intime pour servir à l'histoire diplomatique de l'Europe de 1830 à 1860 (Paris: Didier et Compagnie, 1878), vol. 1, p. 123. During the project for the League of Italian States (1831-1834), Great Britain shared Ferdinand's reservations about an Italian federation dominated by Austria. Moscati, pp. 30-32.

[30]Acton, The Last Bourbons, pp. 66 and 137.

[31]Capua "era di lingua e costumi inglesi infatuato." Calà-Ulloa, de'Tiberiis (ed.), p. 60. He was the second surviving son of Francis I and was born in Palermo on November 10, 1811. He married Penelope Smith on May 11, 1836 and died in Turin on April 22, 1862.

[32]The Capua Affair is described by Calà-Ulloa, ibid., pp. 60-64 and 80-84; and more recently by Acton, The Last Bourbons, pp. 90-99. See also Benedetto Croce, Un Principe di Napoli (Bari: Laterza, 1944).

international cause célèbre, the ambitious, self-indulgent prince fought with his brother on several occasions.[33] Capua and Penelope eloped in January, 1836 and eventually married at Gretna Green, Scotland. Ferdinand did not approve of this marriage.[34] Yet the fugitives enjoyed the protection of Queen Victoria and the support of Palmerston.[35] Ferdinand coped with this unpleasant development in order to defuse the emerging tension over the question of Sicilian sulphur, but he could not accept the British presumption to dictate the terms of the reconciliation with his brother and subject. Even though he liked British ways, the King of Naples drew the line at foreign interference in his family's business.

Capua's demands further complicated the negotiations.[34] His cordial relations with political exiles in London and rumored candidacy for a European throne further

---

[33]Capua accused his brother of suppressing their father's last will which bequeathed him an income of 132,000 ducats. Ferdinand vehemently denied this charge, stating that he had personally paid the debts left by Francis I so that Capua could inherit his full share. Calà-Ulloa, de' Tiberiis (ed.), p. 83.

[34]Ibid., p. 62.

[35]Several reports indicate that Palmerston was related to Miss Smith, who was the daughter of Grice Smith of Ballynatray, Youghal, County Waterford, Ireland.

[34]The Capuas wished to live in England, asked for the title of Princess for Penelope, and the surname of Bourbon for their children. Ferdinand denied this request, but offered a generous settlement and a yearly income which was larger than the one enjoyed by his brother before the elopement.

deterred a reconciliation.[37] According to the Neapolitan consul in Athens, the prince, supported by British sympathizers and Sicilian aristocrats, plotted to become Sicily's constitutional king.[38] Palmerston had favored his intention to reside in Malta, but changed his mind after the London Times published Capua's inflammatory proclamation to the Sicilians. He then advised Capua to postpone the execution of the Malta project and publicly disavow any intention to "foment and encourage disturbances in Sicily."[39]

The Capua Affair damaged Ferdinand's image in British political circles, casting him in the role of a family tyrant and persecutor of ill-starred lovers. But Ferdinand stood on firm ground. As the head of the Bourbons of Naples, he had the prerogative to regulate the marriage of family members.[40] In the final analysis, he behaved with moderation and restraint, offered Capua an honorable settlement, dispatched a special emissary to conduct negotiations in London, and endeavored to pacify Palmerston.

In other disagreements more closely related to foreign

---

[37]I. Arcuno, "Vita d' esilio di Carlo di Borbone, Principe di Capua," Samnium, vol. 5 (1932), pp. 191-192 and vol. 6 (1933), pp. 193-194.

[38]Domenico Morelli to Scilla, March 23, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4130.

[39]Palmerston to Capua, April 28, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4131, copy. Another version claims that Metternich inspired Capua's proclamation in order to keep the controversial prince away from Sicily. Bianchi, pp. 296-297.

[40]It is interesting to note that since the passage of the Marriage Act of 1772, members of the British royal family also needed the consent of the sovereign to marry.

policy, Ferdinand acted in a sensible and prudent manner. For example, he moved cautiously and avoided clear commitments during the controversy relating to the Carlists and the Duchess of Berry.[41] A true Bourbon, Ferdinand favored legitimist causes, but as the king of a relatively small state, he understood the necessity of compromise and avoided confrontations which did not serve his country's best interests.

The emergence of the sulphur crisis provided a more serious issue between Ferdinand and Palmerston. In this instance the king's personal style in the conduct of foreign policy impeded the negotiations with Great Britain and exacerbated the confrontation with Palmerston. Under these circumstances, his foreign minister operated at a disadvantage. Cassaro had a clear understanding of his responsibilities, which he described as supervising the observance of international treaties and maintaining good relations with foreign powers.[42] He expected to be briefed, if not consulted, on matters as important as the international repercussions of the sulphur monopoly. Yet one

---

[41] Ferdinand suppressed the publication of the Court Almanac in order to avoid recognizing either Spanish claimant. Calà-Ulloa, de'Tiberiis (ed.), p. 59. He also did not receive with royal honors his nephew, the Count of Chambord, who was the legitimist claimant to the French throne. Haussonville to Dalmatia, January 28, 1940, Saitta (ed.), pp. 193-197; and Acton, The Last Bourbons, p. 130.

[42] "Esposizione del principe di Cassaro a Sua Maestà il re di Napoli, relativa alla questione delle zolfatare di Sicilia, 15 Gennaio 1840," ASN/AB, f. 1016; MAIC, f. 4125; and Bianchi, p. 457.

month before the signing of the contract, Cassaro professed scant knowledge of the status of the negotiations.[43] In fact, on more than one occasion, he asked Santangelo for the information requested by the British and French envoys.[44] Cassaro's tactics of evasion and procrastination, which so angered the Foreign Office, are more clearly understood against this background of poor communication. To make matters worse, Ferdinand was probably aware of Cassaro's strong reservations regarding the monopoly and was consequently reluctant to consult with his foreign minister.[45]

Struggling between his best judgement and loyalty to the king, Cassaro initially managed a tepid defense of the contract asserting that it was not a monopoly because it

---

[43]"The negotiations have been carried out without the concurrence of Prince Cassaro, who has received no official information upon the subject." Temple to Palmerston, June 2, 1838, Papers, no. 10, p. 16.

[44]Kennedy to Palmerston, July 4, 1838, Ibid., no. 12, p. 17; and Cassaro's "Esposizione," Bianchi, p. 455.

[45]The British envoy knew that Cassaro had characterized the sulphur contract as "odious." Temple to Palmerston, April 16, 1839, Papers, no. 34, p. 56. Cassaro himself acknowledged his strong reservations, and believed that the contract would have an adverse effect upon the Sicilian economy and relations with Great Britain and France. "Esposizione," Bianchi, p. 455. He also had "fortissimi dubbi" about the question of the violation of commercial treaties. "Rispettoso voto del Principe di Cassaro sull' affare dei zolfi di Sicilia trattato nel Consiglio ordinario di Stato del Marzo 16, 1840," ASN/AB, f. 1016; AB/MAE, f. 4125; and Bianchi, p. 464.

was "general for all nations."[44] By his own admission, he relied heavily upon Santangelo's assurance that the sulphur matter would receive "mature consideration."[47] He was under the impression that the Council of Ministers would discuss the contract as part of the overall trade relationship with Great Britain. He was confident that his presence on the Council would insure a fair disposition of this business.[48] But Cassaro eventually learned from Temple that negotiations were in fact progressing, and Santangelo acknowledged at the beginning of June, 1838, that the king had conditionally endorsed the Taix-Aycard contract.[49]

At the same time, Santangelo offered strong arguments in support of a contract that addressed the depressed conditions of an industry victimized by the greed of foreign speculators. Monopolies were a longstanding practice in civilized societies, as exemplified by the soda industry in Marseilles. A correct interpretation of Article IV of the Treaty would disprove any allegation of treaty violation.[50]

---

[44]Cassaro to Temple, November 18, 1837, Papers, enclosure 2 in no. 3, Temple to Palmerston, November 22, 1837, p. 4. The correspondence between Cassaro and Temple is in ASN/AB, ff. 1014 and 1018.

[47]"Esposizione," Bianchi, p. 455.

[48]Ibid., pp. 455-456.

[49]Ibid., p. 456.

[50]The original Italian version of this letter is dated June 8, 1838. Its translation is dated July 8, 1838, Papers, enclosure 1 in no. 13, Kennedy to Palmerston, July 9, 1838, pp. 18-21. As a result of this letter, Ludolf was the target of a violent verbal attack by Palmerston at the end of a

Ludolf supported this interpretation with strong arguments.[51] Articles IV and V granted Great Britain the status of favored nation, but did not confer upon British nationals more privileges than those enjoyed by Neapolitan subjects. The Crown had the right to levy taxes on national and foreign businessmen: the situation amounted to a tax on sulphur. The restrictions on the sulphur trade were more liberal than those applied to other products because sellers were free to deal with individuals and groups other than the Company.[52] Neither Santangelo nor Ludolf mentioned compensation for British merchants.[53]

Palmerston's intemperate response to the Ludolf note

---

dinner honoring Queen Victoria on July 25, 1838. A few days later, the foreign minister reneged on a promise to assist Naples against the Albanian pirates. "Esposizione," Bianchi, p. 456. Another letter from Santangelo refuted the charge that British businessmen in Sicily did not receive due notice of the contract. Cassaro forwarded this letter to Temple without comment. Santangelo to Cassaro, August 29, 1838, ASN/AB, f. 1014.

[51]Ludolf to Palmerston, July 31, 1838, ibid; and Papers, no. 17, pp. 30-51. Ludolf restated the Neapolitan position in a lengthy letter to Palmerston, September 17, 1838, Papers, no. 25, pp. 40-45. See Appendix E.

[52]Differenze tra il Governo Inglese e quello di Napoli," ASN/MAE, f. 4130; and Ludolf to Palmerston, September 17, 1838, Papers, no. 25, pp. 40-43.

[53]Cassaro tackled this task, suggesting that the merchants submit documentation of their expenses and losses. Only the businessmen who had rented the mines before hearing of the contract would be eligible for compensation. Cassaro to Kennedy, August 27, 1838, ibid., enclosure in no. 24, Kennedy to Palmerston, September 1, 1838, p. 39. Santangelo wanted to prove that the merchants did receive due notice of the monopoly (see footnote 50) and insisted on the documentation of damages. Santangelo to Cassaro, August 24, 1838, ASN/MAE, f. 4126.

enraged Ferdinand and prompted a strong reply.[54] Although this retort never reached its destination, it offers an insight on the king's position.[55] It refuted, almost point for point, the charges levelled at the Bourbon administration and the monopoly. Ferdinand opened with a strong defense of his government which he insisted was neither despotic nor irresponsible; nor one in which "caprice, want of political knowledge, prejudice, private interest, or undue influence may procure the promulgation of unjust and impolitic edicts." Equality under the law had replaced old class privileges, and Neapolitan subjects enjoyed a freedom which was commensurate with "their character, wishes, and needs." The government protected the private property of its citizens and foreign nationals alike, thus insuring a favorable climate for investment. The British could not claim a "monopoly on political and economic science in the country of Broggio, Vico, Galiani, and Genovesi."

Passing to the defense of the contract, Ferdinand argued that it did not establish a monopoly. True, the firm was exempt from paying the tax of two ducats per cantar

---

[54]Palmerston to Ludolf, October 12, 1838, Papers, no. 26, pp. 46-48. See Appendix F. A copy of the king's letter, undated, is in ASN/AB, f. 1013.

[55]Ludolf received the order to transmit these comments verbally. Palmerston's prolonged absence from London and the subsequent death of Ludolf prevented delivery. The detente in Anglo-Neapolitan relations which occurred in 1839 may have persuaded Cassaro to drop this matter, especially since he felt that these remarks would have exasperated the British government "to the limit." "Esposizione," Bianchi, p. 457.

levied upon others, but this was fair in view of Taix-Aycard's financial obligations which included payments to the Neapolitan treasury, compensation to the mine owners for limiting extraction, costs of transportation, warehousing, and administration. Ferdinand rejected Palmerston's charge that selfishness had motivated the approval of the contract. The Neapolitan government could have imposed a tax of one ducat per cantar on sulphur, thus generating an income of 600,000 ducats a year. But this would have necessitated selling the sulphur at a lower price, hardly a remedy for a depressed industry. The letter concluded with an appropriate reminder of the historical ties between Great Britain and Sicily.

> The loyalty with which the ancestors of His Sicilian Majesty kept the alliance with England resulted in the loss of their continental domains. Let history decide which of the countries sacrificed more for the other. The government of His Majesty is content with mentioning that in Sicily English subjects were hospitably received and protected: there they have established the base of their speculation and fortune.[54]

Although it is possible to argue against some opinions expressed in this message, such as the claim that the contract was not a monopoly, the myth of Ferdinand's tyranny and ignorance finds no support. The reality is an independent-minded ruler, anxious to clear his administration of unfair criticism and to justify his intentions in the award of the Taix-Aycard contract.

---

[54]Ibid.

The resolve which Ferdinand expressed so forcefully in this note appeared to waver in the months that followed, giving the impression that he might abolish the monopoly and justifying Cassaro's hopes for a quick solution to the crisis.[57] For one thing, Taix-Aycard had difficulty fulfilling its obligations.[58] Its default would provide an excellent pretext for cancellation without bowing to foreign pressure.

A better solution focused upon the renegotiation of the Anglo-Neapolitan commercial treaty which the British government proposed at the end of 1838.[59] The notion of burying the sulphur deal in a new treaty appealed to Cassaro. A good courtier, he gave Ferdinand credit for an initiative which would "like magic lay to rest all bitterness, terminate the controversy, and satisfy England."[60] The new treaty

---

[57]Kennedy to Palmerston, August 29, 1839, Papers, no. 37, p. 58; November 5, 1839, ibid., no. 42, p. 63; and MacGregor to Palmerston, November 13, 1839, ibid., no. 44, p. 63.

[58]Kennedy to Palmerston, March 18, 1839, ibid., no. 33, p. 56. By May, Taix had not paid half of what he owed and received permission to pay only one-third of the balance. Wood to Kennedy, May 18, 1839, ibid., enclosure in no. 36, Kennedy to Palmerston, May 27, 1839, p. 58.

[59]Pontieri, "Sul Trattato di commercio," Il Riformismo, p. 299.

[60]". . . come per incantesimo sopire a un tratto ogni rancore, troncar le contestazioni e soddisfare l' Inghilterra." "Esposizione," Bianchi, p. 458. According to Cassaro, the king discussed this idea when he returned from Sicily at the beginning of 1839 and gave formal approval to bilateral negotiations between his foreign minister and James MacGregor on June 15. The draft of the proposal was completed by November 25, and submitted to the king at the beginning of December. Ibid.

offered Naples several advantages. It would place the Neapolitan merchant marine and commerce on an equal footing with the British and abolish without compensation the tariff of 10 percent on Neapolitan goods ten years after the signing of the treaty. The monopoly would be quietly abolished, saving national honor. At this point, even the British were optimistic for a peaceful solution. In June 1839, Poulett Thomson informed the House of Lords that "some arrangement was about to be made that would be advantageous to both countries, while it would check the monopoly on sulphur which was not only injurious to all parties, but was one of the most absurd arrangements ever undertaken by a Government."[41]

However, Ferdinand hesitated and then rejected this proposal. Exasperated by the turn of events, MacGregor commented that "the only thing left was to do to Naples what the French had done to Vera Cruz," where Admiral Baudin had opened fire on the port in November 1838.[42]

British pressure on Cassaro increased after parliament opened on January 16. The foreign minister did his best to persuade Ferdinand that the time had come for a compromise. He argued that the contract had not improved the

---

[41]London Times, June 22, 1839, ASN/MAIC, f. 174. Actually, the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council intended to suspend measures designed to encourage the import of sulphur from other areas and the development of surrogates. Palmerston to Kennedy, December 10, 1839, Papers, no. 34, p. 64.

[42]Haussonville to Dalmatia, January 28, 1840, Saitta (ed.), p. 201.

conditions of Sicily, where limits on production had increased unemployment and crimes against property. The sulphur monopoly was a royal concession which the king could properly revoke, especially since Taix-Aycard did not fulfill its obligations.[43]

But Ferdinand continued to play for time, sending confused and contradictory signals. First he indicated his intention to cancel the contract, then he refused to issue a written confirmation. A statement dictated by Ferdinand on February 23 authorized Cassaro to announce the end of the monopoly, but it was followed by nearly a month of procrastination and misunderstanding.[44] This erratic course was, in part, the result of Ferdinand's tendency to keep people guessing about his real intentions. Kennedy complained to Palmerston that "past experience has unfortunately shown that procrastination and delay are inherent in the system of this Government."[45]

Other reasons may have persuaded the king to postpone

---

[43]"Parere del principe di Cassaro sullo scioglimento del contratto di concessione dei zolfi trattato nel Consiglio di Stato del 26 Gennaio 1840," ASN/AB, f. 1016; and ASN/MAE, f. 4125.

[44]Cassaro's note to Temple began with the emphatic "Sir, the sulphur business is solved!" and bore the annotation "written by verbal order of the king." ASN/AB, f. 1016; and ASN/MAE, f. 4130. At Cassaro's request, Kennedy withheld a strong note from Palmerston and delivered it only when he became convinced that Ferdinand had no intention of cancelling the contract. "Rispettoso voto del Principe di Cassaro," Bianchi, p. 465.

[45]Kennedy to Palmerston, November 5, 1839, Papers, no. 42, p. 63.

cancellation. With the support of the French government, Taix and his associates might press for payment of damages resulting from the abolition of the contract.[66] Although Ferdinand had expressed the intention to cancel "at all cost," he may have recoiled from paying a substantial sum of money to Taix and decided to continue the monopoly.[67] Midnight consultations with Cocle, carried out in the privacy of the royal bedchamber, encouraged this course of action. Probably, the announcement of February 23 was a ruse to gain time and Ferdinand had never seriously thought of cancelling the monopoly. Evidence of his willingness to do so is scant and primarily limited to the repeated assurances of Cassaro, who was not very successful in reading his master's mind.

Regardless of his motives, Ferdinand's behavior in this matter appears to be highly questionable. The sulphur crisis was the most delicate and serious foreign confrontation of his reign before the revolutions of 1848. The situation required tact and good will, together with a coherent plan developed in consultation with knowledgeable advisers. Deliberate attempts to mislead his opponent, especially given the great disparity of power, were counterproductive and bound to discredit the reputation of the king. It is quite possible that no Neapolitan diplomatic effort could ultimately have prevailed against the British

---

[66]Haussonville to Dalmatia, February 8, 1840, Saitta (ed.), p. 221.

[67]MacGregor to Palmerston, November 13, 1839, Papers, no. 44, pp. 63-64.

determination to force the abolition of the monopoly. However, Ferdinand's reputation in the international community could have been enhanced by a more honest and realistic foreign policy.

These actions contrast with the king's good intentions and positive approach to the solution of Sicily's problems. He gave ample consideration to the Taix proposal, and approved it only after soliciting the opinions of the appropriate consultative bodies. In his letter to Palmerston, he defended the Neapolitan position with reasonable arguments, in a tone which was firm yet conciliatory, projecting an image of dignity and fairness. Ferdinand's contradictions resulted in part from the pressure of the situation. Faced with opposition from a superior power, he resorted to questionable diplomatic maneuvers in order to protect his country. In addition, he was the product of his formation and environment, an absolute ruler who frequently acted without advice or consent in the area of foreign policy. The question remains whether it is appropriate to judge Ferdinand according to the standards of constitutional governments or movements.

By the middle of March, Temple was warning of reprisals should a satisfactory reply be further delayed.[46] This stiff note prompted the March 16 meeting of the Council

---

[46]Luigi di Regina, Neapolitan chargé in London, to Cassaro, March 10 and 13, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4130; Temple to Cassaro, March 15, 1840, ASN/AB, f. 1016; also Papers, enclosure in no. 60, Temple to Palmerston, March 17, 1840, p. 77.

of State. Discussion centered on the course of action to take in response to the British threat. With the exceptions of Cassaro and Pietracatella, all ministers joined forces with the king and supported the continuation of the monopoly in order to forestall new demands and preserve national honor. In an overconfident mood, this majority downplayed the gravity of the situation. A British blockade would most likely fail because of the length of the kingdom's coastline. If successful, the blockade would ultimately benefit the Neapolitan economy by protecting it from foreign imports. The captured Neapolitan vessels would probably manage to escape or could be ransomed with public funds. Ferdinand insisted that he was right on the issue because the monopoly fell within his prerogatives and did not violate any treaty.[69] He reassured his ministers of the kingdom's defensive capabilities and boasted that a firm response would force the British to withdraw, as in the case of the French fleet under Admiral Lalande.[70]

Cassaro presented the rationale for his dissent from

---

[69]Ferdinand's speech is in Austrian archives, and also in Moscati, pp. 40-41.

[70]The arrival of Admiral Lalande in the Bay of Naples on September 28, 1837, created quite a concern over the intentions of the French fleet and placed the port garrison on full alert for two days and two nights. This episode occurred at the height of the Franco-Neapolitan quarrel over the French postal steamships, and was at first viewed as an aggressive action against Naples. The official French explanation was that Lalande had lost an anchor in the bay a few years before and only wanted to test the depth of the waters to avoid a similar occurrence. Saitta (ed.), September 29, 1837, pp. 114-115; October 6, 1837, p. 117; and December 17, 1837, pp. 138-140.

the majority opinion. The length of the coastline would favor, rather than hinder, a naval blockade, which would damage, rather than benefit, the Neapolitan economy. It would also prevent the export of cash crops, the import of raw materials essential to Neapolitan industry, and would deprive the Treasury of custom revenues. Even worse, a naval engagement could result in the complete destruction of the Neapolitan fleet and damage Neapolitan interests far more than coming to terms with Palmerston. In Cassaro's opinion, the best way to uphold national honor was to respect treaties and maintain friendly relations with other nations. In conclusion, he recommended the abolition of the monopoly, restoration of free trade, and settlement of the dispute.

The Council meeting of March 16 marked the end of Cassaro's political career. On several occasions, he had expressed his intention to quit if Ferdinand reneged on the promise to repeal the monopoly. True to his word, the foreign minister resigned verbally at the end of the meeting and in writing the same evening.[71] On April 3, he received the order to leave the capital within twenty-four hours. Ferdinand treated his foreign minister harshly, denying him permission to choose his place of exile and travel without police escort. He ordered Cassaro to be arrested at night

---

[71]His resignation was accepted on March 23, and published in the Gazzetta on March 24. Haussonville to Thiers, March 24, 1840, Saitta (ed.), p. 229. Ferdinand asked for Lebzeltern's recall because he suspected him of intriguing with Cassaro. Metternich denied the request. Moscati, p. 42.

and taken to Foggia, Apulia, about 150 miles from Naples.[72] When Cassaro became ill, the king ignored his request for a transfer to Rome. This harsh treatment was unusual as well as undeserved. Obviously Ferdinand wanted to make an example of him.[73] The question now remains whether the king punished the minister for having dissented, or whether he wanted to convey the impression that Cassaro had misrepresented him during the negotiations with the British.

The meeting also marked the triumph of the resistance party. To succeed Cassaro, Ferdinand appointed the Prince of Scilla, an amiable cipher who was a member of the anti-Cassaro cabal. His influence on the conduct of foreign policy appears to have been negligible; all available evidence suggests that his major concern was to execute the orders of the king and avoid the fate of his predecessor. By his own admission, he lacked experience in foreign affairs and needed additional time to familiarize himself with the intricacies of the sulphur question.[74] The appointment of Scilla deprived the king of an experienced adviser who was both able and willing to provide alternative views.

---

[72]Temple to Palmerston, April 5, 1840, Papers, no. 69, p. 88.

[73]Cassaro was not as fortunate as the ministers of the French kings, who were confined to their country estates. Calà-Ulloa, de'Tiberiis (ed.), Il Regno, p. 89.

[74]Temple to Palmerston, March 21, 1840, Papers, no. 62, p. 78; and Haussonville to Thiers, March 24, 1840, Saitta (ed.), p. 230.

Finally, the meeting marked the end of any hope for a peaceful settlement with Great Britain.[75] A note of protest entrusted to Castelcicala carried the Neapolitan ultimatum to London.[76] Should Great Britain attack the flag or harm a single Neapolitan subject, the Neapolitan government would protect its rights according to the norms of international law. At the same time, Scilla alerted diplomatic representatives scattered throughout Europe to the progressive deterioration of the situation.[77] British observers in Naples agreed that the time for a negotiated settlement was passing. As Temple informed Palmerston:

> There is every appearance that the Neapolitan Government is determined to persevere in its resistance to the just demands of the British Government, and to maintain the Sulphur Monopoly, regardless of consequences, in violation of its treaties with England and France, and of the repeated promises made to the British Government.[78]

Diplomatic negotiations failed to settle the Anglo-Neapolitan quarrel over Sicilian sulphur by March 1840. Ferdinand was on a collision course with Palmerston and faced a double dilemma. On the one hand, he could not

---

[75]Even the French chargé felt that Ferdinand had reached the point of no return on March 16. Haussonville to Dalmatia, March 19, 1840, ibid., p. 227.

[76]"Nota protestativa consegnata al Principe di Castelcicala al 29 Marzo, 1840," ASN/AB. f. 1013.

[77]Scilla's coded messages to diplomatic personnel in London, Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Turin, and Rome are in ASN/AB, f. 1013.

[78]Temple to Palmerston, March 29, 1840, Papers, no. 66, p. 84.

implement domestic reforms without risking military intervention by a major power. On the other hand, he could not pursue his goal of a nonaligned foreign policy without losing diplomatic support in time of need. Metternich shrewdly assessed Ferdinand's situation:

> . . . while he had the laudable intention to reorganize the internal administration of his country, he attached a value to the word independence which he could not possess on a practical policy: independent as a person, he had no ministers; independent as a sovereign, he had no allies; and was consequently without counsellors at home and friends abroad.[77]

---

[77]Metternich to Felix von Schwartzenberg, Austrian ambassador to Naples, March 10, 1844, Moscati, p. 56.

CHAPTER V

THE WAR

> No blood was shed in this somewhat ludicrous affair. . . .[1]

The Sulphur War was out of the ordinary. There was no formal declaration of war on either side, and diplomatic personnel in London and Naples remained at their posts. There were no major or minor engagements between the two fleets; nor were there any attempts to land in enemy territory. Although the initial British plan for the blockade of Neapolitan ports never materialized, there were random raids on Neapolitan shipping. While small commercial vessels suffered damages, there were no human casualties, with the exception of four Neapolitan soldiers who allegedly died as the result of a twenty-six hour fast enroute from the mainland to Sicily.[2]

After Ferdinand issued his "declaration of independence" at the Council meeting of March 16, war seemed

---

[1]Herbert F. Winnington-Ingram, Hearts of Oak (London: W. H. Allen, 1889), p. 20.

[2]Il Portafoglio Maltese, April 13, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4130.

inevitable.[3] Accordingly, the Neapolitan government placed the kingdom on a war alert and activity increased near Fort St. Elmo in Naples. On the evening of March 17, the Ferdinando sailed for Sicily with a military cargo which consisted of two cavalry units, defense material suited for a siege, and ammunition destined for Palermo, Messina, and Syracuse.[4] By the end of March, Temple was reporting that Neapolitan military preparations were to "be carried out with great activity," including the deployment of 20,000 troops in Sicily and outfitting of the 74-gun Vesuvius and other warships at anchor in the port of Naples.[5] There were rumors in London of Neapolitan war preparations which were totally out of proportion to the issue and danger, and of Ferdinand's intention to lead his troops in the defense of Sicily.[6] Preparations continued in April as the king ordered artillery units to guard approaches to the port of Naples. Two Swiss battalions were put in charge of the

---

[3]"Tutto accennava a guerra," Calà-Ulloa, de'Tiberiis (ed.), p. 89.

[4]Haussonville to Dalmatia, March 19, 1840, Saitta (ed.) p. 227.

[5]Temple to Palmerston, March 29, 1840, Papers, no. 66, p. 84.

[6]A pro-Palmerston paper, The Morning Chronicle, ascribed the military alert to a quarrel between Naples and the Bey of Tunis. Di Regina to Scilla, March 31, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4130; and François Pierre Guizot, Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de mon temps (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1962), vol. 5, p. 90.

defense of Castel Nuovo and one of Castel dell' Uovo.[7] Obviously, the Neapolitans expected an imminent attack. The British consul in Trapani, a Sicilian, reported to the authorities that the governor of Malta had inquired about the defense capabilities of that port city. This report prompted additional ammunition to be shipped to Trapani.[8]

While the Neapolitan government was planning for war, efforts to postpone the expected reprisals continued beyond the British deadline of April 1.[9] On that day, Scilla complained about the tone of Temple's March 25 note, which was "stringent for its brevity and peremptory nature." In the same letter, Scilla announced the departure of Castelcicala, who would present the "definitive solution of this already too protracted and unpleasant discussion."[10] Should this mission fail to cancel British reprisals, the Neapolitan government would then inform European chanceries

---

[7]Haussonville to Thiers, April 2, 1840, Saitta (ed.), p. 240.

[8]Calà-Ulloa, de'Tiberiis (ed), p. 89.

[9]Temple had warned that "serious consequences" would result from further delays. Temple to Scilla, March 22, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4130; and Papers, enclosure 2 in no. 63, Temple to Palmerston, March 24, 1840, p. 82. Three days later, Temple formally requested the abolition of the monopoly and compensation for damages within one week. Otherwise, Admiral Robert Stopford, the commander of the Mediterranean fleet, would receive orders to proceed against Neapolitan vessels. Temple to Scilla, March 25, 1840, ibid., enclosure in no. 64, Temple to Palmerston, March 27, 1840, p. 83.

[10]The "Nota Protestativa" of March 29, 1840, restated the Neapolitan position of treaty non-violation, but did not provide a new solution. ASN/AB, f. 1013.

of a development that "must interest the general policy of Europe and particularly the tranquility of its states."[11] Acting on orders from Palmerston, Temple refused to cancel his instructions to Malta.[12]

As European powers became more and more apprehensive lest "the sulphur of Aetna set all Europe on fire," Scilla continued to court European support and assistance.[13] The minister's optimism reflected Ferdinand's belief that the prospect of a war in the Mediterranean would prompt European governments to intervene in order to prevent the controversy from degenerating into an open conflict. Austria appeared to be the most likely power to mediate. Close family ties united the courts of Vienna and Naples, especially after the marriage of Ferdinand to his second wife, the Archduchess Maria Teresa. More importantly, a major goal of Metternich's foreign policy was to maintain the balance of power on the Italian peninsula. A war in the Mediterranean would destabilize the Italian states, reduce Austrian influence,

---

[11]Scilla to Temple, April 1, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4130; and Papers, enclosure in no 67, Temple to Palmerston, April 2, 1840, pp. 84-85. Temple was aware of Castelcicala's departure, ostensibly to transmit a congratulatory message to Queen Victoria on the occasion of her wedding. Temple to Palmerston, March 28, 1840, ASN/AB, f. 1018; and Papers, no. 66, p. 84.

[12]Palmerston to Scilla, March 13, 1840, ibid., no 57, p. 75; and Temple to Scilla, April 3, 1840, ibid., enclosure in no. 70, Temple to Palmerston, April 5, 1840, p. 89.

[13]Metternich to Lebzeltern, April 11, 1840, Moscati, p. 43. Scilla briefed Neapolitan diplomatic and consular personnel on the possibility of international complications. Circulars of March 21 and 24, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4130.

and open the door to the influx of liberal ideas.

Ferdinand had other reasons for expecting Austrian assistance. Since 1834, he appeared to become more supportive of Austrian interests as he favored the removal of French troops from Ancona.[14] This prompted Lebzeltern to declare that the King of Naples had finally become a royalist. Ferdinand also honored his predecessors' commitment to maintain 60,000 troops in the Po Valley.[15] Thus it was not unreasonable for him to expect some help in return.[16]

Contrary to Neapolitan expectations, however, neither Metternich nor Ferdinand's father-in-law, the Archduke Charles, offered their good offices. Metternich expressed his concern for the serious consequences of the quarrel.[17] In his confidential letter to Lebzeltern, the Austrian chancellor explicitly stated that Austria had no intention of interfering with the domestic administration of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, but was worried about the international consequences of an Anglo-Neapolitan war. He correctly sensed that Prussia and Russia would not support Naples, and that France would probably negotiate, but only as a mediator partial to Great Britain. He closed his remarks with a

---

[14]Moscati, p. 34.

[15]Bianchi, pp. 308-309.

[16]Expected support from Vienna may have strengthened Ferdinand's resolve to resist British demands. Ibid., p. 284.

[17]Domenico Gagliati, Neapolitan ambassador to Vienna, to Scilla, April 13, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4130.

severe judgement of the reckless and ill-advised behavior of the King of Naples, and warned that Ferdinand "would have to back down and Palmerston . . . does not intend to make his retreat easy."[18] Other chanceries acted in a similar manner. St. Petersburg answered that Russia was a long way from the central Mediterranean and lacked the naval capability to protect Naples against the British fleet.[19] Berlin exhorted London to use restraint, but abstained from further action.

Austria, Prussia, and Russia may have had other motives for not supporting Naples. They did not enjoy the commercial privileges which Naples granted to France and Great Britain, and may have looked forward to the abolition of the contract as a first step toward a change in the overall Neapolitan trade policy.[20] In addition, Palmerston was courting the support of these powers in order to check French influence in the eastern Mediterranean. This successful maneuver produced the Quadruple Alliance which isolated France and created the most serious crisis in

---

[18]Metternich to Lebzeltern, April 11, 1840, Moscati, pp. 43-44. The Austrian ambassador warned Palmerston that British military action in Italy would invite an Austrian response and endanger the peace of Europe already threatened by the Eastern Question. Bianchi, pp. 296-297.

[19]Giura, pp. 75-76.

[20]". . . les puissances étrangères ont des raisons de désirer tout ce qui peut amener un changement complet dans les relations commerciales de ce royaume, à cause du benefice de 10% dont elles ne jouissent pas comme nous, et elles n' ignorent pas que la dissolution du contrat des souffres, vu l' arrangement déjà projeté avec l' Angleterre, était un premier pas fait dans ce sens." Haussonville to Thiers, March 31, 1840, Saitta (ed.), p. 234.

Anglo-French relations since Waterloo.[21]

This lack of support for the Neapolitan position was not indicative of an unqualified approval of Palmerston's actions. Two years after the Sulphur War, the Earl of Aberdeen, Palmerston's successor at the Foreign Office, expressed his own disapproval of Palmerston's intemperate conduct.[22] While Guizot acknowledged that the monopoly had damaged British interests, he rejected the notion that it was a violation of any commercial agreement, especially after the Pollock-Phillimore opinion had cleared the Neapolitan government.[23] Guizot concluded that Palmerston would have used more restraint in dealing with a major power such as France or the United States.[24]

Neapolitan envoys throughout Europe could not have agreed more with these sentiments.[25] Some denounced British

---

[21]Norman Gash, Aristocracy and People: Britain 1815-1865 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), p. 295. Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia signed the Pact of London on July 15, 1840.

[22]ASN/MAE, f. 2091, Pontieri, "Sul Trattato di commercio," Il Riformismo, p. 310.

[23]Francesco Castelnuovo, a Bolognese jurist, went a step further by claiming that the depressed conditions of the sulphur industry made the monopoly necessary. ASN/AB, f. 1017.

[24]Guizot, pp. 94-95. Guizot waggishly noted that it was just like England to cope with two wars, one in China for some pills and one in Naples for some matches. Ibid., p. 90; and Giura, p. 75, n. 5.

[25]Ample documentation of the correspondence between Neapolitan diplomats and Scilla is in ASN/MAE, ff. 4129, 4130, and 4131.

greed and arrogance during the Opium War.[26] Others offered unrealistic suggestions. Gagliati felt that an all-out war was a preferable alternative to a blockade because it would embarrass Palmerston and rally international support around Naples. The most absurd idea came from the Neapolitan ambassador to St. Petersburg, who favored giving patent letters (lettere di marca) which would permit Spaniards, Greeks, and even Americans to raid British ships in the Mediterranean and Atlantic Ocean![27]

As tensions mounted and both sides warned their nationals of possible problems, the idea of a negotiated settlement gained support as the only way out of a situation which threatened the peace of the region.[28] Luigi Crosa di Vergagni, the Sardinian ambassador, was briefly successful in his attempt to bridge the differences between Scilla and Temple.[29] His plan for a preliminary agreement had the

---

[26]Giuseppe Ramirez, Neapolitan consul in Malta, to Scilla, April 30, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4130.

[27]Giura, pp. 75-76.

[28]A Neapolitan circular of March 29, 1840, directed the consuls in Livorno, Ancona, Genoa, Trieste, Marseilles, and Gibraltar to advise Neapolitan captains of the implications of the quarrel with Great Britain. ASN/MAE, f. 4130. On April 2, the British consul Thomas Galway advised British merchants in Naples to use their own judgement in placing their cargo on Neapolitan vessels. Il Corriere Maltese, April 18, 1840, p. 122, ASN/MAE, f. 4130.

[29]Correspondence relating to the Crosa mission is in ASN/MAE, ff. 4129 and 4131. The best contemporary account from the Neapolitan side is the Istorico delle Trattative dal 7 al 12 Aprile fra il principe di Scilla, il marchese Crosa e M. Temple, Saitta (ed.), pp. 247-250, n. 1.

green light from both sides but collapsed within a few days.[30] Slowly, the plan for French mediation gained ground, although Franco-Neapolitan relations had been less than cordial. France suspected the Neapolitan court of favoring the legitimist cause, and resented the Neapolitan refusal to grant warship status to French state steamships (paquebots) entrusted with the delivery of the mail to Neapolitan ports.[31] Also, the French complained of the frivolous pretexts used to expel French subjects, especially those of liberal persuasion, from the Kingdom of Naples. Further resentment focused upon odious harassment, a systematic ill-will against everything French, and the Neapolitan tactics of delaying redress of well-founded grievances.[32] On the Neapolitan side, there were suspicions

---

[30]The draft had the initial approval of Pietracatella, Parisio, and the Council of State. The initiative failed because of misunderstandings, suspicion, and intransigence on both sides. Kennedy opposed it and persuaded Temple to modify the initial draft, thus angering the Neapolitans. Temple showed an unwillingness to cater to the usual dilatory tactics of the king. Ferdinand was reluctant to accept a compromise which would appear as a capitulation to British demands and suspected collusion between Temple and Crosa. Ibid., p. 250. The Sardinian government criticized Crosa for undertaking the task without official approval and recalled him shortly thereafter.

[31]The French kept a vigilant eye on the activities of French legitimists in Naples such as the Viscount de Walsch. Dalmatia to Auguste Perier, chargé in Naples, November 13, 1839, Saitta (ed.), pp. 189-190. The visit of the Count of Chambord, the legitimist claimant, was the topic of correspondence between the French foreign minister and the chargé in Naples from November 1839 to January 1840.

[32]"Des actes et des procédés, que reprouvent à la fois l'equité et le droit international, semblent accuser de la part de l'Administration des Deux Siciles contre tout ce

of the trends established by the Orléans monarchy. Always sensitive to slights, Ferdinand resented Louis-Philippe's cool treatment of his ambassador to Paris in 1835.[33] Franco-Neapolitan relations became so strained that the two governments ceased exchanging envoys of ambassadorial rank in the mid-thirties.[34]

France had joined Great Britain in the protest against the monopoly, but the news of Ferdinand's intention to cancel the contract in February, 1840, generated a subtle shift in French diplomacy. The French government now became aware of the need to protect national interests and insure an equitable compensation for the losses suffered by French investors. After all, Taix and associates were creditors of the Neapolitan government and entitled to their own government's protection.[35]

Ferdinand's ill-concealed contempt for diplomats and diplomacy and his personal control over foreign policy

---

qui porte le nom français un sisthème de malveillance et d' hostilité qu' on a peine à s' expliquer." Notes sur les démêlés de la France avec Naples, August 1837, ibid., pp. 100-101.

[33]Bianchi, pp. 276-277.

[34]Admiral LaLande's arrival in the Bay of Naples occurred during this period.

[35]"Cette resiliation change completement à nos yeux la position de M. Taix et de ses associés, et que nous ne devons plus voir en eux que des Français créanciers du Gouvernement Napolitain, et dont les interêts compromis ont droit à la protection de la France." Haussonville to Dalmatia, March 15, 1840, Saitta (ed.), p. 221.

discouraged offers of diplomatic assistance.[34] Nevertheless, Haussonville initiated steps in this direction, stressing to Cassaro the advantages of French over Austrian mediation. With a strong presence in the Mediterranean, France was a better shield against the British fleet than Austria offering "its Hussars from the depths of Hungary."[35] Urged by other diplomats, Haussonville made a similar representation to Scilla and then to Ferdinand. Although he carefully restated France's complete agreement with the British position on the monopoly, he clearly indicated the willingness of his government to officiate as an intermediary.[36]

After the failure of the Crosa initiative, the possibility of French mediation increased. In Paris, Castelcicala took credit for securing Louis-Philippe's good offices.[37] The French government also appreciated Ferdinand's success in persuading the Duchess of Berry to moderate her legitimist activities.[40] The Neapolitan

---

[34]Haussonville to Dalmatia, March 4, 1840, Saitta (ed.), p. 217.

[35]"Un ambassadeur d' une nation comme la nôtre, alliée de l' Angleterre, puissance maritime, maintenant imposante dans le Mediterranée, ne serait-il pas un protecteur plus efficace contre les vaisseaux de ligne venus de Malte, que le ministre d' Autriche vous offrant ses houzards du fond de la Hongrie?" Haussonville to Thiers, March 15, 1840, ibid., p. 223.

[36]Haussonville to Thiers, March 24, 1840, ibid., pp. 229-230; and March 31, 1840, ibid., p. 236.

[37]Castelcicala to Ferdinand, April 15 and 20, 1840, ASN/AB, f. 1013. Castelcicala had the reputation of being a self-serving meddler. Guizot, p. 101.

[40]Acton, The Last Bourbons, p. 130.

government responded by signalling a willingness to allow an allied power to negotiate the issue of compensation.[41] In London, Guizot found Palmerston troubled by the whole business and interested in a quick diplomatic solution. Anxious about European reaction, the foreign secretary asked the ambassador, "Pouvez-vous nous aider à finir cette affaire, et comment?"[42] After receiving specific instructions from Thiers, Guizot offered a proposal which the British cabinet accepted on April 16.[43] Three days later, Lord Granville, the British ambassador to Paris, formally accepted the French mediation. That same day, Thiers telegraphed the proposal to Haussonville, who in turn presented it personally to the king on April 25.[44] Ironically Caprioli and Cocle, who had championed resistance to British demands, now hastened to advise the king to accept the French mediation. Having succeeded in ruining Cassaro's career, these courtiers turned their attention to finding a

---

[41]Haussonville to Thiers, April 17, 1840, Saitta (ed.), p. 254.

[42]"Can you help us to terminate this business, and how?" Guizot, p. 96.

[43]Ibid., pp. 89-90.

[44]Granville's note to Thiers is appended to Thiers' letter to Haussonville of April 20, 1840. Saitta (ed.), pp. 255-256, n. 1. Negotiations were to be held in Paris and not Naples, ostensibly to spare Ferdinand the embarrassment of dealing under British guns. Actually, the French hoped that negotiating in Paris would avoid the delays, uncertainties, and equivocations which characterized Neapolitan foreign policy. Thiers to Guizot, April 20, 1840, Guizot, p. 99.

solution to the crisis while maintaining the king's favor.[45]

While diplomats worked toward a peaceful solution to the problem, the Sulphur War had begun. Palmerston considered his country at war since the first week of April, when he casually remarked to the Neapolitan chargé in London, "Do you know that we are at war?"[46] But the British fleet had not as yet initiated hostile action against Neapolitan ships. On April 10, Admiral Stopford on the H.M.S. Princess Charlotte notified the governor of Malta, Henry Bouverie, that the Neapolitan government had failed to comply with the "just demands of the British Government regarding the Monopoly of the Sulphur Mines." Consequently, he would execute his orders "with all possible dispatch."[47] According to his instructions, Stopford would "cause all the Neapolitan ships that may be in Neapolitan or Sicilian waters to be stopped and detained" until he received orders to cease and desist.[48] The fleet maneuvered in the southern Mediterranean, mostly around the islands of Capri and Ischia, in

---

[45]Haussonville to Thiers, May 2, 1840, Saitta (ed.), p. 269.

[46]Luigi di Regina to Scilla, April 7, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4130; and Giura, p. 72. Palmerston did not view this action as an all-out war, unless British citizens became victims of aggression. Palmerston to Temple, April 14, 1840, Papers, no. 68, p. 88.

[47]Il Portafoglio Maltese, April 18, 1840, carried the text of this letter. ASN/MAE, f. 4130.

[48]Ibid. Temple's description of the operation is very similar: "Not an immediate blockade, but to chase Neapolitan vessels and hold them as pawns." Temple to Scilla, April 17, 1840, ibid.

Sicilian territorial waters, and off Italy's heel.[49] H.M.Ss. Bellerophon, Benbow, Hydra, and Jasur from Malta and the corvette Talbot from Corfu stopped, searched, and disabled Neapolitan commercial vessels, and escorted them to British naval bases. The first ship confiscated by the British was the Achille, which arrived in Malta on April 21.[50] These operations appeared to be more consistent with piracy on the high seas than a war fought according to conventional rules.[51]

The memoirs of a British naval officer who participated in the hostilities treat the entire episode as a lark, an exercise which broke the monotony of service at sea.[52] Rear Admiral Herbert Frederick Winnington-Ingram was a young midshipman on the H.M.S. Talbot, which was under the command of the then Captain Henry Codrington. Strategy relied upon the element of deceit. H.M.S. Talbot hoisted the Austrian flag until it came within two or three miles of the

---

[49]Unconfirmed reports mentioned British hostile action as far north as the island of Pianosa in the Tuscan archipelago and as late as June 23, 1840. Report of the General Consulate of the Two Sicilies in Livorno, June 24, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4131.

[50]For a detailed description of the vessels taken to Malta from April 21 to April 27, see "Notamento di tutti i legni di Real Bandiera che sgraziatamente sono qui approdati in arresto," Ramirez to Scilla, April 27, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4130. The vessels carried salt, citrus fruits, wheat, and barley. The British released the cargo of one ship because it consisted of French goods. Ramirez to Scilla, May 2, 1840, ibid.

[51]Davis, in Davis (ed.), p. 86.

[52]Winnington-Ingram, p. 20.

unsuspecting quarry. Then it would fire a shot across the bow, putting the crew in a state of confusion "like a wounded bird with feathers dishevelled by the sportsman's fire."[53] Winnington-Ingram's account contains some glaring mistakes, such as a reference to the King of Naples as Francis rather than Ferdinand.[54] However, this eyewitness account indicates perceptions which must have been fairly common within the British navy.[55]

The reports from consular personnel reflect a more sober side of the war. Several consuls residing in port cities such as Giuseppe Tschudy in Livorno, Filippo Boscaini in Civitavecchia, Ferdinando Scaglia in Trieste, and Giuseppe Monticelli in Venice requested information and expressed concern for Neapolitan trade.[56] The consul in Corfu, Giorgio Balsamo, described the status and treatment of the captured crews.[57] From Malta, Ramirez reported that the disruption of trade between Naples and Sicily generated

---

[53]Ibid.

[54]Ibid.

[55]The admiral considered the capture of a big sea turtle as the highlight of the entire operation. Ibid., p. 22.

[56]ASN/MAE, ff. 4130 and 4131.

[57]Balsamo identified the name, origin, and destination of the five captains detained in Corfu at the end of April and reported that the crews enjoyed freedom of movement at the base. Balsamo to Scilla, April 30, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4131. Two more vessels were captured in May, but orders came from Malta to release two empty ships, one carrying British goods and two confiscated after April 26. By the end of May, only two Neapolitan ships remained in Corfu. Balsamo to Scilla, May 29, 1840, ibid.

shortages and a rise in the price of commodities such as wine.[58]

Consular reports also provide information regarding the hardships and losses incurred by the captains of the captured ships. Small Neapolitan entrepreneurs who contracted for the delivery of their cargo suffered inconveniences, humiliation, and, in several cases, substantial damages. There was the case of Captain Gennaro Lauro of the Assunta who was under contract with a trading firm in Castellammare di Stabia to load salt in Trapani destined for Odessa. On April 26, the H.M.S. Benbow opened fire on the Assunta about thirty miles out of Girgenti and escorted it to Malta where it remained until June 15. When Lauro and his vessel finally arrived in Odessa on August 12, the cargo was for the most part spoiled. In addition, an oversupply on the local market interfered with the sale of the remaining good salt on board. Lauro lost most of his cargo and could not recover the expenses incurred for salaries and the maintenance of his crews. While in Malta, he missed several business opportunities and would miss others while in Odessa. Although he was not responsible for the delays, the

---

[58]A small boat carrying orange and cotton seed was the last to arrive in Malta on April 25. Ramirez to Scilla, April 27, 1840, ibid. Ramirez was an outspoken critic of the British fleet's arrogant behavior and British policy, which "was always known for disloyal and abusive behavior, especially in the matter of commercial interests." Ramirez to Scilla, April 30, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4130.

trading company found him in default and fined him.[39] This woeful tale provides some insight on the ordeals of Neapolitan traders, but its accuracy is questionable since its purpose was to obtain compensation.

British raids continued after the announcement of the French mediation, notwithstanding Palmerston's April 20 promise to Guizot to suspend hostilities for three weeks as a conciliatory gesture.[40] In retaliation, Scilla ordered an embargo on British vessels in Neapolitan ports.[41] Inconsequential and short-lived, this action affected eight ships, mostly empty, and lasted only twenty-four hours.[42]

In the meantime, other issues stood in the way of the negotiations. The French were particularly upset with the postponed departure to Paris of the Duke of Serracapriola, appointed ambassador the previous fall, and now mentioned as

---

[39]Gennaro Lauro to Felice de Ribas, the Neapolitan consul in Odessa, August 23, 1840, ASN/MAE. f. 4131.

[40]Craven (ed.), p. 210.

[41]"Progetto di nota che il ministro di S. M. Siciliana dovrà dirigere al gabinetto il 25 aprile 1840," ASN/MAE, f. 4130. Neapolitan representatives in European capitals were notified of the embargo on April 24. Ibid.

[42]The Neapolitan government defined the circumstances which justified retaliation, quoting the authority of Emerich de Vattel and other political theorists. A government which cannot obtain redress for the unfair treatment of its subjects has the right to treat in the same manner the subjects of the offending power. The title of this memo is "Secondo il diritto delle genti" ("According to International Law"), under the heading of the Ministry of the Interior and its author was probably Santangelo. ASN/AB, f. 1013.

the chief negotiator for the Neapolitan side.[43] This postponement delayed the arrival of the new French ambassador to Naples, and the Thiers government was beginning to wonder if the Neapolitan government meant to exchange envoys of ambassadorial rank.[44]

Closely linked to Serracapriola's arrival was the extent of his authority to negotiate on behalf of his government. Without full powers, he would be forced to seek approval from Naples at every step, and this would contradict the stipulation that negotiations be held in Paris. According to the Neapolitan government, Serracapriola had full powers since the beginning of May and could, if he wanted, "sell Sicily."[45] Actually, he could not negotiate without consulting his government until the end of May.[46] Yet, he still had reasons to be apprehensive about the consequences of decisions made without Ferdinand's approval. Even the French minister sympathized with Serracapriola's precarious position.[47]

---

[43]Nicola Donnorso Maresca, the Duke of Serracapriola, delayed his departure because of the death of his mother in Russia. Haussonville to Thiers, March 17, 1840, Saitta (ed.), p. 222.

[44]France wanted to be represented by a diplomat with the same rank as the Austrian ambassador.

[45]Montebello to Thiers, May 7 and 10, 1840, ibid., pp. 280-281; and Montebello to Thiers, May 9, 1840, ibid., p. 282.

[46]Thiers to Montebello, May 28, 1840, ibid., p. 287.

[47]"Il est à plaindre dans tous les cas." ("He is to be pitied in all cases.") Montebello to Thiers, May 10, 1840, ibid., p. 285.

More important than the question regarding Serracapriola's mission was the substantive issue of a quick abolition to the sulphur monopoly. Palmerston was anxious to close the books on the contract and impatient with the lack of progress in this direction.[68] Notwithstanding repeated promises to cooperate, Ferdinand hesitated to cancel the sulphur contract. Speculation surrounds the true reasons for the king's reluctance. Perhaps he would have preferred to see the monopoly cancelled by default on the grounds that Taix-Aycard had failed to fulfill some of its obligations.[69] Perhaps the "resistance party" was again in position to exercise some influence.[70] According to French sources, Ferdinand was concerned with the loss of revenue resulting from the termination of the monopoly and planned other means to exploit the production of Sicilian sulphur.[71] Consequently, he postponed cancellation until receiving assurances that his sovereign right to regulate the industry would not be challenged in the future.[72]

---

[68]Palmerston suspected that the delay was a part of the usual dilatory tactics of the Neapolitan government and contemplated a resumption of the reprisals. Palmerston to Granville, June 2, 1840, ASN/AB, f. 1015.

[69]Serracapriola suggested this solution to Thiers, who vehemently rejected it. Thiers to Montebello, May 28, 1840, Saitta (ed.), pp. 288-289.

[70]Haussonville to Thiers, May 2, 1840, ibid., p. 269.

[71]Montebello to Thiers, May 7, 1840, ibid., p. 279.

[72]Thiers supported Ferdinand's right to regulate the export of sulphur and Palmerston agreed. Thiers to Montebello, May 28, 1840, ibid., pp. 289-290.

Another issue which complicated the negotiation process was the inability of the two governments to agree on a rationale for cancellation. The British insisted that the monopoly should be abolished because it violated a commercial treaty, a notion which the Neapolitans rejected from beginning to end.[73] As far as the French mediators were concerned, the issue of violation was secondary to the issues of abolition and compensation. Thiers bypassed the issue of violation, and expressed doubts regarding its validity.[74] Thus the French removed a major obstacle from the conclusion of the negotiations, and the Neapolitan government was now free to adopt a polite formula to justify the cancellation.[75]

This solution left the way open for the French proposal

---

[73]When he accepted the mediation offer, Granville stipulated that the sulphur monopoly must be abolished immediately because it violated Article V of the 1817 treaty. Granville to Thiers, April 19, 1840, ibid., p. 255, n. 1. The Neapolitan position was equally clear, and stipulated that the only condition for accepting mediation was the preservation of the principle that the monopoly did not violate any treaty. Scilla to Haussonville, April 23, 1840, ibid., p. 264.

[74]France mentioned only two conditions: abolition and compensation. Thiers to Haussonville, April 20, 1840, ibid., p. 257. More explicitly, Thiers expressed the view that "Il sera à propos de s' abstenir de toute mention du traité de 1817, dont la violation est pour le moins problematique" ("It will be a good idea to abstain from any mention of the Treaty of 1817, whose violation is to say the least problematic.") Thiers to Montebello, May 28, 1840, ibid., p. 287.

[75]The desire to comply with the wishes of the French government provided a convenient cover and face-saving device for accepting the proposal.

which attempted to satisfy both parties.[74] Ferdinand was pleased to see that the proposal dropped the issue of violation and preserved his sovereign right to regulate the sulphur industry. The British were gratified with the notion of a quick end to the monopoly. They also liked the inclusion of two British representatives, together with two Neapolitans and a French referee, in a commission charged with determining the compensation for losses suffered by British investors.[77] Palmerston accepted these conditions on July 7.[78]

Two days later, Serracapriola urged his government to accept this proposal and Scilla informed Ferdinand of this new development. On July 21, Ferdinand notified his prime minister that he had accepted the conditions and issued Decree 6310 which abolished the monopoly.[79] Diplomatic amenities followed. Temple expressed gratification for the settlement of the controversy, and Scilla reciprocated by conveying the king's hope that the friendly ties between the two nations would remain strong in the years ahead.[80] The

---

[74]"Ultimato di M. Thiers per lo affare dei zolfi," ASN/MAE, f. 4126; and Guizot, pp. 426-429.

[77]Ferdinand would have preferred to let the French determine the amount and distribution of the indemnity.

[78]ASN/MAE, f. 4124; and Guizot, p. 429.

[79]Serracapriola to Scilla, July 9, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4124; Scilla to Ferdinand, July 16, 1840, ibid.; and Ferdinand to Pietracatella, July 21, 1840, ibid.

[80]Temple to Scilla, July 27, 1840, ASN/AB, f. 1013; and Scilla to Temple, August 10, 1840, ASN/MAE, f. 4214.

Sulphur War had lasted three months and twelve days.[81]

The short duration of the monopoly makes it difficult to assess its impact on the sulphur industry. Available data indicate that sulphur production and trade declined. In 1838 the export of sulphur was 84,272 tons, but this figure does not reflect the amount of sulphur hoarded by the merchants before the contract went into effect. The only full year of the monopoly was 1839, when exports fell to 27,476 tons and sulphur prices stabilized around 29.21 ducats per ton.[82]

The first item on the Neapolitan agenda was the financial settlement with Taix-Aycard, concluded in August 1840.[83] When the contract was abolished, the company held approximately 900,000 cantars (71,407 tons) of sulphur in reserve.[84] Dumped on the market, this surplus would have drastically depressed prices, so the Neapolitan government

---

[81]This figure assumes that the war began on April 10, 1840, when Stopford informed the governor of Malta that hostile action would commence against Naples and ended when Temple received the authorization to recall the fleet from Neapolitan waters. Temple to Scilla, July 22, 1840, ASN/AB, f. 1013; and Giura, p. 88.

[82]See Appendix B, tables 1 and 4.

[83]"Situazione del debito del Reale Governo verso la disciolta compagnia Taix-Aycard e Compagni per gli zolfi di Sicilia per effetto della convenzione dell' 11 agosto 1840," ASN/AB, f. 1015. Taix did not receive full compensation until May, 1843. Giovanni d'Andrea, Minister of Finance, to Scilla, May 29, 1843, ASN/MAE, f. 4125.

[84]R. Busacca, "Sulla Questione degli zolfi e sulle consequenze della Compagnia Taix-Aycard," Giornale di Statistica (1840), Colonna, p. 74.

bought the surplus at a price of 36 carlins per cantar "free on board," and imposed an export duty of 20 carlins per cantar in order to finance the purchase.

This action dissatisfied many: the mine owners who had to extract sulphur without the guarantee of a fixed price and sell it at a lower profit margin; the buyers who faced higher prices in the British market because of the export duty; and the British government which protested this interference with the free purchase of sulphur.[85] Through Temple, the Foreign Office requested a reduction of this tax, but the Neapolitan government at first stood firm, arguing that the king had the right to regulate the industry and impose a levy.[86] Eventually Naples relented, partly to avoid further problems and facilitate the export of the oversupply.[87]

The last task was to settle the claims submitted by British nationals in Sicily. There were questions concerning the real extent of these damages.[88] All the evidence suggests that British trade and navigation did suffer losses. The Neapolitan government acknowledged this fact and asked

---

[85]Palmerston to Castelcicala, September 2, 1840, ASN/MAE; and Giura, pp. 91-92.

[86]Temple to Scilla, March 1, 1841, ASN/MAE, f. 4130; Giura, p. 92-93; and Scilla to Temple, April 7, 1841, ASN/MAE, ff. 4126 and 4132.

[87]This duty was reduced to eight carlins in 1841 and two carlins the following year. It was abolished in 1846.

[88]Sullivan to Palmerston, June 22, 1841, Davis, in Davis (ed.), p. 86.

for documentation. An international commission composed of Sir Woodbine Parrish and Stephan Henry Sullivan of Great Britain, Michelangelo La Rosa and Giuseppe Bonguardino of Naples, and a surarbitre (super-referee), the Count de Lourde of France, met to address this issue. Between March and December 1841, this commission considered nineteen claims, and awarded a grand total of 121,454 ducats instead of the 373,978 requested.[68]

Unexpectedly, France abandoned the mediator role and supported the claims of a group of investors from Marseilles, meeting with strong Neapolitan objections. When Scilla argued that the Thiers proposal did not mention any grounds for these demands, the French backed down. They acknowledged that their request was unwarranted and appealed to the "équité bienveillante" ("benevolent fairness") of Ferdinand.[70] These claims continued until 1851, when France accepted a settlement of 44,000 ducats instead of the 233,442 requested.[71]

Thus ended an undeclared war which did not inflict any

---

[68]For the agenda and criteria of this commission, see Giura, pp. 98-101.

[70]Montebello to Scilla, February 15, 1841; Scilla to Montebello, April 14, 1841; and Montebello to Scilla, April 25, 1841; ibid., pp. 96-97.

[71]ASN/MAE, f. 4128; and Giura, p. 98, n. 2. The French position during the crisis was somewhat ambiguous. Although France formally joined Great Britain in protest, it did not pursue the matter as energetically. There is a question of whether or not banking interests such as Lafitte's, which supported Taix-Aycard, influenced the French government to use restraint. Giura, p. 10.

casualties, but had its winners and losers. Great Britain clearly won the day because it forced the abolition of the sulphur monopoly. Palmerston could now close the books on an annoying controversy which had engaged the Foreign Office in frustrating and protracted negotiations.[72] British merchants in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies received compensation and maintained their privileged status. France was also a winner because of its prestigious role as a mediator between the two parties. Naples was grateful for the face-saving resolution and was well disposed toward friendlier relations with Paris.

Ferdinand emerged bruised from the fray. Forced under foreign pressure to abandon the attempt to regulate a major industry, he cancelled the monopoly and compensated Taix-Aycard, the British, and the French. After bragging repeatedly about his resolve and combat readiness, he lacked both the diplomatic support and military resources to prevail. It was a hard lesson to learn that ruling over a kingdom protected by "sea and holy water" was not enough to insure the pursuit of an independent foreign policy. On the positive side, Ferdinand could take some comfort in having been cleared of the charge of treaty violation. Naples did not suffer severe damages and continued to be free from

---

[72]Palmerston felt that the outcome of the controversy meant the end of a "great embarrassment" and the release of the entire British fleet which was needed for service in the eastern Mediterranean. Palmerston to Temple, July 13, 1840, Craven (ed.), pp. 214-215.

foreign occupation. This was an improvement over the experiences of his two immediate predecessors.

CHAPTER VI

THE CONCLUSION

The Sulphur War exemplified the evolution of British imperialism through commercial treaties to a form of limited military intervention. It also represented an intermediate stage between economic and political influence and outright annexation. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Great Britain had established a virtual hegemony over the Mediterranean. Commercial treaties, a strategic presence, and John Acton's influence over the Neapolitan court supported British interests in the area. During the Napoleonic War, William Bentinck not only protected the Bourbons and their Sicilian domains, but also supported a baronial rebellion, acting more like an overlord than an ally. At the end of the war, the British military presence ended, but commercial domination continued under the guarantees of the Treaty of 1816. This form of control was nothing new, and even warranted the dispatch of warships to Naples during the Revolution of 1820. The rapidly growing demand for sulphur and the expanding business activities of British merchants in Sicily emphasized the need for continued control in the area.

But other factors motivated the use of force by the British government. Palmerston never felt comfortable with the presence of a reactionary government in Naples, and was aware of the links between legitimist forces and Aimé Taix. On the home front, he could not ignore the demands of commercial interests represented in parliament. Not only did the British cabinet formulate policies which were beneficial to economic interests, but did so in response to a considerable amount of political pressure. Obviously, the Sicilian sulphur trade was important to several British industries in a phase of expansion, and parliamentary opposition and special interest groups urged Palmerston to resolve the crisis. Yet, it was the presence of the fleet in Malta which permitted the prompt and effective use of force against Naples.

Finally, the British government was accustomed to having its way with Naples for many years. Faced with resistance from unexpected quarters, Palmerston reacted with anger and disbelief.[1] It was unthinkable that an autocratic ruler of a lesser state, whose role was to cooperate or acquiesce, would presume to challenge the government of a great power. The low esteem which Palmerston had for Ferdinand personally further exacerbated the situation. These feelings influenced Palmerston's conduct during the crisis, which appeared to justify indictments of arrogance

---

[1]Calà-Ulloa, de'Tiberiis (ed.), p. 81.

and abuse.[2] It is clear that the personal antipathy between the foreign secretary and the king, which resulted from differences of philosophy, style, and goals, made their positions irreconcilable. Subsequent developments proved that the confrontation was a personal duel between two willful men. The Anglo-Neapolitan détente, which eventually led to the commercial treaty of 1845, must be credited to the tact of Lord Aberdeen, who understood the need to conciliate Ferdinand. Palmerston's return to power the following year ended this peaceful interlude.[3]

But the Sulphur War was far more than a personal confrontation, as it underscored the tension arising between industrial nations in a phase of expansion and developing countries seeking to diversify their economies, assess their resources, and bring their structures of production in line with their needs while preserving their political autonomy.[4] For the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, the sulphur crisis was an acute manifestation of the problems of an industry which was not structured to take full advantage of the demand for a plentiful domestic resource. Sicily's favorable geographical position and vast deposits of sulphur were not sufficient to insure economic development.

---

[2]Giura, pp. 102-103.

[3]Pontieri, "Sul trattato di commercio," Il Riformismo, pp. 342-343.

[4]Francesco Sirugo, "La 'Rivoluzione Commerciale'. Per una Ricerca su Inghilterra e mercato europeo nell' età del Risorgimento italiano," Studi Storici, vol. 2 (1961), p. 267.

The monopoly not only addressed the depression of an important industry by controlling sulphur production and prices, but offered other advantages as well. Sulphur revenues were expected to facilitate the abolition of the grist tax, improve farming, build roads, and train technical personnel. Furthermore, Sicily depended heavily upon the import of manufactured goods and competed with other nations for the export of cash crops.[5] Regulation of sulphur exports had the potential to make Sicily more competitive on foreign markets. Obviously, a reform of the sulphur industry could not have solved all of Sicily's problems. The improved profile of a single industry does not necessarily translate into general prosperity, nor do export taxes guarantee optimum use of revenues.

There is no challenge to the fact that Ferdinand had the right to make provisions for the welfare of his kingdom. It is equally clear that his actions did not violate any international agreements. What defeated this attempt was a combination of two factors: the growing importance of sulphur in international industry and the weakness of the Bourbon kingdom in Sicily, which was partly a function of its association with more generally "retrograde" political tendencies and opposition from just as "retrograde" elements in Sicily. Since the eighteenth century, Neapolitan trade policy had been uncertain, cautious, and subordinate to the

---

[5]Aurelio Lepre, "Sui Rapporti tra Mezzogiorno e Europa nel Risorgimento," Studi Storici, vol. 10 (1969), pp. 556-557.

needs of the great powers. During the early part of the nineteenth century, the Bourbons had to cope with French invasions, British guardianship, a baronial rebellion in Sicily, and Austrian troops of occupation. No wonder their economic policy remained closely linked with foreign policy.

For all these reasons, any reform affecting the Neapolitan economy had little chance of success without foreign support, or at least, acquiescence. Any attempt to protect a domestic raw material, which was so important to the industrial nations, was likely to meet opposition by the "imperialism of free trade." Great Britain tended to react against any unilateral protectionism as was the case when Belgium considered membership in the Union du Midi.[6] The Sulphur War proved that a state which was economically and politically dependent could not possibly implement reforms which threatened the interests of a great power. Thus the abolition of the monopoly signalled the end of the Neapolitan bid for commercial independence.[7]

When a diplomatic squabble regarding a question of domestic policy degenerated into open hostility, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies lacked the economic resources, military capability, and diplomatic support to win the day. Carried

---

[6]The Union du Midi was a planned customs union linking the markets of Belgium, France, Piedmont, Spain, and Switzerland. In October 1842, Lord Aberdeen dissuaded Leopold I of Belgium from joining, alleging that such an action would threaten the interests of Belgium and the balance of Europe. P. Thureau-Dangin, Histoire de la Monarchie de Juillet, vol. 5, p. 128; quoted in Sirugo, p. 292.

[7]Davis, in Davis (ed.), p. 87.

away by his obsession with independence, Ferdinand miscalculated the inevitable outcome of a confrontation with Great Britain. This was a serious error for a head of state who chose to ignore the advice of his foreign minister.

The Sulphur War also determined the subsequent course of Neapolitan foreign relations. The events of 1840 reinforced Ferdinand's mistrust of diplomacy and diplomats. His animosity found special targets in Temple, whose recall he requested on several occasions, and in Lebzeltern, who represented a power which refused to support the Neapolitan cause. France reaped the benefits of Ferdinand's good will for having brokered the settlement and, as a result, Naples recognized Isabella as the Queen of Spain. Alarmed by this development, Metternich replaced the outspoken Lebzeltern with the tactful Prince Felix von Schwartzenberg, who succeeded in improving relations between Naples and Vienna. But Ferdinand continued to avoid a firm commitment to either France or Austria, and led his country into further diplomatic isolation. Another Italian state did not eventually make the same mistake. Defeated by Austria in the campaigns of 1848-49, Piedmont understood the need to secure an alliance with France before engaging the same superior power on the battlefield. This realistic foreign policy, combined with timely reforms and astute ministerial leadership, made the difference between the future of the Savoys and that of the Bourbons of Naples on the Italian peninsula.

As the year of revolutions approached, Ferdinand's

policy of nonalignment prevented the formation of useful and solid alliances and isolated Naples from the rest of Europe. In addition, the king failed to implement reforms in a basic industry which had the potential of making Sicily more competitive in international trade. These failures have implications regarding the survival of the Bourbon monarchy in southern Italy and the persistence of economic problems in the area.

APPENDIX A

SICILIAN CURRENCY

Onza	=	three ducats*
Ducat	=	ten *tari*
Tari	=	twenty *grani*
Carlin	=	Neapolitan *tari*
**Onza*	=	12.75 *lire* (1862)

SICILIAN WEIGHTS

Cantar	=	79.342 kilograms
Ton	=	12.70 cantars

APPENDIX B

Export and Prices of Sicilian Sulphur*

I. Total export 1832-1850 (decimal values omitted).

Year	Cantars	Tons
1832	400,890	31,566
1833	495,769	39,036
1834	676,413	53,260
1835	699,215	55,056
1836	846,001	66,614
1837	828,107	65,205
1838	1,062,144	84,272
1839	346,301	27,476
1840	609,600	48,000
1841	698,500	55,000
1842	762,000	60,000
1843	825,500	65,000
1844	889,000	70,000
1845	952,500	75,000
1846	1,016,000	80,000
1847	1,079,500	85,000
1848	1,143,000	90,000
1849	1,143,000	90,000
1850	1,016,000	80,000

*Colonna, table 3, p. 49; table 5, p. 52; table 8, p. 73; table 11, p. 76; and table 13, p. 79.

2. Export to Great Britain 1834-1840 (decimal values omitted).*

Year	Cantars	Tons
1834	322,453	25,390
1835	390,144	30,720
1836	423,583	33,353
1837	517,245	40,728
1838	566,356	44,595
1839	258,584	20,361
1840-April	128,905	10,150

*Giura, table 17, p. 83.

3. Prices of average quality sulphur (free on board) per cantar in tari 1808-1837.*

Year	Price	Date	Price
1808	15.00-18.00	1823	16.00-18.00
1809	17.00-18.00	1824	15.00-16.00
1810	18.00-20.00	1825	12.00-14.00
1811	18.50-22.00	1826	11.50-13.00
1812	22.00-24.80	1827	11.50-13.00
1813	26.00-26.00	1828	11.50-13.00
1814	21.00-25.00	1829	10.50-12.00
1815	21.00-26.00	1830	10.25-13.00
1816	26.00-38.00	1831	13.50-18.00
1817	27.00-30.00	1832	18.00-38.00
1818	27.00-30.00	1833	38.00-45.00
1819	24.00-26.00	1834	21.00-45.00
1820	19.00-22.00	1835	17.00-23.00
1821	18.00-20.50	1836	16.75-23.00
1822	18.00-19.00	1837	13.50-15.25

*Giura, table 5, p. 20.

4. Sulphur prices (Raddusa mines) per cantar in tari 1839-1848.*

Year	Price
1839	23.00
1840	23.00
1841	10.00
1842	12.00
1843	12.00
1844	13.50
1845	11.10
1846	12.10
1847	12.15
1848	13.00
1848	20.00

*Colonna, table 9, p. 75 and table 10, p. 76.

APPENDIX C

Treaty of September 26, 1816

Articles IV and V*

Article IV

His Majesty the king of the Two Sicilies promises that British Commerce in general, and the British subjects who carry it on, shall be treated throughout his dominions upon the same footing as the most favoured nations, not only with respect to the persons and property of the said British subjects, but also with regard to every species of article in which they may traffic, and the taxes, or other charges payable on the said articles, or of the shipping on which the importation shall be made.

Article V

With respect to the personal privileges to be enjoyed by the subjects of His Britannic Majesty in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, His Sicilian Majesty promises that they shall have a free and undoubted right to travel and to reside in the dominions of his said Majesty, subject to the same precautions of police which are practiced towards the most favoured nations. They shall be entitled to occupy dwellings, and warehouses, and to dispose of their personal property of every kind and description, by a sale, gift, exchange, or will, and in any other way whatever, without the smallest loss or hindrance being given them on that head. They shall not be obliged to pay, under any pretence whatever, other taxes and rates than those which are paid, or that hereafter may be paid, by the most favoured nations in the dominions of his said Sicilian Majesty.

---

*"Analysis of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between His Britannic Majesty and the King of the Two Sicilies, Signed in London, September 26, 1816," ASN/MAE, f. 4130.

They shall be exempt from all military service, whether by land or by sea; their dwellings, warehouses, and everything appertaining thereto, for objects of commerce, or residence, shall be respected.

They shall not be subjected to any vexatious search or visits. No arbitrary or vexatious inspections of their books, papers, or accounts, shall be made under the pretence of the supreme authority of the state, but these shall alone be executed by the legal sentence of competent tribunals. His Sicilian Majesty engages on all these occasions to guarantee to the subjects of His Britannic Majesty, who shall reside in his states and dominions, the preservation of their property, and personal security, in the same manner as those are guaranteed to his subjects, and to all foreigners belonging to the most favoured and most highly privileged nations.

APPENDIX D

The Pollock-Phillimore Opinions*

Whether the creation of the Brimstone Monopoly in question is an infraction of the treaty with the Neapolitan Government, either as applied to the British Subjects interested in Mines in Sicily, or to British Subjects, holders of Brimstone at the date of the establishment of the Monopoly?

OPINION OF SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK.

I am of opinion that the decree creating the Brimstone Monopoly is not in any respect an infraction of the Treaty between this country and the Neapolitan Government, either with reference to British Subjects interested in Mines in Sicily or to British Subjects, holders of Brimstone at the date of the decree. The Treaty puts the subjects of the Crown of England on the footing of the most favored nations, and it seems to me to do nothing more. A decree which applies equally to the Subjects of the King of Naples and to all Foreigners without distinction, cannot, I think, be regarded as a violation of such a treaty.

12th March, 1840.

OPINION OF DR. PHILLIMORE.

According to the best received opinions of all the Writers on Public Law, a monopoly of the description set forth in the Case may be created by any Independent State within its own dominions without the infraction of any principle of the Law of Nations.

---

*"Sulphur Trade in Sicily," pp. 2-3, ASN/MAE, f. 4130.

Undoubtedly, however, it is competent to two States to prohibit by express stipulation the execution of any such monopoly within the limits of their respective dominions. The only point therefore for consideration here seems to be, whether the monopoly in question is in any way affected by the Treaty of the 26th December, 1816, which at the present moment regulates the commercial intercourse between Great Britain and Sicily.

The only articles which by any latitude of construction can be held applicable to this point are the 4th and 5th. The former, relating to the commerce to be exercised; the latter, to the personal privileges to be enjoyed by British Subjects within the Sicilian Dominions.

The utmost the 4th article stipulates for, is, that the Commerce of British Subjects should be placed on the footing of the most favored nations, and, as the subjects of the most favored nations, indeed the natives themselves, are equally affected with British Subjects by the creation of the monopoly under the Decree of July, 1838. I am clearly of opinion that the monopoly of Brimstone is not prohibited by the terms of this article; this article being the one in which, in my opinion, if any such prohibition were intended it would naturally be expected to be found.

The 5th article, in my judgment, is "dehors," the point in question; it stipulates for the usual privilege and immunities to British Subjects, and for the protection of their personal property, and places them with respect both to the one and to the other, on the footing of the most favored nations. But the Mines of Brimstone are not Personal but Real Property; and with respect to the Brim- stone, which may be in store, the British Subjects are in no way affected by the Decree of 1838, otherwise than the Subjects of all other countries as well as those of the Neapolitan Dominions.

In any view therefore that I can take of this question, my opinion is, that the monopoly not being prohibited by the Law of Nations, there is no stipulation in the existing Treaty which can have the effect of precluding the Neapolitan Government from making any Regulation they may think fit, respecting the production of Brimstone and its export from Sicily, provided that British Subjects are placed in no worse condition with respect to the growth and export of this commodity than the Subjects of that most favored State.

Doctors' Commons,

26th March, 1840.

APPENDIX E

The Neapolitan Position:

Ludolf to Palmerston, September 17, 1838*

September 17, 1838.

The Undersigned, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of His Sicilian Majesty, has hastened to transmit to his Government the note which his Excellency Viscount Palmerston, Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Her Britannic Majesty, did him the honour to address to him on the 27th of July last, complaining loudly of the monopoly in Sicilian sulphur lately granted to a company by the Government of the King. His Majesty has learnt, not without great pain, that this grant is considered by the Government of Her Britannic Majesty, as an infraction of the convention of 1816.

The Undersigned takes the liberty of remarking to Viscount Palmerston with reference to the note on the same subject which the Undersigned had the honour to present to his Excellency on the 31st of July last, that according to the dictates of common sense the privileges which a Sovereign may grant to a foreign nation should never be of such nature as to exceed similar privileges and immunities granted to his own subjects. A contrary principle must be looked upon not only as little in accordance with the paternal regard due to those subjects, but would be fraught with great detriment to the interests of the Sovereign, and would be diametrically opposed and injurious to the prosperity of his states: a prosperity which ought to be the principal object and the first duty of every act emanating from sovereign power.

The Government of His Sicilian Majesty finds itself in the present case supported by the very Convention referred to, which was concluded with England in 1816. In fact, if the terms and the sense of the 4th and 5th Articles of that Convention be well considered, it is clearly manifest that by the concessions made to the subjects of Her Britannic Majesty, His Sicilian Majesty has strictly entered into no other engagement towards them, than to look upon them as the

---

*Papers, no. 25, pp. 43-45.

most favoured nation, and indeed as his own subjects. The fourth Article says, "His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies promises likewise that British commerce in general and the British subjects who carry it on, shall be treated throughout his dominions upon the same footing as the most favoured nation, not only with respect to the persons and property of the said British subjects, but also with regard to every article in which they may traffic, and with regard to the taxes or other duties payable on the said articles, or on the vessels employed in importing the same."

A perusal of this Article distinctly proves that in this very extended concession the King has strictly adhered to the measure of privilege usually granted to foreign nations: that is to say, that he has not granted anything except what is not likely to be injurious to the interests of his own subjects, and that he has not exposed himself to inconveniences, ruinous to his own interests and to the prosperity of his kingdom. It must moreover not be lost sight of, that by this very Article the King has reserved to himself the power of imposing contributions on the property of British subjects equal to those to which the most favoured nation may be subject, provided the general interest should require it; and this Article may thus indeed be considered as the foundation of the immunities and privileges enumerated in Article 5, quoted as follows. "With respect to the personal privileges to be enjoyed by the subjects of Her Britannic Majesty in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, His Sicilian Majesty promises that they shall have a free and undoubted right to travel and to reside in the territories and dominions of His said Majesty, subject to the same precautions of police which are practised towards the most favoured nations. They shall be entitled to occupy dwellings and warehouses, and to dispose of their personal property of every kind and description by sale, gift, exchange, or will, and in any other way whatever, without the smallest loss or hindrance being given them on that head."

It is clear from the contents of this Article (which may be considered as explanatory of the preceding one,) that the disposal of the property of British subjects in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, in whatever way such disposal may be accomplished, shall not be impeded by the operations of the laws prohibiting the sale of property to foreigners; but it can never be inferred from that Article that foreigners should not be subject to the laws of the country which they inhabit, or in which they possess property; laws to which even the subjects of the Sovereign are themselves amenable. If this were not so, this Article would be in contradiction to the 4th: and the meaning of the words just cited is confirmed by the following short quotation, which will in every possible way elucidate the existing discussion. "They (English subjects,) shall not be obliged to pay, under any pretense whatever, other taxes or rates than those which are paid, or that hereafter may be paid, by the most

favoured nation in the dominions of His Sicilian Majesty."

The Undersigned, in corroboration of what he has above stated, has moreover the honour to point out to his Excellency Viscount Palmerston what is actually the case, and what has been the constant practice in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, without its having given rise to the slightest objection, thus affording a convincing and unanswerable proof, that His Sicilian Majesty has in no wise deprived himself by the Treaty in question, of the power of giving exclusive concessions for certain articles of trade within his states. It is this that, notwithstanding the Treaty of 1816, which has been appealed to, a monopoly or royalty of salt and tobacco, the produce of this kingdom as well as of other states, already exists; and there never has been a question of the right of British subjects, to sell this produce by virtue of the said Convention. As it is therefore impossible to doubt the right possessed by the King to establish monopolies, and to farm them out either to private individuals or to companies, how can the right of the King to establish a company be contested, which according to the contract, already known to his Excellency Viscount Palmerston, is bound to regulate the trade in the sulphur of Sicily; an article produced exclusively in that island, and of which there is no reproduction. No publicist will be able to deny, that the two above mentioned qualities of this mineral, ought especially to draw upon it, the provident attention of the Government of His Majesty, with a view to the regulation, by equitable laws, of its exportation; to the production of a larger, a more permanent, and a more certain gain than has hitherto been acquired by those subjects who own that mineral, without wasting imprudently a treasure which other nations are considered not to possess. This sacred right of the Sovereign cannot be disputed; and no opportunity could have been found, for exercising such right with greater justice and general utility, and without injury to the rights of other states, or to the obligations and engagements contracted with other nations, as has been easily proved above. The fact that the conditions attached to this contract for the sale of sulphur are much more moderate and liberal than those to which the monopolies of salt and tobacco are subjected, cannot fail, moreover, to be of weight, and will not escape the attention of those who oppose the measure. In the latter monopoly, it is positively forbidden to sell the articles subject to it; while, with respect to sulphur, the owners have been left at liberty either to sell it to the company or not, according to their own convenience or pleasure, subject to the payment of a tax. If, therefore, the monopoly above-mentioned on articles common to other countries has not given rise to objection, still less should the formation of a company dealing in sulphur, the exclusive production of Sicily, be liable to opposition, founded as it has been by the King for the wisest and most paternal purposes: namely, to augment to a certain, but not to an eventual or precarious extent, the

price of the mineral; to protect those possessors of mines, who have not the means of working them, against usury; and, finally, to establish, on firm foundations, a vast administration calculated to enrich Sicily, and to cause that country to prosper.

The Undersigned begs his Excellency Viscount Palmerston to consider that this measure is equally binding on the subjects of the Two Sicilies as on foreigners; and that, considered even in its worst light, it would amount to nothing more than a tax on the sulphur mines; and who can deny this right to the King? Who can pretend that His Sicilian Majesty has, by the Convention of 1816, abandoned such right with respect to the subjects of Great Britain? Or rather, who will not say that the King has, in this matter, exercised a right inherent in Sovereignty, and which, notwithstanding all interpretation to the contrary, he had reserved to himself by the very terms of the Convention itself? Supposing any intention to exist to carry the objections which might be brought forward by the English still further, they could not even pretend that the prohibition issued to the proprietors to raise from their mines a larger quantity of sulphur than that judged fitting for exportation, would be an impediment to the sale; for, according to the conditions of the Contract, the profit which would result from that increase of sulphur of which the production is prohibited, is compensated in money by the Company; and at the same time the mineral, which is not like an article which can be re-produced, is kept in reserve for future exportation, always to the benefit of the proprietors themselves. How is it possible to call so useful a measure, an impediment, which, while it pays the profit resulting from the surplus of prohibited production, keeps in reserve, on the same ground, a treasure which cannot be reproduced? The Government of His Sicilian Majesty does not impede, but simply regulates the sale of a produce of its own territory, and thus organizes the means of deriving greater profit for the proprietors. But this constitutes the right and the duty of every Sovereign, and of every well organized Government. The King had this in view in fixing a price not to be exceeded, for the sale of sulphur, thus securing the interests of all foreign merchants, and removing all idea of monopoly. It would be possible here, very pertinently, to bring forward the arguments already adduced, and which it will be useless to repeat, which have served to give a clear and true explanation of the terms of the 4th and 5th Articles of the Convention. The King has only had in view to remedy the decay of an exclusively national interest, of a precious gift of nature, which the shrewdness of certain foreign speculators on the one hand, and the avidity for temporary gain on the part of the proprietors of mines on the other tended entirely to ruin. The King felt that it was his duty to remedy this evil, as it would have been vain to expect any useful arrangement from the combined determination of so many proprietors, divided as they are in

interests and opinions, and who are probably in a great measure ignorant of their own true interest. The most noble attribute of Sovereignty, and of all political society, has accordingly, under these circumstances, been called into action; namely, that of directing the interests of individuals to the common good, and of affording to those interests the most palpable advantages. The King has never deprived himself of this attribute, either by the meaning or by the spirit of the Convention, as the Undersigned has sufficiently proved.

Leaving the distinct and positive value of these arguments to exercise their just weight upon the Government of Her Britannic Majesty, the Undersigned has at the same time, in using them, given most convincing proofs that His Majesty his August Master has not violated, or ever has had the intention of violating, the Treaties which exist between him and Her Britannic Majesty, the scrupulous execution of which is, on the contrary, his constant desire; and that the earnest wish of His Sicilian Majesty is constantly to maintain and to cultivate good understanding with Her Britannic Majesty, being ready to do every thing in order to render himself agreeable to that August Sovereign without at the same time losing sight of the perogatives of his crown, or of the interests of his own subjects.

The Undersigned, &c.

(Signed) LUDOLF.

APPENDIX F

The British Position:

Palmerston to Ludolf, October 12, 1838*

The Undersigned, &c., has the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the official note, addressed to him on the 17th ultimo, by Count Ludolf, &c., containing the grounds on which the Government of His Sicilian Majesty consider the course which they have adopted, with respect to the Sicilian Sulphur Trade, justifiable and compatible with the letter and spirit of the Treaty of 1816.

In reply, the Undersigned must, in the first place, state, that Her Majesty's Government do not admit the fundamental position, on which Count Ludolf's argument rests; namely, that no Sovereign can be expected to grant to foreigners greater privileges or immunities than are enjoyed by his own subjects. For the Undersigned must observe, that it is precisely for the purpose of securing in certain cases, such greater immunities and exemptions, that Treaties of Commerce are frequently made. Because, in countries where the Government is arbitrary and despotic, and subject to no responsibility or control, it may often happen that caprice, want of political knowledge, prejudice, private interest, or undue influence, may procure the promulgation of unjust and impolitic edicts, inflicting much injury upon the people of such state, interfering with the legitimate industry of individuals, deranging the natural transactions of commerce, and causing great detriment to private interests, and to national prosperity; and Foreign Governments whose subjects are engaged in commercial intercourse with the people of such State, are, therefore, often anxious to secure their subjects, by fixed stipulations, and by Treaty engagements, from being liable to the injuries and uncertainties, which, from the above mentioned causes, the people of the State itself are from time to time exposed to.

Now the Treaty of 1816, between Great Britain and Naples, contains a stipulation of this nature; and, according to that Treaty, although the Neapolitan Government may exercise its Sovereign Power over its own subjects, and interfere as it pleases with their private and commercial

---

*Papers, no. 26, pp. 45-48; ASN/MAE, f. 4130.

transactions, yet it cannot so interfere with, or restrain the private and commercial transactions of British subjects.

But the monopoly granted by the Neapolitan Government to Messrs. Taix and Co., does interfere with, and restrain the private and commercial transactions of British subjects in Sicily, by preventing those subjects from selling, as they please, the sulphur raised from mines which they have rented, and to increase the productiveness of which, they have expended a considerable capital. Therefore, the monopoly of Messrs. Taix and Co., is inconsistent with the Treaty engagements of the Sicilian Crown, towards the Crown of Great Britain; and the British Government cannot consent, that such monopoly shall have any application to the commercial transactions of British merchants in Sicily.

But, even supposing that the above mentioned argument advanced by Count Ludolf were valid, which Her Majesty's Government cannot admit it to be, still the provisions of the monopoly granted to Messrs. Taix involve so great a violation of the Treaty of 1816, that Her Majesty's Government would be justified in demanding and obtaining redress for Her Majesty's subjects on that account. For, assuming that the Treaty of 1816 secures to British subjects in the Neapolitan dominions, no other privilege than that of being, at all times, and in all respects, placed upon a footing of perfect equality with Neapolitan subjects, or with the subjects of the most favoured nation; still, that Treaty, even upon such a narrow and limited interpretation of it, (an interpretation, which Her Majesty's Government by no means admit,) would protect British subjects from being treated in any possible contingency, within the Neapolitan Dominions, less well than other individuals; and the Treaty could not authorize His Sicilian Majesty to impose higher duties upon the property of British subjects, than upon the property of other individuals; and yet these things would be the consequence of the monopoly of Messrs. Taix and Co. For a permission is granted to that firm, in consideration of the annual payment to the Neapolitan Government of 400,000 ducats, to export every year 600,000 cantars of sulphur free of duty; and, whereas the whole quantity of sulphur to be exported from Sicily, is, by the contract with Messrs. Taix and Co., to be limited to 600,000 cantars, while the present average yearly produce is calculated at 900,000 cantars, and is considered susceptible of great and progressive increase; therefore, Messrs, Taix and Co., are further to pay to the proprietors of sulphur mines, an annual sum of 120,000 ducats, as compensation to those proprietors for the injury they will sustain, by reason of this limitation of the quantity they are to be permitted to raise and sell. It is, therefore, clear that Messrs. Taix and Co. pay for the privilege which has been granted to them, and in lieu of duty, the annual sum of 520,000 ducats; being at the rate less than one ducat a cantar. On the other hand, British subjects who may not choose to sell their sulphur to Messrs. Taix's Company, are to be obliged

to pay a duty of 2 ducats a cantar on exportation.

Thus, British subjects would pay on the exportation of their sulphur, a duty more than double the amount of the whole consideration to be paid by Messrs. Taix and Co., for the privilege granted to them, and in lieu of duty. The difference would be still greater, and still more to the disadvantage of the British Lessees of Mines if the increased exportation provided for by the 25th Article of the Contract should take place.

But Count Ludolf endeavours to give to the 5th Article of the Treaty, an interpretation altogether new and untenable, for the purpose of reconciling the stipulations of that Article with the measure now under discussion.

The 5th Article states, that British subjects shall be entitled to dispose of their personal property in any way whatever, and without the smallest loss or hindrance; and Count Ludolf contends, that this passage refers solely to such hindrance as would arise from laws, preventing foreigners from possessing property in Sicily, and that the passage affords no protection to British subjects against vexatious interference, and arbitrary exaction, in regard to the disposal of their property. But such an interpretation of the Treaty, is totally at variance with the clear and distinct terms of the Article in question, and is directly opposed to the intention of the contracting parties, as recorded in the preamble, which is stated to be, "to provide for the security and advantage of the subjects and commerce of Great Britain;" and in such an interpretation, therefore, Her Majesty's Government certainly can never acquiesce.

Count Ludolf, moreover, endeavours to defend the monopoly granted to Monsieur Taix, by quoting the precedent of other monopolies, which have long existed in the Neapolitan Dominions, and against which no objection has been urged on the part of Great Britain; and he particularly specifies the monopolies of salt and tobacco.

But the Undersigned begs to state, that there is no parity between the two cases; and that a monopoly granted exclusively to a company of individuals like the firm of Messrs. Taix and Co., is essentially, and in principle different from a monopoly assumed to itself as a Royalty by the Executive Government of the country, and granted out in permissions to any person who may take out a permit for that purpose; and it is evident that the latter species of monopolies can form no precedent for the former.

No doubt Royal monopolies, such as those of salt and tobacco, in the Neapolitan States, are very objectionable ways of raising a revenue. They interfere injuriously with private enterprise, prevent the full development of the natural commercial resources of the Nation, and check the consequent increase of the Public Revenue; but in all countries where the science of Political Economy has been imperfectly understood, such monopolies have constituted one of the sources of income for the Crown. When the Treaty of 1816 was signed, the above-mentioned monopolies existed in

the dominions of His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies, and however injurious those monopolies may be to the interests of the Neapolitan Government, their operation cannot be made the ground of complaint on the part of Her Majesty's Government, under the stipulations of the Treaty of 1816.

But with respect to sulphur, the case is different. British subjects conceiving themselves protected by the terms of the Treaty, and relying upon the existing law of the land, have become largely interested in the operations of raising and exporting sulphur from mines belonging to private individuals; and by their intelligence, industry, and capital, such British subjects have succeeded in again rendering profitable, mines which by former neglect had been allowed to fall into decay. But at the very moment when these British subjects have completed their preparations and outlay, and when they are about to derive therefrom those advantages wich their personal exertions and pecuniary expenditure entitle them to expect, the Neapolitan Government steps in, limits the quantity which such persons are to raise to two-thirds of the average quantity hitherto raised, during the time that some of the mines, for the causes above stated, had been comparatively unproductive, and with respect to this limited quantity, forces the British Lessees, either to sell their sulphur to a private Company, and at a price arbitrarily fixed, or to pay on exporting their sulphur themselves, a duty more than double the amount which the privileged Company is to pay. It is needless to say, that such a proceeding is highly injurious to British subjects, extremely unjust, and at variance with the stipulations of the Treaty. It is true, as Count Ludolf observes in another part of his note, that, as an alleged compensation for this limitation, a certain sum is to be paid to the Proprietors and Lessees of Mines, and that this sum is to be calculated according to the amount by which the average production of the last four years, exceeds the quantity now permitted to be exported.

But it must be observed, that the Neapolitan Government, in making that calculation, consulted no party, except the one whose interests are directly opposed to those of the British merchants; and had no regard to the increased production, which, for the future, would necessarily follow from the effects of the British capital and machinery which have been applied to the Sicilian Mines. The limitation now established, must therefore prove ruinous to many individuals who have no other way to repay themselves for the large sums laid out in these mines, but by an increased annual production. But, instead of being freely allowed to increase their annual production, they are, on the contrary, to be compelled to diminish it. Her Majesty's Government cannot, therefore, admit, that any compensation founded on such a calculation as that above mentioned, can be an equivalent for the injury which the monopoly would inflict upon the British Lessees of Sicilian Mines.

Nothing but the future operations of the parties themselves can show what additional quantity of sulphur the outlay and preparations made by those Lessees will actually enable them to raise; and the only full and just compensation, which they can receive for the outlay, which, trusting in the good faith of the Neapolitan Government, they have made, will be a permission to continue to work their mines, and to sell their sulphur, without being exposed to any interference or restriction on the part of Messrs. Taix and Company.

Such permission, the British Government demand; and the British Government must hold that of Naples responsible for all losses and injuries, which any subjects of Her Majesty may incur, in consequence of the monopoly of Monsieur Taix.

There is one further argument advanced by Count Ludolf, which requires some comment.

Count Ludolf repeatedly asserts that the contract with Messrs. Taix and Co. has been entered into by the Neapolitan Government, solely from a paternal regard for the public good; and in order the better to regulate the production of sulphur, and to prevent the mines from being prematurely and wastefully exhausted. But by the 25th article of the contract, the probability of an exportation greater than 600,000 cantars is admitted, and provision is made for the contingent profit which the Neapolitan Government is to derive from such increase; and as the conditions under which this increased exportation is to take place are not specified, it may be inferred that if Messrs. Taix and Co. should find the speculation profitable, they will increase the exportation to any extent, consistent with their own interests.

But in that case, the argument used by Count Ludolf, that the measure is one of paternal precaution against a too rapid expenditure of the sulphur of Sicily, will fall to the ground; and the question will resolve itself simply into one of greater or less profit to the holders of the contract.

The Undersigned in conclusion, begs to observe, that the Neapolitan Government, seems to labour under a misconception as to a fundamental point on which Count Ludolf's argument rests; for that Government appears to imagine that sulphur is an article found only in Sicily, and that Providence has rendered all mankind dependent upon that single island for a commodity which is extensively required for various uses. But if the monopoly in question is persisted in, the Neapolitan Government, and Monsieur Taix and his Company, will soon find that the geographical information upon which the Company has been founded, is as defective, as the principle on which it rests, is impolitic and unjust. A very short period will satisfy the Government of Naples that sulphur is an article much more extensively diffused over the surface of the earth than has been represented by the persons who have projected this monopoly; and the scheme of Monsieur Taix will inevitably bring other mines in other countries into fuller work, will introduce into the market

of the world a larger quantity of sulphur, and will thus diminish permanently the value of the Sicilian mines. When this result has been accomplished, the Government of Naples may perhaps regret that it allowed itself to listen to a scheme suggested by individual cupidity, which can only be carried into effect by sacrificing the interests of the many to the avarice of the few, which violates the national faith, and which must involve the Crown of Naples in a difference with a Power, whose fleets and armies have protected and preserved for that Crown, the very island where the subjects of that power are now about to be exposed to treatment oppressive and unjust.

The Undersigned, &c,
(Signed by) PALMERSTON

APPENDIX G

THE CHRONOLOGY

Trade Relations Between Great Britain and Naples: 1667-1838

1667 - The Treaty of Madrid granted Great Britain flag privileges in Neapolitan ports.

1713 - The Treaty of Utrecht confirmed these privileges.

1793 - The British agreed to protect Neapolitan merchantmen and the Neapolitan government pledged to suspend trade with France.

1813 - Murat abolished the flag privileges in Naples.

1815 - Great Britain asked for the restoration of flag privileges, but de'Medici opposed the request.

1816 - With the Treaty of September 26, Naples granted Great Britain a 10 percent reduction on import duties and the status of most favored nation.

1823 - In order to protect Neapolitan commerce and the merchant marine, de'Medici increased duties on imports and decreased duties on exports.

1828 - Great Britain raised the duties on Neapolitan imports shipped on Neapolitan vessels.

1829 - De'Medici tried unsuccessfully to negotiate a treaty based on reciprocity.

1833 - The British expressed an interest in renegotiating the Treaty of 1816, but only that section concerning parity in navigation.

1834 - Negotiations broke down because Great Britain was unwilling to surrender the 10 percent discount guaranteed by the Treaty of 1816.

1838 - The British proposed a renegotiation of the Treaty of 1816 based on complete parity.

The Sulphur Crisis

1833 - First Taix proposal.

1836 - Second Taix proposal.

1837 - March, French envoys in Naples become aware of the Taix proposal.

1837 - November, the British government officially protested the projected Taix-Aycard contract.

1838 - July 10, Ferdinand approved the Taix-Aycard contract.

1838 - July 25, violent verbal confrontation in London between Palmerston and Ludolf.

1838 - September 17, Ludolf's note to Palmerston described in detail the Neapolitan position.

1838 - October 12, Palmerston rejected Ludolf's arguments and reaffirmed British opposition to the monopoly.

1839 - December 24, MacGregor and Cassaro completed the draft of a new commercial agreement which provided for the cancellation of the monopoly.

1840 - January, British merchants petitioned for the repeal of the sulphur monopoly.

1840 - January 28, Palmerston's note requested the immediate cancellation of the sulphur contract, but Cassaro persuaded Kennedy to withhold this note from the king until after the Council meeting of February 21.

1840 - February 23, Cassaro announced the abolition of the monopoly.

1840 - March 2, Lyndhurst addressed the House of Lords.

1840 - March 8, Ferdinand reaffirmed his intention to continue the monopoly.

1840 - March 15, Temple forwarded Palmerston's January 28 note.

1840 - March 16, Ferdinand supported the continuation of the monopoly at the Council of State.

1840 - March 23, Ferdinand officially accepted Cassaro's resignation and appointed Scilla to succeed him.

1840 - March 26, The Pollock-Phillimore opinions stated that the sulphur monopoly did not violate the Treaty of 1816.

1840 - April 10, Stopford informed the governor of Malta that the fleet was commencing hostile operations.

1840 - April 12, the Crosa initiative failed.

1840 - April 12, Guizot informed Palmerston that the French government was willing to mediate.

1840 - April 16, the British cabinet accepted the offer of French mediation.

1840 - April 19, Thiers urged Ferdinand to accept the mediation.

1840 - April 21, the first ship confiscated by the British arrived in Malta.

1840 - April 24, Naples placed an embargo on British vessels in Neapolitan ports.

1840 - April 25, the Neapolitan government formally accepted the mediation and lifted the embargo.

1840 - July 7, Palmerston accepted the conditions of the mediation.

1840 - July 21, Ferdinand accepted the Thiers proposal and abolished the monopoly.

1840 - July 22, Temple received the authorization to recall the fleet from Neapolitan waters.

APPENDIX H

THE PEOPLE*

ABERDEEN, George Hamilton-Gordon; Earl of; Foreign Secretary in the Peel Cabinet, 1841-1846.

ACTON, John Francis Edward; Prime Minister of Ferdinand IV, 1785-1804.

ANTONINI, Emidio; Baron; Neapolitan Ambassador to Berlin, 1833-1847.

BEAUVALE, Frederick Lamb; Baron; British Ambassador to Vienna.

BENTINCK, William Henry Cavendish; Commander-in-Chief, British forces in Sicily, 1811-1815.

BERRY, Maria Carolina of Bourbon; Duchess of; half-sister of Ferdinand II and mother of the legitimist claimant to the French throne.

BOUVERIE, Henry; Governor General of Malta.

BUONGUARDINO, Giuseppe; Neapolitan representative to the commission of compensations.

BUTERA, Giorgio Wilding; Prince of; Neapolitan Ambassador to St. Petersburg.

CAMPOFRANCO, Antonio Lucchesi Palli; Prince of; Lieutenant General of Sicily, 1835-1837.

CANNING, George; Foreign Secretary in the Liverpool Cabinet, 1822-1827.

CAPRIOLI, Giuseppe; Abbé; secretary of Ferdinand II.

---

*Unless stated otherwise, office holders served during the sulphur crisis.

CAPUA, Carlo of Bourbon; Prince of; controversial brother of Ferdinand II.

CARACCIOLO, Domenico; Marquis; Neapolitan Ambassador to London and Paris, 1754-1764; Viceroy of Sicily, 1781-1786.

CASSARO, Antonio Statella; Prince of; Neapolitan Foreign Minister, 1830-1840.

CASTLEREAGH, Robert Stewart; Viscount; Foreign Secretary in the Liverpool Cabinet, 1812-1822.

COCLE, Celestino; Monsignor; confessor of Ferdinand II.

CHAMBORD, Henry Charles of Bourbon; Count of; legitimist claimant to the French throne.

CROSA di VERGAGNI, Luigi; Marquis; Sardinian diplomat.

DALMATIA, Nicolas Soult; Duke of; French Foreign Minister, 1839-1840.

D'ANDREA, Giovanni; Marquis; Neapolitan Minister of Finance.

DEL CARRETTO, Francesco Saverio; Commander, Neapolitan police.

ELLIOTT, Hugh; British envoy and successor to William Hamilton in Naples.

FERDINAND I of Bourbon; King of the Two Sicilies, 1816-1825; formerly Ferdinand IV of Naples, 1759-1816.

FERDINAND II of Bourbon; King of the Two Sicilies, 1830-1859.

FERDINAND VII of Bourbon; King of Spain, 1808, 1814-1833.

FRANCO, Antonino; Secretary of State for Sicilian Affairs.

GAGLIATI, Domenico Severino Longo; Marquis; Neapolitan envoy extraordinaire to Vienna.

GOODWIN, John; British Consul General in Palermo.

GRANVILLE, George Leveson-Gower; Earl of; British Ambassador to Paris.

GREY, Charles; Earl of; Whig politician; Prime Minister, 1830-1834.

GUIZOT, François Pierre; French Ambassador to London, February-October, 1840.

HAMILTON, William; British envoy to Naples, 1764-1800.

HAUSSONVILLE, Joseph Othenin de Cléron; French chargé in Naples, January-May 1840.

KENNEDY, John; British chargé in Naples.

LABOUCHERE, Henry; Vice-President of the Board of Trade, 1835-1839; President, 1839-1841.

LAROSA, Michelangelo; Neapolitan representative to the commission of compensations.

LAURENZANA, Onorato Gaetani, Duke of; succeeded Campofranco as Lieutenant General of Sicily in 1837.

LOURDE Jean; Count de; French representative to the commission of compensations.

LEBZELTERN, Ludwig; Count; Austrian Ambassador to Naples, 1830-1844.

LUDOLF, Guglielmo Constantino; Neapolitan Ambassador to London.

LYNDHURST, John Singleton Copley; Baron; Tory member of the House of Lords.

MACGREGOR, James; British envoy extraordinaire to Naples.

MEDICI, Luigi de'; Neapolitan Finance Minister, 1822-1823; Foreign Minister, 1823-1830.

MELBOURNE, William Lamb; Viscount; Whig politician; Prime Minister, 1835-1841.

MOLÉ, Louis Mathieu; Count; French Foreign Minister and Prime Minister, 1836-1839.

MONTEBELLO, Napoleon Auguste Lannes; Duke of; French Ambassador to Naples in May 1840.

MURAT, Joachim; General, Napoleonic Army; King of Naples, 1809-1815.

PALMERSTON, John Henry Temple; Viscount; British Foreign Secretary, 1830-1834, 1835-1841, and 1846-1851.

PARISH, Woodbine; British representative to the commission of compensations.

PARISIO, Nicola; Neapolitan Minister of Justice.

PERCEVAL, Spencer; Tory politician; Prime Minister, 1809-1812.

PERIER, Auguste Casimir; French chargé in Naples, 1839-1846.

PIETRACATELLA, Giuseppe Ceva-Grimaldi; Marquis; President of the Council of Ministers.

PITT, William; Prime Minister, 1783-1801 and 1804-1806.

RAMIREZ, Giuseppe; Neapolitan consul in Malta.

REGINA, Luigi di; Neapolitan chargé in London after the death of Ludolf.

SANTANGELO, Nicola; Neapolitan Minister of the Interior.

SATRIANO, Carlo Filangeri; Prince of; General, Neapolitan Army.

SCILLA, Fulco Ruffo; Prince of; Duke of Santa Cristina; Neapolitan Foreign Minister, 1840-1848.

SERRACAPRIOLA, Nicola Donnorso Maresca; Duke of; Neapolitan Ambassador to Paris.

SOLARO DELLA MARGHERITA, Clemente; Count; Sardinian Foreign Minister, 1835-1847.

STOPFORD, Robert; Admiral, British Navy; Commander, Mediterranean Fleet.

STRANGWAYS, W. Fox; member of the Board of Trade.

SULLIVAN, Stephan Henry; British representative to the commission of compensations.

SYRACUSE, Leopold of Bourbon; Count of; brother of Ferdinand II; Lieutenant General of Sicily, 1830-1835.

TALLENAY, Auguste; French chargé in Naples, 1836-1838.

TEMPLE, William; British envoy to Naples.

THIERS, Marie Joseph; President of the Council of Ministers, 1836 and 1840.

THOMSON, C. E. Poulett; President of the Board of Trade, 1834-1839.

WELLESLEY, Richard Colley; Marquess; Foreign Secretary in the Perceval Cabinet, 1809-1812.

WELLINGTON, Arthur Wellesley; Duke of; Tory politician, Prime Minister, 1828-1830.

WINNINGTON-INGRAM, Herbert Frederick; British naval officer and participant in the Sulphur War.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

The scant mention of the Sulphur War in British publications is an indication of the slight interest assigned to this event by English-speaking scholars. Yet, there is abundant information on British foreign policy and domestic politics which led to 1840. Biographies of Palmerston provide valuable information on his foreign policy. Jasper Ridley's Lord Palmerston (London: 1970) and Kenneth Bourne's Palmerston: The Early Years 1784-1841 (New York: 1982) mention the Sulphur War. The less recent Life of Palmerston by Herbert C. F. Bell (New York: 1936) does not. The private correspondence of Palmerston edited by Augustus Craven Lord Palmerston: Sa Correspondence intime pour servir à l' histoire diplomatique de l' Europe de 1830 à 1860 (Paris: 1878) provides some insight on his behavior during the crisis. Another biography, Dorothy Marshall's Lord Melbourne (London: 1975), defines the relationship between Palmerston and his prime minister during the crisis. Charles K. Webster's The Foreign Policy of Palmerston 1830-1841 (London: 1951); The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh 1812-1815 (London: 1931); and The Foreign Policy of Castlereach 1815-1822) (London: 1925); Adolphus W. Ward and George P. Gooch (eds.), The Cambridge History of British

Foreign Policy 1783-1919 (New York: 1923) are standards of reference for the period. A more recent and specific study by Charles Middleton, The Administration of British Foreign Policy 1782-1846 (Durham: 1977), addresses the relationship between the Crown and the Foreign Office in the decision-making process, but has earned criticism for some errors and generalizations. A group of scholars addresses the strategic aspects of the British presence in the central Mediterranean. Among these authors are Christopher Bartlett, Great Britain and Sea Power 1815-1853 (Oxford: 1963); Hanford Hoskins, British Routes to India (London: 1966); and James Swain, The Struggle for the Control of the Mediterranean prior to 1848 (Boston: 1933). The following works present British foreign policy in the context of specific periods or areas. Christopher Bartlett, "Britain and the European Balance 1815-1848," in Alan Sked (ed.), Europe's Balance of Power 1815-1848 (New York: 1979), discusses the interplay between political and economic considerations in shaping British foreign policy during the post-Restoration years. For the British occupation of Sicily, see Antonio Capograssi, Gl' Inglesi in Italia durante le campagne napoleoniche (Bari: 1949) and John Rosselli, Lord William Bentinck and the British Occupation of Sicily 1811-1814 (Cambridge: 1956). H. M. Lackland's "The Failure of the Constitutional Experiment in Sicily 1813-1814," English Historical Review (April 1926), mentions Bentinck's ambitious plans for control in Sicily. For a

special treatment of British foreign policy immediately following the Congress of Vienna, see Stephen R. Graubard's "Castlereagh and the Peace of Europe," Journal of British Studies (1963) and the excellent treatment by Norman Gash in chapter 10 of his Aristocracy and People (Cambridge: 1979). The same chapter examines the development of that policy to the end of the Palmerston years, while other chapters cover several aspects of domestic policy. More narrowly focused is the article by R. L. Baker, "Palmerston and the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi," English Historical Review (January 1928). For the controversy surrounding the sulphur monopoly and international law, see "An Analysis of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between His Britannic Majesty and the King of the Two Sicilies," and The Pollock-Phillimore Opinions (London: 1840). For a more recent interpretation of the expropriation question, see Alexander P. Fachiri, "Expropriation and International Law," British Yearbook of International Law (1925). For the diplomatic correspondence between London and Naples presented to Parliament by order of the Queen, see Papers Relative to the Sulphur Monopoly in Sicily (London: 1840). Thomas Curson Hansard (ed.), Parliamentary Debates, has the discussions for the years 1838-1840. The only existing eyewitness account by a participant in the naval operations against Naples is Herbert F. Winnington-Ingram's Hearts of Oak (London: 1889). For the economic perspective, John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson's "The Imperialism of Free Trade," Economic History Review

(1953), has been essential to this study. Desmond C. M. Platt's Finance, Trade, and Politics in British Foreign Policy 1815-1914 (Oxford: 1963), offers the interpretation that it was not a function of the British government to promote foreign trade. A subsequent response to Gallagher and Robinson, Platt's "The Imperialism of Free Trade: Some Reservations," Economic History Review (August 1968), and "Further Objections to an 'Imperialism of Free Trade', 1830-1860," Economic History Review (February 1973), define the Sulphur War as an exception to the rule rather than part of a plan to further economic interests through government policy. Other works in the same area are: W. O. Henderson, "The Anglo-French Commercial Treaty of 1786," Economic History Review (August 1957); Peter Marshall, "The First and Second British Empire: A Question of Demarcation," History (February 1964); G. C. Bolton, "The Founding of the Second British Empire," Economic History Review (April 1966); and Bernard Semmel, The Rise of Free Trade Imperialism (London: 1970). Judith Blow Williams, British Commercial Policy and Trade Expansion 1750-1850 (Oxford: 1972), contributes a useful, select bibliography of literature from 1953 to 1969. For information on the Board of Trade, see Roger Prouty, The Transformation of the Board of Trade 1830-1855 (London: 1957) and Lucy Brown, The Board of Trade and the Free Trade Movement 1830-1842 (Oxford: 1958); although the latter fails to see any relationship between the Board of Trade and the foreign policy decision-making process within the British

government. Arthur Redford's Manchester Merchants and Foreign Trade 1794-1858 (Manchester: 1934) still provides useful information on primary sources. The activities of the British merchants in Sicily are described in Raleigh Trevelyan's Princes under the Volcano (New York: 1969).

Harold Acton's The Bourbons of Naples (New York: 1956) and The Last Bourbons of Naples (London: 1960) describe the Neapolitan court during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in an anecdotal style. The latter book is a colorful and informative account of the reign of Ferdinand II. Both works give a sympathetic account of the Bourbons; unfortunately, they also fail to cite complete footnotes. A more recent and scholarly general work is Denis Mack Smith's Modern Sicily after 1713 (New York: 1968), the second volume of his A History of Sicily. Mack Smith has made a valuable contribution to an understanding of the political and economic problems of modern Sicily. Storia della Sicilia (Naples: 1977), a multi-volume collection of essays edited by Rosario Romeo, provides a wide range of topics on Sicilian history. In contrast with the abundant biographies of Palmerston, no modern historian as yet has written a complete and authoritative account of the life of Ferdinand II, nor are there works dealing with his ministers. Judgements by his contemporaries reveal a partisan bias. A refreshing exception is the portrait left by Pietro Calà-Ulloa, the Duke of Lauria, a perceptive and loyal civil servant of both Ferdinand and his successor, Francis II.

Giuseppe de'Tiberiis has published under the title of Il Regno di Ferdinando II (Naples: 1977) part of Calà-Ulloa's manuscript Delle Rivoluzioni nel Regno di Napoli, which was left unfinished in 1875. This account balances Ferdinand's flaws and shortcomings against his energy and good intentions and concludes with the acute observation that his reign was one of labor and not achievement ("più di travaglio che di parto.") Among more recent historians, Ruggero Moscati has included a section on Ferdinand II in his I Borboni in Italia (Naples: 1970). Ernesto Pontieri describes in detail the scope and significance of Ferdinand's reforms in "Ferdinando II di Borbone a la Sicilia: Momenti di politica riformatrice," Il Riformismo borbonico nella Sicilia del Sette e dell' Ottocento (Naples: 1965). Nicomede Bianchi's Storia documentata della diplomazia europea in Italia (Turin: 1867) is a good place to begin an examination of Neapolitan foreign relations preceding and following the Sulphur War. It carries the text of Cassaro's memoranda of January and March 1840, and a detailed description of Crosa di Vergagni's efforts to conciliate the contenders. Bianchi is open about his dislike of Ferdinand; his account of the crisis is not consistently objective. The best modern analysis of Ferdinand's foreign policy and repercussions of the war is Ruggero Moscati's Ferdinando II di Borbone nei documenti diplomatici austriaci (Naples: 1947), which carries the text of Ferdinand's anti-British speech of March 16, 1840. Armando Saitta (ed.),

Le Relazioni diplomatiche fra la Francia e il Regno delle Due Sicilie (Rome: 1973), published the correspondence of French diplomats stationed in Naples. The severe judgement expressed by these diplomats reflects the strained relations between Naples and Paris. In the area of foreign relations, two publications concerning specific periods deserve mention. Walter Maturi, "La Politica estera napoletana dal 1815 al 1820," Rivista Storica Italiana (1939), is a scholarly and well-balanced account of the international problems confronting the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. In his recollections entitled Mémoirs pour servir à l' histoire de mon temps (Paris: 1862), François Pierre Guizot describes his role as intermediary between Palmerston and the French government and appends the text of the Thiers proposal. Several works have addressed other areas and periods of Sicilian history. For an understanding of the origins, composition, and functions of parliament see Giacomo Giacomazzi, Il Parlamento siciliano (Palermo: 1960). For the reforms of Domenico Caracciolo and the relations between the Bourbons and Sicilian barons, see Mack Smith; Pontieri's essay "L' Esperimento riformatore del marchese Domenico Caracciolo Viceré di Sicilia (1781-1786)," Il Riformismo; and his book Il Tramonto del baronaggio siciliano (Florence: 1943), which is the most complete account of the landed aristocracy's struggle to preserve ancient privileges. Especially important for an understanding of the Sicilian Question is Rosario Romeo's Il

Risorgimento in Sicilia (Bari: 1982). For the Constitution of 1812, see the article by Emilio del Cerro "La Sicilia e la costituzione del 1812," Archivio storico per la Sicilia (Palermo: 1914-1925), which also describes in detail the actions of parliament; Francesco Renda, La Sicilia nel 1812 (Caltanissetta: 1963), an Italian scholar's perception of the British occupation; and Pontieri's essay "Un Retroscena del conflitto costituzionale del 1811 in Sicilia tra la Corona e l' aristocrazia parlamentare," Il Riformismo. For the problems of the Restoration, see Gaetano Cingari, Mezzogiorno e Risorgimento (Bari: 1970) and his essay "Dalla Restaurazione all' Unità," Romeo (ed.), Storia della Sicilia. For the economy of the sulphur industry, see Ludovico Bianchini, Storia economico-civile di Sicilia (Messina: 1841), reprinted in 1960. Bianchini wrote with knowledge and authority, although Gino Arias, La Questione meridionale (Bologna: 1921), has challenged the data on the number and ownership of the sulphur mines. Several anonymous papers which were published in 1840 shared Bianchini's pro-Bourbon attitude and justified the monopoly as the solution to the industry's problems. While interesting to read, their objectivity is suspect. A good example is the Exposé sur la question des souffres (Paris: 1840), which was probably sponsored by Taix and financed by the House of Laffitte. In the same category are the "Memoria sulla controversia per l' appalto de' solfi in Sicilia" (Italia: 1840) and "Delle Solfatare in Sicilia e de' nuovi

provvedimenti per l' industria e lo spaccio del solfo" (n.p.:n.d.). For a current perspective, see Mack Smith, Romeo, and Salvatore Francesco Romano's Momenti del Risorgimento in Sicilia (Messina: 1952), which mentions the influence of foreign capital on the Sicilian economy. The most informative works on the origins, development, structure, and problems of the sulphur industry are Federico Squarzina's Produzione e commercio dello zolfo in Sicilia nel secolo XIX (Turin: 1963) and Maurizio Colonna's L' Industria zolfifera siciliana (Catania: 1971). Other modern scholars discuss the problems of underdeveloped countries in post-Napoleonic Europe: Francesco Sirugo's "La 'Rivoluzione Commerciale': Per una Ricerca su Inghilterra e mercato europeo nell' età del Risorgimento italiano," Studi Storici (1961); and Aurelio Lepre's "Sul Rapporti tra Mezzogiorno e Europa nel Risorgimento," Studi Storici (1969). John A. Davis, "The South, the Risorgimento and the Origins of the 'Southern Problem'," in John A. Davis (ed.), Gramsci and Italy's Passive Revolution (London: 1979), perceives the Sulphur War as both a symptom and a factor of the problems in the Italian South. This essay has the additional distinction of being the only article in English which mentions the Sulphur War. On the question of the monopoly's legality, two papers of the time supported Naples and criticized Great Britain: "The Sulphur Question Plainly Stated in a Letter to Lord Palmerston" (London: 1840), and "Risposta alle petizione de' negozianti inglesi" (Pisa:

1840). Similar arguments are expressed in "Di una Quistione surta tra il governo delle Due Sicilie e la Inghilterra in Marzo 1840," "Se nel Contratto de' solfi abbiavi contravvenzione al trattato per gli affari di commercio fra il governo di Napoli e quello della Gran Bretagna," and "I nostri Trattati del 1816 non sono lesi se il Re concede ad un estero un privilegio e una privativa sopra un ramo di commercio," (all n.p.: n.d.). Michele Solimene's Sulla Proposta del trattato di reciprocanza tra l' Inghilterra, la Francia, e il Regno delle Due Sicilie e sulla disputa de' zolfi (Naples: 1840) deals extensively with the issue of treaty violation. For the diplomatic and military developments of the Sulphur War, see the memoirs of Guizot and Winnington-Ingram. Vincenzo Giura's La Questione degli zolfi siciliani (Geneva: 1973) remains the most current and complete work on all the aspects of the sulphur controversy.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acton, Harold. The Bourbons of Naples. New York: Viking Press, 1956.

_____. The Last Bourbons of Naples. London: Methuen, 1961.

Afan de Rivera, Carlo. Pensieri sulla Sicilia al di là del Faro. Naples: n.p., 1820.

Arias, Gino. La Questione Meridionale. Bologna: Zanichelli, 1921.

Bartlett, Christopher. Great Britain and Sea Power 1815-1853. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.

Bell, Herbert C. F. Life of Palmerston. 2 Vols. New York: Longmans, 1936.

Bianchi, Nicomede. Storia documentata della diplomazia europea in Italia. Vol. 3 (1830-48). Turin: Unione Tipografica Torinese, 1867.

Bianchini, Ludovico. Storia economico-civile di Sicilia. Palermo: Francesco Lao, 1841.

Blanc, Louis. Scritti Storici. Bari: Laterza, 1945.

Bourne, Kenneth. Palmerston: The Early Years 1784-1841. New York: MacMillan, 1982.

Brown, Lucy. The Board of Trade and the Free Trade Movement 1830-1842. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958.

Calà-Ulloa, Pietro. Il Regno di Ferdinando II. Giuseppe de'Tiberiis (ed.). Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1977.

Capograssi, Antonio. Gl' Inglesi in Italia durante le campagne napoleoniche. Bari: Laterza, 1949.

Cingari, Gaetano. Mezzogiorno e Risorgimento. Bari: Laterza, 1970.

Colonna, Maurizio. L' Industria zolfifera siciliana. Catania: Università degli Studi, 1971.

Craven, August (ed.). Lord Palmerston: Sa Correspondence intime pour servir à l' histoire diplomatique de l' Europe de 1830 à 1860. Vol. 1. Paris: Didier, 1878.

Gash, Norman. Aristocracy and People. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979.

Giacomazzi, Giacomo. Il Parliamento siciliano. Palermo: Instituto Bibliografico Siciliano, 1960.

Giura, Vincenzo. La Questione degli zolfi siciliani. Geneva: Droz, 1973.

Guizot, François Pierre. Mémoires pour servir à l' histoire de mon temps. Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1862.

Hansard, Thomas Curson (ed.). Parliamentary Debates. Vol. 4. London: Baldwin, 1821; Vol. 25 (1834), Vol. 44 (1838), Vol. 52 (1840).

Hoskins, Hanford L. British Routes to India. London: Frank Cass, 1966.

Mack Smith, Denis. Modern Sicily after 1713. New York: Viking Press, 1968.

Marshall, Dorothy. Lord Melbourne. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1975.

Middleton, Charles. The Administration of British Foreign Policy 1782-1846. Durham: University Press, 1977.

Moscati, Ruggero. Ferdinando II nei documenti diplomatici austriaci. Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1947.

_____. I Borboni in Italia. Naples: Edizione Scientifiche Italiane, 1970.

Nisco, Niccola. Storia del reame di Napoli dal 1824 al 1860. Vol. 2. Naples: Lanciano e Varaldi, 1908.

Papers Relative to the Sulphur Monopoly in Sicily. London: n.p., 1840.

Platt, Desmond C. M. Finance, Trade, and Politics in British Foreign Policy 1815-1914. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968.

Pontieri, Ernesto. Il Tramonto del baronaggio siciliano. Florence: Sansoni, 1943.

_____. Il Riformismo borbonico nella Sicilia del Sette e dell' Ottocento. Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1965.

Prouty, Roger. The Transformation of the Board of Trade 1830-1855. London: Heinemann, 1957.

Redford, Arthur. Manchester Merchants and Foreign Trade 1794-1858. Manchester: University Press, 1934.

Renda, Francesco. La Sicilia nel 1812. Caltanissetta: Sciascia, 1963.

Ridley, Jasper. Lord Palmerston. London: Constable, 1970.

Romano, Salvatore Francesco. Momenti del Risorgimento in Sicilia. Messina: D'Anna, 1952.

Romeo, Rosario. Mezzogiorno e Sicilia nel Risorgimento. Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, n.d.

_____. Il Risorgimento in Sicilia. Bari: Laterza, 1982.

Rosselli, John. Lord William Bentinck and the British Occupation of Sicily 1811-1814. Cambridge: University Press, 1956.

Saitta, Armando (ed.). Le Relazioni diplomatiche fra la Francia e il Regno delle Due Sicilie. Vol. 1 (1836-1840). Rome: Istituto Italiano per la Storia Moderna e Contemporanea, 1973.

Semmel, Bernard. The Rise of Free Trade Imperialism. London: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

Solimene, Michele. Sulla Proposta del trattato di reciprocanza tra l' Inghilterra, la Francia, e il Regno delle Due Sicilie e sulla disputa de' zolfi. Naples: Ateneo, 1840.

Squarzina, Federico. Produzione e commercio dello zolfo in Sicilia nel secolo XIX. Turin: I.L.T.E., 1963.

Swain, James. The Struggle for the Control of the Mediterranean prior to 1848. Boston: Stratford, 1933.

Tommasi di Lampedusa, Giuseppe. The Leopard. New York: Pantheon, 1960.

Trevelyan, Raleigh. Princes Under the Volcano. New York: William Morrow, 1973.

Webster, Charles K. The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh 1815-1822. London: Bell and Sons, 1925.

_____. The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh 1812-1815. London: Bell and Sons, 1931.

_____. The Foreign Policy of Palmerston 1830-1841. London: Bell and Sons, 1951.

Williams, Judith Blow. British Commercial Policy and Trade Expansion 1750-1850. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.

Winnington-Ingram, Herbert Frederick. Hearts of Oak. London: William Allen, 1889.

ARTICLES

Baker, R. L. "Palmerston and the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi." English Historical Review. Vol. 43 (January 1928): pp. 83-89.

Bartlett, Christopher. "Britain and the European Balance 1815-1848." In Alan Sked (ed.). Europe's Balance of Power 1815-1848. New York: Harper and Row, 1979: pp. 145-163.

Bolton, G. C. "The Founding of the Second British Empire." Economic History Review. Vol. 19 (April 1966): pp. 195-200.

Cingari, Gaetano. "Dalla Restaurazione all' Unità." In Rosario Romeo (ed.). Storia della Sicilia. Vol. 8. Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1977, pp. 3-77.

Davis, John A. "The South, the Risorgimento and the Origins of the 'Southern Problem'." In John A. Davis (ed.). Gramsci and Italy's Passive Revolution. London: Croom-Helm, 1979: pp. 67-103.

Del Cerro, Emilio (Nicola Niceforo). "La Sicilia e la Costituzione del 1812." Archivio Storico per la Sicilia. Vol. 39 (1914): pp. 269-328; Vol. 40 (1915): pp. 20-44, 268-303; Vol. 41 (1916): pp. 321-358; Vol. 44 (1922): pp. 70-153; Vol. 45 (1924): pp. 1-84; and Vol. 46 (1925): pp. 1-35.

Fachiri, Alexander P. "Expropriation and International Law." British Yearbook of International Law. Vol. 6 (1925): pp. 159-171.

Gallagher, John, and Robinson, Ronald. "The Imperialism of Free Trade." Economic History Review. Vol. 6 (1953): pp. 1-15.

Graubard, Stephen R. "Castlereagh and the Peace of Europe." Journal of British Studies. Vol. 3 (November 1863): pp. 79-87.

Henderson, W. O. "The Anglo-French Commercial Treaty of 1786." Economic History Review. Vol. 10 (August 1957): pp. 104-112.

Lackland, H. M. "The Failure of the Constitutional Experiment in Sicily 1813-1814." English Historical Review. Vol. 41 (April 1926): pp. 210-235.

Lepre, Aurelio. "Sui Rapporti tra Mezzogiorno e Europa nel Risorgimento." Studi Storici. Vol. 10 (1969): pp. 548-585.

Marshall, Peter. "The First and Second British Empire: A Question of Demarcation." History. Vol. 49 (February 1964): pp. 13-23.

Maturi, Walter. "La Politica estera napoletana dal 1815 al 1820." Rivista Storica Italiana. Vol. 4 (1939): pp. 226-272.

Phillips, W. Alison. "Great Britain and the Continental Alliance 1816-1822." In Adolphus W. Ward and George P. Gooch (eds.). The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy: 1783-1919. Vol. 2. New York: Macmillan, 1923: pp. 1-50.

Platt, Desmond C. M. "The Imperialism of Free Trade: Some Reservations." Economic History Review. Vol. 21 (August 1968), pp. 296-306.

_____. "Further Objections to an 'Imperialism of Free Trade' 1830-1860." Economic History Review. Vol. 26 (February 1973): pp. 77-90.

Sirugo, Francesco. "La 'Rivoluzione Commerciale': Per una Ricerca su Inghilterra e mercato europeo nell' età del Risorgimento Italiano." Studi Storici. Vol. 2 (1961): pp. 265-297.

Temperley, Harold. "The Foreign Policy of Canning." In Adolphus W. Ward and George P. Gooch (eds.). The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy: 1783-1919. Vol. 2. New York: Macmillan, 1923: pp. 51-118.

Vetro, Carmelo. "Il Colera del 1837 in provincia di Caltanissetta." Archivio Storico Siciliano. Vol. 6 (1980): pp. 241-293.

PAPERS PUBLISHED DURING THE SULPHUR CRISIS

"An Analysis of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation Between His Britannic Majesty and the King of the Two Sicilies." n.p.:n.d.

"Delle Solfatare di Sicilia e de' nuovi provvedimenti per la industria e lo spaccio del solfo." n.p.:n.d.

"Di una Quistione surta tra il governo delle Due Sicilie e la Inghilterra in Marzo 1840." n.p.:n.d.

"Exposé sur la question des souffres." Paris: Dupont, 1840.

"I nostri Trattati del 1816 non sono lesi se il re concede ad un estero un privilegio e una privativa sopra un ramo di commercio." n.p.:n.d.

"Memoria sulla controversia per l' appalto degli zolfi della Sicilia." Italia: n.p., 1840.

"Riposta alle petizioni de' negozianti inglesi pei solfi di Sicilia." Pisa: n.p., 1840.

"Se nel Contratto de' solfi abbiavasi contravvenzione al trattato per gli affari di commercio fra il governo di Napoli e quello della Gran Bretagna." n.p.:n.d.

"Sulphur Trade in Sicily: The Pollock-Phillimore Opinions." London: n.p., 1840.

"The Sulphur Question Plainly Stated in a Letter to Lord Palmerston." London: Burrup and Blight, 1840.