THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

THE LONDON 'TIMES' AND GERMANY
1904 - 1914

by

Robert Nerenberg

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PREFACE

The Anglo-French entente of 1904 heralded growing concern by the British government at Germany's increasing dominance of the continent and the aggressiveness of its foreign policy. The Convention with Russia three years later seemed to effect the "encirclement" of Germany against which Bismarck had continually warned during his chancellorship. Whilst Anglo-French and Anglo-Russian relations grew more cordial, Anglo-German relations became more strained. By 1914 the major European powers had aligned themselves into two opposing camps. The Entente Powers--of whom Great Britain was one--constituted one group; the Central Powers--of whom Germany was a member--constituted the other constellation.

Considering the importance which historians have attributed to the German naval programme, to German industrial and commercial expansion, and to the German government's behavior in the international crises which punctuated the decade 1904-1914, as "causes" of the First World War, I

thought that it would be useful to examine the contemporary British assessment of Germany and its international behavior as portrayed in The Times. In these years The Times enjoyed an unique position among the British press. At home it was the paper of the governing elite; abroad it was regarded as the semi-official voice of British governments.

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze The Times' attitude towards Germany as revealed in its editorials and correspondents' reports; how and to what extent this image of Germany changed from 1904 to 1914; what the connection was between Printing House Square's views on Germany and those on France and Russia; and whether its perceptions of Germany influenced its opinion of the Liberal government. As The Times not only reported foreign news, but itself pursued a foreign policy, this thesis will also seek to determine who decided The Times' European policy, what developments influenced its formulation, whether and how it was affected by a change in ownership in 1908, and the relationship between the British Foreign Office and Printing House Square. On the naval issue, content analysis techniques will be used to indicate how much attention was given to this topic in the different years, as well as to sound variations in tone over the decade.

Because of insufficient source material, there are several things which this thesis does not attempt to do. This is not a study of public opinion. A worth-while

analysis of this subject would require some means for measuring the impact newspapers made upon their readers. There is no reliable technique for doing this. Nor does this thesis attempt an in-depth examination of The Times' influence on British governments. Whilst this would be a very useful subject for study, it requires access to documents available only in Great Britain. Thus this thesis confines itself to investigating The Times' attitude toward Germany in the decade prior to Sarajevo.

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CHAPTER I

'THE TIMES', 1904-1914

In the period 1904-1914 The Times enjoyed an unrivalled reputation both in Great Britian and abroad, and was undoubtedly the most prestigious newspaper in the world.[1] Founded as The Daily Universal Register in 1785, and renamed The Times three years later,[2] it had exerted its greatest influence in British politics between 1841 and 1877 under the editorship of Delane,[3] when it could be said, albeit with some exaggeration, "It is The Times which leads the Government and the House of Commons which follows; Ministers and Parliaments fear The Times, and The Times is not the least afraid of either."[4] Although its importance in domestic matters had diminished somewhat by the turn of the

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[1] F. H. Kitchin, The London 'Times' under the Managership of Moberly Bell (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1925), p. 13; W. D. Bowman, The Story of "The Times" (London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1931), p. 1.

[2] R. Pound & G. Harmsworth, Northcliffe (London: Cassell & Co. Ltd., 1959), p. 306; The History of 'The Times' (London: Printing House Square, 1935-1952), I, p. 6; H. R. Fox Bourne, English Newspapers (New York: Russell & Russell, 1966), I, pp. 254-259.

[3] The History of 'The Times', IV, Pt. I, p. 136; Fox Bourne, II, pp. 164-168, 330-333; Sir Edward Cook, Delane of 'The Times' (London: Constable & Co. Ltd., 1916), pp. 1-8,269.

[4] Cited in Asa Briggs, The Age of Improvement, 1783-1867 (London: Longmans, 1963), p. 428.

century, its authority on the Continent remained unaffected till after World War I.[5]

The Times' stature abroad was based on two mistaken notions. The first of these was that it was the official voice of British governments in matters of foreign policy; the second, that it had a large hand in the formulation of British foreign policy. Although governments used The Times to announce their intentions in international matters, it most certainly did not merit the title "voice of the government" in the same way that did, for example, the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung in Germany.[6] In 1788 The Times had announced that on questions of foreign policy it would be "like Janus, the Roman deity, double-faced; with one countenance it will smile continually on the friends of Old England, and with the other will frown on her enemies."[7] During the years of this study, it maintained this tradition. Printing House Square alone decided who were Great Britain's friends and who its enemies. Thus during the Algeciras Conference of 1906, when Lord Haldane, the British Secretary of War, visited George E. Buckle, the editor, to request that The Times moderate its tone toward Germany, he was

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[5]Bowman, p. 1.

[6]Z. S. Steiner, The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy 1898-1914 (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1969), pp. 186-187; Cook, pp. 274-276.

[7]Cited in The History of 'The Times', I, p. 31.

unsuccessful.[8] And again in 1908, when it was announced that the Kaiser would visit Great Britain and that Cahncellor von Bülow intended to accompany him, The Times immediately demanded that the British government inform Wilhelm II that Bülow's presence was not then welcome. Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, wrote to Sir Frank Lascelles, the British ambassador in Berlin, that he regretted The Times' articles as they did nothing to improve Anglo-German relations, but "it is not in our power to control such articles."[9]

In Germany, particularly, The Times was feared and hated in official circles because it was believed that Printing House Square played a prominent role in determining British foreign policy. In December 1905 Kaiser Wilhelm, in a conversation with Alfred Beit, a British financier and close personal friend of King Edward VII, named Moberly Bell, The Times' assistant manager, and Alfred Harmsworth,[10] the proprietor of the Daily Mail, as Germany's two greatest enemies in London, and described George Saunders, The Times' Berlin correspondent, as an "Erzschweinhund of the first

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[8]Oron J. Hale, Publicity and Diplomacy with Special Reference to England and Germany 1890-1914 (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1940), p. 294.

[9]British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914, eds. G. P. Gooch & H. Temperly (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1926-1938), VI, No. 53. (Hereafter cited as B. D.).

[10]In 1905 he was raised to the peerage and became Lord Northcliffe; in 1908 he purchased The Times.

class."[11] Six years later, on a visit to England, the Kaiser confied to General Sir John French that Lord Northcliffe and Moberly Bell were "most hostile to Germany and doing much harm."[12] Similar opinions were entertained by Friedrich von Holstein,[13] the Senior Counsellor in the German Foreign Office, and Chancellor von Bülow.[14]

What ability Printing House Square had to sway governments on issues of foreign policy resulted from the fact that members of the Cabinet, of the British Foreign Office, and even British ambassadors themselves, frequently relied on The Times for information of international developments. The Foreign Office regularly gave greater credit to the reports of Henry Wickham Steed, the paper's correspondent in Vienna from 1902 to 1912, than those of its own ambassador.[15] It was not unusual for the foreign correspondents, through their numerous local connections, to

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[11] Die Grosse Politik der europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914, eds. J. Lepsius, A. Mendelssohn Bartholdy & F. Thimme (Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1922-1927), XX, Pt. 2, No. 6887 (hereafter cited as G. P.). Erzschweinhund may be translated literally as "special pig-dog".

[12] B. D., VII, No. 490.

[13] N. Rich, Friedrich von Holstein. Politics and Diplomacy in the Era of Bismarck and Wilhelm II (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1965), II, pp. 664-665.

[14] Bernhard Fürst von Bülow, Denkwürdigkeiten (Berlin: Verlag Ullstein, 1930-1931), I, p. 335.

[15] Steiner, p. 188.

supply the Foreign Office with news which it was unable to obtain through regular channels. In December 1908, Sir Fairfax Cartwright, British ambassador in Vienna, got information from J. D. Bourchier, The Times' Balkan correspondent, which caused him to believe that Count von Aehrenthal, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, had not known of Bulgaria's intention to claim its independence.[16] In Berlin, Sir Frank Lascelles saw Saunders almost daily.[17] Bell maintained cordial relations with members of the British Foreign Office and frequently dined with cabinet ministers as well as high-ranking members of the Foreign Office.[18] James Thursfield, The Times' naval correspondent, was a personal friend of First Sea Lord John Fisher, with whom he kept in constant touch.[19] Valentine Chirol, head of Printing House Square's Foreign Department from 1899 to 1912, who had served in the Foreign Office for four years, maintained his friendships from those years and was thus in a position to plumb the thinking of the Foreign Office as

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[16] B. D., IX, Pt. I, No. 20. For Bulgaria's declaration of independence, see Chpt. V, Pt. I.

[17] N. Rich and M. H. Fisher (eds.), The Holstein Papers (Cambridge: At The University Press, 1955-1963), IV, No. 1014.

[18] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 114; E. H. C. Moberly Bell, The Life and Letters of C. F. Moberly Bell (London: The Richards Press, Ltd., 1927), pp. 142-143.

[19] Arthur J. Marder (ed.), Fear God and Dread Nought. The Correspondence of Admiral of the Fleet Lord Fisher of Kilverstone (London: Jonathan Cape, 1956), II, No. 25.

well as to pass on to it the latest intelligence which he had obtained.[20] All this, however, is not to say that Printing House Square determined the nation's foreign policy. Whilst The Times influenced the Foreign Office on details of specific issues, no newspaper in these years produced a fundamental change in thinking at the Foreign Office.[21]

The Times' importance in domestic politics derived from the fact that it was the newspaper of the "governing classes"--i.e., of the upper and the upper-middle classes. It was an "educated newspaper", intended for educated people.[22] Its caste character is revealed in the great attention which it devoted to the minutiae of life at Oxford, Cambridge and the public schools, and to the social functions of London society. Although it was frequently labelled Tory, in this period it was independent of any political party. It critically supported governmental policies which it regarded as being in the national interest, and censured those which it deemed unwise.[23]

In make-up, The Times was quite different from

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[20] Steiner, pp. 189-190; G. P., XI, no. 2621; Sir Valentine Chirol, Fifty Years in a Changing World (London: Jonathan Cape, 1927), pp. 285-303.

[21] Steiner, p. 192.

[22] Kitchin, p. 263; Cook, p. 3; The History of 'The Times', II, pp. 13-14.

[23] Ibid., p. 13; Bowman, p. 3.

present-day North American dailies. The first two pages consisted of advertisements. Then followed two pages of law court reports. The main news page came next, after which were placed the "Parliamentary Reports", spread over two pages. Another page of advertisements followed, and then the editorial page. The usual editorial page carried substantial comments on the latest developments in both domestic and world affairs. Notwithstanding that it had a reputation for disinterested reporting, there was not always a clear distinction between "news" and "comment". Editorials were frequently little more than elaborated news reports, and news reports little more than statements of correspondents' opinions. A business page, a page of ecclesiastical, naval and military news, a sports and university page, and two or more pages of advertisements completed the typical edition of The Times.

By the turn of the century, The Times exercised less influence in home affairs than it had previously. Several reasons account for this erosion. In 1857, its circulation had been almost six times that of all the other London dailies combined, but the removal of the tax on newspapers in 1855 meant that more middle-class people now could afford to buy newspapers and opened the way for a number of rivals, which modelled themselves on The Times.[24] By 1880, The

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[24] Ibid., pp. 7ff; The History of 'The Times', III, chaps. XIV and XVII; Fox Bourne, II, pp. 224-366 passim.

Morning Post and the Standard had circulations almost equal to The Times', and the Daily Telegraph's exceeded it.[25] Several prominent provincial dailies--notably The Manchester Guardian and the Birmingham Daily Post--also achieved the quality of news coverage and reporting of the best in London.[26] The growing circulations of these newspapers meant a loss of subscribers to The Times and, even more important financially, a drop in the number of "situation" and "wants" advertisements.[27] The publication in 1887 of some fraudulent letters supposedly written by Charles Stewart Parnell, implicating him in the murders committed by some Irish extremists, and the subsequent revelation by a Judicial Committee that the letters were the fabrications of Richard Pigott, hurt The Times financially in court costs and tarnished its reputation for accurate reporting of domestic affairs.[28] But the most important reason was the emergence of a new kind of newspaper in the 1880's--the "popular journal". Automatic typesetting, improved and faster printing presses, the development of wood-pulp paper, which

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[25]Bowman, p. 120; Richard D. Altick, The English Common Reader. A Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 355.

[26]Bowman, p. 20.

[27]Kitchin, p. 14.

[28]Bowman, pp. 285-301; The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 43-89.

replaced the more expensive rag paper, made possible newspapers at a price within the means of the working-class.[29] This reading public had been created by the Education Act of 1870, which promised elementary education for all. However, lowering the price of dailies did not immediately create a "mass", as opposed to a "class", newspaper-reading public. So long as the newspapers themselves did not change, the working-class did not subscribe to them. The factory-worker wanted entertainment and diversion, not information. Only when the detailed reporting of politics gave way to sports, crime, anecdotes, jokes, and riddles did the lower-class begin to purchase newspapers.[30] Because the franchise had been extended to virtually all adult males by 1884, this new press had tremendous political importance. It also hurt The Times badly economically. Advanced industrialization meant more advertising, and the popular journals with their larger circulations attracted commercial advertising that previously had gone to the "class" newspapers. This loss of advertising revenue finally precipitated a financial crisis for The Times.[31]

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[29]Carlton J. H. Hayes, A Generation of Materialism 1871-1900 (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), pp. 176-177; Raymond Williams, The Long Revolution (London: Chatto & Windus, 1961), pp. 173-202.

[30]Altick, pp. 355, 363; Hayes, pp. 178-179; The History of 'The Times', III, chap. IV.

[31]Ibid., pp. 117-124, 431ff; Hayes, p. 178; Williams, pp. 200-202.

The managerial organization of The Times was complicated and not very logical. It had been founded by John Walter and though the Walter family continued to be the largest single shareholders, they did not control the majority of the shares. Nevertheless, management of The Times was vested solely in the Walter family.[32] In 1889, Arthur Walter assumed the duties of manager. An English country gentleman by inclination, he preferred the leisure of his estate to the routine of Printing House Square. To enable himself to indulge his penchant and in the hope that he would be able to improve the paper's deteriorating financial position, he appointed Moberly Bell assistant manager in 1891, and left to him the responsibility for the newspaper's publication. Thus it was Moberly Bell who assumed responsibility for most of the policies pursued by The Times from his appointment to his death in April 1911.[33]

As a young man, Bell had gone to Egypt to work as a clerk in his father's commercial house. Always interested in journalism, he had done numerous articles for The Times and in 1882 had left business to accept an offer as The Times' Egyptian correspondent. Bell was deeply influenced by the Social Darwinism which pervaded the intellectual climate of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. A convert to

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[32]Kitchin, pp. 11-12; The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 431-436.

[33]Ibid., pp. 107ff.

racialism and its attendant notions of competition and struggle among populations, he believed in the inherent superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race and its mission to minister law and order to the rest of the world.[34] Given this outlook, Bell regarded any threat to the Empire as a blow against civilization itself.[35] Thus when British troops occupied Egypt in 1882, he immediately supported the action. French efforts to get the British government to withdraw its troops roused him to condemn France and on his promotion to Printing House Square in 1890 he was still an acknowledged Francophobe. In his first years as assistant manager he frequently declared that he believed "in racial affinities, and that deep down in our bones is hatred of the French."[36] Although he did not have any particular liking for Germans, as Teutons he thought them immensely superior to the French.[37]

Because of his long years abroad and because he believed that the Empire represented a moral mission, Bell was much more concerned with foreign than with domestic developments. The Times' foreign coverage, once unrivalled, had declined till by the time of Bell's appointment to assistant manager it was frequently excelled by the Standard,

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[34]Hayes, pp. 255-265.

[35]Bell, p. 201.

[36]Cited in ibid., p. 212.

[37]The History of 'The Times', III, p. 372.

the Morning Post and the Daily Telegraph.[38] What distinguished The Times' treatment of foreign news from most other newspapers' was the fact that as well as providing full coverage of foreign happenings, its staff also pursued a "foreign policy". Not only were international developments reported, but they were interpreted as seen by particular individuals at The Times, whose perceptions often differed markedly from those of important members of the government. This was particularly the case with regard to Germany, whose international behavior in these years was seen in a harsher light by Printing House Square than by most members of the government.

Traditionally, responsibility for foreign news had been divided between the editor and the manager. But George Buckle, editor between 1884 and his retirement in 1912, was primarily interested in the domestic politics of Great Britain and the Continental countries, and in international developments only in so far as they influenced national affairs. As he devoted himself to the "Letters to the Editor", the law court and parliamentary reports, and party politics, and left foreign news to Bell and Chirol, he had little influence in the formulation of the paper's foreign policy.[39] Since Bell's duties did not leave him sufficient

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[38] Ibid., p. 128.

[39] Ibid., pp. 128 and 298; Kitchin, p. 14.

time adequately to supervise the foreign correspondents, one of his first actions as assistant manager was to establish a Foreign Department at Printing House Square. Although the head of the Foreign Department was nominally responsible for the management of foreign correspondents, Bell retained responsibility for correspondents' appointments, transfers, promotions and salaries, and he maintained considerable correspondence with them.[40] Not all of this correspondence, however, related to matters of The Times' foreign policy. The need to remove the paper's operations from the red meant that many of Bell's letters to correspondents were simply demands that they exercise more restraint in their expenses.[41]

Although the head of the Foreign Department was charged with the detailed supervision of the foreign correspondents, the fact that Bell regarded them as specialists initially ensured that they had considerable latitude for initiative. He treated the despatches of the correspondents of the major European capitals as the raw material from which to construct the newspaper's foreign policy. Hence The Times' statements on foreign affairs were a composite of the views of the foreign correspondents, of the head of the Foreign Department, and of the assistant

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[40] Ibid., p. 15; The History of 'The Times', III, p. 129.

[41] Bell, pp. 153-154.

manager.[42] But once Bell was convinced, through the despatches of the Berlin and Paris correspondents, that the foreign policy of Germany was hostile to Great Britain, he expected all The Times' correspondents to follow this line in their reporting.[43]

The Times' focus in the years 1904-1914 was primarily on Europe. Although it considered the Empire as the foundationstone of Britain's greatness, and its protection and preservation as the central task of all British governments, its focus of attention, paradoxically, was Europe. This was not due to any inconsistency, as it realized that the Empire was secure only so long as an equilibrium was maintained among the European powers. As long as France and Russia had pursued ambitious colonial policies that seemed to jeopardize the integrity of Britain's possessions, and their combined naval strengths almost equalled that of Britain, The Times had identified France and Russia as Great Britain's natural foes.[44] During these years, Printing House Square viewed Berlin with a benign eye.[45] It was only in the twilight years of the last decade of the century, once Germany had

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[42] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 129.

[43] See Chap. IV, Pt. I.

[44] E.g., The Times, 26 June 1883; 30 Aug. 1890; 25 Oct. 1895; 11 Apr. 1896; 13 May 1896; 4 Apr. 1898; 25 July 1898.

[45] E.g., ibid., 2 Jan. 1885; 25 Aug. 1890; 13 June 1894.

become an economic and military colossus, that Printing House Square began to question its analysis of the international distribution of power. This reassessment was probably inevitable, but it occurred when it did, and took the form that it did, because of the anti-British sentiment then current in Germany. Dislike of Britain was purposely contrived by Admiral von Tirpitz through the official German press. Plans were then in preparation for the German fleet, and public support was needed to ensure the passage of the naval laws through the Reichstag.[46] Whilst at Windsor in November 1899, Count von Bülow, then the German Secretary of State, penned a revealing memorandum. Inter alia, he wrote:

> There is no doubt that feeling in England generally is far less anti-German than German feeling is anti-British. Therefore the most dangerous Englishmen for us are those who, like Chirol and Saunders, know from personal observation how sharp and deep is the German dislike of England. If the British public realized the feeling reigning just now in Germany, it would cause a great change in their view of the relationship between England and that country.[47]

Valentine Chirol headed the Foreign Department from 1899 to his retirement in 1912. Educated in France and Germany, as well as in England, he had served in the Foreign Office from 1872 to 1876 and as The Times' Berlin correspondent

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[46] J. Steinberg, Yesterday's Deterrent. Tirpitz and the Birth of the German Battle Fleet (London: Macdonald, 1965), pp. 141-143, 158-161, 179-180, 206.

[47] G. P., XV, No. 4398.

from 1892 to 1896.[48] On his appointment to Berlin he had been Germanophile, but following the Kruger telegram[49] Chirol began to have reservations about the direction of German foreign policy under Wilhelm II.[50] Nevertheless, at this juncture he still held the traditional opinion that Russia was the bête noire of the Empire.[51] In April 1896 Chirol left Berlin to become assistant head of the Foreign Department; on 1 January 1899 he became head.[52]

As head of the Foreign Department, Chirol frequently wrote the paper's editorials on foreign affairs. When he did not, special "leader-writers" were assigned to write articles with specific instructions of what was wanted.[53] Undoubtedly Bell regularly consulted Chirol about the editorials' contents and helped decide their tone. Naval editorials, on the other hand, were the work of James Thursfield, The Times' naval correspondent, or of the

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[48]Chirol, pp. 12-21, 264; The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 140, 764-765.

[49]In December 1895 Dr. Jameson and a band of armed men marched on the Boers in the Transvaal. The Boers quickly captured Jameson and his men and on 3 January 1896 Kaiser Wilhelm II sent a telegram to President Kruger congratulating him on repelling the invasion "without making any appeal for the help of friendly powers."

[50]Chirol, p. 281; Baron von Eckardstein, Ten Years at the Court of St. James, 1895-1905, trans. G. Young (London: Thornton Butterworth Ltd., 1921), p. 139.

[51]The History of 'The Times', III, p. 300.

[52]Ibid., pp. 280 and 287.

[53]Ibid., pp. 303, 314, 317, 337, 358, 374, 470, 629, 679.

leader-writers who in these instances got their instructions from Thursfield.[54]

In January 1897 Chirol's vacancy in Berlin had been filled by George Saunders, who remained there till 1908, when he was transferred to Paris. Saunders had studied at Bonn and Göttingen and married a German. Before joining The Times, he had represented the Morning Post in Berlin for nine years, which had given him a good knowledge of German affairs and policies.

In a quasi-parliamentary system like Germany, with responsibility for foreign policy vested in the hands of the monarch, the direction of foreign policy depended to a large extent on the character of the Kaiser. A man of no fixed beliefs, ever in search of a new role, Wilhelm II was easily swayed by the many nationalist and economic interest groups that existed in the Second Reich. Given the expansionist and Anglophobe sentiments of many of these groups, there was always the danger that Germany might be set on an anti-British course. Although originally a Germanophile, the Kruger telegram alarmed Saunders, who feared that the Kaiser had fallen under the sway of Anglophobe pressure groups. The First German Navy Bill (1897) further worried him and the anti-British outbursts in Germany during the South African War convinced him that Germany was now firmly anti-British

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[54] Ibid., pp. 604-605, 624-628, 706.

and that it, not France and Russia, henceforth represented the real danger for Britain.[55]

From 1902 till his death six years later, William Lavino was The Times' correspondent in Paris. As a young man he had served in Vienna: between 1878 and 1892 with the Daily Telegraph, and then with The Times. As early as 1894 Lavino had thought that he detected anti-British trends in German foreign policy and, accordingly, had advised Printing House Square that Anglo-Russian and Anglo-French rapprochements might be necessary in the future to ensure continued operation of the European system.[56] At that time, his idea met little encouragement. France and Russia still were regarded as avaricious competitors for empire, and Germany, although occasionally considered an annoyance, was not yet perceived as expansionist.

Lavino construed the German press's scurrilous attacks on England during the South African War as proof that the Kaiser had abandoned Bismarck's policy of attempting to maintain the status quo. By the time of the Treaty of Vereeniging, he was firmly convinced that only an Anglo-French-Russian alliance could forestall German domination of Europe.[57] Hence by the time of his appointment to Paris,

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[55] Ibid., pp. 295-300; Chirol, p. 282; Koppel S. Pinson, Modern Germany: Its History and Civilization (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1961), pp. 158-160, 276-310.

[56] Ibid., p. 250.

[57] Ibid., p. 376.

Lavino was already decidedly Francophile. Once there, he quickly established friendly relations with Emile Loubet, the President of France, and with Théophile Delcassé, the French Foreign Minister,[58] and did all in his power to improve Anglo-French relations. That Lavino played an important role in bringing about the Anglo-French entente is indicated by a letter of congratulation that was sent to him by Chirol on 25 April 1904, following the ratification of the agreement.[59]

Although the Kruger telegram had caused considerable irritation in Great Britain and had provoked Prime Minister Salisbury to tell the Kaiser that he ought to mind his own affairs, the feeling against Germany had died down quickly and generally been forgotten. The anti-British tirades of the South African War, on the other hand, made a permanent impression. Whilst all the Continental press expressed moral outrage at Britain for waging war on a small nation of farmers, the French and Russian press had soon moderated their tone, whereas the German newspapers printed their most vituperative articles in the last year of the war. Saunders, already disturbed by the Kruger telegram and the First Naval Law, saw this as confirmation of Germany's hostility. He gave full reproductions of the worst articles circulated in

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[58] Ibid., p. 377.

[59] Ibid., p. 391.

German newspapers and was primarily responsible for alerting The Times' readers to the degree of German antipathy to Britain just then. That his suspicions of Germany occasionally distorted his articles is revealed by the fact that during the South African War he depicted the German press as though it alone were anti-British, whereas, in reality, all Continental newspapers were unfriendly, albeit the articles in the German press were usually more violent than those in other papers.[60]

Saunders' despatches, in particular, had great influence in shaping Bell's and Chirol's opinions of Germany. His reports persuaded Chirol that Anglo-German friendship and co-operation were no longer possible. Gradually the head of the Foreign Department began to advocate the abandonment of splendid isolation and an active involvement in Europe to prevent German hegemony.[61] Oron J. Hale has stated that it was Printing House Square that determined Saunders' outlook.[62] In actual fact, it was the other way around.

Bell also underwent conversion. Although he had been annoyed by the Kruger telegram, he had thought that the Anglophobe sentiments expressed in Germany were merely a

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[60] Ibid., p. 311; Hale, pp. 200-206.

[61] Chirol, pp. 285ff.

[62] Hale, p. 22.

passing phase.[63] Saunders' warning of 1897 that the First German Naval Law required greater watchfulness of German naval policy by the British government in future had not made much impression on him. He thought that Germany had as much right to a navy as any other nation. But the sharpness of the anti-British outbursts in Germany during the South African War made him reassess the situation, although he was slower than Chirol to conclude that German policies were designed to turn international relations upside down.

In early June 1902, Alfred Rothschild, a British financier, approached Bell for Count Metternich, the German ambassador, to see what The Times thought of an Anglo-German rapprochement. On 13 June, Bell wrote to Saunders to canvass his views on the subject and, specifically, what he thought of the idea of an alliance between the two countries. Saunders' reply was that "Germany is a new, crude, ambitious, radically unsound Power" and that therefore the British government would do better to seek a rapprochement with Russia.[64] No evidence is available to indicate just when Bell became Germanophobe, but probably it was shortly after this letter.

Thus by the end of 1902, Bell, Chirol, Lavino and Saunders, the four men who were instrumental in sketching The Times' profile of Germany, were all distrustful of the

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[63] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 148.

[64] Cited in ibid., p. 366. The emphases are Saunders'.

tack of German policy. Given their attitude, Saunders and Lavino reported news that reflected their misgivings, and Bell and Chirol supported and encouraged this coverage as they believed that it was necessary to waken the British public to the emerging German menace.

When Saunders left Berlin for Paris in 1908 his position was filled by J. E. Mackenzie.[65] Bell had wanted Henry Wickham Steed moved from Vienna, but Steed was persona non grata in Berlin and his presence there would have only further annoyed the Kaiser and the German press. Hence on advice from Chirol and from Steed himself,[66] Bell dropped this idea and appointed Mackenzie, who must have been acceptable to Berlin, as no objections were raised to his appointment. There is a dearth of material on Mackenzie, but he seems to have been a reliable journalist who followed the general line already laid out at Printing House Square. Certainly there was no discernible change between the tone of Mackenzie's articles on Germany and that of Saunders' before him.

By 1907, The Times was in serious financial straits. Its average daily circulation had dropped below 40,000 and its advertising revenues failed to grow at the same pace as

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[65] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 682.

[66] The British Foreign Office also advised against Steed's appointment to Berlin, but Bell's decision appears to have been based on the strength of the persuasion of Chirol and Steed, rather than that of the Foreign Office. Ibid., pp. 645-646.

expenses. A number of shareholders, dissatisfied with the declining rate of return on their investment, therefore petitioned the courts to sell The Times.[67] With Moberly Bell's aid, Lord Northcliffe, the tsar of the popular press, purchased The Times in March 1908.[68] In return for the help which he had given, Bell was given assurance by Northcliffe that the newspaper's tradition of independent political reporting would not be tampered with and that the editorial staff would be left free to pursue its own policies.[69]

Many questioned whether the new proprietor would honour his undertaking. Northcliffe was the founder of the Daily Mail. Whereas The Times had a long tradition of objective reporting and disinterested commentary, the Daily Mail exemplified the careless exaggeration and over-simplification that characterized the new journalism. Northcliffe's only standard for judging the success of a newspaper was its margin of profit. To increase circulation, he stressed sensationalism and entertainment rather than information. Hence his ownership of The Times threatened to reduce it to the status of an upper-class Daily Mail. Whilst he did tarnish its reputation during and after World War I, his interference before the war was limited to introducing

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[67] Ibid., pp. 454-459.

[68] Ibid., pp. 557-572; Pound & Harmsworth, pp. 311-317.

[69] Bell, p. 292; Chirol, p. 236; The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 547-549.

changes in The Times' physical makeup.[70]

On Bell's death in April 1911, Reginald Nicholson became manager. Northcliffe was determined that The Times should become a paying newspaper, and Nicholson's preoccupation therefore was with economizing and with increasing circulation and advertisements. This left the new manager no time to interfere with editorial policies.[71] In March 1912, Chirol retired and in August was followed by Buckle. The new editor, Geoffrey (Robinson) Dawson, had previously served as editor of the Johannesburg Star and as The Times' South African correspondent. An ardent apologist of the Empire, he had been recommended by Bell and was highly regarded by Buckle, both of whom saw him as a person who would fight to maintain The Times' tradition of independence from proprietary interference.[72]

Chirol was succeeded as head of the Foreign Department by Henry Wickham Steed. Steed had served as Berlin correspondent for six months in 1896, as Rome correspondent from 1896 to 1902, and as Vienna correspondent from 1902 till his promotion to Printing House Square. Convinced by his short stay in Berlin that German policy was on a

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[70]"The 'Times'; From Delane to Northcliffe", The Quarterly Review, CCXlL(1923), p. 106.

[71]The History of 'The Times', IV, Pt. I, pp. 519-520.

[72]Ibid., III, pp. 742ff.; J. E. Wrench, Geoffrey Dawson and Our Times (London: Hutchinson, 1955), passim, pp. 44-93.

a collision course with British interests, he thereafter viewed Germany's international behavior with a very critical eye.[73]

By the end of 1912, the old faces in the managerial posts at Printing House Square had been replaced by new ones, some promoted from within The Times' hierarchy, others brought in from outside. Shortly after Bell's death, there was a noticeable softening in The Times' attitude toward Germany. Although Bell's absence from Printing House Square may partly account for this, by far the most important reason was the realization at Printing House Square that unless the entente powers established better relations with Germany, Europe might plunge itself into a general war, and this was something that The Times was determined to avoid. Printing House Square thus attempted to pave the way for better feelings between Britain and Germany as the first step toward a détente between the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente. This new, moderate tone lasted till the murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand at Sarajevo.

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[73]Chirol, pp. 280-293; The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 281-294, 402; IV, Pt. I, p. 139.

CHAPTER II

THE GRAND ALIGNMENTS

Germany emerged from the Franco-Prussian War as the strongest military power in Continental Europe, if not in the world. The German Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, had realized that France's loss of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany by the Treaty of Frankfurt would keep alive in the breasts of patriotic Frenchmen the spirit of revanche. To prevent a French-led encirclement of Germany he constructed an elaborate system of alliances to keep Paris diplomatically isolated.[1] The Iron Chancellor regarded European diplomacy as a chessboard with five players, of whom Berlin must always be à trois. He was remarkably successful in this juggling act until his dismissal by Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1890, although it is doubtful that even Bismarck could have kept this labyrinthine arrangement in balance much longer.[2]

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[1] E. Brandenburg, From Bismarck to the World War: A History of German Foreign Policy, 1870-1914, trans. A. E. Adams (London: Humphrey Milford, 1927), pp. 4-10; W. L. Langer, European Alliances and Alignments, 1870-1890 (2nd ed.; New York: Vintage Books, 1950), p. 16.

[2] R. J. Sontag, European Diplomatic History 1871-1932 (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1961), pp. 3-46; R. Albrecht-Carrié, A Diplomatic History of Europe Since the Congress of Vienna (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), pp. 164-206.

During his Chancellorship, Bismarck had been careful not to do anything that might drive Great Britain into an agreement with Russia or France, although he occasionally had created difficulties in Anglo-German relations, as, for example, in the German bid for colonies in 1884-1885.[3] But even then, he had not pressed too hard, lest he arouse lasting anger in London.[4]

Since 1878 Great Britain had assumed a posture of "isolation" vis-à-vis the Continent[5]--it was referred to as "splendid isolation" after 1896.[6] Isolation did not mean that Great Britain had adopted a policy of non-involvement in Europe. It simply meant that the British governments of these years refused to commit themselves in peace-time to formal alliances entailing a casus belli.[7] As an imperial

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[3]A. J. P. Taylor, Germany's First Bid for Colonies, 1884-1885. A Move in Bismarck's European Policy (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1938), pp. 32-92.

[4]C. J. Lowe, The Reluctant Imperialists: British Foreign Policy 1878-1902 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), I, p. 62.

[5]C. Howard, Splendid Isolation (London: Macmillan, 1967), p. 44.

[6]Ibid., pp. 14-20.

[7]Ibid., p. 45. British policy under Prime Minister Salisbury was guided by fear of Russian designs on Constantinople and the need to defend Egypt. As the British Mediterranean fleet might some day find itself squeezed between the Russian and French navies, the British government in 1887 had exchanged notes with the Italian and Austro-Hungarian governments, in which they pledged their intention to maintain the status quo in the Mediterranean. However,

power with global interests, Britain could not afford to tie itself exclusively to the continental ambitions of any European power.[8] Nor could it allow any power to achieve hegemony on the Continent. Britain traditionally acted as the arbiter which prevented any power or combination of powers from gaining paramountcy. As one power or combination became powerful enough to threaten the existence of the rest, Britain threw its support to the weaker side, thus redressing the balance.[9] Certainly Sir Edward Grey, British Foreign Secretary from 1906 to 1916, regarded this as the keystone of British foreign policy.[10]

Bismarck had performed a very delicate balancing act in keeping both Austria-Hungary and Russia allied to Germany, as they had strongly conflicting ambitions in the Balkans.

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there was no casus belli in these notes; only a statement that consultation would occur to decide what should be done in the event of an alteration of the status quo in the Mediterranean. See: L. Albertini, The Origins of the War of 1914, trans. and ed. by I. M. Massey, I (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), pp. 55-57; C. J. Lowe, Salisbury and the Mediterranean 1886-1896 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965), pp. 13-18.

[8]Lord Strang, Britain in World Affairs (London: Faber & Faber, 1961), p. 227.

[9]R. W. Seton-Watson, "The Foundations of British Policy," Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 4th. Series, XXIX (1947), pp. 61-62; H. J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), pp. 182, 194-197.

[10]B. D., III, No. 418.

Baron von Caprivi, the new Chancellor, Marschall von Bieberstein, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs from 1890 to 1897, and Friedrich von Holstein, Senior Counsellor in the German Foreign Office from 1878 to 1906, thought that Bismarck's diplomacy had been too complicated and that Germany could honestly not support both Russia and Austria-Hungary. They convinced Kaiser Wilhelm II of this and when the Reinsurance Treaty came up for renewal in 1890, shortly after Bismarck's dismissal, the agreement was allowed to lapse.[11] It was decided, instead, to adopt a policy of "honesty" toward Austria-Hungary.[12]

The German refusal to renew the Reinsurance Treaty and the Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty of 1890, by which Germany ceded Zanzibar to Britain in exchange for Heligoland, caused alarm in St. Petersburg, where it was thought that Germany contemplated an alliance with Great Britain.[13] In fact, there was at this time a strong desire for an alliance with

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[11] N. Rich, Friedrich von Holstein: Politics and Diplomacy in the Era of Bismarck and Wilhelm II, I, pp. 307-320; M. Balfour, The Kaiser and his Times (London: The Cresset Press, 1964), pp. 135-137.

[12] The Reinsurance Treaty of 1887 between Germany and Russia promised neutrality between the two powers, except in the event of a German attack on France or a Russian attack on Austria-Hungary. It was hardly consistent with the Dual Alliance of 1879 between Germany and Austria-Hungary, which provided for active military support in the event of an attack by Russia on either power.

[13] W. L. Langer, The Franco-Russian Alliance, 1890-1894 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929), p. 120.

Britain in Berlin, but this idea received little encouragement in London.[14] France, which had been diplomatically isolated since 1870, lost no time in taking advantage of Russia's newly-found isolation to conclude a defensive alliance in 1894 directed against Germany. But this Franco-Russian Alliance was of greater danger to Great Britain than to Germany. Only France was intractably hostile to Germany, whilst both France and Russia had bad relations with Britain.[15]

India was the keystone to the British Empire. Russia, checked in its European expansion at the Congress of Berlin, had been making rapid incursions into Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet, thus posing a threat to the Suez link with India, as well as to India itself.[16] In addition, Russian advances into Manchuria and Korea presented a considerable threat to British economic interests along the

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[14]W. L. Langer, The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890-1902 (3rd. ed.; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960), p. 19; Lowe, The Reluctant Imperialists, I, pp. 157-158.

[15]Langer, The Diplomacy of Imperialism, p. 48.

[16]A. P. Thornton, "Rivalries in the Mediterranean, the Middle East and Egypt," The New Cambridge Modern History, ed. F. H. Hinsley (Cambridge: At The University Press, 1962), XI, pp. 575-577, 590. (Hereafter cited as NCMH); N. Mansergh, The Coming of the First World War: A Study in the European Balance 1878-1914 (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1949), pp. 51-54; B. C. Busch, Britain and the Persian Gulf 1894-1914 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 114-131.

Yangtze.[17]

The Third Republic also posed a threat to the British Empire. In 1869 a company of predominantly French bondholders had opened the Suez canal, providing a much-shortened route between India and Europe. In 1875 Prime Minister Disraeli had purchased the bonds of the Egyptian Khedive, who was in financial difficulty; and in 1879 Anglo-French Controllers-General were appointed to manage the Khedive's finances in an attempt to restore order and to protect the bondholders' investments. However a military revolt in 1881 undermined the Khedive's authority and jeopardized Anglo-French interests there. The British government was afraid that if French troops intervened alone to put down the revolt, they would remain to occupy Egypt--they had just occupied Tunis. Thus the British government desired joint action. But when London approached Paris about joint intervention, the French government refused. The British government therefore went into Egypt alone. Although it planned to withdraw shortly, the troops remained. This caused extremely bad feelings against London in Paris as France had had designs on Egypt and this complicated Anglo-French relations till the

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[17]Lowe, The Reluctant Imperialists, I, pp. 227-233; D. C. M. Platt, Finance, Trade and Politics in British Foreign Policy 1815-1914 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 275-283.

entente of 1904.[18]

Germany had entered into "the scramble for colonies" later than France and colonial questions did not become a major issue between London and Berlin until after the Franco-Russian Alliance. Whilst Bismarck had begun Germany's colonial empire with acquisitions in Africa and the Pacific, he was never much interested in overseas territories and never allowed them to interfere with his European diplomatic manoeuvres.[19] Bismarck's successor, Caprivi, and the Foreign Secretary, Marshall, likewise believed that colonies were of minor importance and should not be allowed to create difficulties with Great Britain.[20] After 1894 this policy changed. Bismarck had exchanged Zanzibar for Heligoland in the hope of drawing Great Britain into an alliance. Following the signature of the Franco-Russian Alliance, the idea of an alliance with Great Britain was again revived in Berlin, but for a different reason. Whereas Bismarck's were intended to maintain the operation of the European balance of power, Kaiser Wilhelm's were intended to end it.

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[18]R. Robinson and J. Gallagher, Africa and the Victorians: The Official Mind of Imperialism (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1961), pp. 76-89, 94-121; Langer, European Alliances and Alignments, pp. 252-278, 281-282; Platt, pp. 156-180.

[19]Mansergh, pp. 43-45; W. R. Louis, "Great Britain and German Expansion in Africa, 1884-1919," Britain and Germany in Africa: Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule, eds. P. Gifford and W. R. Louis (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), pp. 6-17.

[20]Ibid., p. 17.

Social Darwinism dominated German thought in the Wilhelmine era. The history of nations was viewed as a continuous struggle for survival. Leopold von Ranke, writing between 1824 and 1886, had seen the history of European nations as the history of the balance of power.[21] The emergence of the transcontinental states, Russia, the United States, and the British Empire, prompted Ranke's disciples to carry his thinking one step further. Max Lenz, Hans Delbrück, Otto Hintze, Hermann Oncken, Erich Marcks and Friedrich Meinecke reasoned that if Germany were to become a world power it too would require a continental hinterland. They thus saw the need of the European balance to give way to a global balance, in which a German-dominated Europe would act as one of the counterweights.[22] In the same way, the German school of historical economists, with their emphasis on neo-mercantilism, considered essential the acquisition of an Ergänzungsraum (hinterland) if Germany was to remain economically competitive with the other great powers, and thus a great power itself in future.[23]

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[21] Ludwig Dehio, "Ranke und der deutsche Imperialismus," Historische Zeitschrift, Vol. 170 (1950), pp. 307-309.

[22] Ibid., pp. 309-320; Geoffrey Barraclough, An Introduction to Contemporary History (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967), pp. 32, 61, 111, 115-116.

[23] Herbert Feis, Europe, the World's Banker 1870-1914 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), pp. 176-177; Hayes, pp. 12-13; W. F. Bruck, Social and Economic History of Germany from William II to Hitler, 1888-1938. A Comparative Study (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 37; C. Wilson, "Economic Conditions," NCMH, XI, pp. 60-61.

These ideas gained wide currency, both among the German public and in official circles, and found vociferous expression in the German Colonial Society, the Pan-German League, and the German Naval League. The "New Course", which the Kaiser trumpeted after Bismarck's dismissal, was a declaration that the All Highest was a convert to these opinions. Wilhelm's repeated efforts to get an alliance with Britain, on the one hand, or with Russia, on the other, which would have given him a free hand on the Continent, were an attempt to achieve German dominance.[24] These attempts were not, however, the result of any well-thought-out, concerted strategy. There is no evidence to indicate that any official, long-range plans to this end existed.[25] Given the role of the monarch in determining German foreign policy, given Wilhelm's emotional immaturity and instability and his amenability to persuasion by the assorted pressure groups that grew up as a result of the quasi-parliamentary nature of German government, that would have been impossible.[26] The Kaiser's attempts to achieve a diplomatic revolution--i.e., "to force the European system into retirement"--were based on "rank opportunism" rather than

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[24] L. Dehio, "Deutschland und die Epoche der Weltkriege," Historische Zeitschrift, Vol. 173 (1952), pp. 78-82.

[25] J. M. K. Vyvyan, "The Approach of the War of 1914," NCMH, ed. C. L. Mowat (2nd ed.; Cambridge: At the University Press, 1968), XII, p. 149, Footnote No. 1.

[26] Henry Cord Meyer, Mitteleuropa in German Thought and Action 1815-1945 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1955), p. 84.

"statesmanship."[27]

The Kaiser and his entourage decided to employ colonial issues to demonstrate to London that Great Britain was friendless and in need of German diplomatic support. It was assumed in Berlin that once the British government realized this that it would have no alternative but to accept German terms for diplomatic support--the transformation of the Triple into a Quadruple Alliance.[28] The first indication that Germany intended to create points of friction with Great Britain to emphasize the latter's diplomatic isolation in Europe, thereby forcing it into the Triple Alliance, came in the Kruger telegram of 1896.[29] However, this move backfired. The telegram aroused great anger in Britain and Prime Minister Salisbury issued a sharp rebuke to the Kaiser that he ought to keep his nose out of a dispute that did not involve Germany. The rebuke was underlined by the despatch of British warships to Delagoa Bay.[30]

Wilhelm II was quick to realize that without a navy Germany was impotent to alter British policy. The Kaiser

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[27] Ibid.

[28] Balfour, pp. 182-183, 192; A. J. P. Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918 (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1963), pp. 360-363.

[29] G. P., XI, Nos. 2577-2639.

[30] Langer, The Diplomacy of Imperialism, pp. 234-244.

was therefore persuaded of the need of the construction of a German battle fleet. This fleet, it was thought, would act as the lever that would bring Great Britain into an alliance, thereby ensuring Germany a "place in the Sun." Although the German Navy later became the one issue that stood in the way of an Anglo-German understanding, the Flottengesetz of 1898, which provided for a small "defensive fleet," aroused little concern in Britain.[31]

The bad feeling against Germany subsided quickly and was replaced again by the traditional hatred of France. The issue was the Sudan. Because the Egyptian economy was totally dependent on the Nile, it was imperative to British governments that no other power should have control of its headwaters. The French for some time had been pushing into the interior of Africa from Tunis and Senegal. In 1898 a small band of Frenchmen hauled up the French flag at Fashoda. They were almost immediately challenged by a larger British contingent and war seemed likely.[32] Prime Minister Salisbury informed Théophile Delcassé, the French Foreign Minister, that Captain Marchand must be recalled.[33] The French

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[31]Steinberg, pp. 72-84, 125-148; E. L. Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy (Oxford: At the University Press, 1935), pp. 48-54; A. J. Gillespie, "The Attitude of the House of Commons towards France, 1898-1904" (Unpublished M. A. thesis, University of Guelph, 1971), pp. 64-68, 108-113.

[32]Robinson and Gallagher, pp. 339-374; J. A. S. Grenville, Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy: The Close of the Nineteenth Century (London: The Athlone Press, 1964), pp. 218-230.

[33]B. D., I, Nos. 189-227.

government, faced with the prospect of war and thus permanent bad relations with Britain as well as with Germany, yielded, although the incident had generated intense hostility in both countries.[34]

Britain's very strained relations with both France and Russia caused a number of the Cabinet to question the policy of "isolation" and provided Joseph Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary, with an opportunity to try to achieve a pet ambition--an alliance with Germany. In the spring of 1898 he made an unofficial proposal for an alliance to Paul Hatzfield, the German Ambassador to London.[35] However the German government refused. It realized that Great Britain intended to use Germany to block Russian ambitions in Asia.[36] Lord Lansdowne, the Foreign Secretary from 1900 to 1905, began official talks in 1901, but found the German terms--a Quadruple Alliance--too high.[37] The German Foreign Office was convinced that British differences with France and Russia were irreconcilable and that London had no alternative but to join the Triple Alliance, which Berlin had made the

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[34]Langer, The Diplomacy of Imperialism, p. 555; Albrecht-Carrié, p. 224.

[35]J. L. Garvin, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1934), III, pp. 254-261.

[36]G. P., XIV, Pt. I, No. 3785.

[37]Grenville, pp. 336-362; G. Monger, The End of Isolation: British Foreign Policy, 1900-1907 (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1963), pp. 21-45.

sine qua non of any understanding.[38] The South African War of 1899-1902 marked a turning-point in Anglo-German relations. The war came as a shock to the British government, not only because British armies in the field initially suffered one defeat after another, but because the Continent was swept by a tide of anti-British sentiment which revealed just how friendless Great Britain had become. Although all of the Continental press depicted Britain as a bully waging war on a nation of peaceful farmers, the French and Russian press early moderated their tone. The German press, in contrast, became more scurrilous as the war went on.[39] Many of the worst articles were reproduced in British newspapers. The British public was informed that German cartoons showed Queen Victoria awarding campaign medals to young soldiers for raping Boer women and murdering Boer children. Understandably, the British public became intensely anti-German. Whereas people previously had regarded France and Russia as the enemy, many now began to wonder whether Germany was not the real threat. This sentiment revealed itself in 1903 when the British government had to refuse participation in a German-sponsored scheme for a railway from Baghdad to the Persian Gulf partly because the British public would not

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[38] G. P., XVI, No. 4837; XVII, No. 4996.

[39] Hale, pp. 190-226.

tolerate co-operation with Germany.[40]

British involvement in South Africa had prompted Russia to expand its influence in China and Persia. In October 1901 Lord Lansdowne approached St. Petersburg in the hope of an agreement on Asia and the Middle East, but was flatly refused.[41] Rebuffed at St. Petersburg, he turned to the other great Asian power, Japan, which was also greatly concerned by Russian incursions into Manchuria and Korea. On 30 January 1902 he signed the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.[42] By the terms of this treaty, if either member were attacked by a third power, the other would maintain strict neutrality. But if either signatory were attacked by two or more powers, the neutral member was bound to give military support.[43] As Russia was the nation likely to precipitate war in the Far East, and France the power that would support it, Great Britain found itself in the unhappy position of having to

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[40]Sontag, p. 87ff.; Cf. R. J. S. Hoffman, Great Britain and the German Trade Rivalry 1875-1914 (New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1964), pp. 148-150.

[41]Langer, The Diplomacy of Imperialism, pp. 711-716, 752-755; Z. Steiner, "Great Britain and the Creation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance," The Journal of Modern History, XXXI (March, 1959), pp. 27-32.

[42]I. H. Nish, The Anglo-Japanese Alliance: The Diplomacy of Two Island Empires, 1894-1907 (London: The Athlone Press, 1966), pp. 153-181, 229-234; Monger, pp. 56-62.

[43]Nish, pp. 216-218; J. P. T. Bury, "Diplomatic History, 1900-1912," NCMH, XII, pp. 124-125.

contemplate the possibility of war with the Dual Alliance.[44]

In an attempt to extricate himself from this possibility, Lansdowne again began negotiations with Russia in 1902. But these also failed.[45] The alternative was now an understanding with France. In Paris, Delcassé, who was a revanchist, had been preparing the ground for a détente with Britain.[46] Although the Franco-Russian Alliance ostensibly had ended Paris' diplomatic isolation, France really had gained little from it. Russian incursions into Manchuria threatened war with Japan. If Britain became involved on the side of Japan, France would have to join with Russia or lose Russian friendship, thus again facing Germany alone. But war in Asia over Russian ambitions there would profit France not at all. For these reasons the French government desired improved relations with Great Britain. Morocco provided the basis for an accord. Since 1882 the imperialist element in France had been anti-British because of the latter's occupation of Egypt. If the British government renounced all claims to Morocco, the French government would be free to appease its imperialists. The British Foreign Office would

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[44]Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, p. 412.

[45]Monger, pp. 108, 114-126, 138-146.

[46]P. J. V. Rolo, Entente Cordiale: The Origins and Negotiation of the Anglo-French Agreements of 8 April 1904 (London: Macmillan, 1969), pp. 81-109, 129-148; C. Andres, Théophile Delcassé and the Making of the Entente Cordiale (London: Macmillan, 1968), pp. 91-118, 195-199.

be able to relax somewhat over Egypt, and the Quai d'Orsay need no longer ponder the choice of war in Asia or termination of its alliance with St. Petersburg.[47]

The initiative for talks came from Delcassé and was warmly received in London. An agreement was enticing to Britain for two reasons. First, it would mean the dissipation of long-standing tensions between the two countries; and second, London could attempt to use Paris as a moderating influence on St. Petersburg.[48] The French government's decision in 1902 to reduce its naval expenditures, thereby abandoning naval competition with Great Britain, brought about a friendlier feeling towards France in the British House of Commons.[49] The French public was prepared for an entente--there was still a good deal of anti-British sentiment in France from the time of Fashoda--by the visit of King Edward VII to Paris in May 1903. Serious discussions commenced in July. Lord Lansdowne stipulated that France must abandon all claim to Egypt, while Delcassé pressed for

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[47] Langer, The Franco-Russian Alliance, pp. 399-401; Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, pp. 412ff.

[48] K. Eubank, Paul Cambon: Master Diplomatist (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), pp. 70-73; E. W. Edwards, "The Japanese Alliance and the Anglo-French Agreement of 1904," History, XLII (1957), p. 23.

[49] Gillespie, pp. 141-148; A. J. Marder, The Anatomy of British Sea Power. A History of British Naval Policy in the Pre-Dreadnought Era 1880-1905 (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1964), pp. 470-471.

a free hand in Morocco, where France had carved out an important sphere for itself.[50] The entente, concluded in April 1904, was not an alliance.[51] It covered only the colonial differences between the two countries in Newfoundland, Asia and North Africa. The most important clauses were secret. In them, Britain recognized France's special interest in Morocco, whilst France, in return, acknowledged Britain's special position in Egypt.[52]

II

Britain's colonial rivalry with France in Africa, and with Russia in the middle and Far East, in the 1880's and 1890's, had occasioned Printing House Square to regard France and Russia as Britain's natural enemies. However, the Kaiser's frequent belligerent, bombastic speeches, and the imperialistic rhetoric of many of his aides and close friends, had convinced the men of The Times who were

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[50] Monger, pp. 111-114, 127-131, 157-159; Rolo, pp. 152-229; C. Andrew, "France and the Making of the Entente Cordiale," The Historical Journal, X, No. 1 (1967), pp. 99-105.

[51] For this point see, e.g., Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, p. 413; Marder, p. 472; Albrecht-Carrié, p. 243; Sidney B. Fay, The Origins of the World War (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1930), I, pp. 168-169; Lord Strang, Britain in World Affairs (London: Faber & Faber, 1961), pp. 254-256; R. C. K. Ensor, England 1870-1914 (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1960), pp. 368ff.; Bury, p. 128; E. L. Woodward, "British Foreign Policy in Retrospect," International Journal, XXIII, No. 4 (Autumn, 1968), p. 512.

[52] B. D., II, No. 417; Bury, p. 127.

responsible for the formulation of its foreign policy that the Kaiser meant to alter the distribution of power in the world to Britain's disadvantage. Whereas previously it had inveighed against the dangers of Russian and French imperialism, after 1902 The Times began to warn that henceforth Germany must be watched as its foreign policy was "bound to clash" with British policy.[53] Sedan had demonstrated that France was no match for Germany, and even France and Russia combined were thought to be militarily weaker, as the efficiency of the Tsarist army was suspect. Thus Printing House Square deemed necessary a fundamental realignment of the European great powers to contain German expansionist ambitions. As the first step, it advocated an alliance with France.

There was no possibility of Anglo-French cooperation so long as their colonial disputes remained unresolved. Hence The Times began to stress those points of agreement between the two countries that might serve as the basis for an accord.[54] Demonstrations of Anglophile sentiment in France were reported, particularly the fine reception shown King Edward VII on his visit to Paris in May 1903.[55] These

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[53] The Times, 8 and 10 Nov. 1902.

[54] E.g., ibid., 24 Apr., 4, 6 and 22 May, 6 and 9 July 1903.

[55] E.g., ibid., 13 and 15 Apr., 4 and 6 May 1903.

were contrasted with instances of Anglophobe feeling in Germany.[56] Lest anyone fail to recognize the new tack that it was pursuing, The Times in March 1903, speaking as though it were the voice of a single-minded nation, announced that the British public had "altered very decidedly in favour of France," whilst at the same time developing a "contrasted attitude" toward "another nation".[57] Not only did The Times frequently employ sphinx-like phrases such as "other nation" or "another nation", but it regularly pontificated as though it were the voice of a monolithic country.

The editorial of 9 January 1904 announced that the French and British governments were on the eve of the signature of a convention which would settle all territorial questions that had strained feelings between them. Besides ensuring cordial relations between Britain and France in future, "one of the most obviously beneficial contributions of the Anglo-French entente" was to "render the part of the honest broker a good deal less profitable than it used to be." Both Baron von Holstein and Count von Bülow, when forming German policy, had assumed an irreconcilable clash of interests between Britain and France, on the one hand, and Britain and Russia, on the other, thus leaving them a free hand to play the role of arbiter mundi.[58] Their

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[56] Ibid., 11 Mar. 1903. [57] Ibid.

[58] G. P., XVIII, Pt. I, No. 5421.

strategy of lending diplomatic support to Britain only at a price was regarded at Printing House Square as blackmail, and had aroused considerable anger.[59] Because of the entente it was thought that henceforth Germany would not be in a position to fish in troubled waters.

When the Kaiser and the Chancellor became aware that a settlement was imminent, they got nervous. Although they realized that their supposition of British isolation in Europe might have been mistaken, they took hope from developments in Asia, where Russia and Japan were drifting toward war.[60] At Printing House Square, this aroused considerable alarm, since it appeared to jeopardize the rapprochement. The official German press was quick to pick up this theme. It not only prophesied a new Anglo-French rift, but possibly even war between the two because of Russia and Japan.[61] Lavino, reporting from Paris, dismissed as ridiculous this idea which he thought originated at the German Foreign Office, as it would

> ... leave intact the military and naval forces of the very Power who is the deadly foe of one of them and the rival of the other--namely Germany.[62]

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[59] The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 314-315.

[60] Erich Eyck, Das Persönliche Regiment Wilhelms II. Politische Geschichte des deutschen Kaiserreiches von 1890 bis 1914 (Erlenbach-Zürich: Eugen Rentsch Verlag, 1948), p. 384; G. P., XIX, Pt. I, Nos. 5943 and 5961.

[61] The Times, 4 Jan. 1904.

[62] Ibid., 5 Jan. 1904.

The Times devoted substantial coverage to the German press's reaction to the impending entente. As it wholeheartedly desired closer relations with France, it treated German criticisms and fears as ridiculous fabrications of the imagination, attributing them to malevolent motives.[63]

Historians have characterized Saunders as the most Germanophobe of The Times' correspondents.[64] This was undoubtedly because, stationed in Berlin for so long, he was the direct object of most of the Kaiser's and the German Foreign Office's criticisms of The Times. But in reality, Lavino's despatches usually painted Germany in harsher shades than Saunders'. There were at least two reasons for this. Living in Paris and being Francophile, Lavino undoubtedly had absorbed some of the anti-German sentiment that was so common there. Furthermore, he had helped to prepare the ground for the entente, and by adopting a strongly pro-entente posture must have hoped to reassure Frenchmen with lingering doubts about the reliability of Perfidious Albion that the accord would not only be viable, but that it had the complete and unreserved commitment of the British government. Although Saunders' reports were more subdued in tone, they nevertheless also revealed considerable mistrust of German policy.

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[63] E.g., ibid., 4, 10, 12 and 18 Mar. 1904.

[64] Hale, p. 131.

War in Asia between Russia and Japan broke out on 8 February 1904. Once again Berlin regained its old optimism. The Kaiser was convinced that Russia had no alternative but to seek a rapprochement with Germany, as St. Petersburg could not afford to leave unguarded its western frontier at the same time that the bulk of its armies were engaged in the Far East. After an agreement with Russia, Germany would be in a position to apply pressure at Paris to bring it into an alliance, too, thereby nullifying the effect of the entente.[65] Saunders, relying on well-developed contacts, was able to trace and report this line of reasoning, although he himself thought that Berlin's optimism was bound to be disappointed. Nevertheless, he urged the British government to take the German naval programme more seriously than it had previously.[66]

Whilst the Kaiser made overtures to Tsar Nicholas II, the German Foreign Office maintained a facade of neutrality.[67] Saunders was unaware of the exact nature of the German moves, but he suspected that something was taking place.[68] He

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[65] J. A. White, The Diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 170-172, 176-178; G. P., XIX, Pt. I, Nos. 4942 and 4943.

[66] The Times, 10 and 26 Feb. 1904.

[67] R. Sontag, "German Foreign Policy, 1904-1906," The American Historical Review, XXXIII, No. 2 (Jan. 1928), p. 281.

[68] The Times, 29 Feb. 1904.

remarked that although Germany was ostensibly neutral, there were indications that the Kaiser was attempting to achieve a diplomatic coup.[69] Germany was depicted as an opportunist trying to win advantage from Russia's entanglement. The tenor of these articles implied that there was something reprehensible about Germany seeking a rapprochement with Russia, although it was quite proper for Britain to have an entente with France.

Printing House Square closely observed the response of other governments to the idea of the entente, and concluded that with the exception of Germany it was everywhere greeted favourably, including Japan. In Berlin, however, it was "received with pained surprise and evident annoyance."[70] Notwithstanding that Printing House Square feigned disinterest at indications of concern and anger in Berlin, it was somewhat worried as there was always the likelihood that Germany might be able to use the war in the Far East to drive a wedge between Russia and France. Should that happen, the European balance once again would be drastically altered.

The terms of the entente cordiale, signed on 8 April 1904, were carried in the following day's Times. Whilst the editorial praised the settlement as a "pledge of universal peace", it also saw in it the fulfilment of a "wish of the

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[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid., 19 Mar. 1904.

two peoples to draw closer together."[71] The entente was not an alliance, and was never converted into one.[72] Lavino had acknowledged this three weeks before its signature.

> It must be borne in mind that there is no question of anything approaching an alliance. What is being done is to remove long-standing and dangerous causes of difference between the two countries.[73]

Yet on 12 April, The Times' editorial compared the entente to the Franco-Russian Alliance, emphasizing that "it makes a great change in . . . the probable future of the politics of the world." Henceforth Germany would no longer be in a position to "assume with some shadow of plausibility that in the larger questions of international politics Great Britain must follow in the wake of the Triple Alliance." The editorial of four days later elaborated on this when it declared that as a result of the agreement "Berlin is no longer the diplomatic centre she was in the palmiest days of Bismarck."[74] This statement was a declaration of Printing House Square's view of the raison d'être of the agreement: in future, the British and French governments would work in concert to contain Germany.

The Liberal Westminster Gazette and Daily News, and the Conservative Daily Telegraph and Standard welcomed the entente in like fashion. The Daily Chronicle, also Liberal, and the Conservative Morning Post and Saturday Review, which

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[71] Ibid., 9 Apr. 1904 [72] See p. 42.

[73] The Times, 18 Mar. 1904. [74] Ibid., 16 Apr. 1904.

took their cues from Lord Roseberry, who thought that the agreement would result in war with Germany, levelled a number of criticisms.[75] In contrast, the Manchester Guardian, a leading Liberal newspaper, attached little importance to the entente. It regarded it as merely giving "formal diplomatic sanction either to accomplished facts or to a course, which, had we been arbitrarily minded, we could have taken at any moment without asking anybody's leave."[76] The Guardian treated the entente as no more than a colonial settlement, and did not even mention the word Germany in discussing it.[77]

In suggesting that the entente was something more than just a settlement of colonial differences, The Times' thinking was in advance of that of the British Foreign Office. Whilst there was a young, anti-German group at the Goreign Office--most notable were Louis Mallet, William Tyrrell and Francis Bertie, all of whom were to occupy important posts later--their views did not carry much weight till after 1906. Sir Thomas Sanderson, the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the most important person at the Foreign Office, although often annoyed by

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[75]Rolo, p. 271; R. R. James, Rosebery. A Biography of Archibald Philip, Fifth Earl of Rosebery (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963), p. 449.

[76]Manchester Guardian, 13 Apr. 1904.

[77]Ibid., 9, 11 and 13 Apr. 1904.

German diplomatic methods, regarded Russia as the bête noire. Neither Francophile nor Germanophobe, Sanderson never considered the entente as anything but an amicable solution of long-standing territorial disputes.[78] Nor did Lord Lansdowne, the Foreign Secretary, conceive of the entente as an instrument for boxing in Germany.[79] Could suitable terms have been arranged, he would have welcomed a similar understanding with Berlin on the Portuguese African colonies.[80]

As The Times saw the entente as the first step to containing Germany, it was anxious to know how Berlin would react to the agreement. On 12 April, Chancellor von Bülow made a short speech to the Reichstag in which he hailed the Anglo-French settlement as a step that could only serve to strengthen the peace of Europe.[81] Saunders, rather

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[78] Z. Steiner, "The Last Years of the Old Foreign Office, 1898-1905," The Historical Journal, VI, No. I (1963), pp. 66-78; Monger, pp. 177-178.

[79] Lord Newton, Lord Lansdowne. A Biography (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1929), pp. 329-330; Steiner, The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy 1898-1914, p. 48.

[80] B. D., III, Nos. 18-22. It was widely believed that the bankrupt Portuguese government would be overthrown and the Portuguese African colonies abandoned. Both the British and German governments were desirous of parts of these territories. For strategic reasons, the British government could not allow Germany to gain control of the southernmost portion of Mozambique. Hence there was need of an agreement for the division of these colonies should Portugal withdraw from them.

[81] E. M. Carroll, Germany and the Great Powers, 1866-1914. A Study in Public Opinion and Foreign Policy (Hamden: Archon Books, 1966), pp. 493-494; Eyck, p. 378.

perplexed by the German government's "wise reserve in foreign affairs," thought that the declaration was due more to "temporary embarrassment" than to "wisdom".[82] In an effort to plumb the thoughts of the German Foreign Office, the Berlin correspondent had been carefully studying the comments of the German press. The Kölnische Zeitung (Cologne Gazette) and the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung (North-German Gazette) were the German newspapers most frequently paraphrased. This was significant, as the Kölnische Zeitung was used by the German Foreign Office to announce government policy, to launch trial balloons and to probe public opinion.[83] The Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, which was heavily subsidized by the German Foreign Office and almost totally controlled by it, was relied on to launch and defend new government policy, to announce changes in policy, and to make corrections to material given in other sources.[84] In relying on these two newspapers, Saunders was attempting to present the thinking at the German Foreign Office.

Saunders observed that both the North-German Gazette and the Cologne Gazette "claimed" to welcome the entente, as it would help to secure peace.[85] However, he also excerpted

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[82] The Times, 29 Apr. 1904.

[83] Hale, p. 48.

[84] Ibid., pp. 59-60.

[85] E.g., The Times, 11, 14 and 26 Apr., 24 May 1904.

the Rheinisch-Westfalische Zeitung, which attacked the Chancellor for not having prevented an Anglo-French accord, which it thought represented a major setback to German Weltpolitik.[86] In reporting conflicting articles, Saunders was attempting to inform his readers that there was considerable divergence of opinion regarding the entente in Germany. The German government, as revealed in the North-German and Cologne Gazettes, had adopted a wait-and-see attitude. However, not to be forgotten was the fact that the German government was also under considerable pressure from nationalist groups to assume a more aggressive stance in international affairs.

That Printing House Square had not yet forgotten nor forgiven either the German government or the German press for their vituperative statements against Great Britain during the South African War was illustrated on 10 May, when the editorial castigated the Chancellor and German press for their "infinitely milder satire against Russia," which was then conducting some pogroms, whilst

> ... for three years, throughout the course of the War in South Africa, the Anglophobe journals of Germany poured forth an incessant stream of obscene vituperation against this country, and never once did Count von Bülow or any other responsible German statesman raise a finger or utter a word to check it.[87]

The conclusion to be drawn from all this, according

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[86] Ibid., 12 and 13 Apr. 1904.

[87] Ibid., 10 May 1904.

to the editorial, was obvious. German professions of neutrality vis-à-vis Russia were nothing but a sham.[88]

By the end of May 1904, a number of people at the German Foreign Office were convinced that the entente was specifically anti-German in design.[89] In an attempt to allay the Kaiser's growing uneasiness, King Edward VII was persuaded to pay a visit to Kiel in the last week of June. The announcement of the royal visit gave rise to optimism in Germany,[90] but caused some alarm at Printing House Square, where it was feared that the Kaiser might use this opportunity to begin talks on an Anglo-German entente, thereby precluding the possibility of a special relationship between Paris and London.

The Berlin Post, in welcoming the announced visit, opined that the Anglo-French agreement had dealt only with colonial matters, leaving unaltered relations between London and Berlin. Saunders criticized the article for being only partly true.

> The signature of the Anglo-French Agreement [he argued] is deeper than this. . . . 'what constitutes the distinctive feature of this Agreement . . . is that the parties pledge themselves not merely to refrain from poaching on one another's preserves, but to do all in their power to further one another's interests'.[91]

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[88] Ibid.

[89] G. P., XX, Pt. I, Nos. 6378 and 6383; Eyck, p. 380.

[90] Sir Sidney Lee, King Edward VII. A Biography (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1927), II, p. 292.

[91] The Times, 6 June 1904.

Unspoken, but implied, was that this included cooperative action against Germany. These opinions were reiterated in the editorial.[92]

The Times devoted considerable attention to King Edward's proposed visit. Repeatedly it emphasized that there was not "the slightest evidence" that the visit was "intended to bear a political character" or that it was anything more than a "dynastic courtesy" call.[93] When the Munich Allgemeine Zeitung speculated that the purpose of the King's trip was to demonstrate to Paris that London did not intend to jeopardize its relations with Berlin, Saunders countered that this was "going a good deal too far." The Kiel visit was not meant "to prove anything to France."[94] On this point, of course, it was the German newspaper which was correct, and Saunders who was in error.[95]

King Edward arrived at Kiel on 24 June and was accorded an enthusiastic reception in the German press. Saunders thought that this emotional outpouring was "tasteless" and vain."[96] One might attribute Saunders' distaste for this rather emotional German display to the British stiff

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[92] Ibid.

[93] Ibid., 3, 9, 22, 24 and 27 June 1904.

[94] Ibid., 7 June 1904.

[95] L. Albertini, I, p. 150; Philip Magnus, King Edward the Seventh (London: John Murray, 1964), p. 338.

[96] The Times, 25 June 1904.

upper lip, but a similar reception of the King the year before in Paris had been described as "cordial" and evincing "good will".[97] Nothing more clearly could reveal how deeply The Times' personnel distrusted Germany than that they even put the worst possible construction on German demonstrations of good will. However, The Times' fears were unwarranted. The Kaiser dwelt at length on an idée fixe, the "yellow peril",[98] but did not try to draw the King into an alliance. And King Edward, although giving assurances that the entente was not directed against Germany, did not provide any opening for such overtures to be made.[99]

The entente did not logically mean that henceforth Britain would act in concert with France against Germany. After all, it was France, not Britain, which had lost Alsace-Lorraine and had ambitions of winning them back. It was even likely that Britain would become more isolationist than hitherto, having settled its outstanding differences with a European power.[100] Thus The Times' analysis of the raison d'être of the entente was totally wrong. It was German intervention in Morocco, in response to this accord, which drew Britain and France together. The entente only

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[97] Ibid., 4 May 1903.

[98] Vyvyan, NCMH, XII, p. 149; Barraclough, p. 81.

[99] Eyck, pp. 382-383.

[100] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, p. 413.

became an instrument of Anglo-French cooperation against Germany because of German reaction to it. The British government had not drafted the agreement to this end. It was only after the Algeciras Conference[101] that the agreement of 1904 began to seem to have greater significance than it actually had. But if The Times' interpretation of the motives behind the entente was wrong, the perceptions of Saunders, Lavino, Chirol and Bell that a new constellation had emerged which was undermining the old European alignments were more accurate, in the short run, than those of the British Foreign Office. In the long run, of course, those groups in Germany which believed that the European system was being eclipsed by a global system saw developments more clearly than anyone.

III

The idea of an Anglo-Russian settlement followed logically from the entente. The French government was anxious for an Anglo-Russian accord, as Britain's and Russia's lines of authority in the Middle and Far East had not yet been delineated and friction between them was certain to impede Anglo-French friendship. The British government, too, desired better relations with Russia. In April 1904, whilst in Copenhagen, King Edward VII raised the

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[101]See Chap. IV, Pt. I.

subject with Alexander Izvolsky, the Russian ambassador to Denmark.[102] However, the Russo-Japanese War, which erupted in February 1904, temporarily soured Anglo-Russian relations, as it was widely believed in Russia that but for its alliance with Great Britain, Japan would not have dared to go to war.[103]

Printing House Square at this juncture was not in favour of a rapprochement with Russia. Although Lavino for some time had been advocating an Anglo-Russian, as well as an Anglo-French, alliance, Chirol believed that the Russo-Japanese War made Anglo-Russian differences too complicated to be settled just then.[104] Bell, always opposed to the reactionary character of the Tsarist regime, had for the moment adopted a very strong anti-Russian stand because of the repressive measures that had been adopted against the reform movements and because the year before, D. D. Braham, The Times' St. Petersburg correspondent, had been expelled for reporting on a pogrom in southern Russia.[105] Even more important, he was convinced that a revolution was imminent

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[102] B. D., IV, No. 183; Lee, II, pp. 284-287.

[103] Stephen Gwynn (ed.), The Letters and Friendships of Sir Cecil Spring Rice (London: Constable and Co. Ltd., 1930), I, p. 403; Rogers P. Churchill, The Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 (Cedar Rapids: The Torch Press, 1939), p. 63.

[104] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 391.

[105] Ibid., pp. 382-385, 418.

that would topple the regime and usher in a constitutional, parliamentary system of government, thereby removing the ideological obstacle standing in the way of harmonious relations between Britain and Russia.[106]

In the autumn of 1904, Anglo-Russian relations worsened and for a short time it seemed that Britain might declare war on Russia. On the night of 21-22 October, the Russian Baltic fleet, whilst passing through the North Sea on the way to the Far East, had shelled the Hull fishing fleet at Dogger Bank, sinking one trawler and killing two British fishermen.[107] The British public was indignant and demanded a strong response.[108] The British government, also outraged, demanded a full investigation by the Russian government and punishment of those responsible, with hints that war might ensue if satisfactory reparations were not forthcoming.[109] Mediation by the French government and Russian accession to the British demands cooled British feelings,[110] but the Tsar, angered by the attitude that had been displayed

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[106] Ibid., pp. 418ff.

[107] B. D., IV, No. 5; Gwynn, I, pp. 389-390; White, pp. 179-180.

[108] R. P. Churchill, p. 74; Lee, II, p. 303.

[109] B. D., IV, Nos. 6, 7, 8, 12, 13 and 14; J. Steinberg, "Germany and the Russo-Japanese War," The American Historical Review, LXXV, No. 7 (Dec., 1970), p. 1976.

[110] B. D., IV, Nos. 16, 18 and 20; Bury, p. 128; Eubank, pp. 91-94.

by the British government, now turned to the Kaiser for support.[111]

At the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, the Kaiser had made every effort to capitalize on anti-British sentiment in St. Petersburg to prevent an Anglo-Russian settlement. Almost immediately, he had guaranteed the inviolability of Russia's western frontier, thereby releasing large numbers of troops and quantities of matériel from the western garrison to the eastern campaign.[112] Although The Times deprecated this German action as an "elastic interpretation of neutrality,"[113] it saw in the German efforts at a rapprochement more than just military and diplomatic considerations. "Dynastic considerations" were thought to be of equal importance. This was a frequent theme of Bell's: that in a world in which constitutional government everywhere was capturing the popular imagination, despots were bound to cling to each other in desperation in an attempt to avert their inevitable overthrow.

Following Dogger Bank, The Times joined the chorus demanding forceful action,[114] even war,[115] but it also

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[111] R. P. Churchill, p. 77; G. P., XIX, Pt. I, No. 6119.

[112] Eyck, p. 364; G. P., XIX, Pt. I, No. 5924.

[113] The Times, 14 Sept. 1904. Also see 22, 23 and 24 Sept. 1904.

[114] Ibid., 24 and 25 Oct. 1904.

[115] Ibid., 26 Oct. 1904.

managed to lay part of the blame for the tragedy with Germany. In its editorial of 24 October, The Times noted that because of "all sorts of cock-and-bull stories . . . industriously circulated in a portion of the Continental Press" that Japanese torpedo boats were lying in wait in the English Channel, the Russian sailors had been described as being very nervous on leaving Danish waters. Hence the Russian sailors had undoubtedly mistaken the Hull trawlers for Japanese naval craft. Although this did not excuse the "lamentable incident", it did help to explain it.[116] Lavino, reporting from Paris, attributed the Russian sailors' anxiety directly to the German press.[117]

The temporary strain in Anglo-Russian relations occasioned by the Dogger Bank incident resulted in increased cordiality between St. Petersburg and Berlin.[118] Ever since the Anglo-French entente, the Kaiser had been thinking of ways to forestall an Anglo-French-Russian alignment.[119] Encouraged by the Tsar's increasing friendliness, the Kaiser now proposed a defensive alliance, which also would have

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[116] Ibid., 24 Oct. 1904.

[117] Ibid., 27 and 29 Oct. 1904.

[118] G. P., XIX, Pt. I, Nos. 6028, 6034, 6035, 6057 and 6120; H. Bernstein (ed.), The Willy-Nicky Correspondence, being the Secret and Intimate Telegrams Exchanged between the Kaiser and the Tsar (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1918), Nos. 13-15.

[119] White, pp. 170-178.

included France.[120] Although these negotiations did not result in a treaty, they emboldened Wilhelm II to try again and, when he secretly met Nicholas II at Björkö, when yachting in the Gulf of Finland in July 1905, he persuaded the Tsar to sign a defensive treaty.[121] By the terms of this pact, if either signatory were attacked by another European power, the other would come to its ally's aid.[122] Wilhelm had offered these terms because he believed that the Franco-Russian alliance was entirely defensive in nature.[123] Once back at St. Petersburg, Nicholas II was advised that this treaty was in violation of the Franco-Russian alliance of 1894, whereupon he informed the Kaiser that it was inoperative.[124]

The Times had been unaware of the Kaiser's overtures to Nicholas II in November 1904, but it did get word that the two monarchs were to meet at Björkö.[125] Although it could only "surmise" about the "real significance" of the

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[120] G. P., XIX, Pt. I, Nos. 6118, 6120, 6123-6131; I. D. Levine (ed.), Letters from the Kaiser to the Czar (New York: F. A. Stokes, 1920), pp. 123-140.

[121] G. P., XIX, Pt. II, No. 6202; White, pp. 214-215; Mansergh, pp. 104-105.

[122] G. P., XIX, Pt. II, No. 6220.

[123] Bernstein, p. 129.

[124] G. P., XIX, Pt. II, Nos. 6247, 6248, 6254 and 6255.

[125] The Times, 24 July 1905.

meeting,[126] Printing House Square thought it was another Wilhelmine "coup de théâtre" whose purpose was to draw "attention to the actor-manager and the actor-author and of making people talk about him."[127] Finally, a month later, The Times stated that it had authoritative information that at Björkö the Kaiser had proposed a German-Russian partition of Austria-Hungary, with Russia to receive Bohemia, the Polish provinces and Hungary.[128] Whilst the source may have been authoritative, the information was incorrect. The British Foreign Office, on the other hand, suspected that a Russo-German alliance had been discussed.[129]

The possibility of an alliance between Berlin and St. Petersburg, which would disregard British interests in the Middle East, alarmed London and spurred it to the renewal of pourparlers with the Russian government.[130] The Times welcomed the resumption of talks and the prospect of a territorial settlement,[131] but, because of Bell, remained extremely critical of the Tsar and his policies. Printing

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[126] Ibid.

[127] Ibid., 25 July 1905.

[128] Ibid., 26 Oct. 1905.

[129] B. J. Williams, "The Strategic Background to the Anglo-Russian Entente of August 1907," The Historical Journal, IX, No. 1 (1966), p. 371.

[130] Newton, p. 328; B. D., IV, Nos. 197, 198, 201 and 203.

[131] The Times, 26 Oct. 1905.

House Square had condemned Nicholas II for "Bloody Sunday"[132] and dismissed as "otiose and obscure phraseology" his promise to convoke a legislative assembly.[133] When the Tsar issued a new constitution on 30 October 1905, The Times' editorial greeted it as a "reluctant" concession wrung from a ruler "deaf to appeal and impervious to pity".[134]

In December 1905, the Conservative government was replaced by a Liberal administration. Sir Edward Grey, the new Foreign Secretary, was more suspicious of the direction of German foreign policy than his predecessor had been. After Germany's heavy-handed blunder in Morocco, Grey was anxious for an agreement with Russia so that "if it is necessary to check Germany it could then be done."[135] The Russian Foreign Office, after the Russian débâcle in the Far East in 1904-1905, displayed renewed interest in the Middle East as an outlet for Russian energies. Even before the war, most Russian capitalists had focused their interest on Persia, rather than on Manchuria or Korea.[136] However, German economic penetration of Persia and the Baghdad

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[132] Ibid., 24 Jan. 1905. On Sunday, 22 January 1905, a procession of industrial workers from St. Petersburg marched to the Winter Palace with a petition for the Tsar. At the Palace the marchers were met by troops who fired on them, killing seventy and wounding two hundred and forty.

[133] Ibid., 4 Mar. 1905. Bloody Sunday provoked strikes and riots. In an effort to re-establish calm, Nicholas II on 3 March declared his intention to summon a consultative assembly.

[134] Ibid., 1 Nov. 1905. [135] B. D., III, No. 299.

[136] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, pp. 418-419.

Railway scheme gave rise to uneasiness in St. Petersburg, where it was feared that Britain and Germany might be contemplating an agreement at Russia's expense. To prevent that, the Russian Foreign Office decided on compromise with both Germany and Britain and dropped its objections to the Baghdad Railway and agreed to divide control of Persia with Britain.[137]

By 1906, there was a change of attitude at Printing House Square. Chirol's reservations about Russia had been over its policy in Asia. After Russia's defeat in its war against Japan, he no longer feared Russian imperialism in the Far East. But as he regarded the Kaiser's intervention in Morocco as a statement of Germany's intention to use force to alter the European balance, he thought necessary an entente with Russia to prevent it from being drawn into the German camp.[138] Bell, too, had softened. He was by now convinced that the Tsar was not likely to be overthrown for some time and that if an accomodation was going to be made with Russia it must be with him. That he now agreed to the need of a settlement was due to the fact that the French government had informed Printing House Square that the

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[137] Ibid., pp. 442-443; J. B. Wolf, The Diplomatic History of the Baghdad Railway ("The University of Missouri Studies: A Quarterly of Research," XI, No. 2; Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri, 1936), pp. 25-28, 37-38.

[138] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 418.

future of the Anglo-French entente was uncertain unless Britain and Russia could resolve their differences.[139] Tangier also had made a strong impression on him and he compromised his ideological objections to Russia as he believed that the entente was essential to check Germany and because an agreement with Russia would prevent the Kaiser from using the Tsar as a pawn in his manoeuvres.[140]

Formal negotiations between Britain and Russia began the first week of June 1906.[141] Alexander Izvolsky, now Russian Foreign Minister, was determined to prevent another incident similar to the Kaiser's Tangier visit and kept the German government informed of the Anglo-Russian talks.[142] The German press immediately took up the cry that the purpose of the negotiations was to isolate Germany.[143] The Times' editorial of 24 May gave assurance that the discussions were intended only to improve relations between London and St. Petersburg, not "to impair the position of Germany or any other Power," although it surmised that "the premature announcements of an Anglo-Russian settlement were

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[139] Ibid., p. 426.

[140] Ibid., p. 423.

[141] Harold Nicolson, Sir Arthur Nicolson, Bart., First Lord Carnock. A Study in the Old Diplomacy (London: Constable & Co. Ltd., 1930), p. 217; Gwynn, II, p. 82.

[142] Nicolson, pp. 232-233; B. D., IV, Nos. 170 and 369.

[143] Carroll, p. 559.

deliberately put about from Berlin in order to arouse feeling in Russia against it."[144] This analysis was probably correct in that there was in Russia a large and influential pro-German group that was opposed to any accommodation with "liberal England."[145]

Only once was reference made to Germany when discussing the negotiations after that in 1906, and then without specifically naming it. On 17 December the editorial stated that Persia was characterized by "the palsy which often marks the last stages in the decay of Oriental polities," and that this imposed on Russia and Britain "the duty and the privilege of promoting together the peace and progress of the Middle East." Since "our distrust of each other could ever cause them [i.e., "the duty and privilege"] to devolve upon others,"[146] it was imperative that all differences that caused misunderstanding between them should be resolved. As the only other power that was making a strong bid to establish itself in Persia was Germany, the editorial suggested that this was the raison d'être of an agreement. Although this was one of the benefits that would obtain from an agreement, it was not, in the view of Printing House Square, the reason

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[144] The Times, 24 May 1906.

[145] Sidney Harcave, Years of the Golden Cockerel. The Last Romanov Tsars 1814-1917 (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1968), p. 421.

[146] The Times, 17 Dec. 1906.

for the Convention. That Printing House Square suggested that it was resulted from the fact that it could not give what it regarded as the reason without creating difficulties with the pro-Germans in Russia.

In the first week of August 1907, Nicholas II, accompanied by Izvolsky, by now Foreign Minister, journeyed to Swinemünde to repay Wilhelm's Björkö visit. Both the British Foreign Office and The Times were concerned about the visit. The Foreign Office feared that the Kaiser might use the occasion to persuade the Tsar to join him in a new Dreikaiserbund.[147] Whilst The Times did not believe "that any modification is contemplated of the policy based on the Franco-Russian Alliance and its logical development, the impending Anglo-Russian agreement," it infered that Izvolsky's presence signified that the "approaching interview between the two Sovereigns will have a political as well as a personal character."[148] Actually, the Russian Foreign Minister had attended the Tsar only to inform Prince von Bülow that the signature of the Anglo-Russian Convention was imminent and that no German interests had been trodden on.[149] By 7 August, Printing House Square was aware of this and in its editorial was able to assure The

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[147] R. P. Churchill, p. 171.

[148] The Times, 2 Aug. 1907.

[149] G. P., XXII, Nos. 7378 and 7379.

Times' readers that the meeting had been "nothing more than the meeting between two neighbour-potentates, friends and relatives." The article stressed that the impending Convention would not alter Russo-German relations, though, as there existed between the Russian and German monarchs very close personal and familial bonds.

> Such an understanding is entirely compatible with a durable Russo-German friendship, and can have no harmful effect on the community of sentiment which, as a matter of fact, must animate the two Sovereigns who are the chief surviving representatives of absolute, or quasi-absolute, rule in Europe.[150]

This statement was perfectly honest and in no way a contradiction of the reason that Printing House Square supported the Convention. It did not expect that an Anglo-Russian accord would damage German-Russian relations, only that a settlement would remove the basis for a German-Russian agreement directed against Britain. It also may have been intended to allay the fears of Russian Germanophiles.

The Convention was signed on 31 August 1907. By it Russia recognized Britain's special position in southern Persia and in Afghanistan and Chinese suzerainty of Tibet, whilst the British government acknowledged Russia's special position in northern Persia.[151] In announcing the signature, The Times stated that it expected that the news would be met

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[150] The Times, 7 Aug. 1907.

[151] B. D., IV, Appendix I, pp. 618-620.

with "deep satisfaction by all reasonable Englishmen."[152] In its review of the reasons for the Convention, Germany was not mentioned.

In surveying the Convention during the following weeks, little reference was made to Germany. The Berlin correspondent reported the German press reaction to the agreement,[153] but as Bülow had instructed the German press to comment only "quietly and factually" on it,[154] Saunders had little to criticize. Although Printing House Square had averred on 25 September that the agreement had been entered into solely to secure India's frontiers against Russian incursions,[155] it came closer to the truth two weeks later when it stated that the Convention ended "the Bismarckian tradition . . . that England and Russia could always be played off against each other."[156] This was the British Foreign Office's view of the reason for the Convention. Although Whitehall's motivations were not anti-German, it nevertheless saw the agreement as a means of preventing Russia from being drawn into an alliance with Germany.[157]

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[152] The Times, 2 Sept. 1907.

[153] E.g., ibid., 6, 27, 28 and 30 Sept., 1 Oct. 1907.

[154] G. P., XXV, Pt. I, Footnote to No. 8534.

[155] The Times, 25 Sept. 1907.

[156] Ibid., 10 Oct. 1907.

[157] Nicolson, pp. 234-235; Williams, p. 371.

The Times was one of the few British newspapers to see any European significance at all in the Convention; the British press generally thought that its importance was limited to Asia.[158] The Manchester Guardian saw nothing particularly important in the agreement, as "a number of facts existing de facto have been declared to exist de jure as far as two nations were concerned."[159] The Liberal Economist declared that it was only an instrument for ensuring the integrity of India, although it thought that "winning the respect, confidence, and even affection of the natives" was a surer way to guarantee this.[160]

Notwithstanding that Printing House Square regarded the Convention as a useful way of containing Germany, it did not treat the agreements with France and Russia in the same way. Whereas The Times referred to the entente, which it had helped to achieve, as an alliance directed against Germany, it never described the Convention in such cordial terms. Printing House Square regarded the latter as important in that it strengthened the entente and made it unlikely that Russia would gravitate into the German camp, thereby giving the Kaiser a free hand in Western Europe. But there was no expectation that the British and French governments would

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[158] Hale, p. 300.

[159] The Manchester Guardian, 2 Sept. 1907.

[160] The Economist, 28 Sept. 1907.

develop the same kind of intimate, working relationship that Printing House Square considered to exist between the British and French governments.

Whilst the reasons for this difference are not given in either The Times or in The History of 'The Times', several are obvious. France was motivated by revanchist sentiment against Germany, whereas Russia had no Sedan to avenge. And even though the Convention seemed to resolve territorial points of friction between Britain and Russia, it was doubtful that St. Petersburg in future would not have expansionist ambitions in the Middle East that would create new tension. But most important, if perhaps less obvious, was the pronounced antipathy of Printing House Square, and the British public generally, to Russia. Only because of its fear of Germany did The Times welcome the Convention. However, the Tsarist regime's violent anti-semitism, its brutal repression of labour unrest and its refusal to grant genuine parliamentary institutions made repugnant the idea of a warm, close relationship with Russia.

CHAPTER III

THE NAVAL FURORE

Between 1871 and 1900 the German Empire underwent a profound social transformation. A predominantly agrarian, rural society at the time of the Franco-Prussian War, Germany was by the dawn of the twentieth century the most urbanized and industrialized nation in Europe.[1] In these three decades the population increased from forty-one to fifty-six millions, and the Reich emerged as one of the world's major trading nations.[2] This "social churning" was accompanied by considerable social unrest, as was reflected in the rapid growth of the German Social Democratic Party. Prior to 1890 the average worker spent long hours in the mill, was paid relatively low wages, had inadequate housing and was nourished by a poor diet.[3] These harsh conditions of life resulted in large-scale emigration, especially to the United States. German economists deplored this loss of

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[1]Wilson, NCMH, XI, p. 58; G. Stolper, K. Hauser, and K. Borchardt, The German Economy, 1870 to the Present, trans. Toni Stolper (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1967), pp. 22-25.

[2]Bruck, pp. 71-72, 110; J. A. R. Marriott and C. G. Robertson, The Evolution of Prussia (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1945), pp. 381-382.

[3]Wilson, NCMH, XI, p. 58.

potentially productive manpower, and reasoned that colonies afforded a solution. Not only would colonies ensure outlets for Germany's surplus population, but they served as sources of raw materials and markets for manufactured wares.[4]

A part of the colonial question was the navy, which would be required to protect the Reich's hoped-for far-flung territories.[5] Early proposals for a large German fleet got favourable hearings. There were several reasons for this. Kaiser Wilhelm II was fascinated by naval subjects and took immense pride in his honourary British title of "Admiral of the Fleet." Thus he, and those German chauvinists who were determined that the German Empire must be accorded its "place in the Sun" as a world power alongside Britain, saw in a battle fleet the trappings of global power.

The fact that Germany had few national institutions gave the navy particular popular appeal. The armies were creatures of the states. As the navy, which had not existed before 1871, was an imperial institution of the "Reich . . . under the supreme command of the Kaiser,"[6] it was something

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[4]Stolper, p. 38; G. Ritter, Staatskunst und Kriegshandwerk. Das Problem des "Militarismus" in Deutschland (München: Verlag R. Oldenbourg, 1965), II, pp. 174-175; Charles A. Fisher, "The Changing Dimensions of Europe," Journal of Contemporary History, I, No. 3 (July, 1966), pp. 12-13; Barraclough, pp. 60-61.

[5]Ritter, II, p. 175.

[6]Cited in Steinberg, Yesterday's Deterrent, p. 32.

with which all patriotic Germans could identify themselves. The navy particularly appealed to the middle class. Unlike the armies, which drew their officers and ideals almost exclusively from the Junkers, the navy was middle class in composition and ideals.[7] Furthermore, the navy represented Kultur. The term Kultur meant much more than our word culture. It signified the excellence of everything German, which derived from spiritual qualities unique to Germans. Thus battleships were floating proof of the excellence and ingenuity of German technology, and as much a manifestation of Kultur as philosophy or science.[8]

The naval question occupied a prominent place in the Social Darwinism of German neo-mercantilists. Since they regarded international trade as a competition for survival in which only a few nations would prevail and the rest must succumb, a conflict with England for the markets of the world seemed inevitable. Superior naval power, of course, would decide the outcome.[9]

The German navalists found their most ready and important allies in the industrialists. The neo-mercantilist doctrines of German economists and the large profits likely

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[7] Ibid., pp. 36-46; Ritter, II, p. 171.

[8] Steinberg, Yesterday's Deterrent, p. 38.

[9] Bruck, p. 37; Hayes, pp. 12-13; Wilson, NCMH, XI, pp. 60-61; J. Steinberg, "The Copenhagen Complex", The Journal of Contemporary History, I, No. 3 (1966), pp. 25-27.

from the construction of a high-sea fleet ensured big business's support. In 1898 Alfred Krupp provided funds for the establishment of the German Navy League. The League's express purpose was to "educate" the German public to the need for a strong fleet. Once aroused, the public exerted pressure on the Reichstag, which then voted the appropriations necessary for the fleet's construction.[10]

The driving force behind the creation of the Schlachtsflotte, and the man who gave it its raison d'être, was Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz. Tirpitz was appointed Secretary of the Reichsmarineamt in 1897.[11] He viewed the navy as an instrument of diplomacy rather than as part of the struggle for commercial survival, although he regularly employed the commercial argument in public. "Tirpitz was the first modern strategist to see that an arms race can be used as a kind of lever to froce other powers to move in a desired direction."[12] Previous attempts to bring Great Britain into the Triple Alliance had failed. He reasoned that if Germany built a large battle fleet and concentrated it in the North Sea, Britain would find itself sufficiently threatened to seek an accommodation with Germany. Rather

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[10]Ritter, II, p. 172; P. R. Anderson, The Background of Anti-English Feeling in Germany 1890-1902 (Washington: The American University Press, 1939), p. 165.

[11]Steinberg, Yesterday's Deterrent, pp. 125-126.

[12]Ibid., p. 20.

than engage in a costly naval race, Britain would accede to Germany's terms.[13]

Whereas Tirpitz considered the German fleet as a lever of diplomacy, the British Admiralty regarded the British Navy as the basis of Great Britain's prosperity and security. Britain's standard of living depended on its commerce: it relied on its carrying trade and the export of its manufactures to pay for the importation of its foodstuffs and the raw materials for its industries.[14] By 1900 Britain was importing four-fifths of its food grains, fifty percent of its meats, all of its sugar, coffee, tea and rice, and a good part of its fruits and vegetables.[15] If any power or alignment of powers were strong enough at sea to choke off Britain's overseas trade, it was faced with economic ruin and its people with starvation. And because it was not a military power, the destruction of its fleet opened the British Isles to military invasion.

Because of the special role of the navy in protecting commerce and guarding against invasion, the British

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[13]Ibid., pp. 20-21; Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, p. 33; Walter Hubatsch, Die Ära Tirpitz. Studien zur deutschen Marinepolitik 1890-1918 (Göttingen: Musterschmidt Verlag, 1955), p. 20.

[14]Marder, The Anatomy of British Sea Power, p. 85.

[15]"Royal Commission on Supply of Food and Raw Material in Time of War," British Sessional Papers, XXXIX (1905), pp. 4-20; J. H. Clapham, An Economic History of Modern Britain (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1935), II, p. 218.

government of 1889 had adopted a "two-Power standard" as its naval policy. The two-power standard was a statement that henceforth the government would maintain the British navy at least at the strength of the next two most-powerful navies combined, which then were the French and Russian.[16] This policy was adopted by successive British governments and remained the basis of British naval policy until 1912.

In March 1898 Tirpitz won passage through the Reichstag of the First Navy Law, which provided for a navy of nineteen battleships, twelve large and thirty small cruisers and eight coastal-defense ships. This programme was to be completed within six years.[17] In 1900 he pushed through the Second Navy Law which amended the First and provided for thirty-four battleships, eight large and twenty-four small cruisers, and a reserve squadron of four battleships and three large and three small cruisers by 1920.[18] The preface to the Second Navy Law stated that Germany intended to build a navy which was so powerful that "if the strongest naval power engaged it, it would endanger its own

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[16] See Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, Appendix II, pp. 455-473; Marder, The Anatomy of British Sea Power, pp. 105-106.

[17] Steinberg, Yesterday's Deterrent, pp. 144-146, 196; Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, pp. 25-26; Hubatsch, pp. 63-64.

[18] Ibid., pp. 70-71; Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, p. 29; Sir Peter Gretton, Former Naval Person (London: Cassell, 1968), p. 20.

supremacy."[19] Since Britain was "the strongest naval power," this was an unequivocable declaration that the German navy was being built against Britain. Despite this, however, Tirpitz did not anticipate that the German battle fleet would ever engage the British, nor did he envisage a fleet capable of besting the British in battle. All that Tirpitz planned was a fleet sufficiently large to be able to inflict enough damage on the British so that the latter would be helpless before the French and Russian fleets combined. The alliance value of the German fleet lay in its capacity of "spoiler". But this presupposed that Great Britain would always be faced by a hostile Franco-Russian combination. Tirpitz failed to realize that Germany's international behavior, and especially the construction of a large navy, would lead British governments to re-asess their relations with other states.[20]

The British navy was the subject of consuming interest to Printing House Square. The Times' views on naval policy were the work particularly of Bell, Buckle and Thursfield, who regarded the fleet not only as the basis of the nation's prosperity and security, but also the instrument whereby Britain was enabled to act as the arbiter of the Continental balance. Although toward the end of his

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[19]Cited in Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, p. 5.

[20]Steinberg, Yesterday's Deterrent, p. 21.

years as Managing Director Bell had come to show some respect for the arguments of his Military Correspondent, Charles à Court Repington, that successful intervention in Europe to prevent German hegemony would require a highly-trained and well-equipped expeditionary force, in addition to clear naval superiority over Germany, Buckle and Thursfield remained converts to the "blue-water school".[21] They had learned nothing from the Franco-Prussian War and continued to believe that through its ability to establish a blockade of the Continent the British navy held the key to deny success to any power bent on European domination. As British governments had for several hundred years acted to prevent the scales in Europe tipping too far one way or the other, any nation ambitious to upset the equilibrium of power must contemplate a conflict with Britain. And since, in the minds of Buckle, Thursfield and Bell, Continental hegemony could be accomplished only through the destruction of the British fleet, foreign powers' naval policies became the touchstone of their intentions for The Times.

It is for this reason that Anglo-German naval developments were the over-riding issue of concern to The Times between 1904-1914. The Times' attention might occasionally focus on some other matter involving Germany--e.g., Germany's actions in Morocco in 1905 and 1911, German

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[21] The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 361-362, 507, 606.

reaction to the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, and Germany's behavior during the crisis precipitated by the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by its ally Austria in 1908--but it always returned to the subject of the German navy as the dominant issue for Great Britain vis-à-vis Germany. In fact, the German navy was the main item of foreign news in The Times in this decade. Its pages always provided full coverage of the annual German naval estimates and the various stages of debate on the estimates in the Reichstag,[22] and on the German Navy League's almost continuous agitation for enlarged programmes.[23] There were a number of lengthy series on the state of the British navy

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[22]E.g., The Times, 4, 11, 12 Mar. 1904; 12 May 1904; 16, 17,28 Feb. 1905; 18, 21 Nov. 1905; 7, 8, 29 Mar. 1906; 21 May 1906; 12 Dec. 1906; 11 Feb. 1907; 3, 8 May 1907; 12 Aug. 1907; 12, 25 Oct. 1907; 18, 19, 20, 29 Nov. 1907; 10, 11, 13 Dec. 1907; 10, 24, 30, 31 Jan. 1908; 3 Feb. 1908; 30 Mar. 1908; 3 Dec. 1908; 13, 16, 18, 23, 25, 30 Mar. 1909; 27 July 1909; 1, 11 Dec. 1909; 12, 17, 24, 25 Feb. 1910; 7, 8, 9 Mar. 1910; 16 Feb. 1911; 10 May 1911; 19 Aug. 1911; 8, 22 Apr. 1912; 14, 15, 16 May 1912; 27 Nov. 1912; 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 20 Feb. 1913; 26 Nov. 1913; 5, 20, 23 Feb. 1914.

[23]E.g., ibid., 19, 22 Apr. 1904; 8 Nov. 1904; 21 Dec. 1904; 18 Jan. 1905; 28 Feb. 1905; 20, 22, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30 May 1905; 3 June 1905; 22 May 1906; 30 Mar. 1907; 14, 21 May 1907; 14, 19, 26 Dec. 1907; 11, 14, 20, 21, 22, 23 Jan. 1908; 6 Feb. 1908; 14 Apr. 1908; 2 May 1908; 13, 15, 18, 23 June 1908; 10, 11, 22 July 1908; 21 Aug. 1908; 26 29 Sept. 1908; 2, 8, 21 Oct. 1908; 11 Mar. 1909; 8, 16, 17 Apr. 1909; 4, 25, 29 May 1909; 3, 5, 7, 15 June 1909; 13 Dec. 1909; 1 Jan. 1910; 16 Feb. 1910; 6 Apr. 1910; 23, 31 May 1910; 25 Oct. 1910; 4, 30 May 1911; 6 June 1911; 4 July 1911; 26 Sept. 1911; 9 Sept. 1912; 27 May 1913; 25 May 1914.

in relation to other navies, particularly the German navy;[24] and frequent editorials comparing the size and efficiencies of the British and German navies.[25]

The First and Second Germany Navy Laws had aroused no concern at Printing House Square.[26] Even at the beginning of 1904, by which time Printing House Square regarded Germany as having designs of Continental hegemony, it still "was by no means apprehensive" of the German navy.[27] On 25 February the editorial described increased naval expenditures as a "grievous and growing burden". The exception was Saunders, who cautioned that "the development of the German navy . . . merits careful attention."[28] There was at this time considerable agitation by the German Navy League for the amendment of the Navy Law of 1900 to provide

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[24]E.g., ibid., 22, 24, 26, 30 Jan. 1907; 4, 7, 9, 12 Feb. 1907; 2, 3, 4 Mar. 1911; 26, 27 Feb. 1913; 1, 4, 6 Mar. 1913; 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11 June 1914.

[25]E.g., ibid., 6 Feb. 1905; 25 Mar. 1905; 22 May 1905; 28 July 1906; 12 Feb. 1907; 20 Nov. 1907; 12 Dec. 1907; 24 Jan. 1908; 3, 19, 25 Feb. 1908; 4, 6, 7, 9 Mar. 1908; 29 Oct. 1908; 13 Nov. 1908; 8 Dec. 1908; 23 Feb. 1909; 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 30 Mar. 1909; 5, 7 Apr. 1909; 27, 28 May 1909; 27 July 1909; 1 Dec. 1909; 11, 29 Jan. 1910; 10, 15 Mar. 1910; 4, 10 Mar. 1911; 2 May 1911; 24 June 1911; 16 Feb. 1912; 11, 13, 19, 21 Mar. 1912; 17 May 1912; 19 July 1912; 8 Feb. 1913; 8, 14, 27, 28 Mar. 1913; 1 Apr. 1913; 6 June 1913; 19 July 1913; 20 Oct. 1913; 10 Dec. 1913; 7 Jan. 1914; 3, 13, 18 Mar. 1914.

[26]The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 303ff.

[27]Ibid., p. 389.

[28]The Times, 10 Feb. 1904.

for more battleships and battle cruisers. The Navy League's argument was that Germany, as a major trading nation, required a sufficiently large fleet to protect against a Verhungerungs-blockade.[29] Those Britons who realized the importance of the Royal Navy to the protection of British commerce in wartime deemed this a sensible argument.[30] The House of Commons still considered the French fleet the real danger.[31] However, Saunders was not particularly impressed by this logic. He pointed out that further additions to the German fleet posed the question

> . . . as to the real objects of these excessive naval preparations. . . . It is universally admitted that the navy which is at present being constructed will be strong enough to render an attack upon German shores or even a blockade next to impossible. What, then, are the intentions which animate those who desire to go so far beyond the present scheme?[32]

The British Admiralty had asked itself this question in 1901. In a Cabinet paper of October 1902, the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Earl of Selborne, stated that it was the Admiralty's opinion that

> [t]he more the composition of the new German fleet is examined the clearer it becomes that it is designed for a possible conflict with the British fleet. It cannot be designed for the purpose of playing a leading part in a future war between Germany and France and Russia.

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[29] Carroll, p. 454.

[30] Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, p. 48.

[31] Gillespie, pp. 108-113.

[32] The Times, 26 Mar. 1904.

> The issue of such a war can only be decided by armies and on land, and the great naval expenditure on which Germany has embarked involves a deliberate diminution of the military strength which Germany might otherwise have attained in relation to France and Russia.[33]

For both the answer seemed clear, although they had arrived at their conclusions independently of each other.

King Edward VII paid a state visit to Germany in June 1904, during which he attended the annual Kiel regatta. Kaiser Wilhelm II, like a young boy eager to impress his peers with a new toy, assembled the full German battle fleet for the inspection of his uncle. The king was indeed impressed by what he saw, and also a little alarmed.[34] Saunders described the fleet and the activity in the German shipyards as "the spectacle of a new naval Power arming in a hurry."[35] Printing House Square, till then more or less oblivious to the rapid pace of construction of the German navy, was sufficiently impressed by the reports that it received to editorialize that whilst "[n]o phantom as to German aggression haunts us . . . we feel that it is our duty to watch the progress of German naval power."[36] Henceforth the German fleet was the major German subject of concern to Printing House Square.

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[33]Cited in Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, p. 107.

[34]Magnus, p. 338; Lee, II, p. 294.

[35]The Times, 25 June 1904.

[36]Ibid., 1 July 1904.

In response to the growth of the German fleet and because of improved relations with France, the Admiralty in 1904 strengthened the Home Fleet by reducing the number of ships in the Mediterranean squadrons. A new naval base was also begun at Rosyth, on the Firth of Forth.[37] This caused considerable anxiety in German naval circles. Tirpitz realized that in its early stages of construction the German fleet would be in a "danger zone" when it would be vulnerable to pre-emptive attack. It was widely believed in Germany that Great Britain was not above a second "Copenhagen".[38]

For this reason, people in the top circles in Berlin laboured to prevent reports appearing in the British press that might provoke the British government to make a strong response before the German navy had matured beyond its infancy. Unlike the Daily Telegraph or the Standard, which maintained that the best way to promote good international relations was to avoid printing articles that might give offence and so reported only the soothing, authorized releases of the German government, The Times increasingly warned of the danger represented by a growing German fleet.

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[37] Marder, From the Dreadnought to the Scapa Flow, I, pp. 40-42.

[38] Steinberg, The Journal of Contemporary History, I, No. 3 (1966), pp. 24-25; Marder, The Anatomy of British Sea Power, p. 496; B. B. Schofield, British Sea Power. Naval Policy in the Twentieth Century (London: B. T. Batsford, 1967), p. 23.

When German attempts to pacify The Times failed, official circles in Germany became filled with fear and hatred of it.[39] Saunders had immediately grasped what the German government was up to. In a letter of 23 February 1909 to Bell, he had written

> It has always been obvious to observers that when once the German government had got a Navy Act which would give their dockyards as much as they can possibly do for the next ten or fifteen years, they will lose no time in tranquillizing English public opinion by every means in their power.[40]

German fears were fed when on 3 February 1905 Arthur Lee, a Civil Lord of the Admiralty, stated at a political dinner that if Britain and Germany ever went to war, the German fleet would be sunk even before it realized that there was a war on.[41] General alarm ensued in the coastal regions of Germany. The Times' editorial thought it a "little comic, to our English way of thinking" that German newspapers should have gotten excited over a speech which "did not cause any excitement or attract any particular attention in the country [England]." It regarded the Civil

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[39] The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 362, 804; Hale Publicity and Diplomacy with Special Reference to England and Germany 1890-1914, pp. 25-27.

[40] Cited in The History of 'The Times', III, p. 394.

[41] The Times, 6 Feb. 1905. Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, pp. 94-95, gives the date as 4 Feb.; Marder, The Anatomy of British Sea Power, p. 498, and Gretton, p. 22, give the date as 3 Feb. The Times states that it was 2 Feb. I have accepted as correct the majority opinion.

Lord's rhetoric as a bit of electioneering and certainly not intended as "a pronouncement of international importance."[42] This was so. Lee had not expected that his speech would be read in Germany.[43] Although it was little more than a statement of fact considering the relative strengths of the British and German navies, The Times' editorial writers were less than candid in suggesting that such a statement should have produced the same reassuring effect in Germany that it had had in Great Britain. The result of it was that the German navalists had fresh material in their campaign for a new naval bill.[44]

The international distribution of naval power was fundamentally altered in May 1905 when the Russian fleet was annihilated by the Japanese fleet in Tsushima Straits. The Admiralty never had considered the possibility of a war with the United States,[45] whilst the entente cordiale had eliminated the French fleet as a likely adversary. This left only the Schlachtsflotte. Viewed in this context, Great Britain enjoyed overwhelming naval superiority at the end of 1905. Despite its importance, The Times devoted no attention to the significance of Tsushima; its attention was

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[42] The Times, 6 Feb. 1905.

[43] Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, pp. 94-95.

[44] The Times, 7 Feb. 1905.

[45] Gretton, p. 23.

focused on the first Moroccan crisis.

This margin in naval security was lost in one stroke on 10 February 1906 with the launching of the Dreadnought. The Dreadnought was a super-battleship which revolutionized naval warfare. Unlike previous ships, which had had a variety of gun calibres, it was equipped only with twelve-inch guns. This gave it an arc and weight of fire far exceeding that of any other ship and rendered all pre-dreadnought ships obsolete.[46] The way had been opened for Anglo-German naval competition on much closer terms.

The launching of the Dreadnought's unleashed a furious debate in British naval circles. Its apologists argued, and undoubtedly correctly, that since technological developments had made it inevitable, Britain must gain the lead in them.[47] Its opponents contended that Sir John Fisher, the First Sea Lord, had deliberately written off the nation's naval superiority and was allowing Germany an almost even start. Although The Times did not enter into this naval debate, it unequivocably came out in support of the Dreadnought. This was due to James Thursfield, its

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[46]Marder, The Anatomy of British Sea Power, pp. 515-535; Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, pp. 104-108.

[47]Richard Hough, Admiral of the Fleet. The Life of Sir John Fisher (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1970), pp. 241-242; Marder, The Anatomy of British Sea Power, pp. 536-540.

naval correspondent.[48] In its editorial of 10 February, in which it announced that the launching would take place that day, The Times gave "credit . . . to the wisdom and prevision of the sea officers, who are thus shown to have foreseen the requirements of modern naval warfare." Its praise of the Admiralty was even more lavish two days later when it stated that in the Dreadnought the people of Great Britain had tangible proof that the Admiralty was still well endowed with the qualities of "Consilium [consultation], Cura [attention], and Conamen [exertion]," for which it had been renowned in the past.[49] But the editorial of 12 February also forewarned that

> Germany is preparing to build battleships of speed, displacement and armament not incompatible with those of the Dreadnought. . . . Thus, although we are first in the field, and thereby, happily, well ahead of the rest of the world, it is certain that we shall not long remain alone in it.

The implications were clear: having gotten a head start on Germany in the construction of dreadnoughts, the British government must make the most of its advantage and build a substantial number before Germany began.

In December 1905 the Liberals replaced the Conservatives as the government. The Liberals came to power on a platform promising both social reform and retrenchment in

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[48] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 467. Chirol disagreed with Thursfield's opinions.

[49] The Times, 12 Feb. 1906.

government spending. For many Liberals, an obvious saving could be made in armaments. The liberal philosophy of the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was that war grew out of the national piling-up of armaments and the erection of barriers to the free flow of trade. If all guns were melted down and all tariff walls removed, the awful burden of war would be lifted from the shoulders of mankind.[50] The new government therefore viewed with alarm the large naval expenditures which had been requested in the Cawdor Memorandum[51] by the Conservative government. Sir Campbell-Bannerman accepted the Cawdor Memorandum as his government's naval policy,[52] but continued to search for a way of reducing naval expenditures without forfeiting Britain's naval security.

The Prime Minister and "naval economaniacs" of his party saw a way out of their dilemma in the proposed second

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[50]Peter Rowland, The Last Liberal Government. The Promised Land 1905-1910 (London: Barrie & Rockliff, 1968), 2-4, 185; Colin Cross, The Liberals in Power (1905-1914) (London: Barrie & Rockliff with Pall Mall Press, 1963), p. 37.

[51]On 4 December the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Earl of Cawdor, announced that strategic requirements necessitated an output of four large armoured ships annually until Great Britain had an unassailable preponderance in capital ships. Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, pp. 125-126. Also see The Times, 4 Dec. 1905. The Times thought that the government's intention was quite satisfactory.

[52]Great Britain, 4 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), CLXII (1906), cols. 114-115; Gretton, p. 23.

Hague Peace Conference.[53] Notwithstanding that the agenda for the Conference did not include the subject of the limitation of armaments,[54] the Prime Minister declared on 23 July 1906, in opening the Inter-Parliamentary Union meeting in London, that his government was determined to discuss the question at The Hague, and he urged the delegates to press their governments to do likewise.[55]

The Times was unimpressed by Campbell-Bannerman's idealism, anticipating his call for a reduction of armaments.[56] On 9 May H. Vivian, a Liberal back bencher, had attacked the heavy expenditure on armaments in the House of Commons amidst considerable government applause, and proposed a general limitation.[57] In a special article of 20 July, Repington censured any proposals that the government might have for a unilateral limitation of armaments as they would only "reduce the security provided by our

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[53]Tsar Nicholas II of Russia proposed a second Hague Peace Conference on 13 September 1905. James Brown Scott, The Hague Peace Conferences of 1899 and 1907 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1909), I, Footnotes pp. 93-94.

[54]Ibid., I, p. 663; II, pp. 175-177.

[55]J. A. Spender, The Life of the Right Hon. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, G. C. B. (London: Hodder and Stoughton Limited, n.d.), II, pp. 262-263 and Footnote p. 263.

[56]The Times, 20 July 1906.

[57]Great Britain, 4 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), CLVI (1906), cols. 1383-1390.

armaments without any reasonable hope that their example will be followed elsewhere." Nor did Repington think much of the Liberal "economists'" arguments that armaments were a "crushing burden".

> It has been under the sense of material security afforded by this shield [the Royal Navy] that modern Britain has risen to her great estate, that her credit is unrivalled, that her merchants cover the world with their wares, and that by enriching themselves they enrich also every trade and every class of labour in this country.

Repington's arguments were realistic and reveal the reason why The Times distrusted the Liberal party. Printing House Square feared that Liberal pacifists and idealists might prevail in their caucus and lead Britain to abandon the expensive naval competition which appeared inevitable with the introduction of the dreadnought-type ship. Should Britain ease up in building dreadnoughts, Germany might eventually overtake it, thereby jeopardizing the nation's security and its international authority.

In anticipation of success in getting agreement to a limitation of armaments at The Hague, and as a sign of the British government's sincerity in advocating this, the government persuaded the Admiralty to drop one dreadnought from the Cawdor programme for the fiscal year 1906-1907 and two from the programme for the fiscal year 1907-1908.[58]

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[58] "Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty Explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1906-1907," British Sessional Papers, LXIX (1906), p. 285ff.; Gretton, p. 23.

The announcement was made in the House of Commons on 27 July.[59] The Conservatives attacked the government's policy as jeopardizing the "recognized invincibility of the British Navy."[60]

The Manchester Guardian stated that the government had a "mandate" to cut expenditures on armaments in anticipation of persuading other governments at the Hague Conference to reduce theirs, although it was dubious that other governments would follow the British lead.[61] The Times, by contrast, in an editorial of 28 July, which was probably written or at least influenced by James Thursfield, greeted the deletion of one dreadnought from the 1906-1907 estimates with "misgiving", but took encouragement from the fact that "[t]hree battleships of the Dreadnought type are a very formidable addition to our prospective naval strength to be laid down in a single year." The intention to reduce the following year's estimates by two dreadnoughts it thought a "much more questionable policy." It realized that the government was doing this for reasons of "high policy" rather than of "strategy", as "it is to be an earnest at the Hague Conference of our bona fides when the question of reduction of armaments comes up for discussion." But this was a

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[59] Great Britain, 4 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), CLXII (1906), col. 69.

[60] Ibid., cols. 75-80.

[61] The Manchester Guardian Weekly, 1 Aug. 1906.

dangerous course to pursue when the nation's security was involved. And Campbell-Bannerman's description of armaments as "reckless expenditure" was hardly encouraging, when they had "hitherto [been] regarded as necessary to defend our interests."

Unlike C.P. Scott of The Manchester Guardian, who frequently allowed his heart to rule his head,[62] Bell and Chirol viewed relations between states in hard terms of power and self-interest. Although they, too, were men with, and respect for, principle, they realized that on the international stage a good cause is lost without the power behind it to ensure its implementation. Because the course of German policy seemed in conflict with British interests, they demanded that the government react decisively to safeguard the nation's welfare. Insofar as it did not do this, it incurred The Times' wrath and scorn. It was undoubtedly because Printing House Square surveyed international affairs in terms of Realpolitik that O. J. Hale, who preferred C. P. Scott's politics of morality, labelled The Times as "consistently anti-German" and dismissed its depiction of German policy as an "artificial creation."[63]

The opinion of the editorial of 28 July 1906 stands

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[62] J. L. Hammond, C. P. Scott of 'The Manchester Guardian' (London: G. Bell and Sons Ltd., 1934), pp. 149-176.

[63] Hale, Publicity and Diplomacy with Special Reference to England and Germany, p. 22.

in marked contrast to that in the series, "The State of the Navy," which ran from 22 January to 12 February 1907.[64] The author merely identified himself as "a correspondent." The History of 'The Times' makes no reference to the series, but the fact that the author had "for hard upon 20 years . . . represented The Times as its correspondent at all of the manoeuvres at which representatives of the Press were allowed to be present"[65] indicates that it was Thursfield. The article of 24 January dealt with the reduction of the Cawdor programme by one ship in the 1906-1907 fiscal year. The author found it "much more easy to explain and defend the dropping of a ship in 1906 than I should to explain and defend the putting of a fourth ship into the programme framed at the end of 1905." This switch in opinion was occasioned by the fact that the launch of the Dreadnought had so upset the naval calculations of the other naval powers that not one of them laid down a single new battleship in 1906.[66] Thus what appeared to be lack of resolution in 1906 looked like foresight from the vantage point of 1907.

This was also the view of the Admiralty. On 26 September 1906 the First Sea Lord, Sir John Fisher, wrote to

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[64]The articles were printed on 22, 26 and 30 Jan., 4, 7, 9 and 12 Feb. 1907.

[65]The Times, 22 Jan. 1907.

[66]Ibid., 24 Jan. 1907; Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, p. 67; Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, p. 111.

Lord Tweedmouth, the First Lord of the Admiralty, that Great Britain's

> present margin of superiority over Germany (our only possible foe for years) is so great as to render it absurd to talk of anything endangering our naval supremacy, even if we stopped all shipbuilding altogether!!![67]

Some of the navalist press, however, had continued to assail the government for what it regarded as the government's dereliction. On 22 September 1906 the Conservative Standard created a public flutter when it stated that "the advent of a Liberal Government has in ten months done more damage to the nation than we might anticipate from conflict with a first-class European Power."[68]

The Kaiser was opposed to any discussion of "disarmament" at The Hague.[69] In Berlin it was believed that Campbell-Bannerman had raised the question to embarrass

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[67]Arthur J. Marder (ed.), Fear God and Dread Nought. The Correspondence of Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Fisher of Kilverstone (London: Jonathan Cape, 1956), II, No. 49. The emphases are Fisher's. He regularly underlined and used exclamation marks in abundance to emphasize his arguments.

[68]Cited in Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, p. 127.

[69]G. P., XXIII, Pt. I, Nos. 7815-7816. The British government used the terms "limitation" or "reduction" of armaments; the German government the term "disarmament". Sir Edward Grey, who was sceptical of any concrete results from such a discussion, but was nevertheless willing to give it a try, pointed out the difference in meaning of the terms to the Germans. See ibid., Nos. 7882 and 7927.

the German government internationally, as it would obviously refuse.[70] On 30 April 1907 Chancellor von Bülow officially announced in the Reichstag that Germany would not engage in discussions of "disarmament" as they were "unpractical".[71] The Times' editorial stated that the Chancellor's speech 'must be a bitter disappointment to the fire-eaters of the recently elected Government bloc."[72] But it hardly could fault the German government's decision, as it had been saying much the same thing.

The Liberal government's failure to get an agreement to a limitation of naval armaments from Germany opened the way to an intense and protracted race in dreadnought construction. This competition had been foreseen at the time of the launching of the Dreadnought and was one of the reasons given against its construction by the ship's opponents.[73] The Times, too, had recognized this, but rather than opposing the dreadnought-type had urged the government to build up a substantial lead in them before Germany began its programme. So long as Germany had not

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[70] Ibid., No. 7841. Even if the German government had wanted to engage in talks on a limitation of armaments, the German public would not have countenanced them, as it had been taught to believe over the years that a strong fleet was essential to Germany's prosperity and security.

[71] The Times, 1 May 1907.

[72] Ibid.

[73] For these arguments see Marder, The Anatomy of British Sea Power, p. 536ff.

laid down a dreadnought, The Times remained relatively satisfied with the Liberal's naval policy. But when Germany began construction, The Times began to show a note of anxiety about the government's intentions which had not previously been noticeable. In the autumn of 1908 and spring of 1909 this amounted to hysteria.

II

In May 1907 Saunders reported that the German Navy League, which had been relatively quiet during the year 1906, was beginning a campaign for a "new and more extensive" naval programme.[74] By the end of August there were hints in the German press that the Reichstag would amend the Navy Law at its autumn session to reduce the age-limit for battleships from twenty-five to twenty years, thus increasing the pace of replacement of obsolete vessels.[75] These reports indicated that the German Admiralty, which had suffered a setback in its plans with the launching of the Dreadnought, which rendered its existing ships obsolete, had recovered and was now firmly committed to a dreadnought programme of its own.

The text of the amendment to the Navy Law to be presented to the Reichstag was published in the Norddeutsche

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[74] The Times, 14 and 21 May 1907; Carroll, p. 567.

[75] The Times, 31 Aug., 4 and 5 Sept. 1907.

Allgemeine Zeitung on 18 November, and was reproduced in The Times by Saunders the following day. Although the amendment outlined the new programme of German construction to the year 1917, Saunders cautioned on 20 November that "in no quarter is it assured that the published programme can be regarded as final beyond the year 1911." The editorial that accompanied the article was restrained in its comments. The Kaiser was in the midst of an official visit to England, and Printing House Square thought that it

> would scarcely be opportune just now, when the German Emperor is the honoured guest of our Sovereign and his people, to consider in any detail the reaction that the expanding naval expenditure of Germany is likely to have sooner or later on the naval policy of this country.

But nevertheless there was the "two-Power standard" to be considered, and notwithstanding the friendly state of Anglo-German relations, "international friendships are no adequate measure of national security, and for that reason every nation prepares to defend itself in the event of their rupture." The editorial concluded by stating that henceforth the government would be expected to live up to the Cawdor schedule of construction.[76]

At Printing House Square, the new Navy Law gave rise to added pessimism about the possibility of better relations between Germany and Britain in the foreseeable future, as

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[76] Ibid., 20 Nov. 1907.

well as anxiety concerning the government's likely response. Chirol expressed this mood in a letter of 28 November to F. Chilver, Saunders' Berlin assistant.

> How is steam to be got up for the heavy taxation which the Navy bill involves without turning on the old pressure valves of Anglophobia, and if they are turned on, what becomes of the professions of undying friendship during the Windsor week, and what figures will our Spenders and Haldanes and the rest cut over here? Our policy is to sit tight and watch.[77]

As a result of the new programme, Germany was to have twelve new battleships between 1908 and 1911, instead of the eight originally scheduled.[78] The "economaniacs" saw nothing menacing in this.[79] Sir Edward Grey, however, was resolved that Great Britain must meet the German acceleration in battleships with increases of its own. In a speech at Alnwick, on 16 January 1908, the British Foreign Secretary stated that it was not his government's intention to complain about German naval construction, but that as "Britain's trade, its Empire and the very independence of the country" depended on the navy, naval increases abroad would require Britain to react accordingly.[80] The Times'

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[77] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 507. The emphasis is Chirol's.

[78] For the comparative rates of construction under the two navy laws see Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, p. 136; B. D., VI, Nos. 41-42; Hubatsch, p. 76.

[79] Gretton, p. 24; Rowland, p. 193.

[80] For the text of the speech see The Times, 16 Jan. 1908.

editorial thought Grey's words "wise and weighty", and took it "for granted that financial tightness, of no matter what origin, will not be relieved by cutting down the Admiralty estimates" for the forthcoming financial year, as "our safety at home must always depend mainly upon the Navy."[81] For the time being, Printing House Square was contented.

The British naval estimates were tabled in March of each year. If Printing House Square hoped to sway public opinion on this issue, January and February were the decisive months. In early 1907, when Britain had had a monopoly on the dreadnought, The Times had been relatively satisfied with the government's naval parsimony. By January 1908, however, there were indications that Germany would shortly be launching its first dreadnought.[82] This, and the acceleration resulting from the programme of 1907, roused Printing House Square to urge the government to abandon any naval economies it might have considered for the 1908-1909 estimates.

Saunders had reported that the overwhelming majority of Germans supported the new Navy Law.[83] The editorial of 24 January 1908 stressed that "motives and ambitions of this

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[81] Ibid., 17 Jan. 1908.

[82] It was launched in March 1908. See ibid., 29 Feb. and 9 Mar. 1908.

[83] Ibid., 10, 14, 20, 21 and 22 Jan. 1908; Carroll, pp. 567ff.

kind, openly avowed and unimpeachably attested," would have to be considered by the Cabinet when formulating its current estimates. Notwithstanding that it preferred immediate substantial increases in the estimates, "a moderate and well-conceived programme, specially framed to serve as the basis for that future expansion which the new German programme must of necessity entail," would suffice for the 1908-1909 financial year. If Germany were found to be building ahead of its published schedule, supplementary estimates were imperative.[84] This was the first occasion on which a Times' editorial raised the possibility of Germany building ahead of its official programme. It was this contingency which gave rise to the naval panic of the following spring.

On 30 January 1908 Tirpitz answered his critics by declaring that the German navy was defensive, not offensive, in character, and therefore hardly could be construed as a "provocation to England."[85] As the King of Portugal and the heir to the throne had been assassinated on 1 February, and the following day's Times was devoted to the memory of the murdered monarch and his son, it was not till 3 February that Printing House Square was able to comment on Tirpitz's defence of his naval bill.[86] The editorial announced that

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[84] The Times, 3 Feb. 1908.

[85] Ibid., 31 Jan. 1908; Carroll, pp. 567ff.

[86] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 602.

had the German State Secretary of the Navy taken the trouble to "glance at any half-dozen of representative newspapers," he would have found for himself that Britain was a "united nation" in its "determination" to maintain its naval supremacy, and would react to any steps taken by others, which might "threaten" it, with "corresponding steps on our side." The "public unquestionably look upon the German bill as such a step."[87]

Obviously Printing House Square did not regard the liberal press as representative of any segment of the British public, as The Manchester Guardian stated that Britain's naval strength ensured the nation's security.[88] Nor was the Admiralty alarmed.[89]

The Liberal Cabinet seriously divided over the formulation of the naval estimates for 1908-1909. The Admiralty's proposals required a £2,150,000 increase over the estimates of the previous year. Lloyd George, Churchill, Harcourt and McKenna all demanded that the estimates must be reduced below those of 1907-1908. Tweedmouth threatened to resign his post as First Lord if any cuts were made. The "social reform group" countered that the Board of the Admiralty should be dismissed unless economies were effected.

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[87] The Times, 3 Feb. 1908.

[88] The Manchester Guardian Weekly, 29 Dec. 1907.

[89] Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, p. 137; Gretton, p. 24.

A compromise was arrived at. The increase in the estimates was held to £900,000, but no reduction was made in construction--the Admiralty's proposal of one new dreadnought and one new battle cruiser was adhered to.[90] Fisher thought this was quite adequate, as now Britain enjoyed a considerable lead in dreadnoughts.[91]

Printing House Square had foreseen the Cabinet split and asserted that "defence is infinitely more important than opulence"[92]--a not very clever description of social welfare legislation. It described the £900,000 increase in the estimates, which were presented to Parliament on 25 February,[93] as "nominal", and the government's paring of the Adiralty's recommendations as "ill-timed" and "a temporizing and illusory expedient" which would undoubtedly require that the Admiralty propose supplementary estimates before the end of the year "to cover the deficit in votes cut down by the Cabinet below the point of safety." The Times' verdict

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[90] J. A. Spender, The Life of the Right Hon. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, II, pp. 377-378; Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, p. 138; Rowland, pp. 193-194; M. V. Brett (ed.), Journals and Letters of Reginald Viscount Esher (London: Ivor, Nicholson & Watson Ltd., 1934), II, pp. 281-284.

[91] Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, p. 138; Fear God and Dread Nought, II, No. 90.

[92] The Times, 8 Feb. 1908.

[93] "Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty Explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1908-1909," British Sessional Papers, LXV (1908), p. 283.

on the government was "'not guilty, but don't do it again,' with especial stress laid on the latter clause of the sentence and many reserves in regard to the former."[94] The Times then came on a godsend that for a time at least was an embarrassment to those demanding retrenchment in naval spending.

The British naval estimates for the 1908-1909 fiscal year were prefaced by a statement that henceforth the amounts of British naval budgets would depend on the pace of construction of foreign powers,[95] which could mean only Germany. On his own initiative, Kaiser Wilhelm decided that he would once-and-for all lay British suspicions to rest and on 16 February he penned a private note to Lord Tweedmouth, assuring him that the German navy was not being built to challenge the British and that the German people would appreciate it if in future the British press did not mention German naval programmes when discussing their own.[96] Tweedmouth was flattered by the letter and, without revealing its existence to the Prime Minister, replied to the Kaiser, including details of the new naval estimates, which had not

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[94] The Times, 25 Feb. 1908.

[95] "Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty Explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1908-1909," British Sessional Papers, LXV (1908), p. 285.

[96] G. P., XXIV, No. 8181.

yet been made public.[97] Repington got wind of the letter and on 6 March, with Buckle's approval, disclosed its existence in a Times "Letter to the Editor."[98]

There was a division of opinion at Printing House Square over the letter. Buckle thought that it represented an attempt by a foreign head of state to meddle in British domestic politics. Thursfield was not prepared to give it this interpretation. As editor, Buckle had his way and the editorials on the letter were written by J. C. Ross, a "leader writer", on Buckle's instructions.[99] The purpose of Buckle's disclosure was to arouse a public storm against the Kaiser that would make it impossible for the anti-naval wing of the Liberal party to force naval cuts in the foreseeable future. When Buckle was satisfied that this had been achieved, The Times dropped the matter.[100]

The Times treated the letter as a sensation. The editorial of 6 March asserted that it amounted to "an attempt to influence, in German interests, the Minister responsible for our Naval Estimates." The lesson of the

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[97] Ibid., No. 8182; Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, pp. 140-141.

[98] Charles à Court Repington, Vestigia (London: Constable and Co. Ltd., 1919), pp. 284-286; The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 603-604.

[99] Ibid., pp. 604-605.

[100] Ibid., p. 606; Repington, pp. 291-292.

letter, The Times declared, was plain for all to see--the Kaiser had attempted to dupe the First Lord "to make it more easy for German preparations to overtake our own."

When questioned about the letter in the House of Commons, Asquith described it as "purely private and personal."[101] The Times rejected this.

> It will hardly be maintained that an argument by so good a dialectician as the German Emperor addressed at that critical time [i.e., at the time of the preparation of the naval estimates] to the First Lord of the Admiralty with the object of showing that there is no need for increases of our naval preparations, was exactly calculated to strengthen the hands of those who desire the adequate defence of British costs and commerce.[102]

The construction which Printing House Square put on the Tweedmouth letter was generally denounced by the rest of the British press.[103] Even the rabid Daily Mail was critical.[104] Fisher thought that Repington was "absolutely unscrupulous",[105] and King Edward VII that The Times' "vicious article was quite uncalled for."[106] Roseberry, a

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[101]Great Britain, 4 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), CLXXXV (1908), col. 1067.

[102]The Times, 10 Mar. 1908.

[103]The Observer wholeheartedly agreed with The Times. See A. M. Gollin, 'The Observer' and J. L. Garvin, 1908-1914. A Study in Great Editorship (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), Chap. III.

[104]Repington, p. 286; Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, p. 141; Hale, Publicity and Diplomacy with Special Reference to England and Germany, pp. 306-307.

[105]Marder, Fear God and Dread Nought, II, No. 116.

[106]Ibid., No. 117.

former Prime Minister, thought that "absolutely insane inferences" had been "drawn" by the press.[107]

Some of the German press were as wide of the mark in assigning blame, from a German point of view, as was The Times, in its criticisms, from a British perspective. Thus on 12 March Saunders reported that the Süddeutsche Reichs-correspondenz had accused The Times of an "unfair manoeuvre" in publishing the Kaiser's letter. The Reichscorrespondenz might have better questioned the merits of an authoritarian, semi-feudal system of government, dominated by a scatter-brained Emperor, who was poisoning Anglo-German relations. The Times, per contra, should have enquired into Tweedmouth's very fitness to hold the office of First Lord of the Admiralty.[108]

In the House of Commons, the opposition impugned the government's naval provisions, and suggested that if Germany were to quicken the comparative pace of its construction, it might have thirteen dreadnoughts to Great Britain's twelve in 1911.[109] Asquith, who was acting as Prime Minister for

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[107]Great Britain, 4 Parliamentary Debates (Lords), CLXXXV (1908), col. 1075.

[108]Tweedmouth died of a "brain ailment" the following year. See Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, p. 22.

[109]Great Britain, 4 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), CLXXXV (1908), cols. 1154-1155, 1180ff. The possibility of an acceleration in the rate of construction had been foreseen by Sir William White, Director of Naval Construction, 1885-1902, in a special article to The Times of 15 November 1906. He pointed out that the length of time that it took

Campbell-Bannerman, who was ill, gave a firm undertaking that if Germany were found to be accelerating the government would lay down "a sufficient number" of ships at "such a date" that "at the end of 1911 the superiority of Germany which the right honourable gentleman foreshadows would not be an actual fact."[110]

Printing House Square welcomed Asquith's reply, which was received "with profound satisfaction and no little sense of relief." But it also revealed continued want of confidence in the Liberal party, which at the crucial moment might be paralyzed by the Radicals, allowing Germany to steal ahead in dreadnoughts. The Radicals' "discomfiture" had "rather postponed than decided" the issue and it "therefore behoves the country to see to it that when the time comes its decision shall be unmistakable in the sense of Mr. Asquith's words."[111]

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to build a warship depended on the availability of the materials--armour, guns, gun-mountings, electrical equipment, etc.--at the appropriate times, since they were installed in a particular order. A delay in delivery held up construction. If orders for these materials were placed well ahead of time, delays could be eliminated and the pace of building speeded up. White thought that Germany lacked the industrial plants to take large orders for armour and gun-mountings, and hence would not be able to build ahead of its published schedules. Great Britain, on the other hand, could, and in this lay its ability to maintain its naval supremacy against all competitors.

[110]Great Britain, 4 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), CLXXXV (1908), cols. 1337-1338.

[111]The Times, 11 Mar. 1908.

It is interesting to note that Count Paul von Metternich, the German ambassador to London, advised the Kaiser in the spring of 1908 that from the British viewpoint German naval developments must be seen as a threat to Great Britain's security, inasmuch as if its fleet were sunk, Britain lay open to invasion, whereas the German army was strong enough to repel any attack.[112] This was also the view of The Times. Needless to say, the Kaiser did not think highly of Metternich's opinions.[113]

Wilhelm II committed another gaffe in the autumn of 1908. During his visit to England in November 1907 the Kaiser had discussed the state of Anglo-German relations with his host at Highcliffe Castle. Colonel Wortley had recorded the conversation and some months later suggested to the Emperor that it be published in the interest of more cordial relations between the two nations. The Kaiser agreed and on 28 October 1908 the Daily Telegraph published the manuscript.[114] In the course of the conversation Wilhelm II had emphasized that Britain had nothing to fear from the German fleet, as it was being built for operations in the Pacific.[115] He also declared that the majority of Germans

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[112] G. P., XXIV, No. 8193.

[113] See the Kaiser's marginalia, ibid. and No. 8219.

[114] Ibid., Nos. 8249-8251; Hale, Publicity and Diplomacy with Special Reference to England and Germany, pp. 313-317.

[115] The "Yellow peril" was one of the Kaiser's pet themes. Vyvyan, p. 149.

were hostile to, and that many desired war with, Britain, although he personally was Britain's friend. The Emperor anticipated that his remarks would ease suspicions in Britain, but they had the opposite effect. The "navalist press," particularly, took alarm.

Printing House Square immediately used this new ammunition in its fight with the anti-navalists. In the summer of 1908, Lloyd George, Churchill and Harcourt, the three most zealous Gladstonian economists in the Cabinet, decided that the best way to achieve a reduction in naval spending was to negotiate a naval agreement with Germany.[116] What Printing House Square feared was that the economaniacs, in their eagerness for an agreement, would accede to German terms, thereby compromising Britain's margin of safety in dreadnoughts. The surest way to prevent that happening was to stiffen public opinion to demand that the Liberal government not enter into any understanding with Germany unless Germany accepted British naval proposals, rather than the other way around.[117] The Times began its campaign by asking why the letter had been published at all and, more specifically, why at this juncture?[118] The obvious answer seemed to

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[116] Rowland, pp. 195-197.

[117] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 608.

[118] On 6 October Austria had annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina, thereby precipitating another major European crisis. See Chap. V, Pt. I.

be that the Emperor wanted "to dissipate the feelings of distrust . . . in this country." However, his "admissions . . . [of] the unfriendliness of German feeling towards England" could only "justify and confirm that distrust." And his statement that the German navy was being built for duty in the Far East seemed a "surprising reason for the accumulation of a great naval force in the Baltic and the North Sea, many units of which notoriously lack coal-capacity to make lengthy cruises of any kind."[119]

The newspaper criticisms of the German government's naval policy following the Daily Telegraph interview aroused considerable anxiety in the country regarding what the British government's naval policy would be henceforth. Would the government honour the two-power standard? On 12 November Asquith gave assurances in the House of Commons that his government was committed to a "two-power + 10% standard," and that in making its calculations no consideration was given to whether a power was friendly or hostile to Great Britain.[120] Having gotten what it wanted, The Times stated that this was the only "workable formula,"

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[119] The Times, 29 Oct. 1908. In German newspapers the interview unleashed a storm of protest against the Kaiser. See Carroll, pp. 594-598.

[120] Great Britain, 4 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), CXCVI (1908), col. 560. Campbell-Bannerman had stated in July 1906 that the calculation of the two-power standard involved considerations of "political conditions." See ibid., CLXII (1906), col. 116.

and the government finally having adopted it, the nation expected its fulfilment "without flinching or pinching."[121]

Fisher dismissed the furore over the navy resulting from the Daily Telegraph interview as proof of the Emperor's claim that "the British Public are mad, mad, mad, mad as March hares!"[122]

The naval estimates for 1909-1910 provoked a new storm in the Cabinet. Reginal McKenna, the new First Lord of the Admiralty, on the advice of the Admiralty, requested an increase of £3,000,000 over the previous year's spending for construction of capital ships. Churchill and Lloyd George again called for cuts.[123] On 19 January Buckle got wind of what was happening and instructed Thursfield to work up a leader to strengthen the hands of the navalists.[124] The resulting editorial of 22 January charged those members of the Cabinet opposed to Churchill's and Lloyd George's schemes for naval economies to live up to the Prime Minister's formula for the two-power standard as the "City of London, and the whole country" would regard anything less

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[121] The Times, 8 Dec. 1908.

[122] Marder, Fear God and Dread Nought, II, No. 148. The Kaiser had commented on the madness of the British public in the Daily Telegraph letter. See G. P., XXIV No. 8251 (Anlage).

[123] Rowland, pp. 250-251.

[124] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 625.

as "untoward proceedings on their part." The fight within the government continued and in the last week of January McKenna delivered a speech in London in which he promised that the government would maintain the navy "at such a pitch of strength and efficiency" that the nation was safe from all "possible foreign attempts."[125] The editorial of 30 January pointed out that although the First Lord of the Admiralty had given no figures for new construction, in view of the fact that the government had built below the Cawdor programme in the 1906-1907 and 1907-1908 fiscal years, the forthcoming budget must "recover the ground lost." Even though it was preferable that the government lay down "eight armoured ships during the ensuing financial year, and at least four during the following year," if this were "not absolutely necessary," the "arrears" must be made up "without fail" during the next two years. This meant "a minimum" of six ships in the 1909-1910 financial year, and another six in 1910-1911.[126] The language in these efforts to stir up support for McKenna was moderate in comparison with what was to come.

According to the Navy Laws of 1906 and 1908, Germany was to have thirteen capital ships commissioned by 1912. Britain, on the other hand, under the revised schedule of

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[125]For the text of the speech see The Times, 29 Jan. 1909.

[126]Ibid., 30 Jan. 1909. The emphasis is The Times'.

the Liberal government, would have eighteen. This was far from the promised two power + 10% standard in dreadnoughts, but it still ensured Great Britain a margin of five capital ships over Germany.[127] The Liberal government had assumed that German shipyards required thirty-six months to complete a ship from the date of its order,[128] although The Times had warned as early as 30 March 1907 that they might be able to do it in twenty-four to thirty months' time.[129] The British government also had assumed that Germany would adhere to its published schedule of construction.[130]

In December 1908 the British Admiralty received information which suggested that Germany had accelerated its pace of construction.[131] This raised the frightful prospect that Germany might have seventeen capital ships by the end of 1912, rather than the thirteen previously

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[127] Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, p. 152.

[128] Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, p. 203.

[129] The Times of 14 March 1908 cautioned that the Schichau, Elbing and Danzig shipyards could turn out ships at three times their current rates.

[130] Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, pp. 203-204.

[131] Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, pp. 151-153; Stephen McKenna, Reginald McKenna, 1863-1943. A Memoir (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode (Publishers) Ltd., 1948), pp. 71-79. On 15 October and 30 November 1908 Saunders had reported in The Times that the German Admiralty had placed orders for ships before the Reichstag had voted the necessary funds for their construction.

assumed, and possibly even twenty-one.[132] The British government's attempts to get information from the German ambassador and the German naval attaché in London on actual and planned German construction only resulted in confusing replies which conflicted with the information in the Admiralty's possession.[133]

The Cabinet was divided as to what the German government's early orders and stocking of nickel for gun-mountings portended. Lloyd George and Churchill refused to accept the argument that this confirmed acceleration.[134] McKenna, on the other hand, backed by Fisher, who thought that the "outlook is very ominous,"[135] recommended that the estimates make provision for a minimum of six dreadnoughts.[136] Although Fisher supplied J. L. Garvin, editor

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[132] Ibid., pp. 154-155.

[133] G. P., XXVIII, Nos. 10249, 10250, 10266, 10269 and 10287; B. D., VI, Nos. 151-154.

[134] R. S. Churchill, Winston S. Churchill (London: Heinemann, 1967), II, pp. 517-521; Winston S. Churchill (London: Heinemann, 1969), II Companion, Pt. 2, pp. 938, 943, 955; McKenna, p. 79; Brett, II, p. 370.

[135] Marder, Fear God and Dread Nought, II, No. 154, McKenna was converted from a "Little Navy" to a "Big Navy" man by Fisher after his appointment to the office of First Lord of the Admiralty. See Marder, ibid., Nos. 154 and 157; and McKenna, p. 70.

[136] J. A. Spender and Cyril Asquith, Life of Herbert Henry Asquith, Lord Oxford and Asquith (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1932), I, p. 253; Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, pp. 159-163; Fear God and Dread Nought, II, No. 158.

of The Observer, with secret information, there is no evidence that he also supplied Printing House Square with this intelligence.[137]

Asquith finally effected a compromise; the estimates of 1909-1910 provided for four dreadnoughts with the proviso that if Germany were found to be building ahead of its published time-table, another four dreadnoughts would be laid down by 1 April 1910 at the latest.[138] Churchill later portrayed the differences in the Cabinet in his own inimitable way: "The Admiralty had demanded six ships: the economists offered four: and we finally compromised on eight."[139]

In the early part of February Buckle learned that the Admiralty was alarmed at the possibility of acceleration. Thursfield was instructed to enquire around for information for a leader that would stir things up as the Cabinet was again deadlocked and the Admiralty was anxious to get authorization to award its contracts. However, Buckle cautioned Thursfield not to go to Fisher, since if knowledge of their meeting just then came to light, the article would be greeted as nothing more than a polemic.[140]

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[137] Gollin, pp. 64ff.

[138] Spender and Asquith, I, p. 253; McKenna, p. 80.

[139] W. S. Churchill, The World Crisis (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923), I, p. 33.

[140] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 626.

The editorial of 23 February was therefore deliberately intended to send a chill down the backs of its readers. It warned that no longer could the British people take comfort from the knowledge that in a crisis they could build ships at a quicker pace than other powers. Germany had speeded up both its rate of construction and its production of guns, gun-mountings, armour plates, etc., on which the tempo of construction depended, with the result that Britain's margin of superiority might soon be erased.

The Times kept up its campaign to arouse public opinion. On 1 March Ross penned an editorial stating that six dreadnoughts was the minimum acceptable for 1909-1910. At Printing House Square it was policy that to provide for anything less than that number was dereliction.[141] When the naval estimates for 1909-1910 were issued on 12 March 1909,[142] The Times greeted the Cabinet's compromise of four regular and four contingent ships unenthusiastically. "It represents, in all conscience, no very heroic policy, and no very courageous grappling with the stern realities of a very critical situation."[143] There was now even concern at Printing House Square that six dreadnoughts for 1909-1910

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[141] Ibid., p. 628.

[142] "Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty Explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1909-1910," British Sessional Papers, LIII (1909), pp. 285ff.

[143] The Times, 13 Mar. 1909.

might not be enough and on 15 March Buckle requested of Thursfield, "Poke up McKenna [as there is] . . . a very general uneasiness and nothing but very firm and decided language from McKenna will reassure people."[144]

In the House of Commons, the government's naval provisions came under heavy criticism by the Conservatives. Balfour thought that they were "utterly insufficient." Both Asquith and McKenna had to admit that they were in possession of information which seemed to indicate a German speed up, but the Prime Minister denied Balfour's figure of twenty-one or more German dreadnoughts by 1912. There would be, he asserted, only seventeen to Great Britain's twenty.[145] Given these revelations, Printing House Square called for increases in the programme, "both actual and contingent, of the Estimates under discussion."[146]

On 18 March The Times carried two long editorials on Britain's naval position which sounded a note of panic. In its view, the upshot of the debates in the House of Commons was that

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[144]Cited in The History of 'The Times', III, p. 628.

[145]Great Britain, 4 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), II (1909), cols. 944-995.

[146]The Times, 17 Mar. 1909.

> whereas only forty-eight hours ago the country was willing to believe that we were safe and more than safe in respect of the Navy, that we could in fact 'sleep quietly in our bed', we now know on the admission of the Prime Minister and the First Lord of the Admiralty themselves that unless we bestir ourselves, promptly, steadily, and continuously we are or very soon shall be within measurable distance of a very grave situation indeed. The worst of it is, too, that we do not even yet know, nor can the Government or the Admiralty tell us, that we are out of the wood. They can only say that they hope and believe we are.[147]

During the ensuing hysteria, Printing House Square completely lost its head. The Times raised the question of the government's fitness for office. It had distrusted the Liberal government from the date of its election to power because of its Radical wing, which wanted retrenchment in naval spending to free funds for programmes of social reform. It regarded the present revelations as proof of the falseness of the government's economies. "They i.e., the Liberals have been mistaken once. Can we be sure that they will not be mistaken again?"[148]

If the Prime Minister and the First Lord of the Admiralty were indeed sincere in their protestations of the government's intention to maintain Great Britain's naval superiority and to safeguard its security, there was, according to The Times, only one way to demonstrate it, and that was by announcing that the four contingent ships would be laid down forthwith as "a substantive and integral

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[147] The Times, 18 Mar. 1909.

[148] Ibid.

portion" of the current year's estimates.[149] Printing House Square reiterated its want of confidence in the government's handling of naval affairs even more forcefully the following day.

> Mr. Asquith has not known in the past what Germany was doing, he does not know except superficially what she is doing now . . . and there is not the least security that he will know next year all that she is doing, until the results are before him and this country is outdistanced in the race.[150]

The majority of British newspapers joined in the hysteria Germanica.[151] The Daily Express held Fisher solely responsible for "the imminent possibility of national disaster."[152] The Manchester Guardian, as usual, was one of the few newspapers to remain sceptical. It deplored the agitation, since, in its view, the increase of the naval estimates by three million pounds over the previous year assured the nation's security.[153] And it questioned the

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[149] Ibid. Nor did Printing House Square care for the Liberal government's attack on privilege, which it deemed a mark of its "socialist taint" (24 Jan. 1908); but the overriding reason for its distrust of the government was the Radicals' opposition to naval spending. The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 624 and 628.

[150] The Times, 19 Mar. 1909.

[151] E.g., Daily Telegraph, The Observer, Birmingham Daily Post, Pall Mall Gazette, Daily Mail, The Scotsman, Radical Daily News, Daily Chronicle, Westminster Gazette, Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury and Morning Post. Hale, Publicity and Diplomacy with Special Reference to England and Germany, pp. 351-355.

[152] Cited in Hough, p. 290.

[153] The Manchester Guardian, 15 Mar. 1909.

veracity of the Admiralty's documentation of German acceleration.[154] The Admiralty's evidence was, of course, merely conjectural,[155] although the German government's refusal to provide the British government with unambiguous information only seemed to confirm its correctness. Nor did the editor of the Naval Annual think that the tactics of the navalist press were warranted. In a Times' letter to the editor he emphasized that whilst the government's economies might have weakened the nation's defences, they "do not justify the alarmist outcry which has been raised."[156]

On 26 March 1909 the naval tumult assumed yet a new shrillness with the announcement that St. Petersburg was prepared to accede to Austria's annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. When Printing House Square learned that the Russian decision had resulted from a German ultimatum, it concluded that the Triple Entente had been seriously weakened as an effective instrument for containing Germany and that therefore the fleet must be strengthened correspondingly to redress the balance.[157] The editorial of 27 March, which was written by Chirol, made this point by calling for an end to division on the naval question.

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[154] Ibid., 19, 23, 24, 27, 30 and 31 Mar. 1909.

[155] Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, pp. 153-156; Hough, p. 289.

[156] The Times, 24 Mar. 1909.

[157] The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 630-631.

> The British Navy has stood more than once between Europe and the claims of some great Continental Power to be the sole and supreme arbiter of its destinies. Surely some means can yet be discovered by the combined patriotism of the Government and the Opposition to remove all danger of the appearance even of party divergences when the question at issue is to be the maintenance of that naval power which not only is the essential guarantee of our national existence, but has proved in the past, and may yet prove in the future, the real bulwark of European freedom.

The fact that Printing House Square continued to believe that the British navy was a suitable lever to maintain the equilibrium of the Continental system reveals how insular some of its thinking was. The exception on this question was Repington. Buckle and Thursfield dismissed his argument outright; and even Bell, who was the Military Correspondent's apologist, did not really grasp the role that would be required of the British army in a future European war.[158]

Repington had been hired on as Military Correspondent by Bell in January 1905. The South African War had pointed out the need of major army reforms, and the Managing Director was determined that the public should be educated to press for the needed changes.[159] Amongst his first proposals, Repington suggested the creation of a "Continental Army", but by this he meant an army for use against Russia in India.[160] It was during the first Moroccan crisis, in

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[158] Ibid., pp. 507 and 694.

[159] Ibid., pp. 462-463.

[160] Ibid., p. 464.

conversations with Major Huguet, the French military attaché in London, that his eyes were opened to the realization that if France were to resist German attack in the event of war, British military aid was required immediately, since French forces were numerically weaker and Russia would require some weeks to complete its mobilization.[161]

Repington's revolutionary doctrine of a standing British expenditionary force for Europe appeared in The Times for the first time on 5 March 1906. In this article he argued that in the next European war it would be the British army, not the British navy, that would play the decisive part.

> The war, if it comes, will be fought out, and perhaps decided so far as France and Germany are concerned, upon the land frontier. Subsidiary operations against the French or German coasts will not, in all probability, affect the issue of the first decisive encounters in any material degree. . . . If the integrity of France and the preservation of the peace of Europe and the traditions of Liberalism are vital interests of any particular Power in Europe, then this Power is bound to organize and dispose its armed forces, and engage those of its other allies so that it can give moral and material support to France at the decisive point within certain limits of time, whether directly on the menaced frontier, or indirectly on another frontier of Germany, where menace of invasion will distract active troops from the Meuse.

Although he continued to develop this idea till the outbreak of the war, the Military Correspondent made little

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[161] Ibid., p. 465.

headway at Printing House Square. Buckle, Thursfield and Bell all remained firm in their belief that the navy was capable of preventing French military defeat through the blockade of Germany.[162] Steed alone wholeheartedly agreed with Repington.[163] Ironically, Repington made his greatest impression in Germany. Editor of the Army Review as well as The Times' Military Correspondent, he was believed in Berlin to be expressing the thinking of official British circles.[164]

Nevertheless, despite the considerable pressure on it, the government refused to commit itself.[165] Asquith's failure to give an undertaking to lay down at once the contingent ships, even after what Printing House Square regarded as Germany's latest proof of designs of Continental domination, reduced it to anger and name calling. Thus in its editorial of 29 March The Times referred to the government as "busy-bodies and sentimentalists who go about prating of universal brotherhood, and declaring that Germany

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[162] Ibid., p. 694. [163] Ibid., p. 706.

[164] B. D., VI, Enclosure in No. 442. Fisher opposed the idea of spending money on the army which would otherwise go to the navy. Ruddock F. Mackay, Fisher of Kilverstone (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), pp. 355-356, 369-370, 381 ff. Richard B. Haldane, Secretary for War, agreed with much of Repington's thinking, but he was unable to muster support within his own party. Stephen E. Koss, Lord Haldane: Scapegoat for Liberalism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), pp. 43 ff.

[165] Great Britain, 4 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), III (1909), cols. 39-146.

is too good, too humane, and too peace-loving ever to raise a finger against England," even when Russia, which had also been "fed with protestations of German friendship far more lavish than those ephemeral ones that delight our sentimentalists", was threatened with mobilization when it stood in the way of "some German ambition," although it had done nothing to provoke Germany. The affairs of the nation were being directed by "a band of self-constituted authorities upon German intentions" who had "just spent over three-hundred millions on old-age pensions", but now refused "to spend less than one year's interest on that sum in building ships to give security at once to those who pay and those who receive the pensions."[166] These decisions were being taken by "restive mediocrities."[167]

Parliament rose for the Easter recess on 7 April, and with it The Times' agitation cooled somewhat. When the naval estimates came before the House in July to be voted on, the First Lord announced that the contingent ships were to be laid down as part of the regular programme.[168] The decision was based on information that both Austria and Italy were laying down four dreadnoughts.[169] The Times

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[166] The History of 'The Times' does not indicate who wrote this editorial, but it may have been Buckle himself, as he was "no admirer of old age pensions or social insurance and he wanted the money for dreadnoughts." The History of 'The Times', III, p. 705.

[167] The Times, 29 Mar. 1909.

[168] Great Britain, 4 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), VIII (1909), cols. 855-859.

[169] Hough, p. 289; Mackay, p. 410.

welcomed "with satisfaction the rather belated announcement that the Government have at last made . . . to do what every one must have seen for some time that they certainly must do."[170]

With the government's declaration that the contingent ships had been incorporated into the regular naval estimates, the naval scare of 1909 ended. In spite of the fact that the Bosnian crisis was important news during the first three months of 1909, The Times devoted more column inches of news and editorials to the German navy in 1909 than in any other year of the decade of this study. More than half of these column inches were printed during the panic.[171] Not before nor again was The Times' tone as shrill on any issue as on the German navy in March 1909.

By the autumn of 1909 it was obvious to the Admiralty that Germany was not accelerating. The Times later maintained that the German Admiralty reverted to its official schedule of construction because it had been found out.[172] There is no evidence to indicate that there were any plans for an increase in the rate of construction.[173]

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[170]The Times, 27 July 1909 (editorial).

[171]See the Appendix for the figures on column inches.

[172]The Times, 17 Feb. 1911.

[173]Hough, p. 289; Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, pp. 177-178.

The Times' exaggeration of the danger resulted from Printing House Square's suspiciousness of German foreign policy in general, and its naval strategy in particular. However, the German government must assume a good deal of the blame. If it had provided accurate information on German shipbuilding, and had allowed the British naval attaché in Berlin to visit the German shipbuilding yards, the British Admiralty's apprehensions might have been allayed.

German naval developments were given moderate coverage in 1910--both in amount of space and in tone. This was undoubtedly in response to German restraint in naval construction. Nevertheless, Printing House Square still surveyed the German navy with its previous critical eye. The naval estimates for 1910-1911 were issued on 9 March 1910. They provided for five dreadnoughts and five armoured cruisers and represented an increase of more than five million pounds over the previous year's budgetary provision.[174] The Times expressed the opinion that this huge increase was "inevitable", and seemed pleased by it.[175] Yet five days later the editorial demurred that there was still not conclusive evidence that Germany had not stepped

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[174] "Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty Explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1910-1911", British Sessional Papers, LXI (1910), pp. 293 ff.

[175] The Times, 10 Mar. 1910 (editorial).

up its pace of naval construction and, whilst it did not "wish to draw alarmist inferences from these facts," there was reason to doubt that the estimates were adequate.[176] The Times also might have mentioned that there was no evidence whatever to indicate that Germany had begun acceleration.

Although naval coverage was moderate again in The Times in 1911, it continued to underline the need of a vigorous programme of construction. On 17 February the editorial stated that the fact that the rumored acceleration of 1909 had not occurred did not ensure against it not happening in the future. This was elaborated on a fortnight later. "If, then, the 'eight' of 1909 had any effect in preventing a German acceleration, then surely a like adequate--but not more than adequate--provision in 1911 might be expected to have the same effect now." Conversely, any reduction in the naval estimates could only be expected to provide an incentive to a German quickening in pace.[177]

The naval estimates for 1911-1912 provided a £3,788,800 increase over the previous year's.[178] Whilst this was "not sensational Estimates," it appeared to be

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[176] Ibid., 15 Mar. 1910.

[177] Ibid., 4 Mar. 1911.

[178] "Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty Explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1911-1912", British Sessional Papers, LXVIII (1911), pp. 299 ff.

adequate. But it could be regarded as no more than a "minimum," stated The Times.[179]

During the year, Mackenzie several times reported that there were rumors that the German Navy Law would be amended again.[180] The Berlin correspondent's articles were not without substance. Tirpitz had determined to marshal the anti-British sentiments aroused during the second Moroccan crisis to win a new supplement to the Navy Law.[181] The amendment was realized the following year.

III

Churchill replaced McKenna as First Lord of the Admiralty in October 1911.[182] Previously a "Little Navy" man, the Panther affair had converted him to support a "Big Navy" policy.[183] In an intemperate speech at Glasgow on 9 February 1912, the new First Lord declared that whilst the navy was a necessity to Great Britain, it was a mere "luxury" for Germany.[184] There was a mild outburst in

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[179] The Times, 10 Mar. 1911 (editorial). The emphasis is The Times'.

[180] Ibid., 30 and 31 May, 26 Sept., 24 Oct. and 28 Nov. 1911.

[181] Alfred von Tirpitz, Erinnerungen (Leipzig: Verlag von K. F. Koehler, 1919), pp. 181-185; Ritter, II, pp. 215-236.

[182] McKenna, pp. 108-119.

[183] R. S. Churchill, II, p. 521.

[184] Ibid., pp. 563-564; The Times, 10 Feb. 1912.

reaction in Germany[185] and dismay amongst those in Britain who were striving for improved Anglo-German relations.[186] Churchill's vivid remarks were, of course, no more than a statement of the realities of international politics. The Times concurred with the substance of Churchill's speech, albeit it considered the word "luxury" a "rather unhappy phrase".[187]

The heightened tension in Anglo-German relations resulting from the Agadir incident alarmed a number of people in both Germany and Great Britain. Albert Ballin, the director of the Hamburg-Amerika Line and a close friend of Kaiser Wilhelm II, expected a visit from his English friend, Sir Ernest Cassel, in March 1912. At the beginning of the new year, on his own initiative, Ballin addressed a private letter to Cassel suggesting that when he came to Germany he bring along Churchill to discuss naval matters with his German counterpart.[188] Churchill declined the invitation, but discussed the offer of negotiations with the Cabinet. Although Asquith, Grey and Churchill were all sceptical that

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[185]Carroll, p. 708.

[186]Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, p. 277; The Manchester Guardian, 10 Feb. 1912.

[187]The Times, 16 Feb. 1912 (editorial).

[188]Lamar Cecil, Albert Ballin. Business and Politics in Imperial Germany, 1888-1918 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), pp. 182-183; Koss, p. 79.

such talks would achieve anything, they agreed that the attempt must be made as the Radicals were clamouring for less armaments, and enlarged naval expenditures could only be justified if it was demonstrated that the Admiralty pursued a big-navy policy because Germany spurned an agreement.[189] Lloyd George and Churchill drafted an outline of terms the British government regarded as an acceptable basis for agreement, which Cassel delivered to the Kaiser on 29 January. The German government indicated interest and the British Cabinet delegated Lord Haldane, the Secretary for War, to engage in unofficial talks.[190] Haldane arrived in Berlin on 8 February 1912.

The British government attempted to conceal the purpose of Haldane's mission. It was announced that he was travelling to Berlin in his capacity as chairman of the Royal Commission on the University of London to study German innovations in technical education.[191] Repington urged

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[189] Ibid., p. 74; W. S. Churchill, I, p. 95.

[190] Viscount R. B. Haldane, An Autobiography (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., 1929), p. 256; Th. von Bethmann Hollweg, Betrachtungen zum Weltkriege (Berlin: Verlag von Reimer Hobbin, 1919), I, pp. 49-50; Dudley Sommer, Haldane of Cloan; His Life and Times, 1856-1928 (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1960), pp. 256-258; G. P., XXXI, No. 11, 347, Anlage I.

[191] Sir Frederick Maurice, Haldane, 1856-1915. The Life of Viscount Haldane of Cloan (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1937), p. 293; Sommer, p. 259.

Buckle to play along with this ruse.[192] Both the Berlin correspondent and Printing House Square acquiesced in the deception. Mackenzie asserted that the visit was of a "private nature" in connection with the University of London.[193] Printing House Square repeated this and added the comment that Haldane's university business "will, of course, not prevent him from meeting political personages and having conversations with them on political topics." It saw a danger in the visit, however, as some people in Germany might think that the British government was attempting to persuade Germany to reduce its naval programme. If that occurred, "misunderstanding" in Germany would only be increased.[194] Printing House Square disapproved of a mission of Haldane's nature at this juncture because it might stimulate Anglophobe sentiments in Germany, which particularly was to be avoided then on account of the Turco-Italian War.[195]

The Secretary of War's trip bore no fruit. The British government made the reduction of the German naval programme the sine qua non of any agreement; the German government, in turn, would not commit itself on the naval

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[192] Koss, p. 75.

[193] The Times, 9 Feb. 1912.

[194] Ibid.

[195] See Chap. V, part II.

issue without a British guarantee of neutrality in the event of war between Germany and some other European power.[196] This, clearly, the British government could not do, as that would sanction what it sought to prevent--German hegemony of the Continent.

The British naval estimates for 1912-1913 provided for four capital ships, with the stipulation that if other powers enlarged their naval programmes, the government would "present Supplementary Estimates, both for men and money."[197] The Times described the four dreadnoughts as "the irreducible minimum,"[198] but welcomed the proviso for a supplementary estimate as "adequate redemption of the pledges given to the country in the Glasgow speech."[199] Churchill, previously the bête noire of Printing House Square, now was cast in glowing colours.

The naval scare of 1909 had caused the Admiralty to abandon the fiction of the two-power standard.[200] Hence when he introduced the estimates to the House of Commons on 18

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[196]Bethmann Hollweg, pp. 51-57; Tirpitz, pp. 186-188; Maurice, pp. 297-299; B. D., VI, No. 506.

[197]"Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty Explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1912-1913," British Sessional Papers, LII (1912), pp. 295 ff.

[198]The Times, 11 Mar. 1912 (editorial). The emphasis is The Times'.

[199]Ibid., 13 Mar. 1912.

[200]Gretton, pp. 31-32.

March, Churchill announced that the two-power standard was no longer realistic and that henceforth the Admiralty would regard a sixty-per cent superiority in dreadnoughts over Germany as its index for naval construction.[201] This was hardly a radical departure, since for some years Germany had been the only power which the British Admiralty considered when it drafted its annual requirements. The United States, the next naval power after Germany, was never entertained as a possible enemy.[202] The Times' editorial of 19 March welcomed the First Lord's announcement. Whilst some people might take umbrage at Churchill's naming of Germany as the standard which defined the pace of British shipbuilding, he had "only put into plain, but perfectly courteous and friendly, words what all the world knows to be the truth."

In May 1912 the German Reichstag adopted a new naval bill which provided for three additional dreadnoughts between 1912 and 1917.[203] On 22 July, true to his word, Churchill brought down a bill that increased the schedule of British construction from 3,4,3,4,3 to 5,4,4,4,4 over the next five

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[201] Great Britain, 5 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), XXXV (1912), cols. 1549-1557.

[202] Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, pp. 183-184; Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, pp. 368-369.

[203] Ibid., p. 371; The Times, 14-16 May 1912 (Berlin).

years.[204] Printing House Square declared that the announcement was inadequate in that it made no provision for new construction to strengthen the Mediterranean fleet, whose job it was to safeguard "our only practicable road to Egypt."[205] However, this concern with the Mediterranean had to do with the Austrian and Italian naval programmes, not the German.

In 1913 the Balkans dominated European attention and naval affairs somewhat receded from focus. The Second Balkan War, which erupted in January, forebode the possibility of a general European war. As the realization dawned that Europe might indeed be hurtled over the precipice, efforts were made to reduce tensions.[206] The Times, accordingly, mellowed its tone on Germany, albeit on the naval issue the old vigilance remained.

In the first week of January 1913 Tirpitz informed the Reichstag that the German Admiralty was prepared to accept a 16:10 ratio in dreadnoughts between Great Britain and Germany--i.e., Churchill's sixty per cent superiority.[207] The Times gave the proposal a cordial reception. It regarded

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[204] Great Britain, 5 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), XLI (1912), cols. 838 ff.

[205] The Times, 22 July 1912 (editorial).

[206] See Chap. V, Pt. II.

[207] G. P., XXXIX, No. 15, 563; Hubatsch, pp. 80-81.

Tirpitz's words as

> animated by a spirit which is friendly and reasonable toward us. They may even indicate . . . that a considerable advance may have been made in responsible German quarters towards a better understanding of British naval superiority.[208]

Nothing came of the offer, as there were a number of practical difficulties involved.[209] But the friendliness with which Printing House Square received the idea indicates how sincerely it desired an Anglo-German rapprochement. Notwithstanding its new tone, The Times remained resolute on the question of British naval superiority. The German naval estimates for 1913-1914 were reduced by £824,000 from the previous year's.[210] The British government, however, under the formula of the supplementary law of 1912, laid down five dreadnoughts--one more than in 1912-1913.[211] The Times

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[208] The Times, 8 Feb. 1913.

[209] Tirpitz had suggested that the ratio be on the basis of squadrons, which would have been to Germany's advantage. Great Britain, of course, could agree to this formula only if the calculation were made by simple addition of individual ships. But regardless how looked at, the offer had not involved a concession by Germany, as it had just committed large sums to the enlargement of the army and for the next several years would not have extra money for further naval expansion anyway. The German plan, therefore, was intended to prevent Britain pulling even further ahead in dreadnoughts than it already was. See Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, pp. 406-407.

[210] The Times, 27 Nov. 1912.

[211] "Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty Explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1913-1914", British Sessional Papers, LXIII (1913), pp. 301 ff.

announced that this increase was a "serious mistake"--it should have been two.[212]

In March 1912 Churchill had proposed a "naval holiday."[213] He reiterated this proposal on 26 March 1913. If in any year Germany were prepared to reduce its naval programme, Great Britain's would be decreased proportionately.[214] The scheme, which had been formulated to appease Lloyd George and the "economists,"[215] got no reaction in the House of Commons.[216] Printing House Square greeted it as "visionary, but a . . . timely testimonial to the improvement in our relations with our neighbours across the North Sea."[217] Although the First Lord's offer was not really given encouragement in Berlin,[218] Tirpitz feigned interest so as not to arouse the militarists who were demanding cuts in naval expenditure to release additional funds for the army.[219]

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[212] The Times, 14 Mar. 1913 (editorial).

[213] Great Britain, 5 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), XXXV (1913), cols. 1557-1558.

[214] Ibid., L (1913), cols. 1756-1759.

[215] R. S. Churchill, II, pp. 600-602.

[216] Great Britain, 5 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), L (1913), cols. 1791 ff.

[217] The Times, 27 Mar. 1913 (editorial).

[218] G. P., XXXIX, Nos. 15,569 and 15,575 ff.

[219] Woodward, Great Britain and the German Navy, p. 412.

Because Britain was an imperial power, its naval commitments were global rather than European in scope. As an increasing proportion of the British fleet was concentrated in the North Sea, the British naval presence elsewhere was weakened. The British people were no longer able to carry the burden of global defence alone and the dominions were prevailed upon to make some contribution. In July of 1912 Churchill had suggested to Sir Robert Borden, the Canadian Prime Minister, that Canada provide three dreadnoughts for imperial defence.[220] Borden was persuaded and on 5 December 1912 introduced the Naval Aid Bill to the Canadian House of Commons. The nationalist Quebecois revolted at the idea of using Canadian money to safeguard British interests and on 30 May 1913 the Senate rejected the Bill.[221] This proved an embarrassment to Churchill and the Admiralty as, on the one hand, the overseas squadrons, particularly the Mediterranean, needed reinforcement, whilst on the other, the Radicals were clamouring for retrenchment. On 5 June Churchill announced to the British House of Commons that the government was accelerating the construction

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[220]Henry Borden (ed.), Robert Laird Borden: His Memoirs (Toronto: The MacMillan Co. of Can. Ltd., 1938), I, pp. 357-359; Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, pp. 295-98.

[221]Borden, I, pp. 400-421; Harold A. Wilson, The Imperial Policy of Sir Robert Borden (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1966), pp. 13-20.

of three ships from the 1913-1914 programme to fill the gap left by the defeat of the Canadian bill. He argued that as these three ships were required to maintain overseas levels in 1916, and there was a good possibility that the Canadian government would get passage of the Naval Aid Bill before the following year's naval estimates, acceleration rather than a supplementary programme was all that was needed.[222] The Times found little for congratulation in the First Lord's solution. Printing House Square thought that it was "adequate as an interim arrangement," but "eight new ships, not five, are necessary to the whole-world requirements of the Empire in 1916, and . . . eight, not five, must therefore be laid down before next spring."[223] This theme was reiterated on 18 July, when The Times dealt with Churchill's comments on the naval estimates in the Committee of Supply on the Shipbuilding Vote in the House of Commons.[224]

Churchill, whilst addressing the Lord Mayor's Banquet at Guildhall on 10 November 1913, insinuated that the forthcoming year's naval estimates would be substantially larger than those for 1913-1914.[225] This incited the Radicals to launch a vigorous public anti-navalist campaign. Heat

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[222]Great Britain, 5 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), LIII (1913), cols. 1043-1044.

[223]The Times, 6 June 1913 (editorial).

[224]Ibid., 18 July 1913 (editorial); Great Britain, 5 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), LV (1913), cols. 1482-1489.

[225]The Times, 11 Nov. 1913.

was added to the debate by the publication in the Daily Chronicle on New Year's Day 1914 of a conversation between Lloyd George and a visitor to Criccieth during the Christmas holidays in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had opined that there were several good reasons for cutting naval expenditures.[226] The Paris correspondent reported that Lloyd George's remarks had made a generally bad impression in France. Printing House Square, in a preface to Saunders' article, mooted that if the British government really were serious in reducing its naval programme, it would weaken the entente as Germany would have more funds for the army, which would necessitate commensurate increases in military expenditure in France, thereby adding to the already heavy tax levy of the average Frenchman.[227] The real danger, however, was that any slackening of naval construction by Britain would have the opposite effect from that sought. Rather than securing further improvement in Anglo-German relations, it would worsen them as the German naval party would seize the opportunity to force a new German programme, thereby triggering another round of naval competition.[228] The Times then joined in the navalist campaign against the Radicals to stir up opinion that would

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[226] Ibid., 2 Jan. 1914.

[227] Ibid., 3 Jan. 1914.

[228] Ibid., 5 Jan. 1914 (editorial).

force the Cabinet's hand when deciding the estimates.[229] The Cabinet, which had been deadlocked, effected a compromise on 11 February. The 1914-1915 estimates would show an increase of £2,750,000 over those of the previous year, with a guarantee that those for 1915-1916 would be reduced by £2,000,000.[230] The "Statement Explanatory of the Navy Estimates" was issued on 12 March.[231] The Times' was ambivalent in its reaction. It editorialized that to provide for only four battleships "is to ignore . . . the necessity that is cast upon us of filling up the gap in our admitted requirements left by the absence of the three Canadian ships." Nevertheless, another year's delay in laying down these additional ships in the expectation that the Canadian government might revive its bill, posed no real danger so long as action were taken in March 1915.[232] On this mellowed note, The Times ended its pre-war naval crusade.

The unique attention that The Times gave to the German navy to World War I was due to the role that Printing

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[229] Ibid., 7, 19, 22, 23 and 26 Jan., and 4 Feb. 1914 (editorials); Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, pp. 317-318.

[230] Ibid., p. 325; "Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty Explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1914-1915," British Sessional Papers, LIII (1914), pp. 289 ff.

[231] The Times, 13 Mar. 1914.

[232] Ibid. Also see ibid., 17 Mar. 1914 (editorial).

House Square perceived for the British navy in world affairs. Like most people, it regarded the navy as the shield behind which Britain was secure from starvation, commercial ruination and even invasion itself in wartime. But in addition, it saw the navy as the means whereby Britain was able to accomplish the role of arbiter of the European system. Insofar as the Kaiser wanted a large fleet, reasoned Printing House Square, he must have ambitions of Continental imperialisms, since only through preventing the possibility of British intervention on the Continent could he hope to succeed. Thus anything that jeopardized Britain's naval superiority over Germany was regarded by The Times as undermining the precarious equilibrium that was the basis of Britain's prosperity and world authority. The Liberal government, which was ambivalent in its attitude to a big-navy programme, accordingly was deeply distrusted by Bell, Buckle and Thursfield, the three men most influential in developing The Times' naval policy. Any German naval increase, either actual or projected, immediately roused Printing House Square to begin a campaign to stir up its readers to exert pressure on the government to augment its naval spending. That successful British intervention in Europe in future would require a large, well-trained and well-equipped standing army, made little impression at Printing House Square. The French comment that the British navy did not run on wheels was fully understood only by Repington and Steed.

CHAPTER IV

THE MOROCCAN CRISES

The first Moroccan incident was the first of the crises between the turn of the century and the outbreak of World War I that seemed for a time likely to explode into a major European war. Morocco was of particular interest to France. Situated next to Algeria, its occupation by another power would have presented a strategic threat to Algeria and French West Africa.[1] Since it was German intervention at Tangier that precipitated the crisis, although Germany had no vital interest in Morocco, its editorials and correspondents' articles during this time present a clear picture of The Times' interpretation of the intentions and general direction of German foreign policy.

Under the sultanate of Mulai-el-Hassan (1873-1894), and the vizership of Ba-Ahmed (1894-1900), Morocco had had strong government and had been closed to European penetration. The accession to the sultanate of the weak-willed and inexperienced Abd-el-Aziz in 1900 completely changed the situation. The new ruler had a very pronounced taste for European goods and quickly emptied his treasury in their

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[1] E. N. Anderson, The First Moroccan Crisis, 1904-1906 (Hamden: Archon Books, 1966), p. 3.

purchase. On the advice of W. B. Harris, The Times' correspondent in Tangier, the new Sultan instituted a new series of fiscal reforms. Instead of strengthening his position, they merely undermined it further. The new tax levies violated the Koran and rumors spread that Abd-el-Aziz, because of his fraternization with Christians, had abandoned Islam.[2] Morocco slipped into disorder and the Sultan, if he were to reassert his authority, required further foreign loans to enable him to enlarge and re-equip his army. Morocco was ripe for picking by a European power.

Théophile Delcassé, the French Foreign Minister, quickly set about ensuring that Morocco would fall under French control. In 1900 the French and Italian governments secretly arranged a quid pro quo whereby Italy agreed not to interfere with French designs on Morocco and, in return, France relinquished all claims to Tripoli.[3] The main obstacle, however, was Great Britain. Because of the anger that had been aroused among colonially-minded Frenchmen, first by the English occupation of Egypt and then by Fashoda, no French government had dared to acknowledge British control

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[2] Ibid., pp. 3-4; Walter B. Harris, Morocco that Was (London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1921), pp. 65 ff.; Rom Landau, Moroccan Drama, 1900-1905 (San Francisco: The American Academy of Asian Studies, 1956), pp. 53-59.

[3] Feis, pp. 399-400; E. N. Anderson, pp. 21-23; Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, pp. 405-406.

of Egypt and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. Delcassé was aware that if he was to get British assent to French dominion of Morocco he would have to formally recognize Britain's position in Egypt. This was accomplished in the Anglo-French entente of 1904.[4] The only other nation with a territorial stake in Morocco was Spain. France and Spain signed an agreement in October 1904 which publicly declared that Spain recognized the terms of the Anglo-French entente. Secretly, however, the agreement provided that Morocco should be carved up between France and Spain, with France getting considerably the larger portion.[5] The terms of the pact were immediately forwarded to the British government, which agreed to them.[6]

Whilst the British and French governments had been negotiating the entente, Abd-el-Aziz, who again was insolvent, had been dealing with the Banque de Paris et Pays-Bas and the French government for a large loan. The loan was concluded on 12 June and was the first step in the French plan to take over Morocco. The loan was to be repaid from the customs duties collected at all Moroccan ports. To ensure that the customs duties were actually applied against the loan, a special body of French officials, responsible to

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[4] See Chap. II, Pt. II.

[5] B. D., III, No. 59.

[6] E. N. Anderson, p. 124.

the French legation, was appointed to oversee the entry points at all the ports.[7]

The German government at first was not particularly worried by the Anglo-French and Franco-Spanish agreements of 1904, despite the fact that the entente indicated that in future Germany no longer would be able to play off Britain and France against each other. In the Far East, Britain and Russia seemed to be slipping toward war with each other, a development which the German Foreign Office regarded as inevitable. The entente would not withstand this strain and Germany again would be free to court Russia.[8] However, these optimistic predictions did not come true. Russia would not consider an alliance with Germany without a German-French rapprochement and the entente had survived the outbreak of war in the Far East.[9] The German Foreign Office therefore adopted a new tack.

In 1880 Germany had been a signatory to the Madrid Convention, which had guaranteed Morocco's independence and the maintenance of the open door.[10] The terms of the Anglo-French and Franco-Spanish agreements of 1904 regarding Morocco, and France's subsequent behavior there, violated the terms

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[7] Ibid., pp. 129-131; Feis, pp. 402-403.

[8] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, p. 422; Rich, II, pp. 678-680.

[9] See Chap. II, Pt. I.

[10] The other signatories were Austria-Hungary, Italy, Spain, Great Britain, France, Russia, the United States, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Belgium and Denmark.

of the Madrid Convention.[11] Thus early in 1905 Holstein and Bülow decided to use France's violation of the open door as a pretext for German interference. The German government would publicly denounce France's behavior and call for an international conference to discuss developments in the Sherifian Empire. France, they thought, would be isolated. Russia was in no position to stand behind the Republic--its armies were being defeated in Asia and Russia itself was rent by revolution. The United States was certain to uphold the principle of the open door and Britain would not oppose the United States. The other powers were sure to oppose France from economic self interest. France, having been taught that Britain could not be relied upon, would abandon the entente and accept the suggestion to draw nearer to Germany. The Russian objections to an alliance with Germany would be removed and the long-sought-for "continental league" and German domination of the Continent would be accomplished facts.[12]

It was with some difficulty that Kaiser Wilhelm was persuaded to land at Tangier on 31 March to announce to the

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[11] Although the German Foreign Office had not seen the secret clauses of either agreement, it was aware of their existence. See Rich, II, p. 700.

[12] Ibid., pp. 691-702; The Holstein Papers, IV, No. 883; Oscar Freiherr von der Lancken Wakenitz, Meine Dreissig Dienstjahre, 1888-1918 (Berlin: Verlag für Kulturpolitik, 1931), pp. 53-57; Sontag, "German Foreign Policy, 1904-1906", The American Historical Review, XXXIII, No. 2, p. 287.

world that Germany regarded the Sultan as a sovereign prince and French actions in Morocco as violations of international law. Despite the fact that he performed this role with considerable flourish, he had misgivings about the course on which Bülow and Holstein were launched.[13]

The Kaiser's actions at Tangier were generally unexpected. Certainly Lavino and Saunders had no foreknowledge of what was about to occur. As late as 17 March Lavino reported that the fact that the German Emperor intended to dine with the French ambassador in Berlin the following day "is to be regarded as evidence that relations between France and Germany have once more become normal, which they have not been for a long time past."[14] Saunders reiterated this view three days later. Ironically, he thought that this improvement was due to "the satisfactory progress of the exchange of views which is taking place between the two Powers with reference to German interests in Morocco."[15]

The first intimation in The Times of the Kaiser's proposed visit came from Harris in Tangier. Harris, unlike

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[13] Rich, II, pp. 693-695; Balfour, pp. 252-253; Eyck, pp. 387-392; G. P., XX, Pt. I, Nos. 6588-6589.

[14] The Times, 17 Mar. 1905.

[15] Ibid., 20 Mar. 1905. The German government had initiated not-very-successful discussions with the French government in Sept. 1904 regarding the situation in Morocco when it learned of the discussions between France and Spain. G. P., XVII, Nos. 5200, 5203 and 5205.

Saunders and Lavino, was pro-German. His Germanophile sentiments were the result of his friendship with Abd-el-Aziz and his belief that order could most easily be restored by the Sultan if he remained free from foreign interference. As a French protectorate in Morocco jeopardized the interests of the British business community there, and as the German government favoured the open door and championed the Sultan's independence, Harris naturally viewed German actions in a favourable light.[16] This was clearly revealed in Harris' lengthy article. He defended German complaints that the French government was working to establish an economic monopoly for itself in Morocco and condemned this behavior as it threatened the status quo. In conclusion, he stated that the Kaiser would pay a short visit to Morocco on 31 March and that "this next month or so will see complications which will seriously affect the Morocco question."[17] There is no indication how Harris came by this information, but he was on very good terms with Richard von Kühlmann, first secretary of the German legation in Tangier,[18] and he may have been told something by him.

Lavino at first refused to believe that the Kaiser's projected visit had political motivations.[19] Printing House

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[16] The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 409-411.

[17] The Times, 20 Mar. 1905.

[18] G. P., XX, Pt. I, No. 6562; The History of 'The Times', III, p. 413.

[19] The Times, 22 Mar. 1905.

Square, however, as revealed in its editorial of 23 March, was less certain. It immediately struck the note that the French government's actions in Morocco were only circumscribed by its agreements with the British and Spanish governments. Since it had in no way violated these, the German government did not have legitimate complaints.[20] Printing House Square cannot have been unaware that this argument would have carried little weight in a court of international law,[21] but its purpose, obviously, was to make clear to the German government that in the event of German-French difficulties over Morocco, The Times was prepared to lend its full support to the French case, whatever that might be. Printing House Square was not particularly concerned with the commercial claims of the British traders in Morocco; it viewed the incident in the context of the manoeuvres of the European powers. That it was resolved to give its full support to France, even before the Kaiser had landed at Tangier, should there be difficulties, is revealed in a letter of 27 March from Chirol to Harris, in which the latter was instructed that

> the policy of The Times is to support the French in Morocco, . . . our attitude towards them in Morocco will be the touchstone, as far as they are concerned, of the Anglo-French rapprochement, and we cannot afford to allow the slightest suspicion to be cast upon our

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[20] Ibid., 23 Mar. 1905.

[21] Rich, II, pp. 699-700.

> loyalty to the agreement. . . . The last thing we want to do is to travailler pour le Roi de Prusse.[22]

Nothing reveals more clearly than this letter how Printing House Square pursued the formulation of its "foreign policy". The initial evidence that convinced Printing House Square that the German government was committed to a policy that clashed with British interests had come from Saunders and Lavino in Berlin and Paris. Once their views were accepted as correct by management, other correspondents were expected to adopt and follow the official line. Harris was too independent-minded to comply. Thus his despatches during the crisis were frequently amended or entirely withheld from publication.[23] The fact that Harris had only one-third the column inches of Saunders, and one-fifth the space of Lavino, during the crisis to the time of the assembly of the Algeciras Conference is not really surprising, considering that the focus of attention naturally was on Europe, since the importance of the Kaiser's visit was the flourish of diplomatic activity which it triggered in Berlin, Paris and London. The important point is that Harris' despatches were suppressed or altered in so far as they did not conform to Printing House Square's official line.

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[22]Cited in The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 413-414.

[23]Ibid., p. 414.

Lavino was the first to discern the reason for the timing of the Kaiser's action. On 28 March he noted that Wilhelm's approaching Tangier call was probably prompted by Russia being "temporarily disabled." He was, however, still unaware of the real purpose of the demonstration, as he supposed it was intended to win "a little hush money" for Germany "for putting on record that whenever any other Power gains any advantage in any part of the world with which Germany happens to trade she must get some compensation for the acquiescence, providing of course, circumstances favour such pretensions."[24] The day of the Kaiser's disembarkation, the Paris correspondent stated that there no longer could be any doubt of the real reason for the Emperor's action--Germany meant to rupture the entente. The editorial concurred.[25] By 5 April he was certain that Germany "aims at disturbing the Anglo-French entente and at forcing France to approach Germany."[26] Saunders and Printing House Square quickly reached the same conclusion and this remained their leitmotif throughout the crisis.

There is no evidence that either Printing House Square or The Times' European correspondents had any inside information of the machinations then taking place at the

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[24] The Times, 28 Mar. 1905.

[25] Ibid., 31 Mar. 1905.

[26] Ibid., 5 Apr. 1905.

German Foreign Office. They reached their conclusions, probably independently of each other in this instance, because the German government's behavior did not substantiate the Kaiser's claim that his government was solely concerned with safeguarding the open door and with preserving the Sultan's integrity. If the German government were indeed so concerned with the open door, then why "publicly proclaim that the incident was no concern of hers" when Russia "slammed" that door in Manchuria;[27] why had the German government waited a year before making known its concern over Morocco;[28] why did it use this means of making known its anxiety, rather than "diplomatic channels";[29] and what about the German occupation of Shan-tung, which clearly was inconsistent with the maintenance of China's integrity and independence?[30] But most damaging of all to the German government's claim was the inexplicable veil of silcence in which it had enshrouded itself. If it were really dissatisfied with developments in Morocco and had proposals for discussion, why did it not make them known, queried The Times?[31]

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[27] Ibid., 30 Mar. 1905 (editorial).

[28] Ibid., 31 Mar. 1905 (Paris).

[29] Ibid., 3 Apr. 1905 (Paris).

[30] Ibid. 19 Apr. 1905 (Berlin).

[31] Ibid., 8, 1c and 11 Apr. 1905.

It was just this silence by the German government following the Tangier visit that brought on the first Moroccan crisis. The "sphinx-like attitude", as Bülow termed it, was not accidental. The Chancellor had instructed the German Foreign Office not to discuss Morocco.[32] Only if a settlement were delayed and tension allowed to build would the French government realize that it could not count on British support, and only then would it be prepared for a rapprochement with Germany. The Chancellor's tactic, however, was to backfire.

The French government, predictably, approached the German government about the possibility of some kind of quid pro quo. The German government refused flatly: it would agree to nothing except an international conference of the signatories to the Madrid Convention. This the French government rejected and deadlock ensued.[33] Delcassé was not prepared to yield as he believed that Germany was bluffing and would not risk war over Morocco. In any event, he was certain that France could count on British backing. Maurice Rouvier, the Premier of France, on the other hand, thought that Britain was merely playing France against Germany and that, in any case, Britain could not be of aid

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[32] G. P., XX, Pt. I, No. 6573.

[33] For the details of these manoeuvres see Andrew, Théophile Delcassé and the Making of the Entente Cordiale, pp. 274-278; and E. N. Anderson, Chap. XII.

to France inasmuch as the British navy "did not have wheels." Delcassé lost the support of his colleagues and on 6 June he resigned.[34]

Lavino greeted the announcement of Delcassé's fall with a mild rebuke of the French government. How could it permit to resign the man who "by treaty after treaty, by understanding after understanding . . . [had] shattered German hegemony on the Continent of Europe?"[35] The editorial greeted the news with "sincere regret."[36] Despite the fact that Printing House Square regarded Delcassé's departure from the government as a serious blow to the entente,[37] it could hardly admit this publicly. Nor dared it say anything which might offend Rouvier, who had assumed responsibility for foreign affairs. It therefore described him as a man who "will cherish the entente cordiale" without being associated in German eyes, as was Delcassé, with its formation.[38] On the day of Delcassé's fall, the Kaiser made Bülow a prince.[39] Printing House Square cannot have been

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[34] Ibid., p. 212; Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, pp. 430-431; Andrew, Théophile Delcassé and the Making of the Entente Cordiale, pp. 288-300; Bury, p. 129.

[35] The Times, 7 June 1905.

[36] Ibid.

[37] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 421.

[38] Ibid.

[39] E. N. Anderson, p. 233.

unaware of the connection between the two events, but it said nothing about it. Saunders pointed out that some German newspapers saw a link between the two events, but he himself did not elaborate. Only the Vienna correspondent emphasized the simultaneity of the two events.[40]

The British government from the first took much the same view as The Times. Whilst it recognized that Delcassé had erred in not consulting Germany over Morocco, and knew full well that the statements by the French government that its agreements with Britain and Spain did not in any way jeopardize the commercial and economic interests of other powers were lies, it too regarded the German Emperor's demonstration as a test of Anglo-French friendship and co-operation.[41] For this reason it was resolved to give France the full weight of its diplomatic support.[42]

Rouvier had believed that all Germany really wanted was the downfall of the Germanophobe Delcassé, and expected moderation in the German government's attitude with his forced resignation. When, however, there was no change, the

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[40] The Times, 7 June 1905.

[41] B. D., III, No. 69. In February 1905, Sir Arthur Nicolson, then British ambassador to Madrid, had advised the French government that it should consult Germany on Morocco. B. D., III, No. 66.

[42] Newton, p. 334; B. D., III, Nos. 90 ff.; Viscount Grey, Twenty-Five Years 1892-1916 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925), I, pp. 78 ff.; Spender, II, p. 248.

French Premier adopted the position of his former foreign minister. He drew closer to Great Britain and refused the German invitation to an international conference.[43] The British government, to assert its backing of Rouvier, also refused to attend.[44]

As Lavino, Saunders and Printing House Square immediately had grasped the reason for the German actions, and determined to lend their full support to France, they from the very first opposed the idea of an international conference as it could only humiliate France. Thus on 7 April Lavino stated, "There is no Moroccan question. It was finally settled by the Anglo-French entente."[45] Although this was a clear affirmation of the backing of France, he cannot seriously have expected anyone to accept this argument as it implied that any Anglo-French agreement superseded other international agreements.[46] Saunders could see no reason for a conference as "there was nothing in the Anglo-French Convention which could affect the

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[43] E. N. Anderson, pp. 234-255; Sontag, "German Foreign Policy . . .", p. 290.

[44] B. D., III, Nos. 124 and 126; Lee, II, p. 343.

[45] The Times, 7 Apr. 1905.

[46] It was this very concept--the unilateral violation of international agreements--which had so aroused the British government in 1871 and 1877. In 1871 Russia had abrogated the Black Sea clauses of the Treaty of Paris and in 1877 it declared war on Turkey in a bid to gain possession of the Straits. In both instances the British government had denounced these violations of international agreements.

liberty of Germany or of any other Power to trade in Morocco."[47] The editorial of 7 June is particularly revealing. It reads, "We [i.e., Great Britain] shall certainly not wish to be parties to the conference proposed anew by the Sultan of Morocco, by way of taking the solution out of French hands, if France determines to hold aloof from it." This was precisely the policy being pursued by the British government.[48] Whilst no mention is made of this editorial in The History of 'The Times', it would appear that Printing House Square consulted with, or was advised by, the British government concerning its intentions on the conference.

When the French government refused the proposal of a conference later in June, the British government followed suit.[49] Lavino reported that this had made a very strong impression in France, where many people had been sceptical about Britain's good faith. "The best-informed people here knew, of course, that they could count absolutely upon the

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[47] The Times, 1 May 1905. Saunders undoubtedly made this statement in good faith. In 1910 Chirol came to the conclusion that France meant to strengthen its grip on Morocco. If he had been aware of the secret clauses of the Anglo-French Agreement of 1904 in 1905 it would not have taken him that long to reach that opinion. If Chirol did not know of the secret clauses, neither did Saunders. See The History of 'The Times', III, p. 691.

[48] E. N. Anderson, p. 236.

[49] S. L. Mayer, "Anglo-German Rivalry at the Algeciras Conference," Britain and Germany in Africa, p. 219.

loyalty of Great Britain."[50] Whilst greater confidence in the reliability of Britain in France was one of the results of the first Moroccan incident, it hardly existed yet. Delcassé had toppled because Rouvier and his colleagues distrusted Great Britain. The Paris correspondent, in an effort to foster the impression of total Anglo-French solidarity vis-à-vis Germany, suggested a degree of confidence that simply did not exist.

The editorial of 23 June provides further evidence that Printing House Square was in very close touch with the British government on developments for a conference. The French government, after its initial rejection, intimated to the German government that it might agree to a conference if an agenda were accepted beforehand. The British government modified its stand accordingly[51] and The Times mooted that "should France now conceive it to be in her interests that we should withdraw that refusal, we shall doubtless be as ready to withdraw it as we were to give it."[52] Two weeks later both the British and French governments assented to the conference.

The conference convened on 16 January and sat till 7 April 1906. The most contentious items on the agenda

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[50] The Times, 17 June 1905.

[51] E. N. Anderson, p. 247.

[52] The Times, 23 June 1905.

were responsibility for organization and supervision of the Moroccan police and establishment of a national bank. At first France demanded absolute control of both; Germany, complete "internationalization".[53] Harris had fallen out of favour with Bell[54] and Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace was appointed to the conference as "an independent observer". Wallace was a former Times' foreign correspondent and the man who had organized and first headed the Foreign Department. He was on intimate terms with heads of state and diplomats from every country.[55] Before his departure, King Edward urged him to spare no effort to "bridge over the differences between Germany and France."[56] The Kaiser believed that Wallace's influence helped achieve compromise,[57] and his articles certainly reveal a conciliatory attitude. Although he opposed the German proposal for "internationalization", he did so at first because he believed that it would not work, not from fear of sinister motives. The idea was "logical enough" in the "region of philosophical abstraction", but "as soon as it condescends to come down to the level of tangible proposals a host of practical

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[53] E. N. Anderson, pp. 351 ff.; Mayer, pp. 227-228.

[54] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 468, footnote 2.

[55] Ibid., p. 130 ff.

[56] Cited in ibid., p. 468.

[57] Ibid.

difficulties arise. Experience . . . has proved that an international administration, even when practised by a small number of Powers, is ruinously expensive and lamentably inefficient."[58] Lavino also recognized that compromise was necessary--both France and Germany would have to bend if a settlement was to be reached.[59]

Whilst The Times appreciated that some kind of compromise was necessary, when deadlock ensued it blamed Germany.[60] It still attributed Germany's behavior to its desire to break the entente.[61] The German government's principal efforts, however, were now directed to saving face. Germany had expected the support of the other powers in denying France a predominant position in Morocco. When that backing did not appear, the German government maintained its stand so as to force the French government to meet it halfway.[62] The editorial of 10 March hinted that Germany's obstructionist tactics might be an effort to preserve amour-propre, but the point was not emphasized nor made again.

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[58] The Times, 25 Jan. 1906.

[59] Ibid., 24 Jan. 1906.

[60] E.g., ibid., 31 Jan. (editorial); 7 Feb. (Wallace); 10 Feb. (Lavino); 12 Feb. (Wallace); 22 Feb. 1906 (Lavino).

[61] Ibid., 10 Feb. 1906 (Lavino and editorial).

[62] E. N. Anderson, pp. 353 ff.; Mayer, pp. 232-240; Rich, II, pp. 734-742.

The final agreement provided for joint French-Spanish supervision of the police, with a Swiss inspector-gernal, who was to report to the Sultan once each year. France was given controlling shares in the bank, although its supervision was entrusted to a board of directors from state banks of participating countries.[63] Germany had had to make substantial concessions on both these crucial issues. Although the principle of the open door ostensibly had been safeguarded, France had really been given the green light to proceed with the pacific penetration and control of Morocco.

In summarizing the events of the Tangier visit and the Algeciras Conference, Printing House Square reiterated that, regardless what the German government or German press might say, the German government's real purpose in Morocco had been to disrupt the entente and in this it had signally failed.[64] Wallace, Saunders and Lavino concurred. Printing House wquare suggested that as a result of Germany's clear demonstration of its continental ambitions, the way might now be open to some kind of understanding between Britain and Russia.[65]

The only discordant note was sounded by Harris.

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[63]For the terms of the Algeciras Convention see F. L. Israel (ed.), Major Peace Treaties of Modern History, 1648-1967 (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1967), II, pp. 1157-1195.

[64]The Times, 2 Apr. 1906.

[65]Ibid., 9 Apr. 1906.

The danger having passed and The Times having demonstrated its loyal support of France, Printing House Square probably thought that there was no longer any reason to suppress the opinions of its eccentric Tangier correspondent. In a lengthy column of 9 April, Harris gave an excellent analysis of how the changing European alignment must be viewed from Berlin. Britain, he pointed out, had the good fortune to be an island secure behind the iron hulls of the world's greatest fleet; Germany, on the other hand, was a land power with no natural frontiers and thus ever anxious of any likely hostile league. Consequently the entente, which seemed innocent in English eyes, was viewed in Berlin as "a wicked attempt to isolate Germany, and possibly to form a coalition against her. This was an error. Nobody wished, from malice prepense, to isolate Germany, and much less to attack her. . . . [But this] was seriously believed in Berlin." If Britons considered Germany's geographical situation and how the entente must appear to it, Germany's action would not seem so menacing.

This analysis, although too innocent in that it failed to enquire into the reasons behind the German government's publicized motivations, was the only article during the entire period 1904-1914 that attempted to present the German point of view. This illustrates dramatically how isolated Harris was among The Times' personnel. This fact was further underlined by Lavino, who,

whenever reporting on developments in Morocco, had relied on the reports of the Tangier correspondents of the Temps and the Echo de Paris rather than on Harris' reports.[66]

From the first Moroccan incident to the outbreak of World War I, Printing House Square and the British Foreign Office were in agreement in their views of the raison d'être of German foreign policy. The belief of the German Foreign Office that The Times made British foreign policy was wrong. The British Foreign Office did not come to the conclusion that German foreign policy was hostile to Great Britain because the people of The Times already held that view. It was due to the retirement of a number of the "old guard" in 1906 and their replacement by younger men with a distrust of Germany. For them, as for the men of The Times, Tangier and Algeciras merely confirmed suspicions which they had previously arrived at independently.[67]

II

Whilst the Algeciras Conference had concluded the

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[66] E.g., ibid., 7, 8 and 10 Apr.; 2, 9, 13, and 25 May; 9 Aug. 1905.

[67] For the views of the younger men of the British Foreign Office, see Eyre Crowe's "Memorandum on the Present State of British Relations with France and Germany" of 1 January 1907, which was widely circulated in the Foreign Office. B. C., III, Appendix A. For the opinion of older members of the Foreign Office see Lord Sanderson's memorandum of 25 February 1907, which was a rebutal of Crowe's paper. B. D., III, Appendix B.

first Moroccan incident, it had really merely deferred a final settlement. It had also further undermined Abd-el-Aziz's authority and in August 1907, his elder half-brother, Mulay Hafid, was proclaimed Sultan at Marrakech. The revolt spread quickly and Abd-el-Aziz was deposed.[68] France could hardly proceed with its policy of "peaceful penetration" so long as disorder prevailed. But if France were to take bold steps to restore order, it needed the acquiescence and cooperation of Germany, as the Tangier visit had so unpleasantly demonstrated.

Following the events of April 1905-April 1906, the French government desired an undertaking from the German government giving it a free hand in Morocco. By the summer of 1907 Bülow was courting France in an effort to lure it from the entente or, failing that, to isolate Russia on the Continent, thereby pushing it into an agreement with Germany.[69] Nothing came of these initial manoeuvres, but during the Bosnian imbroglio, whilst the attention of the European powers was riveted upon the Balkans, the French government concluded an agreement with the German government. By the Accord of February 1909, the German government disavowed any political interest in

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[68] I. C. Barlow, The Agadir Crisis (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1940), pp. 58-62.

[69] G. P., XXI, Pt. II, No. 7259; XXVI, Pt. II, No. 9372.

Morocco and granted to the French government permission to take whatever steps it found necessary to restore order in the Shereefian Empire. The French government, in return, consented not to employ means that would infringe German commercial interests.[70] Publicly The Times hailed the accord as the first step toward an Anglo-German rapprochement, as it had repeatedly stated that an improvement in Franco-German relations was prerequisite to more amicable relations between Britain and Germany.[71] Privately, however, there was considerable concern at Printing House Square that Germany might use better relations with France to weaken the entente. It was common knowledge that important members of the French Chamber of Deputies favoured a rapprochement with Germany as they believed that in the event of a German attack the British navy would be of little avail to France. The best way to avoid provoking an attack, they reasoned, was to establish friendlier terms with Germany.[72] Although Bell, Buckle and Thursfield, given their in the ability of the British navy to maintain the European balance, did not hold much sympathy for these views, they could hardly impugn them publicly, thereby

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[70] Ibid., XXIV, No. 8490.

[71] The Times, 10 Feb. 1909.

[72] The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 676-682; D. W. Brogan, The Development of Modern France 1870-1939 (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1949), pp. 428-434.

further alienating these people. The best they could do was talk of Britain's resolve to stand behind France if threatened by Germany. Hence, when the German gunboat docked at Agadir, Printing House Square immediately supported the French government's actions in its editorials, although privately it thought that France had brought the German response on itself by its too aggressive colonial policy.[73]

In January 1911 order in Morocco again dissolved with the revolt of the Zaer tribe. By March the insurrection had spread to Fez and the European community there lived in peril, as almost anything could turn the revolt in a jihad against Christians.[74] The French government presumed that the accord of 1909 gave it licence to despatch troops to Fez. But to avoid any possible misunderstanding, it enquired of the German government what would be its stand in the event of French intervention. Kiderlen-Wächter, the German Foreign Secretary, replied that his government would oppose a French expedition, as Egypt had proved that permanent occupation would be the outcome.[75] The German Foreign Secretary realized that if he acquiesced in French occupation without suitable compensation he would face a storm from German nationalists.

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[73] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 698.

[74] Barlow, pp. 169-178.

[75] G. P., XXIX, No. 10527; B. D., VII, No. 203.

The situation at Fez, meanwhile, continued to deteriorate. In its editorial of 11 April The Times argued that it was incumbent on France to provide protection for the Christian community. The German consul at Tangier, on 10 and again 16 April, informed Berlin that there had been several attacks on the city, although life seemed no more hazardous than usual.[76] On the twenty-first, The Times' editorial advised the British public that the "situation in Fez is rapidly becoming desperate" and that the French government, "in accordance with responsibilities placed upon them by the Act of Algeciras and by their other agreements," would not be able to delay taking action much longer.

The German government, however, remained adamant; if the French occupied Fez, it would deem the Algeciras Act breached and no longer would feel itself bound by the act's terms.[77] Sir Edward Grey recognized that French occupation posed dangers, but by 10 May he believed that it was inevitable if the Europeans' safety was to be assured.[78] Sir Arthur Nicolson, the Permanent Under-secretary of the British Foreign Office, acknowledged that

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[76] G. P., XXIX, Nos. 10530 and 10531.

[77] Ibid., No. 10545.

[78] B. D., VII, No. 260.

although "Cambon assures me that France will not keep her troops there a moment longer than is absolutely necessary. . . . I am still sceptical as to whether she will find it easy to leave Fez once she has entered it."[79] In the event of a French occupation, he believed that Germany would demand compensation, and it "will be a pretty large one."[80] On 14 May the French government informed the German government that because of developments at Fez, it had ordered a French force to proceed to its relief.[81] Grey was now certain that Germany would have to be paid "a price", as French withdrawl was unlikely.[82] The Times' editorial congratulated the French force on its arrival at Fez, particulatly as it in no way infringed the integrity of Morocco, the sovereignty of the Sultan, or the "open door".[83] The seeming naiveté of this statement should not be taken too seriously. It was merely an attempt to give the appearance of a common front between the two entente powers. Actually, Printing House Square was rather unhappy over further French penetration of the Mohammedan world, as this had unfavourable repercussions in Constantinople,

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[79] Ibid., No. 275.

[80] Ibid., No. 276.

[81] G. P., XXIX, No. 10559.

[82] B. D., VII, Nos. 307 and 314.

[83] The Times, 25 May 1911.

where the German government was currying favour with the Young Turks.[84] But as Germany threatened to cause difficulties with France,[85] The Times constructed a facade of complete agreement with France's actions. Under no circumstances was Printing House Square prepared to let Frenchmen think that they faced Germany alone; if that occurred, the pro-German group in the French Parliament might wrest control of affairs into its hands and leave Britain to face Germany alone.

In the latter part of June, Jules Cambon, the French ambassador in Berlin, met Kiderlen-Wächter at Kissingen, ostensibly to take the "cure" of the waters there.[86] In fact, Cambon was feeling out the German Foreign Secretary to determine what the German government might regard as suitable compensation for the outright establishment of a French protectorate in Morocco.[87] Before Cambon could discuss the matter with his government, however, there was a cabinet crisis and the government fell.[88]

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[84] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 691.

[85] On 30 April, the semi-official Norddeutsche Zeitung had warned that if France sent a military expendition to Fez the German government would regard the Algeciras Act as ciolated and Germany as again having "complete freedom of action." Mackenzie quoted the statement in the 1 May issue of The Times. See also Carroll, p. 649.

[86] The Times, 21 June 1911. The article gave no hint that they might be there for any reason other than to enjoy the mineral springs, which was with them an annual event.

[87] Barlow, pp. 211-214; Brogan, p. 436.

[88] Eubank, p. 136; Brogan, p. 436.

Kiderlen-Wächter was of the opinion, and undoubtedly quite rightly, that once the French occupation had been established, a German protest and request for suitable compensation would accomplish nothing.[89] Therefore, to force the new French government's hand,[90] the German government despatched the gunboat Panther to the Moroccan Atlantic port of Agadir under the pretext that German nationals there were endangered and had petitioned for protection.[91]

The Panther's appearance on 1 July precipitated a new crisis. It is obvious from The Times of 3 July that Printing House Square regarded this as a momentous development as there were three columns of reportage, a map, and an editorial on the topic. Although Printing House Square was alarmed by this action it was uncertain as to the precise logic behind it and therefore adopted a matter-of fact attitude for the moment.[92] The editorial stated that

> The despatch of a German gunboat to Agadir in South Morocco is one of those dramatic strokes in which the diplomacy of Berlin would seem to take a curious

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[89] G. P., XXIX, No. 10549; Lancken Wakenitz, pp. 95-96.

[90] The Caillaux government took office on 27 June. This fact undoubtedly entered into German calculations, as a new ministry, unsure of itself, would be likelier to accede to German demands than one more experienced.

[91] G. P., XXIX, No. 10579.

[92] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 698.

> pleasure. It inevitably recalls the famous appearance of the Emperor at Tangier, and it may be intended to recall that event, but there is at present no reason to suppose that it will be followed by similar consequences.[93]

Almost as an afterthought, the editorial stated that regardless of the purpose of the German action, Kiderlen-Wächter ought not to forget that the British government was committed to stand by France in Morocco. At Printing House Square it was thought that it was the entente, not France's position in Morocco, that was at stake, and that France must get full backing from Britain if it was not to yield to Germany, thereby destroying the entente.[94]

It was immediately apparent that the reasons advanced for the Panther's presence at Agadir by the German government were fatuous. Agadir was a closed port and thus by international law no European had a legal right to maintain interests there.[95] Furthermore, there was not even a German at Agadir.[96] Both Saunders and the editorial made the latter point.[97]

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[93] The Times, 3 July 1911.

[94] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 698.

[95] Barlow, p. 231.

[96] See Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, p. 467, Footnote 2, for an amusing account of how the German national nearest Agadir was ordered to go there so that he could be "endangered."

[97] The Times, 3 July 1911.

Iderlen-Wächter, like Bülow during the first Moroccan crisis, refused to state what it was that Germany wanted. This resulted in conjecture. The British Foreign Office feared that the German Admiralty might be seeking a Moroccan port.[98] The Times also expressed this fear. On 3 July Saunders hinted that the German government might be covetous of a Moroccan coaling station. The next day's Times did not mention a cooling station, but it carried a map of Agadir harbour with "soundings in fathoms" placed on it, which clearly implied that the German government must be interested in Agadir's possibilities as a port. The British Admiralty, on the other hand, was not opposed to the German navy getting Agadir.[99]

Of all The Times' personnel, Mackenzie was the most unhappy with France's behavior. He was angry with France because of its disregard of the welfare of British businesses operating in Morocco. Printing House Square sympathized with the Berlin correspondent, but it also recognized that the French would view British conduct as one more test of the entente and that therefore The Times must side with France against Germany.[100] Mackenzie

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[98] B. D., VII, No. 359.

[99] Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, p. 240.

[100] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 698.

accepted this logic,[101] which was also the viewpoint of the British Foreign Office.[102] But notwithstanding this, both Printing House Square and the British Foreign Office suspected the French government of considering a separate agreement with Germany, which would include cession of a North African port to Germany.[103] This resulted in Times' equivocation. On the one hand, it defended France's behavior in Morocco; on the other, it indicated that it did not have faith in France to safeguard British strategic naval interests in its discussions with Germany.

Franco-German discussions made no progress. The French government waited on the German to make a proposal.[104] The German government expected the French to make an offer.[105] Neither was willing to be the first to reveal its hand. This silence only added to Printing House Square's anxiety that France might consider a German request for a Moroccan port, should such a proposal be made. The editorial

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[101] The Times, 5 July 1911.

[102] G. P., XXIX, No. 10561.

[103] B. D., VII, No. 383 and Minutes.

[104] Österreich-Ungarns Aussenpolitik von der bosnischen Krise 1908 bis zum Kriegsausbruch 1914, eds. L. Bittner, A. F. Pribram, H. Srbik und H. Uebersberger (Wein and Leipzig: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1930), III, No. 2559. (Hereafter cited as Ö.-U.A.)

[105] G. P., XXIX, No. 10595.

of 6 June asserted that while Britain would "act up to the letter and to the spirit of our treaty obligations with France in the full sense""it would also "assuredly assert our right to take part in any 'conversations,' whoever may desire to hold them, which may purport to adjust the Moroccan question."

On 8 July the French government intimated to the German that it might be willing to hand over part of the French Congo as compensation for German recognition of a French protectorate in Morocco.[106] When the German government did not give a firm response, Jules Cambon bluntly asked Kiderlen-Wächter on 15 July what it was that Germany wanted. Kiderlen-Wächter's reply[107]--all of the French Congo in exchange for a slice of Togo or Cameroon--stunned the French government, which categorically refused.[108]

News of the German demand leaked to the French press on 19 July.[109] The Times published the French newspaper accounts[110] with a warning that acquisition of the French Congo was only the first step in a German scheme to create Mittelafrika, which eventually would include the

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[106] Ibid., Nos. 10597 and 10598.

[107] Ibid., No. 10607.

[108] Barlow, pp. 262-263.

[109] Ibid., p. 269; Carroll, pp. 663-664.

[110] The Times, 20 July 1911.

Cameroons, the French Congo, Angola, German West Africa, the Belgian Congo, and German East Africa. Such a block would endanger the security of the Union of South Africa.[111] The editorial of 20 July called on Asquith to make good his promise of a fortnight before that the British government would ensure that British interests would not be disregarded.[112] It concluded by stating that the German claims were so "audacious" that they could be nothing other than "bluff".

> But we also believe that Germany has not yet shown her hand. It is time that she was invited to do so. Possibly the visit of one or two British ships to Agadir . . . might hasten developments.

Sir Francis Bertie, the British ambassador to Paris, also believed that Kiderlen-Wächter's Congo demand was so exaggerated that it was not meant seriously, but was advanced to bestir France to make a counter-offer of a Mediterranean port.[113] However, the despatch of British warships to Agadir would have been a silly and dangerous action. On 4 July the French government had asked the

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[111] Ibid., 21 July 1911.

[112] Asquith had informed the House of Commons on 6 July that his government would back France and "at the same time take care to protect our interests in Morocco--interests both economic and political, which immensely outweigh any that Germany possesses there." See Great Britain, 5 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), XXVII (1911), col. 1341.

[113] B. D., VII, No. 392.

British government to send British warships to Agadir to lie alongside the Panther, but the British government had ruled against this on the ground that it would have been provocative.[114]

By 21 July the British Cabinet was very nervous about what Germany was up to. Lloyd George was known to be pro-German, but Germany's actions following the Panther's arrival at Agadir convinced him that German intentions were sinister and that unless the British government's support of France were made blatantly clear, Germany might resort to war in the belief that France stood alone. The Cabinet decided to give the German government a warning not to attempt to cow France.[115] That evening Lloyd George delivered a speech at Mansion House, in which he declared that if the peace of Europe could only be preserved by the "surrender of British interests, then I say emphatically that peace at that price would be a humiliation intolerable for a great country like ours to endure."[116] The Times

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[114] Ibid., No. 351.

[115] W. S. Churchill, pp. 29-31; David Lloyd George, War Memoirs (London: Ivor Nicholson & Watson, 1934), I, p. 41; H. H. Asquith, The Genesis of the War (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1923), p. 148; Grey, I, p. 225. Cf. Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, p. 471. Taylor argues that the Mansion House speech was directed against France, not Germany. Whilst this is a very original interpretation, there is no evidence to substantiate it.

[116] The Times, 22 July 1911.

published the text of the speech in full and praised it lavishly. Chirol was now persuaded that Germany was again manifesting the same ambitions that it had displayed during the first Moroccan incident,[117] and the editorial denounced Kiderlen-Wächter's suggestions as "nothing less than a claim for absolute European predominance. Neither France nor Great Britain could have entertained them for a moment without confessing themselves overborne by German power."[118]

Lloyd George's explicit warning prompted Kiderlen-Wächter to take steps to assuage the British government. He informed Grey that the German government sought neither a Moroccan naval base nor all the French Congo. When Grey requested Kiderlen-Wächter's permission to tell Parliament this, the German Foreign Secretary refused it as he thought that it would appear that Germany had capitulated under British pressure.[119] It had become a question of national honour. Kiderlen-Wächter warned that if satisfaction from France were not forthcoming, Germany would act "alone" to "vindicate the rights of the Treaty [of Algeciras]."[120] Grey notified McKenna that there was a possibility that the

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[117] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 701.

[118] The Times, 22 July 1911.

[119] G. P., XXIX, Nos. 10618, 10624 and 10625; B. D., VII, No. 417.

[120] Ibid., No. 419.

British fleet might be attacked at any moment.[121] There was great anxiety amongst the British Cabinet and to cool things off the German Foreign Secretary instructed Grey that he could inform Parliament that negotiations between France and Germany did not involve British interests.[122] On 27 July Asquith conveyed this message to the House of Commons.[123] Although Printing House Square was aware that the situation was very serious, there is no evidence to indicate that it was cognizant that the fleet had been alerted. The Times wanted a settlement before developments got out of hand and it knew that Germany must be paid compensation of some kind. Printing House Square was not opposed to the idea of compensation, so long as it was reasonable. What it was opposed to was the means used by the German Foreign Secretary to present the bill.[124]

From this time on, Franco-German negotiations made slow progress. Between the events of the last weeks of July and the outbreak of war between Italy and Turkey at the end of September, Morocco did not get much space in The Times. Printing House Square's attention was focused on the

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[121] W. S. Churchill, I, p. 32; Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, I, p. 242.

[122] G. P., XXIX, No. 10627.

[123] Great Britain, 5 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), XXVIII (1911), cols. 1827-1828.

[124] The Times, 26 July 1911.

Parliament Bill and the series of strikes that plagued Great Britain in the summer and autumn of 1911. In fact, viewed overall, during the duration of the second Moroccan crisis, the domestic issues which threatened the British social structure received considerably greater attention than Morocco, although the latter dominated foreign news till the Tripolitanian War.

Negotiations between France and Germany dragged because both governments had become captives of public opinion. The French public was unprepared for concessions of any kind in the face of what it regarded as German bullying; the German public, and particularly the Pan-Germans, expected a substantial gain of some kind.[125] The Times, anxious for a settlement, emphasized that this, rather than German machinations, was responsible for the protracted discussions[126] and urged compromise on both sides.[127] Braham, who was temporarily in charge of the Foreign Department in Chirol's absence, was as annoyed by the French government's intransigence as by that of the German government. Braham was certain that France would

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[125] Barlow, p. 341 f.; Carroll, pp. 673-688.

[126] The Times, 16 July (Paris); 18 Aug. (Paris); 11 Sept. (editorial); and 26 Sept. 1911 (Paris).

[127] Ibid., 15 Sept. (Paris), 14 Sept. (editorial), 25 Sept. (editorial), 26 Sept. 1911 (Paris).

show no more consideration to British business firms in Morocco than to German, and he was thus unwilling to give to France any more support than was necessary to maintain the appearance of entente unanimity.[128]

The Italian-Turkish conflict[129] introduced a new element into an already difficult situation and gave greater urgency to the need of a settlement on Morocco. The restive Balkan states might seize this opportunity to pounce on Turkey there. If either Russia or Austria-Hungary were drawn in, a general European war was likely. This would be avoided only if all the European powers acted in concert. Steed, writing from Vienna, warned that the concatenation of Morocco and Tripoli created an explosive situation for Europe.[130] The editorial stressed that their concurrence might "bring the peace of Europe into more imminent danger than has threatened it since the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina three years ago."[131]

By the end of September the German public realized that Kiderlen-Wächter's coup had not brought Germany any startling gain and public interest shifted from the

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[128] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 702.

[129] See Chap. V, Pt. II for the details of the Tripolitanian War.

[130] The Times, 29 Sept. 1911.

[131] Ibid.

Moroccan imbroglio to the war between Italy and Turkey. The French public, however, remained obdurate, and the French government would not risk concessions that would arouse a public storm.[132] Printing House Square, without taking the German side, urged compromise on the French government: ". . . we hope that France . . . will not feel tempted to drive too hard a bargain with her neighbour."[133] It was not any longer a question of the trial of the entente; Britain had stood behind France in the face of German dictation. But France's behavior made a quick settlement, upon which the peace of Europe seemed to hinge, difficult.

France and Germany concluded a settlement on 4 November 1911. By its terms, Germany accepted a French protectorate in Morocco. In return, Germany was handed a narrow strip of land on the southern boundary of the Cameroons and a wedge of the French Congo. So that the compensation in Germany would look like an exchange of territory, rather than hush payment, Germany ceded a small area of northeast Cameroon to France.[134] Printing House Square, relieved that an agreement finally had been achieved, congratulated both governments on their prudence, as it had "no interest and no desire that two of our

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[132] The Times, 26 Sept., 9 Oct. 1911.

[133] Ibid., 4 Oct. 1911.

[134] G. P., XXIX, Nos. 10772-10776; B. D., VII, Appendix IV.

nearest neighbours should be divided by a quarrel which might easily involve others beside themselves."[135] The editorial went on to declare that in any good business deal some advantage should accrue to all contracting parties, and "the present transaction seems to answer that description." It particularly complimented Bethmann Hollweg, the German Chancellor, and Kiderlen-Wächter for their "great courage in concluding an agreement which is sure to be misrepresented by their chauvinistic critics at home."

The second Moroccan crisis had brought Europe to the verge of war. Kiderlen-Wächter had threatened to use force if this was needed to maintain German amour-propre; the British government had placed the fleet on alert; and French and German public opinion were inflamed and prepared for war rather than for compromise. The Times, though, never talked war, although it did strongly second the Mansion House Speech. One would expect that after the first Moroccan crisis, the intense naval rivalry between Britain and Germany and the events of the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, The Times would have taken a very strong stand against Germany. In fact, it was no firmer than during the first Moroccan crisis. Printing House Square was not particularly happy over French behavior in Morocco, and domestic issues, which threatened the British

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[135] The Times, 4 Nov. 1911.

social fabric, preoccupied it. Then, too, the entente had been tempered in the previous crises and, notwithstanding differences between France and Britain, had shown itself to be pretty durable. But most important of all, during the crisis Printing House Square began to desire a general European détente as a way of avoiding a general European conflagration, and therefore began to advise both sides quickly to conclude a mutually acceptable settlement.

CHAPTER V

THE BALKANS: TINDERBOX OF EUROPE

The Balkans was a cauldron of conflicting ambitions. The authority of the Ottoman Turks, who had long exercised suzerainty in the area, was in decay and the demise of the Ottoman Empire was considered to be imminent. This naturally raised the question of who would pick up the pieces. Russia traditionally aspired to control of the Straits. In 1897 St. Petersburg, with its energies directed to the Far East, entered into an understanding with Vienna which temporarily "put the Balkans on ice."[1] Russia's defeat in Asia in 1905-1906, however, redirected its attention westward. This interest was encouraged by Alexander Izvolsky, who became Russian Foreign Minister in 1906. Unlike his predecessor, Lamsdorff, who had been prepared to let sleeping dogs lie, Izvolsky was ambitious to achieve some coup that would ensure his reputation for posterity. Nothing was more certain to accomplish this than winning for Russia control of the Dardanelles, and it

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[1] A. J. P. Taylor, The Habsburg Monarchy 1809-1918. A History of the Austrian Empire and Austria-Hungary (new ed.; London: Hamish Hamilton, 1951), pp. 180-181; Langer, The Diplomacy of Imperialism, pp. 373-375; Albertini, I, pp. 90-95.

was on them that he fixed his gaze.[2]

Coincidental with Izvolsky's appointment, Baron von Aehrenthal replaced Count Goluchowski as Foreign Minister of Austria-Hungary. Whereas Goluchowski had been cautious and desirous of the preservation of the status quo in the Balkans, Aehrenthal was a bold man, eager to take strong action to restore the monarchy's sagging prestige.[3] The Hungarian government's policy of Magyarization had disaffected the Empire's Slavs. Serbia turned this to its own advantage. It visualized itself as the "Piedmont of the South" and dreamed of a South Slav kingdom under Serbian leadership. To foster this it encouraged irredentist sentiments among the Serbs and Croats of both the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires.[4] Conrad von Hötzendorff, the Austro-Hungarian Chief of Staff, preached the military destruction of Serbia, but Aehrenthal chose what appeared a less dangerous course. Since the Congress of Berlin[5] the

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[2]G. P. Gooch, Before the War: Studies in Diplomacy (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1938), I, pp. 289-292; Albrecht-Carrié, pp. 259-260; Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, p. 449.

[3]A. F. Pribram, Austria-Hungary and Great Britain 1908-1914, trans. Ian F. D. Morrow (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), pp. 71-75; Albertini, I, pp. 190-191; Bury, p. 132.

[4]B. E. Schmitt, The Annexation of Bosnia 1908-1909 (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1937), p. 5; Albrecht-Carrié, pp. 260-261; Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, p. 450.

[5]For the Terms of the Congress of Berlin see Israel, II, pp. 975-997.

Serbian-Croatian populations of Bosnia and Herzegovina had been under the administrative control of the Dual Monarchy, although nominally they remained Ottoman. Aehrenthal planned to end this fiction by the annexation of the provinces. This would accomplish several things, he reasoned. It would end the South Slav agitation by demonstrating the futility of the notion of a South Slav state. It also would provide an opportunity for Austria to show the Serbs and Croats outside Serbia that Austria could give them fair government if the Magyars were not involved. Dualism might give way to trialism[6] and the remaining Serbs and Croats would be incorporated with Austria rather than Serbia.[7]

By the agreement of 1897, any alteration of the status of Bosnia-Herzegovina required the consent of Russia. However, it was Izvolsky, not Aehrenthal, who first broached the subject. On 2 July 1908 the Russian Foreign Minister informed Aehrenthal that his government was prepared to discuss modification of those clauses of the Treaty of Berlin which dealt with Bosnia-Herzegovina

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[6] In 1867 the Magyars were given their own diet to deal with Hungarian domestic matters. Trialism would have meant the creation of a third diet for the Slavs of the Monarchy. Defense, trade and foreign affairs would have remained in the hands of imperial ministries.

[7] J. M. Roberts, Europe, 1880-1945 (London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1967), pp. 252-253; Taylor, The Habsburg Monarchy, p. 216; Albertini, I, pp. 191-193.

and the Straits.[8] Both Aehrenthal's and Izvolsky's schemes were given urgency by the Young Turk Revolution of July 1908. So long as the corrupt autocrat Abdul Hamid II had held power in Turkey, the collapse of the "sick man of Europe" seemed inevitable. But the Young Turks' programme of liberal reform and westernization, if allowed time, might rejuvenate Turkey sufficiently to frustrate both their designs.[9] On 15-16 September Aehrenthal and Izvolsky met at Buchlau to discuss the situation. It is not entirely clear what transpired there, as there are conflicting accounts.[10] But it seems that Izvolsky agreed to Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, in return for which Aehrenthal promised to support Russia in its efforts to get control of the Dardanelles.[11] Izvolsky thought that he had Aehrenthal's assurance that Austria would not act till he had approached London and Paris about changing the status of the Straits. However, on 6 October, before Izvolsky had discussed the subject with either the British or French governments, the Emperor Franz Joseph proclaimed

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[8] O.-U. A., I, No. 9.

[9] Oron J. Hale, The Great Illusion 1900-1914 (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 255; Albertini, I, p. 197.

[10] For Aehrenthal's account see O.-U. A., I, No. 79; for Izvolsky's account, B. D., V, Nos. 292 and 372.

[11] Schmitt, pp. 20-25; Albertini, I, pp. 206-210.

the annexation.[12]

The British government was very unhappy over the Austrian action. The British public had loathed the tyranny of Abdul Hamid and made impossible British support of his regime.[13] The Young Turks, in contrast, were lauded as liberal parliamentarians by the British people.[14] Under Abdul Hamid's despotism, German influence had been predominant at Constantinople. With the Young Turks it collapsed and British counsel held sway. The British government was thus in a position to block further German penetration in the Near East and to put a halt to German plans for an extension of the Baghdad Railway to Basra on the Red Sea.[15] The difficulty was that, whilst working with the new regime in Turkey, the British government had to be very careful not to give Russia the impression that it was using Turkey to obstruct Russian ambitions in the Near East.[16] If Britain openly sided with Turkey against Russia, the Russian government was likely to infer that there was nothing to be gained from an Anglo-Russian entente and

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[12] Ibid., pp. 217-218; Schmitt, pp. 20-25.

[13] B. D., V, No. 197.

[14] M. B. Cooper, "British Policy in the Balkans, 1908-9", The Historical Journal, VII, No. 2 (1964), p. 263.

[15] See Chap. VI, Pt. I.

[16] B. D., V, No. 207; Cooper, pp. 264-267.

would seek a renewal of the Dreikaiserbund[17] in the expectation of greater maneuverability in the Balkans.

The annexation was not a surprise at Printing House Square. In August, Steed had learned from an Austrian Christian Socialist that the Austrian government meant to celebrate Emperor Franz Joseph's sixtieth jubilee with the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.[18] On 28 September he intimated that annexation might be imminent; four days later, that it seemed certain.[19] However, it was the Paris correspondent who announced that it would be carried out on 6 October.[20] This was not a newspaper coup. The Austro-Hungarian ambassador to France had informed the French government of his government's intention on 3 October. The French premier had leaked the news to the Temps, which printed the story the same day.[21] Saunders' story thus was based on the Temps' revelation.

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[17]The Dreikaiserbund of 1881 was an agreement amongst Austria, Germany and Russia, which provided that in the event of war between one member and a fourth power, the two other signatories would remain neutral. It also had specified that changes in the Balkans were to be brought about only after consultation between Austria and Russia.

[18]The History of 'The Times', III, p. 608 and footnote.

[19]The Times, 28 Sept. and 2 Oct. 1908.

[20]Ibid., 5 Oct. 1908.

[21]Schmitt, p. 34.

The History of 'The Times' makes no mention of the impact that the Young Turk revolution made at Printing House Square, but it must have been considerable. As Germany was not at first directly involved in the Bosnian crisis, it was in its references to the new regime that The Times revealed its attitude toward Germany. Printing House Square, like the British Foreign Office, saw in the Young Turks a bulwark to further German penetration of the Near East. Hence any threat to them represented a setback to British interests in the region. Ostensibly The Times was pro-Young Turk because of their liberal reform programme. Whilst their liberalism obviously made them genuinely appealing to Printing House Square, their anti-German and pro-British sympathies probably were of even greater weight in gaining The Times' support, although the latter reason was not mentioned as the new regime would have been offended by the notion that it was being used by Great Britain as a pawn in European power politics. The strength of Printing House Square's support for the "new Turkey" was thus a measure of its opposition to German expansion in the Near East.

The editorials of 5 and 6 October clearly reveal The Times' approach. The first editorial condemned the annexation on two counts: as a "violation of the public law of Europe" and because it "cannot but damage the authority of the Young Turks in the eyes of their country

and give to reactionary intriguers a handle of which they will not be slow to avail themselves."[22] The second gave a glowing account of the progress that had been made by the Young Turks since coming to power and joined with the British government in extending "the sympathies of the country" to the new regime as "Turkey has been badly treated."[23] These declarations of encouragement and sympathy for the new regime were made repeatedly.[24]

Izvolsky attempted to extricate himself from an embarrassing situation by calling for an international conference to decide on Bulgaria's declaration of independence[25] and the Austrian annexation.[26] When the Russian Foreign Minister informed Grey on 10 October that his government would not raise the question of the Straits at a conference, Grey eagerly adopted the idea as it enabled him to appear to be siding with both Russia and Turkey.[27] Unlike the British Foreign Office and the British government, The

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[22] The Times, 5 Oct. 1908.

[23] Ibid., 6 Oct. 1908.

[24] E.g., ibid., 9, 10, 13, 15 and 16 Oct., 28 Nov. 1908.

[25] Bulgaria had declared its complete independence of Turkey and its incorporation of Eastern Rumelia the day before the annexation. These actions also constituted violations of the Treaty of Berlin.

[26] Ö.-U. A.

[27] Schmitt, pp. 49-54; Albertini, I, pp. 226-227.

Times initially did not try to reconcile both Russia and Turkish interests. When the question of a conference was broached, The Times gave it a cool reception. A conference would merely "condone and ratify the flagrant breaches of the Treaty of Berlin," after which it would "reaffirm with much unction the principle that such compacts are sacred." Austria-Hungary would undoubtedly sign this protocol, whereupon

> it would be asked, on the specious pretext of 'compensation', to sanction further encroachments upon the rights of Turkey, and further violations of great European conventions. . . . We may think the pretension untenable that wrongs done to Turkey by two States ought to be 'compensated' by ways done to her by others.[28]

As Printing House Square knew from a private despatch of 23 September to Bell,[29] Russia was scheming to get control of the Dardanelles. Hence this editorial was directed against Russia as much as against Serbia, which was also known to want compensation.[30] This seems paradoxical, since it suggests that The Times placed no importance on the Anglo-Russian Convention, which Great Britain had entered into to preclude a German-Russian entente.[31] It was not that The Times regarded Russia of

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[28] The Times, 6 Oct. 1908.

[29] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 615.

[30] Ibid.

[31] See Chap. II, Pt. III.

no account in preventing Germany hegemony, but it saw in the "new Turkey" a better instrument through which to check German incursions in the Near East as Russia was not averse to sacrificing British interests there to promote its own expansion.[32] And, not to be discounted, for ideological reasons it was much easier to embrace the Young Turks than the Romanov autocracy.

The Russian Pan-Slavs[33] immediately exerted pressure on the Russian government to claim territorial compensation for the loss of Bosnia-Herzegovina to Austria. The Pan-Slav organ Novoe Vremya was particularly vociferous.[34] In its editorial of 10 October, Printing House Square asserted that although it appreciated that

> for Russia to adopt the same self-denying attitude as the two Western Powers [France and Great Britain] may involve a possible sacrifice of long-cherished desires, ... we feel convinced that in the gratitude of a regenerated Turkey she will obtain a more gratifying and durable reward. Russia has nothing to gain by joining in an undignified scramble, whereby she would alienate Turkey and lose the good will of Powers with which she is on the best possible terms.

These bold words stand in contrast to the government's policy of trying to accomodate Russia without

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[32]Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, p. 445; Hale, The Great Illusion, p. 252.

[33]The Pan-Slavs advocated the union of all Slavic peoples into one kingdom under Tsarist rule.

[34]The Times, 9 and 10 Oct. 1908 (St. Petersburg).

offending Turkey.[35] The announcement that Russia did not mean to ask for the opening of the Dardanelles at a conference was hailed as an earnest of Russia's desire to "consolidate" Anglo-Russian friendship.[36] Henceforth The Times found no difficulty in supporting both Russia and Turkey in the crisis.

The German government was as surprised by its ally's action as the rest of Europe, and found itself in the same dilemma as the British government. On the one hand, it wanted to maintain good relations with Turkey; on the other, it had an alliance with Austria-Hungary. Notwithstanding that the Kaiser was very angry that his ally had taken such an audacious step without consultation, both Bülow and Wilhelm II were resolved that Germany would have to stand by Austria-Hungary since the Algeciras Conference had demonstrated that it was the only power remaining on whom they could depend.[37] The Times was cognizant of Germany's embarrassment: the Berlin correspondent wrote several articles on it[38] and a number of editorials referred to it.[39]

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[35] Grey, I, pp. 174-178; W. S. Churchill, I, p. 31; G. P., XXVI, Pt. I, No. 9056.

[36] The Times, 15 Oct. 1908.

[37] G. P., XXVI, Pt. I, Nos. 8937, 8939, 8984, 8988, 8992, 8994 and 9006; Ö.-U. A., I, Nos. 182, 183 and 273.

[38] The Times, 6, 13, 19, 21 and 26 Oct. 1908.

[39] Ibid., 12, 13, 16, 19 and 26 Oct. 1908.

Aehrenthal agreed to the proposal for a conference on the condition that the question of the annexation would not be placed on the agenda. This position was rejected by the entente governments.[40] It was obvious that unless Berlin exerted pressure on Vienna, Aehrenthal would not yield. Printing House Square therefore began to urge the German government to use its special relationship with the Dual Monarchy to facilitate a settlement. The German government had of late complained that "those do her injustice who suspect her of a policy of making mischief amongst her neighbours." Here was a golden opportunity for Germany to prove that "she is a real and sincere friend of peace and harmony in Europe."[41] Surely Germany must be anxious for an international conference "after the extreme zeal for the observance of public law which she herself displayed in insisting upon the Algeciras Conference," stated The Times.[42]

The annexation enraged the Serbian government and populace. Although Serbia had no locus standi under the Treaty of Berlin, it demanded territorial compensation from Austria. When Aehrenthal refused, the Serbian government voted new levies for its army. Austria replied by

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[40] Schmitt, p. 55 ff.

[41] The Times, 19 Oct. 1908 (editorial).

[42] Ibid., 22 Oct. 1908 (editorial).

strengthening its border garrisons and an Austro-Serbian conflict seemed likely. Although Izvolsky urged moderation on Belgrade, he was not prepared to abandon Serbia's claims because of his reluctance to face the storm that this would provoke among the Russian Pan-Slavs.[43] As the situation worsened, The Times repeated its exhortations for Berlin to use its influence to counsel moderation at Vienna and it placed the onus for a settlement on the German government.[44]

Turkey recognized the annexation and Bulgarian independence on 12 January 1909 in return for payment of a money indemnity.[45] But the crisis dragged on because of Serbian obduracy. On New Year's Day 1909 Conrad von Hötzendorff had enquired of General von Moltke, the German Chief of Staff, what aid Austria-Hungary might expect from Germany against Russia in the event of war between Austria and Serbia.[46] The latter pledged full military support of any policy pursued by Austria-Hungary.[47] Aehrenthal,

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[43] Schmitt, pp. 65-78, 144 ff.; Bury, p. 134.

[44] Eg., The Times, 26 Oct., 21 and 28 Nov., 21 Dec. 1908; 29 Jan., 23 and 24 Feb. 1909.

[45] Schmitt, pp. 117-143. The agreement was not actually signed till 26 Feb. 1909.

[46] Franz Freiherr Conrad von Hötzendorff, Aus Meiner Dienstzeit 1906-1918 (Wien: Rikola Verlag, 1921), I, pp. 132-133, 631-634.

[47] Ibid., pp. 379-384. Bülow had given Aehrenthal carte blanche with Serbia as early as 30 Oct. 1908. G. P., XXVI, Pt. I, No. 9079.

extremely vexed at Belgrade's behavior, in early February decided to take tough action if Serbia did not back down.[48] The British minister in Belgrade informed Grey of this on 22 February.[49] On 18 February Steed had privately given Chirol the same information.[50] Chirol replied that, although not overly optimistic, he thought the German government might exert a moderating influence on Austria.[51] Printing House Square had no knowledge of Bülow's and Moltke's carte blanches. This accounts for the fact that The Times had done little more than adjure the German government to restrain its ally.

Belgrade's abandonment of its territorial claims did not mollify Aehrenthal. He contended that the question of economic concessions involved Austria's sovereignty and therefore could not be submitted to third parties for discussion.[52] On 5 March he informed Berlin that if Belgrade still had not formally acceded to the annexation by the end of the month he would issue an ultimatum to be followed by war.[53] Kiderlen-Wächter, the acting German

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[48] Ö.-U. A., I, No. 987.

[49] B. D., V, No. 597.

[50] The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 623-624.

[51] Ibid., p. 626.

[52] Ö.-U. A., I, Nos. 1097 and 1176; B. D., V, No. 652.

[53] G. P., XXVI, Pt. II, No. 9418.

Foreign Secretary--Schoen was ill, thought ridiculous the idea of war over "Serbian pigs". Bülow therefore suggested to the other powers that they recognize the annexation through an exchange of notes with Austria, which would leave Russia free to force Serbia to accept Aehrenthal's terms.[54] Izvolsky consulted with Grey, who preferred a conference.[55] The Russian Foreign Minister therefore informed the German government that, although prepared for an exchange of notes, he still deemed necessary a conference of the signatories of the Treaty of Berlin.[56] Bülow, who had been preoccupied with the domestic flurry precipitated by the Daily Telegraph interview[57] and the Moroccan negotiations with France,[58] was now free to devote his attention to the Bosnian imbroglio.[59] He and Kiderlen-Wächter decided to force a quick settlement. It was generally known that Russia was unprepared for war[60]

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[54]Schmitt, p. 187. [55]B. D., V, No. 714.

[56]G. P., XXVI, Pt. II, No. 9458.

[57]See Chap. III, Pt. II, for the Daily Telegraph interview. Although Printing House Square saw the "revelations" against the background of Anglo-German naval rivalry, the editorial of 29 Oct. 1908 propounded that the article's publication at that juncture was "for the purpose of sowing dissensions between Great Britain, France and Russia, at a moment when their joint action is disagreeably felt by Germany and her ally."

[58]See Chap. IV, Pt. II.

[59]Schmitt, p. 187.

[60]Ibid., pp. 71-72, 161-162; Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, p. 453.

and on 21 March the German government presented the Russian government with an ultimatum. It must agree unequivocally to the abrogation of Article 25 of the Treaty of Berlin or the German government would "let matters take their course."[61] The Russian government could not contemplate war against Germany and the following day it capitulated before the German threat.[62]

On 25 March, Steed wired Chirol that it was rumored in the Austrian capital that Russia had agreed to recognize the annexation.[63] Saunders, in Paris, wrote that the Temps had ascertained that Russia's assent immediately followed a letter from the Kaiser to the Tsar.[64] This information was disturbing enough in itself, but the uncertainty of Germany's naval intentions--the naval furore was just then at its peak--cast an even darker shadow on it. Chirol was very troubled and indicated to Steed by letter that he feared that the action might be intended to "coerce" Russia back into the Three Emperors' Alliance, perhaps permanently.[65] He gave full expression to this feeling in the editorial of 27 March, which he wrote personally.

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[61] G. P., XXVI, Pt. II, No. 9460.

[62] Ibid., XXVI, Pt. II, No. 9468.

[63] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 628; The Times, 26 Mar. 1909.

[64] Ibid.

[65] The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 629-630.

> The situation with which Europe is confronted involves much more than the fate of Servia. We trust it may not mean the permanent overthrow of the balance of power in Europe; but it certainly does mean that for the moment Germany has placed it in jeopardy by throwing the weight of her sword into the scales, not in any quarrel in which she is herself primarily interested, but in order to prove to the world in general and to Russia in particular, that with her consent and support treaties can be broken with impunity and small States ground down to the dust. . . . The course which she has chosen to adopt may for the moment produce the outward appearance of peace, but it cannot make for permanent peace. For no Power which in the course of history has arrogated to itself the right to dominate Europe, and to impose its own will by sheer force, has ever ensured or secured peace.[66]

This was the clearest statement made by The Times of its reason for opposing German policy. It was not, as Hale suggests, that Printing House Square had malevolent designs against Germany; it was, rather, that Printing House Square suspected the German government, on the basis of Germany's international behavior, of having ambitions that imperilled the "independence" and "security" of the rest of Europe and thereby of Great Britain itself. There was, however, an inherent paradox in Anglo-German relations which The Times never faced. Germany could feel secure only if it dominated either Russia or France, thereby obviating the possibility of a two-front war. Britain, on the other hand, could feel secure only as long as no power dominated the Continent. Hence the German government's efforts to consolidate its position aroused both The Times

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[66] See Chap. III, Pt. II, for the relation of this analysis to the naval question.

and the British government to opposition of German policies, which Berlin, in turn, construed as evidence of an anti-German sentiment in Britain.

Printing House Square presumed coherence, planning and consistency in German circles that did not exist and whose absence accounts for a good deal of Wilhelmine Germany's aberrant behavior.[67] Hence Printing House Square saw in the Kaiser's dramatic intervention a second Tangier: "Germany . . . is merely attempting against the Triple Entente the coup which she tried against the Anglo-French alliance."[68] Chirol sincerely believed that the purpose of this new coup de main was to smash the Anglo-Russian entente. On 7 April he advised Steed that the "two Powers combined have inflicted upon us and upon the Triple Entente a very serious rebuff" and that Russia might be driven "back on to the policy of the old Three Emperors Alliance."[69]

As a consequence of the Bosnian crisis The Times became more sympathetic to the Romanov autocracy than it had been hitherto. In the immediate future there was to be no criticism of Russian policy, although there was some unhappiness over Russian behavior in Persia. If Germany were to be constrained, it was imperative that the Anglo-

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[67]Meyer, p. 106.

[68]The Times, 29 Mar. 1909.

[69]Cited in The History of 'The Times', III, pp. 632-633.

Russian bond be strengthened and that the Russian army be rebuilt. The ultimatum was cited as another example of why Britain must maintain clear naval superiority over Germany, and the naval controversy, in turn, occasioned Printing House Square to place a more serious construction on Germany's motives than it might otherwise have done. Although Germany's motives were no more sinister than at Agadir in 1911, Printing House Square was more troubled by the German action of the spring of 1909 than that of the autumn of 1911.

II

The second Moroccan crisis triggered a series of events which required a complete redrawing of the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire and which, without occasioning an alteration of Printing House Square's attitude towards Germany, nevertheless produced a new tone in The Times.

There was in the Italian government a very strong nationalist element which aspired to colonial acquisitions both because of the prestige attached to having an empire and because of the economic benefits which it was believed resulted from colonies.[70] They had first talked of Tunis,

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[70] W. C. Askew, Europe and Italy's Acquisition of Libya 1911-1912 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1942), pp. 24-42; Elizabeth Wiskemann, "Germany, Italy and Eastern Europe," NCMH, XII, p. 484.

but with the French occupation in 1881 their attention turned to Tripoli. Between 1887 and 1909 the Italian government got blank cheques on the vilayets of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica from the other European powers.[71] But the French occupation of Fez raised the fear that if Italy did not foreclose quickly, Germany or some other power would claim Tripoli as compensation and on 29 September 1911 Italy declared war on Turkey.[72]

As with the Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina three years previously, the British and German governments again found themselves in uncomfortable positions. Germany was Italy's ally, but was paying court to the Committee of Union and Progress with the aim of reestablishing its prestige at Constantinople. The British government, on the other hand, was intent on maintaining its influence with the Porte whilst at the same time befriending Italy in anticipation of detaching it from Austria-Hungary and Germany, with whom Italian relations were deteriorating.[73] Notwithstanding this jockeying, the British and German governments immediately agreed to act in concert with the French, Russian and Austro-Hungarian governments to localize

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[71] Askew, pp. 3-21; Albertini, I, pp. 340-341.

[72] Ibid., p. 342; Askew, pp. 42-63; Bury, p. 139.

[73] B. D., IX, Pt. I, Nos. 231, 250-251; G. P., XXX, Nos. 10,856 ff.

the conflict to Tripoli.[74] The danger was that the Balkan states, burning with irredentist aspirations, would use this opportunity to take action against Turkey. If that occurred, Austro-Hungarian or Russian involvement, and general war were likely.[75] Hence the need for cooperative action.

The Times' policy during the Turco-Italian War was determined by expendiency. Although Printing House Square's sympathy lay with Turkey, it recognized that "Italy will in future count her friends and enemies according to their present attitude towards this, her first genuinely national effort since her unity was accomplished"[76] and accordingly steered a middle course between the belligerents. Yet while Printing House Square refrained from criticism of Italy in order not to provoke sentiments that might impede Italy's gravitation toward the entente powers, there was also a marked softening in tone to Germany in The Times. This might appear contradictory at first glance, but it was not. Printing House Square was fully cognizant that the real danger in Italy's attack on Turkey lay in the likelihood that this would set off the Balkan states.[77] Though

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[74]Ö.-U. A., III, Nos. 2666 and 2675.

[75]Albrecht-Carrié, pp. 276-277; Hale, The Great Illusion, pp. 276-277.

[76]Cited in The History of 'The Times', III, p. 703.

[77]The Times, 30 Sept. 1911 (editorial).

The Times' management had laboured to bestir the British government to take steps that would preclude German domination of Europe, it abhorred the notion of a Continental conflagration. The Times' new tone toward Germany thus indicated two things. First, it reflected the fact that the Triple Entente and Central Powers were engaged in consultative action in the Balkans and, second, it betokened that Printing House Square wanted this cooperation to continue and avoided printing anything which might arouse opinion in Germany to hinder it.[78]

A. J. P. Taylor has suggested that The Times' moderation toward Italy was the result of government persuasion.[79] This is doubtful. The Italian government, which was extremely sensitive of foreign criticisms, complained to Grey that the British press was being unfair to Italy.[80] The British Foreign Office itself was disturbed by the sharpness of some articles and approached the editors of the major newspapers to counsel restraint.[81] Braham, who was acting for Chirol in the latter's absence, advised Grey that The Times was not unfriendly to Italy, but that Printing House Square had been surprised by the suddenness

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[78] E.g., the editorial of 2 Oct. 1911 asserted that "there is probably no nation which shares more earnestly than the German our wish to see the war between Italy and Turkey localized."

[79] Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, p. 474.

[80] Askew, p. 70.

[81] B. D., IX, Pt. I, Nos. 256 and 267.

of Italy's action.[82] The editorial of 28 September had rapped Italy's knuckles for raising this issue whilst the powers were still divided over Morocco, but the editorial two days later censured Turkey for suggesting that it might seize Thessaly as compensation.[83] Thus Printing House Square had already decided on a neutral attitude toward the combatants before the British Foreign Office met with the editors of the press.

Consultation among the powers achieved little, as no power was prepared to be the first to exert pressure on either Italy or Turkey.[84] Between March and October 1912, Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece and Montenegro concluded a series of agreements amongst themselves which provided for the future partition of Turkish territory.[85] The great powers sensed that this flurry of diplomatic activity portended imminent war and in the first week of October agreed to maintain the status quo in the Balkans. This meant that both Austria-Hungary and Russia pledged themselves not to intervene for territorial aggrandizement in the event of a conflict between Turkey and the Balkan League.[86] This step

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[82] The History of 'The Times', III, p. 702.

[83] The Times, 30 Sept. 1911.

[84] E. C. Helmreich, The Diplomacy of the Balkan Wars 1912-1913 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938), pp. 106-124, 126-132; Askew, p. 160 ff.

[85] Helmreich, pp. 47-89.

[86] Ibid., pp. 127-132. Austria-Hungary was not

was aimed at preventing a European, not a Balkan, war. On 8 October 1912 Montenegro declared war on Turkey. Ten days later Serbia and Bulgaria joined the fray.[87]

The First Balkan War produced further moderation in Printing House Square's coverage of Germany. Whereas previously The Times alluded to Germany as the major menace to European peace, it now portrayed her as "labouring for peace and an honourable settlement,"[88] as employed in efforts "to prevent the spread of nervousness,"[89] and complimented Germany on her "zeal for peace."[90] The reason is obvious. Now more than ever the Concert of Europe had to be preserved if the war was to be localized. The editorials repeatedly emphasized the necessity of continued cooperation among the great powers[91] and showed scrupulous impartiality to both the Balkan League and Turkey, lest Great Britain be accused of fishing in troubled waters. The Times avoided everything that might have excited anti-

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anxious to acquire more Slavs following the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Russia was determined that Bulgaria should not get Constantinople.

[87] Ibid., pp. 134, 136-137.

[88] The Times, 14 Nov. 1912 (editorial).

[89] Ibid., 29 Nov. 1912 (editorial).

[90] Ibid., 30 May 1913 (editorial).

[91] E.g., ibid., 20 and 28 Sept., 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 21, 28 and 30 Oct., 11, 14, 26, 27 and 29 Nov. 1912; 26 Mar. 1913.

British feeling in Germany and thereby impaired Anglo-German collaboration. In his address to the National Union of Journalists, Lloyd George opined that regardless of the cause of the war, "at any rate one result will ensue, and that is that the boundaries of freedom and good government will be extended."[92] Printing House Square deplored the Chancellor of the Exchequer's remark.

> For all Europe the dangers which lie ahead are far too grave to admit of avowed partiality towards either side. For this reason we regard it as regrettable that at a critical juncture, when the neutrality of Great Britain ought to be strongly emphasized, so prominent a Minister as the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have allowed himself to utter a sentence on Saturday which will certainly be quoted abroad as an ill-concealed example of taking sides.[93]

The First Balkan War was officially concluded on 30 May 1913. No sooner were the guns silenced than the members of the Balkan League fell out amongst themselves.[94] By the end of June 1913 the guns were again booming and once more The Times accented the need of the powers to work together to ensure that "inflammable tendencies are not allowed to speak."[95]

This new tone of conciliation towards Germany was

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[92] Ibid., 14 Oct. 1912.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Helmreich, pp. 341-367; Albertini, I, pp. 448 ff; The Times, 3 and 23 June 1913 (editorials).

[95] Ibid., 3 July 1913. Also see ibid., 7, 8, 12, 16, 17 and 28 July; 7 Aug. 1913 (editorials).

maintained till after Sarajevo. Although the end of the Second Balkan War restored peace to the Balkans, it was only a question of time till fighting errupted once more. The nationalist sentiments were too strong and the distribution of populations too irregular to allow of easy solution. Hence the question which first occasioned moderation in The Times was responsible for its continuation.

CHAPTER VI

FINANCE AND COMMERCE

In the nineteenth century Ottoman Turkey was seriously ailing financially. Between 1854 and 1875 the sultans accumulated a European debt of two-hundred million Turkish pounds (about six-hundred million United States dollars at 1930 value).[1] These loans, rather than being applied to the development of transportation, communication, and banking institutions that would have strengthened the Turkish economy, were spent on the sultans' extravagent whims, to pay for the suppression of the Cretan insurrection and for the Turkish losses resulting from the Crimean War. By 1875 half The Porte's income went to meet the interest charges on foreign debts and in 1876 it defaulted on payments. The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, the loss of the economically important European provinces at Congress of Berlin, and the Turkish indemnity precipitated total financial collapse. In 1881, without any alternative, Turkey agreed to international reorganization of its finances. In return for new loans, the Sultan agreed to European supervision of the collection of almost all taxes

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[1]Feis, p. 313.

and revenues. Because of this management, Turkish finances remained relatively stable till 1908.[2]

However, despite the seeming stability of the Sultan's finances after 1881, no one seriously believed that "the sick man of Europe" was restored to health. Turkey's demise was still considered to be imminent, at which time its creditors would prevail on their governments to intervene to safeguard their investments.[3] The British government could hardly view these developments with equanimity. Foreign control of Basra, at the head of the Persian Gulf, would have represented a strategic threat to the Suez link with India.[4] For these reasons, a British official in Turkey in 1907 advised the British government to promote British investments there, to ensure a raison d'être for intervention later.[5]

The Turkish Empire was strife-ridden and economically undeveloped. There were few decent roads and very little commerce. Thus for military and economic reasons it was imperative that communications be improved, and a railway

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[2] Ibid., pp. 314-317.

[3] Ibid., p. 318.

[4] Ravinder Kumar, "The Records of the Government of India on the Berlin-Baghdad Railway Question," The Historical Journal, V, No. 1 (1962), pp. 71-72; Newton, pp. 250-251.

[5] B. D., V, No. 147.

seemed the best way to maintain political unity and foster development.[6] Between 1869 and 1888 a European consortium, after 1888 dominated by the Deutsche Bank, had constructed a line that spanned the domains of European Turkey.[7] But the Sultan's dream was a trunk line from Constantinople to the Persian Gulf, with branch lines to Smyrna, Aleppo, Damascus, Beirut, Mosul and Baghdad, which would allow for the quick and easy movement of troops from one part of Asiatic Turkey to another in the event of a rebellion.[8] The European powers, on the other hand, saw in such a line a shortened trade route to the East and an instrument for the development of a new economic hinterland.[9]

Prior to the British occupation of Egypt, British counsel had held sway at The Porte. But this action, the British government's condemnation of the Ottoman's mistreatment of their subject Christian populations, and the British government's reluctance to encourage British investment after the Turkish default of 1875 resulted in the Sultan turning his back on the British and seeking friendlier ties

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[6] E. M. Earle, Turkey, the Great Powers, and the Bagdad Railway. A Study in Imperialism (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1924), pp. 9-17, 19-21; Feis, p. 342; Wolf, p. 12.

[7] Feis, pp. 293-297; Earle, pp. 29-31; Meyer, pp. 76-77.

[8] Feis, pp. 342-343; Earle, pp. 21-22.

[9] Ibid., pp. 2-5.

with Germany.[10] As part of this policy, he awarded the contract for the first stages of the Asiatic railway--from Constantinople to Angora--to a German syndicate. This was applauded by the Kaiser, who was eager to establish German influence in the Near East, and by certain German nationalist organizations, which saw in the Ottoman Empire an important new source of vital raw materials and a new field for investment.[11]

By 1896 the line had reached Konia and negotiations were underway to have it extended to the Persian Gulf. Because this last stage of the projected route crossed long stretches of barren and mountainous terrain, the Deutsche Bank insisted on foreign participation to reduce the financial risk involved. In 1899 an agreement was concluded whereby German financiers were to provide 40% of the capital, British and French financiers 40%, and Turkish financiers 20%.[12] The British government had not opposed the agreement. The Cabinet seemed to think that the participation of British capital safeguarded British interests. In any event, the cooperation of the British government was required if the line was to secure a

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[10] Ibid., p. 38; Feis, p. 330; Platt, pp. 187-192.

[11] Meyer, p. 105; Earle, pp. 31-33, 39-40, 45-52; Wolfe, pp. 20, 65-66.

[12] Feis, pp. 344-346; Earle, pp. 33, 59-67.

terminus on the Persian Gulf, as the Great Powers recognized it as a British sphere of influence.[13]

When, in April 1903, the British government announced to the House of Commons that it would support the construction of the Baghdad Railway, it was harshly attacked in the British press.[14] The Times opposed the idea on the grounds that the railway would hurt the trade of British commercial houses in Mesopotamia as well as weaken Britain's position in the Gulf.[15] The editorial of 14 April 1903 opined, in moderate language, that the strategic objection would be overcome if it could be guaranteed that the line would not be "German". In response to this press campaign--which probably was launched by British firms with navigational interests in Mesopotamia[16]--and lobbying by commercial interests which would suffer because of such a railway, the government two weeks later reversed its position.[17] The Times' editorial "heartily

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[13]Ibid., pp. 68-69.

[14]Great Britain, 4 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), CXX (1903), cols. 1247-1248. The Daily Mail, Daily Telegraph, Pall Mall Gazette, Spectator and National Review all assailed the government. See Earle, p. 182 and Wolf, p. 42.

[15]The Times, 14, 18, 21,22 and 23 Apr. 1903.

[16]Hoffman, pp. 147-148; Earle, pp. 191-192; Wolf, p. 43.

[17]Great Britain, 4 Parliamentary Debates (Commons), CXXI (1903), cols. 221-222.

congratulated [the government] on their decision to have nothing to do with the Baghdad Railway project" and advised the government to continue in this policy until

> the whole scheme is recast in such a shape as to secure to us, in express and unmistakable terms, the rights and privileges indispensible for the preservation in our own hands of our long-standing interests in the Persian Gulf and in the neighbouring regions.[18]

Following the British refusal to join in the venture, the German financiers extended the line from Konia to Bulgurlu. But beyond this lay high mountains and further construction was delayed till 1908, when terms were worked out to extend the line an additional 850 kilometers, to within 700 kilometers of the Persian Gulf. However, the Young Turk Revolution intervened and the Young Turks insisted on British participation in the project.[19] The British Cabinet, when approached, again refused.[20] Unable to get British participation alone, the Turkish government enlisted the aid of the German government. To arouse the British Cabinet's interest, the Deutsche Bank suggested the formation of a new, British-controlled company to build the section from Baghdad to the Persian Gulf.[21] The British Foreign Office was sufficiently impressed by this offer to

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[18] The Times, 24 Apr. 1903.

[19] Feis, p. 353; Earle, pp. 93-97, 217-222; Wolf, pp. 48-55.

[20] Earle, p. 225.

[21] Wolf, p. 78.

send Sir Ernest Cassel to Berlin to investigate it.[22] The German offer of control turned out to be 50% ownership, which the British government thought insufficient.[23] Notwithstanding the lingering memories of the naval scare and the heavy-handed behavior of Germany in the Bosnian imbroglio, The Times' Berlin correspondent had no objection to German proposals to extend the Baghdad Railway so long as Britain controlled the section of the line from Baghdad to the Persian Gulf.[24] Nor was Printing House Square opposed to British participation: "An agreement ought not to be impossible" provided that Bethmann-Hollweg was prepared to deal with the question in a "fair-minded way."[25] The editorial did not explain what it meant by "fair minded," but it undoubtedly referred to the fact that the German government had made an agreement on the Baghdad Railway conditional on a general Anglo-German rapprochement.[26] Whilst desirous of the removal of the specific points of friction between Britain and Germany, Printing House Square did not want Britain and Germany to draw too

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[22] B. D., VI, Nos. 287, 289, 292, 293, 298 and 308.

[23] G. P., XXVII, Pt. II, Nos. 9985, 9986 and 9988.

[24] The Times, 18 Dec. 1909.

[25] Ibid., 30 Dec. 1909.

[26] G. P., XXVII, Pt. II, Nos. 9990 and 9993; B. D., VI, Nos. 308 and 317.

close together lest that estrange France, thereby again giving Germany free elbow room on the Continent.

The British constitutional crisis of 1910 brought to a halt the Anglo-German discussions on the railway.[27] The Baghdad Railway Company and the Turkish government, however, negotiated the terms for the section from El Helif to Baghdad. By this agreement the Baghdad Railway Company returned its rights of construction of the remaining sections of the line beyond Baghdad to the Turkish government, with the understanding that construction would be carried out by an internationally-financed company. There were several reasons for this. The last section of the line would be the most expensive to build; there would be less traffic than on preceding sections; because of domestic demands, the German money market could not provide sufficient funds; the German banks were unprepared to assume the sole risk; and most important of all, British cooperation was required.[28] Since 1899 Kuwait had been under British protection, though still nominally under the control of the Ottomans.[29] As Basra was the only deep-water port in the Gulf, the line would not stand a chance of being economically viable unless

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[27] Wolf, p. 80.

[28] Ibid., pp. 62-63; Feis, p. 355; Earle, pp. 226-229; Busch, pp. 324-325.

[29] Ibid., pp. 95-110.

Basra became the eastern terminus of the railway.[30]

By the spring of 1911 the Turkish government was anxious for an agreement as it wanted to raise its tariff rate, and could do so only with British consent. Such consent was unlikely till all outstanding Anglo-Turkish differences were resolved. As the Ottoman government again had freedom of action in the construction of the line from Baghdad to the Persian Gulf, it had in its hands the basis for a solution of the railway question.[31]

Even before serious negotiations began, Printing House Square reiterated its stand of 1903 that Britain had important interests that needed to be safeguarded.[32] It made the point more specifically on 23 March 1911.

> Our trade in these regions [Middle East] greatly exceeds that of other Powers, and the vital character of our political interests there is too patent to need discussion. . . . We are willing . . . to receive without disfavour and prejudice any plan which demonstrably does not menace our commerce or our political interests. But the demonstration must be clear, cogent, and irrefragable.

In the House of Lords, Lord Morley, Lord President of the Council, had stated in reply to a question by Lord Curzon that the British government was prepared to agree to Basra as a terminus "under certain conditions."[33] The

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[30] Ibid., p. 32; Earle, p. 196.

[31] Wolf, p. 90; Busch, pp. 323-324.

[32] The Times, 19 Jan. 1911 (editorial).

[33] Great Britain, 5 Parliamentary Debates (Lords), VII (1911), col. 602.

reaction of Printing House Square was immediate and blunt.

> The country will want to know what those conditions are to be before any decisive step is taken, and it will demand that they shall effectively and indisputably safeguard all that England and India stand to lose by a blunder or injudicious act of diplomatic weakness in this quarter.[34]

However, there was no reason for concern. That The Times was aware of this is indicated by the fact that there was not another editorial on the subject for over a year. The British government would accept nothing less than recognition of Britain's special position in the Persian Gulf; two British subjects on the board of directors of the company that constructed this part of the railway; and protection of the special privileges of the British navigational firms on the Tigris, Euphrates and Shatt-el-Arab Rivers.[35]

The Anglo-Turkish negotiations were temporarily interrupted by the Tripolitanian War.[36] They resumed in March 1912 and in July 1913 an agreement was signed.[37] The Times did not even bother to mention the fact, although it had stated on 17 May 1913, in commenting on rumors of an imminent signature, that this would prepare the way for

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[34] The Times, 23 Mar. 1911.

[35] Wolf, p. 91.

[36] Busch, p. 329.

[37] B. D., X, Pt. II, No. 124.

"German promoters . . . to complete their great project with the benevolent acquiescence of Great Britain." Reflecting The Times' new tone,[38] the editorial concluded that "it [Anglo-German participation in the Baghdad Railway] will be a further demonstration of that spirit of cooperation among the Great Powers which has done so much of late to preserve the peace of Europe." An Anglo-German agreement on the Gulf section of the railway was initialed in June 1914,[39] but war was declared before it could be signed.

Although the Baghdad Railway and the German naval programme were the main identifiable points of friction between German and Britain between 1904 and 1914, The Times paid scant attention to the former as compared to the latter. There was less column space devoted to the Baghdad Railway over the whole of this ten-year period than to the German navy in the month of March 1908 alone. Of this coverage, over 80% consisted of factual reports of the progress of construction, of financial arrangements, and of the results or rumored results of negotiations for advancing the line. There were only eight editorials on the subject, none of them opposed to the project per se. What Printing House Square consistently objected to, however, were terms that

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[38] See Chap. V, Pt. II.

[39] G. P., XXXVII, Pt. I, Nos. 14,902 and 14,907; The Times, 30 June 1914.

would jeopardize British commercial and strategic interests in the Middle East--particularly the latter. Nor did The Times see anything sinister in German penetration of the Ottoman Empire. Never once was it stated explicitly or even hinted at, that the Baghdad Railway was part of the German government's strategy for becoming a world power. It is somewhat difficult to explain this. The History of 'The Times' says little about the Baghdad Railway. Perhaps Printing House Square's knowledge that the British government held the trump card, if the line was to be extended to the Gulf, in its control of Kuwait, meant that Printing House Square never very seriously regarded the railway as a threat to Britain's Suez link with India.

II

By the end of the nineteenth century, a large number of nations were heavily dependent on international trade for their economic well-being. Industrialization and improvements in transportation and communications had brought about global economic inter-dependence. This was particularly the case for Great Britain. It was dependent on overseas sources for more than half of its foodstuffs and reliant on raw and unfinished goods from abroad to supply its factories, which processed and re-exported these materials as finished wares. This ceaseless flow accounted

for the enviable standard of living enjoyed by its citizens.[40]

In the early stages of industrialization, British governments had regulated trade and commerce with a view to promoting national welfare.[41] However, as it developed, regulation and interference by the state were gradually lessened.[42] The reason was political. Over the years, a complicated structure of import duties had grown up in response to the government's increasing need for tax revenues. The other alternative of the early nineteenth century, the land tax, was politically inexpedient because political power was vested in the landed class. Beginning around 1820, the growing industrial and commercial sectors of England began to clamour for the separation of economic policy from political consideration, and for the abolition of all impediments to the free exchange of goods between nations. The imposition of a moderate income tax in 1842 gave the government a convenient source of income, without

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[40]Anthony Harrison, The Framework of Economic Activity. The International Economy and the Rise of the State in the Twentieth Century (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 7-8; Asa Briggs, "The World Economy: Interdependence and Planning," NCMH, XII, pp. 39-40; Platt, p. 351; Barraclough, pp. 49-55.

[41]E. M. Earle, "Adam Smith, Alexander Hamilton, Friedrich List: The Economic Foundations of Military Power," Makers of Modern Strategy: Military Thought from Machiavelli to Hitler, ed. by E. M. Earle (New York: Atheneum, 1969), pp. 118-119.

[42]Harrison, pp. 8-9.

rousing the hostility of the landed class.[43] In 1846 the Corn Laws, which protected the agricultural sectors of the economy by heavy duties on imported grains, were abolished and a major step taken toward free trade. For the next generation, laissez faire was accepted economic doctrine and practice.[44]

As the first industrialized country, Great Britain for some years enjoyed an unrivalled advantage in the trade of manufactured goods. Nevertheless, its import trade developed at a faster rate than its export trade and by 1870 there was a readily apparent unfavourable balance of trade. This trade deficit was made good from "invisible exports". Earnings from British investments abroad, the use of the British merchant marine by foreign firms for their shipping and foreign reliance on British insurance companies to protect their cargos in British holds earned valuable pounds which paid for this excess of imports over exports.[45] But it was evident that Britain could not rely indefinitely on its invisible earnings and that if the value of its exports were not increased the nation would experience a fall in its standard of living vis-à-vis the rest of the world.

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[43]David Thomson, England in the Nineteenth Century: 1815-1914 (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970), pp. 77-79.

[44]Ibid., pp. 79-82.

[45]Hoffman, pp. 2-12; Feis, pp. 14-17.

After 1880 British industrialists were no longer in a position to view the world with their old equanimity. The Franco-Prussian War and the resulting "armed peace" meant that a number of Continental statesmen, Bismarck in particular, were now very concerned with military preparedness. As a state could consider itself prepared for war only if it was self-sufficient in food and munitions, the protective tariff became a subject of military consideration. Not only would a protective tariff foster infant industry, thereby ensuring the needed military hardware, but it would also keep viable the country's agriculture by sheltering it from the competition of the cheaper grains of Russia, the U. S. A. and Rumania, thus reducing the danger of starvation during blockade in wartime.[46]

By 1900 not only were many British manufacturers excluded from the Continent and from the U. S. A., which had adopted the prohibitive McKinley Tariff in 1890, but they were facing stiff competition in the expansion of their trade in the remaining unprotected markets of the world, in the colonies and even in Britain itself from the newly industrialized nations of Europe, from the U. S. A. and in some cases even from Japan.[47] Unlike most other nations,

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[46]Hayes, pp. 204-205; Hoffman, p. 22; Meyer, pp. 111-116; Earle, Makers of Modern Strategy, pp. 152-154.

[47]Briggs, NCMH, XII, pp. 40-42.

Britain had resisted the protectionist trend of the 1880's and the 1890's. The reason was that commercial interests outweighed the agricultural and that free trade had served Britain so well that laissez-faire doctrine was generally accepted as self-evident truth, notwithstanding that the conditions of international trade which had previously favoured Great Britain were now changed.

Printing House Square had perceived these new developments as early as 1875[48] and by the mid-1880's was urging British businessmen to show greater initiative and imagination if they meant to maintain their European markets against German competition.[49] However, the trend continued and by 1890 Germany had replaced Britain as the chief source of exports to Russia, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Austria-Hungary and Rumania, and was pressing hard in Norway, Holland and Belgium, in all of which Britain had at one time enjoyed an unrivalled position.[50] The British government was sufficiently concerned by these developments to establish a commission to enquire into the reasons why Britain's export trade was growing less rapidly than that of a number of other nations, especially Germany. The Board of Trade's report placed the blame

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[48] The Times, 9 Jan. 1875.

[49] Ibid., 6 Aug. 1886.

[50] Hoffman, p. 102.

squarely with the British businessman, whom it described as "weighted down by complacent apathy, arrogance, conservatism, and antiquated commercial practices."[51] This was essentially the view expressed in The Times from 1904 to 1914. However, Printing House Square's opinion was based on information gathered for it from studies by its overseas correspondents, rather than on the government's investigation.

Great Britain suffered its sharpest competition from Germany in steel and chemicals. It was the development of these two industries that transformed the Reich from an agrarian nation into an industrial giant. In 1871 Germany had produced only three-fifths the steel of the United Kingdom; by 1914 it was producing twice as much, although only half the amount of the United States.[52] Likewise, in 1880 Great Britain had been the world's largest producer of chemicals, but by 1913 it was third, behind Germany and the United States respectively.[53] When dealing with German commercial rivalry, it was to the steel industry

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[51] Ibid., p. 80.

[52] Ibid., pp. 224-225; P. L. Payne, "Iron and Steel Manufactures," The Development of British Industry and Foreign Competition, 1875-1914, ed. by D. H. Aldcroft (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1968), pp. 72-75.

[53] R. W. Richardson, "Chemicals", The Development of British Industry and Foreign Competition, p. 278.

that The Times devoted particular attention.[54] In its review of the nation's economic performance over the previous twelve months, The Times observed in 1904 that in Great Britain itself there were numerous instances when British steel had been displaced by German and Belgian.[55] Whilst this would have been deemed a serious development at any time, it was regarded as very alarming at this juncture because there was an economic recession that further swelled the ranks of the unemployed.[56]

The new industrial duties approved by the Reichstag in January 1905 imposed an additional hardship on British businessmen. The new tax schedules raised the price of imported wools and cottons by 30% to 50% and the price of finished leather goods by 7% to 12%.[57] Saunders suggested that the British government adopt a policy of "retaliation".[58] This was the first instance of a Times' correspondent suggesting that the British government abandon its free trade policy. It was not till the following year that Printing House Square came out in support of protectionism.[59]

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[54]E.g., The Times, 7 Jan. 1904; 15 Nov. 1907; 17 Jan. 1908; 15 Jan. 1909.

[55]Ibid., 11 Feb. 1904.

[56]A. J. Taylor, "The Economy," Edwardian England 1901-1914, ed. by S. Nowell-Smith (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 106-107; Clapham, III, pp. 41-46.

[57]The Times, 31 Jan. 1905. [58]Ibid.

[59]Ibid., 4 Oct. 1906.

By then it was obvious that British moralizing on the virtues of laissez-faire was not going to improve the nation's trade position. The world's economy was still in the grip of recession and Britain's unprotected market had become a dumping ground for Belgian, American and German manufactures.[60]

On 27 December 1907 The Times' "Financial and Commercial Supplement" began a three-part series entitled "Commercial Organization in Germany."[61] The purpose of these articles was to enquire into the reason why "Germany has made such remarkable progress in commerce and industry during the last 35 years. . . ."[62] The conclusion was that the German state had become a partner with the German businessman in helping him to manufacture and market his product. Although The Times disapproved of the German practice of state subsidies to industry,[63] it strongly encouraged the British government to emulate the German government in using Foreign Office consuls to gather information of trade opportunities and to promote German goods abroad.[64] The introductory article pointed out that in

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[60] Ibid.

[61] The series appeared on 27 Dec. 1907; 3 Jan. 1908; and 31 Jan. 1908.

[62] The Times, 27 Dec. 1907.

[63] Ibid., 3 Jan. 1908.

[64] Ibid., 27 Dec. 1907.

1872 there had been 29 German consular representatives; in 1907 there were 852. This was indeed an important reason for the rapid expansion of the German export trade. Printing House Square recognized its importance and did several more articles on it.[65]

The "Financial and Commercial Supplement" of 5 November 1909 devoted a special article to British trade possibilities in Russia. Over the previous sixteen years Russia's import trade had grown by 60%. In that period the value of British imports had risen by about 1/4 of 1%, but the value of German imports had increased by 300%. Although The Times recognized that Germany possessed natural advantages because of geography, Britain had "enjoyed an old-established hold on the market." It noted that British firms were themselves partly to blame for their failure to gain new trade: they were "content to wait for orders," the few salesmen they did have travelling Russia were unable to speak the language, they did not know the requirements of the local market, and they were totally unfamiliar with Russian business practices. But it also censured British consuls in strong language for their failure to advance British sales.

The Times' criticisms fell on deaf ears. The British foreign service was unwilling to become a partner

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[65]E.g., ibid., 16 Oct. 1908; 5 Nov. 1909; and 24 Dec. 1909.

in the promotion of British trade and commerce. The people in the diplomatic service were of aristocratic background and tended to regard bankers and traders as rather lower-class people and business as a rather lower-class occupation. Laissez-faire philosophy was still widely accepted and most foreign service personnel were reluctant to intrude into an area that they believed was best left free of government interference.[66] Nor were British firms prepared suddenly to alter their way of doing business. Their methods had worked well enough in the past and, given the ethnocentrism of the period, were still deemed superior to those of foreigners.[67]

For The Times, the most noteworthy commercial development of 1909 was the gain that German businessmen were making in South Africa in machinery and textiles at the expense of the British product. Although the German manufacturer had an advantage because of the German government's railway and shipping subsidies, which frequently made his good cheaper than the corresponding British commodity, the German sales representative was superior to his British counterpart in the quality of service

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[66]Harold Nicolson, Diplomacy (London: Thornton Butterworth Ltd., 1939), pp. 163-164; Hoffman, pp. 61-62; Platt, pp. xvii-xxxix, 34-73, 81, 97-101, 151-153.

[67]Hoffman, pp. 35-36, 80-88.

offered.[68] The failure of British firms to follow the German practice of training their salesmen thoroughly and "scientifically" before sending them overseas was something that required immediate rectification, stated The Times.[69]

In the last half of the nineteenth and the first several decades of the twentieth century, Latin America was one of Great Britain's major outlets for trade and investment.[70] In Argentina, with its rapidly expanding market, Britain continued to get the lion's share of the import trade, but the percentage of British goods gradually declined, whereas that of other countries increased. According to The Times, in 1899 British products represented about 38% of the market, but only 34% in 1907. During the same period, the value of German goods rose from 5% to 15%; those of the United States from 5% to 13%; and Italian goods from 6% to 9%. This loss of ground by the United Kingdom was "due to a considerable extent to want of intelligence and active propaganda."[71] In an editorial of 1 February 1911 The Times commented on Britain's failure to increase the percentage value of its exports to Brazil and

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[68] The Times, 24 Sept. 1909.

[69] Ibid., 8 Jan. 1904; 31 Jan. 1908; 24 Sept., 22 Oct., and 24 Dec. 1909.

[70] Platt, p. 308.

[71] The Times, 24 Dec. 1909.

Argentina and laid the blame squarely with the British manufacturer and his sales representative. Whilst it was common knowledge that Portuguese was the language of Brazil and Spanish of Argentina, it noted, British trade catalogues for those countries continued to be printed in English, with English weights and measures, although the metric system was used in Latin America. Furthermore, few of the British sales representatives sent out to these countries had a working knowledge of these languages.

> The British merchant . . . is very apt to think that he knows better what his customers want than they do themselves. At any rate, he very often sends them, not what they have asked for and ordered, but what it suits him to supply. He will do business with them on his own terms and not on the terms to which they are accustomed in doing business with merchants of other nations.

From 1910 to the outbreak of World War I, The Times devoted less attention to Britain's world trade position than in previous years. This was undoubtedly due to the economic recovery which began in 1909 and resulted in record export sales from 1911 to 1913.[72]

Hoffman has written that "the German trade rivalry . . . may rightly be viewed as the basic cause for the anti-German orientation of British world policy."[73] This is hardly an accurate statement: the tension in Anglo-German

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[72] Ibid., 13 Jan. 1911; 22 Jan. 1912; and 17 Jan. 1913.

[73] Hoffman, pp. 279 and 303.

relations derived from other issues.[74] Nor is his statement that The Times "played up the German trade peril" a fair charge.[75] Whilst Printing House Square was concerned about Britain's failure to match Germany's rate of growth in its export trade, it saw nothing sinister in this. It saw the reason in the inertia of the British businessman--his complacency, his lack of initiative and his unwillingness to change his product or practices to accomodate the local market--and the failure of the British government to share in the promotion of British wares. In the German businessman and the German consul overseas The Times saw models whom their British counterparts would have to imitate if Britain was to increase its share of world trade. Nor was German commercial rivalry the only concern. The United States, Belgium and France were as frequently cited as nations that were cutting into Britain's overseas market as was Germany.

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[74] See Chaps. II and III.

[75] Hoffman, p. 277.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

In the decade before World War I, The Times consistently voiced distrust of Germany in its news reports and editorials. Once The Times had adopted the policy that Germany was embarked on a foreign policy that threatened Britain's security, it stuck to this policy. Notwithstanding that there was a mellowing in The Times' position between the last months of 1911 and the outbreak of war in 1914, The Times' basic policy, that the course being pursued by Germany constituted a danger to Britain, remained the same.

O. J. Hale, the standard authority on the pre-War European press, has stated that The Times' policy on Germany before the war was initially decided by Printing House Square and that the reportage of Saunders and the other Continental correspondents thereafter merely reflected instructions from London. In fact, though, the opposite was the case. Till about 1902 Bell and Chirol, the men of Printing House Square most concerned with deciding The Times' foreign policy, had regarded Germany generally as a nation of sober, hard-working, disciplined adults and obedient, well-scrubbed children. However, Saunders and Lavino, who had closest contact with developments in Germany,

had for some time before the South African War discerned trends that they found disturbing. The semi-autocratic character of the German state and the excessive nationalism of the powerful pressure groups which thrived on expansionist doctrines and jealousy of Britain, combined to provide a climate that was likely to result in instability and Anglophobia in German foreign policy. The ugly articles against Britain in Germany during the South African War confirmed for the Berlin and Paris correspondents what they had feared for some time--that German foreign policy was basically anti-British. Their reports of the savage stories about Britain in the German press persuaded Bell and Chirol that perhaps Germany was not after all a country of Küche, Kinder und Kirche, as they had thought; but rather a nation of spiked helmets and honed bayonets, impelled by the ambition to make itself master of Europe. This new perception was reflected in Printing House Square's changed attitude toward France after 1903 and its reception of the Anglo-French entente the following year.

Although an individual's social milieu consists of countless events and developments, which of these intrude into his consciousness and win his attention depends on the person's basic beliefs and interests. In the same way that the kind of information to which one is receptive is determined by the person's preoccupations, the interpretation which the information is given results from his

preconceptions on the matter.[1] Once Lavino and Saunders had decided that the Kaiser had steered Germany on to a collision course with Britain, and had persuaded Bell and Chirol of this, all four devoted more attention to developments in Germany, particularly to naval issues, and gave them a different interpretation, than they otherwise would have done.

It is interesting to see how The Times used the terms "Berlin", "Germany" and "German Government" in these years. They were regularly used to denote the Kaiser and his entourage of advisers on foreign policy. Seldom did the word Berlin actually refer to the city, the word Germany specifically to the country, or the phrase German government to the formal governmental structures provided by the Imperial Constitution of 1871. Likewise, Printing House Square drew a clear distinction between the "German Government" and the "German people". Although The Times regularly voiced profound distrust of the Kaiser, the German Foreign Office, the German Admiralty and the Anglophobe nationalist groups whose influence distorted the Kaiser's judgement, it repeatedly announced that it had only the friendliest feelings for the ordinary German, whose views on Britain were being deliberately distorted by the German Foreign

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[1] See Harold D. Lasswell, "Why be Quantitative?", Reader in Public Opinion and Communications, eds. B. Berelson and M. Janowitz (2d ed. rev.; New York: The Free Press, 1966), pp. 247-259.

Office-controlled press.

Although the British government had entered into the entente in an effort to prevent involvement in a war against France and Russia in Asia through the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Saunders, Lavino, Bell and Chirol all regarded it as a response to developments in Europe. They considered it an alliance designed to contain Germany, which it was not.

By 1907 Printing House Square had sufficiently overcome its Russophobe sentiments to welcome the idea of an Anglo-Russian agreement. This change of heart toward Russia had not come easily. Germany's ill-considered intervention in Morocco in 1905, the growing naval rivalry between Germany and Britain, and the French government's warning to The Times that the entente was viable only if relations between France's ally, Russia, and Britain became more cordial and intimate had brought about this change in opinion. As the Kaiser was known to be courting the Tsar with the object of drawing Russia into the Triple Alliance, Printing House Square saw the Anglo-Russian Convention as a buttress of the European system.

The conclusion of the entente badly upset the German Foreign Office, which hastily decided to smash the incipient coalition through intervention in Morocco. Lavino was the first to discern the motive for the German government's action, and Saunders and Printing House Square almost immediately concurred with him that the official reason for

intervention advanced by the German government was merely a pretext. Harris, who was pro-German and had swallowed the German government's official explanation that it had intervened only to maintain the open door in Morocco in the face of French violations, was instructed by Chirol to fall in line with the position being taken by Printing House Square. When he refused, his despatches were edited, amended or entirely withheld from publication. Throughout the crisis, Bell and Chirol used The Times to try to create the impression abroad that both the British government and the British people stood solidly behind France. It was common knowledge amongst The Times' people that many Frenchmen still regarded Britain as Perfidious Albion and advocated a rapprochement with Germany as a way of avoiding the humiliation of a second Sedan. Printing House Square was committed to using all its authority to dispel this notion, since it regarded the entente as the only alignment capable of containing Germany.

Germany's dramatic intervention in Morocco in 1911 caught The Times by surprise, just as it had in 1905. But even before the Panther docked at Agadir, Printing House Square had decided to defend the French government's despatch of troops to Fez. The reason again was the realization that there was a powerful body of opinion in France that favoured an accommodation with Germany, which believed that in the event of a Franco-German war, Britain either

would refuse to become involved or would be unable to provide support that would be of real help to France. Thus again, as during the first Moroccan crisis, The Times regarded it a case of working to preserve the entente. The difference was that by now Printing House Square had become irritated by many French actions, particularly in Morocco. Whilst Printing House Square viewed the entente as an alliance designed specifically to contain Germany, in France it was widely regarded as primarily an economic agreement that gave French firms carte blanche in Morocco. A number of British firms in Morocco had suffered because of French policies there, and this had caused some annoyance at Printing House Square. When Braham temporarily took charge of the Foreign Department in the autumn of 1911, during Chirol's illness, he accorded the French government no more support on Morocco than he deemed necessary to maintain the entente. This was his way of indicating The Times' growing displeasure of French treatment of British businesses.

Unlike in 1905, in 1911 Printing House Square at first thought that vital British interests were at stake in Morocco. It was understood that the Panther's appearance at Agadir was the German Foreign Office's clumsy way of indicating that it expected compensation in return for the establishment of a French protectorate in Morocco. What was unclear was what Kiderlen-Wächter expected.

Because of its preoccupation with the German navy, Printing House Square feared that the German Admiralty wanted a Mediterranean port in North Africa, and that if Germany got it, Britain's Mediterranean link with India would be jeopardized. There was concern at The Times that the French government was not above making an independent deal with Germany without regard to British strategic considerations. Hence The Times tempered its support of France with the proviso that the British government must be a partner in Franco-German discussions to settle the crisis.

In the last year of Buckle's editorship, The Times began to mellow its tone on Germany. This softening was occasioned by the outbreak of war between Italy and Turkey in September 1911. Italy's action seemed likely to trigger a free-for-all in which the Balkan states would try to pick clean Turkey's Balkan carcass. Should either Russia or Austria-Hungary be drawn into this melee, a major European war was virtually inevitable because of the alliance systems. Printing House Square did not want a major war. It had worked for the Anglo-French and Anglo-Russian ententes as a way of preserving the European balance of power. But once a coalition capable of preventing Germany from exercising hegemony had been established, and the prospect of war had been given immediacy, The Times began to counsel better relations with Germany in an effort to preserve the peace of Europe. What Bell, Chirol and

Buckle sought was the maintenance of the European status quo, not the military defeat of Germany.

Dawson, who succeeded Buckle as editor in August 1912, continued with this mellowed tone till the war's outbreak. Dawson's views on international relations had been formed during his years abroad. A staunch apologist of empire, he believed that Britain's principal interests lay outside Europe--in Egypt, South Africa and the Far East. What he desired, therefore, was a general European accomodation that would keep Germany from overthrowing the European system, and would free Britain's hands to concentrate on imperial problems.

The Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908 had also precipitated a major European crisis, although one in which Germany at first was not directly involved. The German government had tried to reconcile its loyalties to Turkey, where it was working to reestablish its influence, and to Austria-Hungary, with whom it had an alliance. When the strain in this policy became too great, Germany came out solidly on the side of Austria-Hungary by threatening Russia with war if it did not back down from its support of Serbia. Although this brutal ultimatum had resulted from Germany's fear of losing its one reliable ally, and thus finding itself isolated in Europe, Chirol immediately concluded that this action was an attempt to break up the Triple Entente, by demonstrating to Russia that it could

expect help neither from Britain nor from France in the event of a Russo-German war. Chirol sincerely put the worst possible construction on Germany's intervention because Printing House Square just then was in a frenzy of dread over the rumored acceleration of German dreadnoughts.

It was this topic, the German navy, that most disturbed Printing House Square and that was the one continuous thread in foreign news from 1906 to 1914. The "blue-water doctrine" was still accepted by Printing House Square as self-evident truth. Since the British navy was regarded by Bell, Buckle and Chirol as Britain's instrument for maintaining the European balance of power, as well as its safeguard against starvation and invasion in wartime, other nations' naval policies became the touchstone of their intentions toward Britain for The Times. After 1904 Germany's ambitious naval programme was interpreted by Printing House Square as proof that Germany intended to gain mastery of the Continent. The Liberal government's left wing, which was pledged to extend social welfare services through the reduction of naval and military expenditures, was therefore a continuous cause of concern to Printing House Square. Had it not been for the influence of the "economaniacs" in the Liberal party, The Times would not have trumpeted the naval issue as loudly as it did in these years. The only way that Printing House Square could hope to keep the Liberal government committed to a naval policy

that it considered to be adequate in the face of the German challenge was to stir up its readers before the presentation of the naval estimates to Parliament each year. It is for this reason that the bulk of the naval coverage regularly came before March, at which time the naval estimates were published.

Any change in the German Navy Law providing for additional construction was immediately met by a campaign in The Times calling on the Liberal government to provide for additions to the British fleet. The German Supplementary Navy Law of 1905 brought a 62% increase over the previous year in terms of space devoted to the German navy. In 1906, however, reportage dropped below that of 1904 by 34%. This was occasioned by the launch of the first dreadnought, which for the moment gave the British navy a comfortable and unbeatable advantage against the German navy. But the German Navy Bill of 1907, by which the pace of construction of German battleships was accelerated through the reduction of their active life by five years, brought an increase in coverage of almost seven times over that of 1906. The high proportion (79%) of this coverage found on inside pages resulted from the large number of editorials on the subject. As the memory of Tangier and the Algeciras Conference was still fresh at Printing House Square, Tirpitz's latest manoeuvre appeared particularly significant. Although the column inches devoted to the German navy in 1908 dropped

by one-quarter from 1907, this was still substantially higher than for any previous year but 1907. The Tweedmouth letter had caused considerable annoyance at Printing House Square and had further heightened suspicion of the direction of German policy. However, the naval panic of the spring of 1909, precipitated by the belief that the German Admiralty was building ahead of its published schedule, ensured that more attention was given to the German navy by The Times in 1909 than in any other year: 45% more space than in 1908 and 12% more than in 1907. The realization that fears of German acceleration had been unfounded, and the German Admiralty's reluctance, for a while at least, to do anything that would further inflame British public opinion, resulted in moderation of both the number and the tone of articles in 1910. In 1910 the space devoted to the German navy was down by half from that of the previous year. This established a new plateau till the war's outbreak, except for 1912, when coverage again increased by 50% in response to Tirpitz's Navy Law of that year.

In 1908 Lord Northcliffe, the proprietor of the immensely successful Daily Mail and an avowed Germanophobe, purchased the financially-ailing Times. Sidney B. Fay, the distinguished Harvard historian, has suggested that The Times' preoccupation with, and attitude towards, Germany resulted from Northcliffe deciding the paper's editorial policy after he got ownership, and that this in itself was

a major contributing cause of the war.[2] This is incorrect. Whilst negotiating for The Times, Northcliffe had promised Bell that he would himself not meddle in deciding the paper's editorial policies. Such a guarantee would normally have been worthless, but in this case, Northcliffe was held pretty much to his word. The Times' personnel took seriously its tradition of criticism of men and causes free from proprietorial interference, and would have resigned had Northcliffe forced his ideas on foreign policy on Printing House Square. Had that happened, The Times' reputation would have been destroyed and its presumed influence in British foreign policy lost; hardly what Northcliffe wanted. The one instance of successful interference by Northcliffe occurred during the "Marconi affair", which was a domestic matter involving alleged government corruption in the awarding of a contract to the English Marconi Company.[3] What happened once war erupted was, of course, a different matter. But Northcliffe's wartime and post-war influence should not be read into the pre-war period.

Nor did The Times have the importance in determining Britain's foreign policy that Fay and Hale, inter alia, assume. The adoption by the British Foreign Office in 1906

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[2] S. B. Fay, "The influence of the Pre-War Press in Europe," Current History, XXIII (Nov. 1930), p. 213.

[3] The History of 'The Times', IV, Pt. II, Appendix II, Sources: V.

of views similar to those being advocated in The Times resulted not from the conversion of the Foreign Office's personnel to the views of Printing House Square concerning Germany, but from the retirement of the "old guard" and their replacement by younger men with new ideas. These younger men had formed their ideas independently of The Times when they discerned in Germany the same trends and developments that had first alarmed Lavino, Saunders, Bell and Chirol.

The mellowing in tone that was evident in The Times between the autumn of 1911 and the outbreak of war in 1914, occasioned by the belief at Printing House Square that an accomodation with Germany that would maintain the European status quo and preserve peace was possible, stands in sharp contrast to the prevailing opinions at the Foreign Office, the Admiralty and the War Office. At the Foreign Office, Arthur Nicolson, the Permanent Under-Secretary, and Louis Mallet and Eyre Crowe, the Assistant Under-Secretaries responsible for European affairs, opposed the idea of even a limited settlement with Germany. It was their view that the long-term aim of German foreign policy was the overthrow of the European system, and that only firmer commitments by Britain to France and Russia could stop that happening. Better relations with Germany, they thought, would only serve to strain the Anglo-French and Anglo-Russian ententes, thereby strengthening Germany's hand.

The Admiralty's view was somewhat similar. It regarded the German fleet as designed specifically for a "bolt-from-the-blue strike" against the British fleet. Hence in its view what was needed was a stronger naval program, not a political settlement with Germany that would strengthen the hand of the radicals to divert funds from the building of ships to old age pensions. The War Office, which almost took for granted a future war with Germany, wanted more funds for the Territorial Force and Expeditionary Force, not an accomodation that would make difficult-to-get funds even scarcer. Thus in the two years preceding the war's outbreak, it was the Foreign Office, the Admiralty and the War Office that displayed the greatest distrust of Germany and most strongly pressed the Cabinet to pursue an anti-German policy, not The Times, as has been suggested so often.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

The space devoted to the German navy in The Times was measured in "column inches". Any news or comment that dealt with the German navy was treated as a measurable unit and its length in the column recorded in inches. Hence articles on agitation by the German Navy League and some articles on the Pan-German League, the German Colonial Society and the Association of German Industrialists fell into this category and are included in these measurements.

Space devoted to the German navy

Year	Column Inches	Percentage on the Front Newspage	Percentage on Inside Newspages
1904	167	95	5
1905	270	68	32
1906	110	99	1
1907	807	21	79
1908	620	63	37
1909	901	45	55
1910	434	60	40
1911	453	29	71
1912	642	33	67
1913	480	38	62
1914 (to 28 June)	265	28	72

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