

HELIGOLAND AND THE MAKING OF THE ANGLO-GERMAN
COLONIAL AGREEMENT IN 1890

by

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PREFACE

The Anglo-German agreement of 1890, better known as the Treaty of Heligoland-Zanzibar, resolved the numerous and often complex colonial issues arising from the imperialistic ambitions of both countries. The focus of the treaty was on disputes in Africa. During the course of the negotiations the British offered the cession of the island of Heligoland as an inducement for the Germans to relinquish their claims to the Sultanate of Zanzibar. Thus, the African perspective on the treaty has been the standard approach to its study.

Heligoland, however, was also a major factor in the conclusion of this treaty. For the British the island had become by 1890 a financial burden offering little to the defense of Great Britain. The Germans, however, placed a far higher value on the island, and the desire to acquire the island repeatedly surfaced in diplomatic exchanges. The Germans wanted the island for defensive purposes as well as for nationalistic ones. From this point of view the treaty also had a European perspective, and it can be considered as a barometer of Anglo-German relations. The treaty was the product of cordial relations

between the two countries in the 1880s, but it was concluded on the eve of a less friendly era.

This study of the Treaty of Heligoland-Zanzibar examines the interests of both the British and the Germans in Heligoland and the value each placed on the island. The development of the colonial rivalries which produced the settlement are examined as well as how Heligoland became involved in the settlement of these African disputes. The interaction between the issue of Heligoland and the African rivalries provides the basis for a new interpretation of the Anglo-German treaty of 1890.

There are many people who have contributed to the completion of this thesis. First of all, I would like to thank Dr. Brian L. Blakeley, the director of this thesis, for his critique and thoughtful suggestions. I am also grateful to Dr. Otto Nelson, the other member of my committee, for his encouragement and help in my research. My fellow graduate students were also helpful to me in helping to clarify my ideas in providing comments. I owe a special debt to my parents who made my education possible. Finally, my task would have been much more difficult without the moral support and understanding of my wife.

CHAPTER I
THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE TREATY OF
HELIGOLAND-ZANZIBAR

The Anglo-German Treaty of Heligoland-Zanzibar¹ of 1890 has not been neglected by historians. However, unlike the Entente Cordiale, except for a few journal articles there is little work dedicated specifically to this treaty. Rather, historians have traditionally viewed the treaty in the context of Anglo-German imperial rivalry in the late nineteenth century. Unfortunately, the very real significance of the small island of Heligoland is often overlooked in such treatments.

Two of the best general studies on Anglo-German relations and European diplomacy in the late nineteenth century are by William L. Langer. His works, European Alliances and Alignments, 1870-1890 (1950) and The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890-1902 (1951), interpret the Treaty of Heligoland-Zanzibar as a British move to ensure the success of colonial policies in Africa. A. J. P. Taylor's The Struggle For Mastery in Europe (1954),

¹Heligoland and Helgoland are both acceptable spellings for the island's name. The author will use the contemporary spelling, Heligoland.

another standard diplomatic reference work, gives much of the same interpretation.² Raymond Sontag's Germany and England: Background of Conflict 1848-1894 (1938) concentrates specifically on the relations between Germany and Great Britain. More recently, Paul Kennedy's The Rise of Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1914 (1980) provides the broadest study of Anglo-German relations. Kennedy, treating the treaty similarly to most earlier historians, focuses primarily on the African provisions in the treaty.³

The Treaty of Heligoland-Zanzibar was, in fact, a product of Germany's seizure of African colonies. The British had established colonies and spheres of influence in Africa long before the Germans hastily but energetically undertook a colonial imperialism in the 1880s. Germany's sudden interest in African colonies destabilized British colonial objectives. The Germans did not immediately become adversaries but rather competitors with goals that often conflicted with those of the British. For example, in 1890 Governor Bartle Frere reported from Cape Town concerns over German activity on the Southwest coast

²William L. Langer, European Alliances and Alignments, 1870-1890 (2 ed., New York, 1950), and The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890-1902 (2 ed., New York, 1951); A. J. P. Taylor, The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1914 (Oxford, 1954); and Ronald E. Robinson and John Gallagher, Africa and the Victorians (London, 1961).

³Paul M. Kennedy, The Rise of Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914 (Boston, 1980), pp. 454-456.

of Africa. In his report to the Secretary of State he enclosed a newspaper article which outlined a German colonial plan whereby the Germans would control central Africa from coast to coast and thwart British imperialist dreams of a British empire from the Cape to Cairo.⁴

Bismarck's sudden acquisition of colonies in 1884 and 1885 created controversy in diplomatic circles. Historians have been equally uncertain as to the motivations behind this policy switch. Bismarck had long opposed the colonial movement in Germany, but in 1884 he surprised the British by reversing his position and moving to acquire colonies. While there is much divergence of opinion over various aspects of the German colonial bid, the basic question comes down to whether Bismarck planned to use the colonies as domestic and diplomatic tools or whether he was genuinely converted to colonialism and its economic philosophy.⁵

In Germany's First Bid for Colonies (1938), A. J. P. Taylor interpreted Bismarck's colonialism as a means of

⁴Governor Frere to Secretary of State Lord Kimberley, July 19, 1880, "Correspondences respecting the Settlement at Angra Pequena, on the S. W. Coast of Africa," C. 4190, August 1890, Parl. Paps., Irish University Press Series, Africa, 18: 157.

⁵An excellent discussion of this wide range of opinion is contained in P. Gifford and W. R. Louis, Britain and Germany in Africa: Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule (New Haven, 1967), pp. 713-727. See also: Woodruff Smith, The German Colonial Empire (Chapel Hill, 1978), p. 39, fn. 42.

promoting German foreign policy objectives. The colonies served Bismarck as instruments of influence in those areas where the British would be most sensitive--the colonies. Taylor argued that Bismarck anticipated that the outcome of negotiations over colonial disputes would be an alliance with Great Britain which would counter any possible threats from France.⁶

Erich Eyck and Norman Rich also saw Bismarck's development of a colonial policy as European in orientation. However, these historians argued that Bismarck sought to use colonial expansion for domestic rather than for diplomatic objectives. Eyck argued that the new colonial policy won for Bismarck the popular support necessary to defeat his political opposition in the Reichstag. Rich supported this line of reasoning with his works on Friedrich Holstein, adding that Bismarck also wished to counter the growing foreign influence on German domestic policy through Crown Prince Frederick.⁷

The more recent work of Woodruff Smith and Helmuth Stoecker considered many factors in explaining Bismarck's bid for colonies. Smith recognized the fact that economics,

⁶A. J. P. Taylor, Germany's First Bid for Colonies, 1884-1885: A Move in Bismarck's European Diplomacy (New York, 1938).

⁷Erich Eyck, Bismarck and the German Empire (New York, 1951); and Norman Rich, Friedrich von Holstein (2 vols., Cambridge, 1965).

domestic politics, and foreign concerns all influenced the Chancellor's decision. From the data available, however, he concluded that domestic politics were the basic impetus for expansion.⁸ Stoecker put forward an economic interpretation of Bismarck's policy. He argued that Bismarck's adoption of protective trade practices after 1879 naturally led to the development of colonies. The colonial acquisitions were made when Bismarck was convinced by his banker and by merchant associations⁹ that African markets would soon be lost to German trade. This idea appears to have come from Bismarck's colonial expert in the Foreign Office, Heinrich von Kusserow, who misinterpreted British and French African policy in 1883.¹⁰

Finally, H. A. Turner exemplifies those historians who believe that Bismarck was genuinely converted to imperialism. Turner argued in 1967 that Bismarck's colonial policy developed from a pure desire for colonies. Colonies were an end in themselves and not a means to an end, an

⁸W. Smith, The German Colonial Empire, pp. 37-39; Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Bismarck und der Imperialismus (Köln: 1969) argues that the colonial policy originated from Bismarck's perception that he could not control socio-economic developments in Germany.

⁹Stoecker's source here is a memorandum by Adolf Woermann of Hamburg. The evidence seems rather weak because Woermann destroyed his personal papers. P. Gifford and W. Louis, Britain and Germany, p. 716.

¹⁰H. Stoecker, German Imperialism in Africa (London, 1986).

idea put forward by A. J. P. Taylor and others. Turner's work supports the seminal studies of Mary Townsend. Turner's most controversial argument is that Bismarck never intended to deceive the British, but problems arose because the British repeatedly failed to comprehend the Chancellor's change in policy.¹¹

Included in the broad study of Anglo-German imperial rivalry are studies of the Treaty of Heligoland-Zanzibar, which settled many of the disputes in Africa. The most significant of the studies regard the treaty as a product of British African policy. Various articles by D. R. Gillard and G. N. Sanderson consider the treaty as an extension of Salisbury's African and colonial policy, but they dispute the motivations and objectives of that policy.

Gillard in his "Salisbury's African Policy and the Heligoland Offer of 1890" asserts that historians associate the treaty with "Salisbury's need to prevent German expansion towards Uganda and the headwater of the Nile."¹² Accordingly, the British offer to cede the island to the Germans was an attempt to safeguard British interests in East Africa. If the offer were accepted, Salisbury

¹¹Henry A. Turner, "Bismarck's Imperialist Ventures: Anti-British in Origin?" in Gifford and Louis, Britain and Germany in Africa (New Haven, 1967), pp. 47-82.

¹²D. R. Gillard, "Salisbury's African Policy and the Heligoland Offer of 1890," English Historical Review, 75 (1960): 631.

calculated that an advantageous settlement of many questions could be made. Gillard demonstrated that the Germans, however, were not in a position to press seriously their claims; therefore, the regions of Uganda and the Upper Nile were already secure.¹³

Sanderson in his "The Anglo-German Agreement of 1890 and the Upper Nile" disputed Gillard's thesis that Salisbury was negotiating from a position of strength. Sanderson argued that Salisbury, and not the Germans, negotiated from a position of comparative weakness. Sanderson further argued that the change in the German government in March 1890 put Salisbury on the defensive. Germany's African policy became quite aggressive after Otto von Bismarck's resignation, prompting Salisbury to make his Heligoland offer.¹⁴

The disagreement between Gillard and Sanderson rests primarily on two issues. First, they interpreted the significance of Zanzibar to Salisbury's African policy differently. Gillard argued that the Heligoland offer was made because Zanzibar, of all the problems with Germany in Africa, alone was beyond Salisbury's usual

¹³Ibid., pp. 631-632.

¹⁴G. N. Sanderson, "The Anglo-German Agreement of 1890 and the Upper Nile," English Historical Review, 78 (1963): 50-53.

techniques of diplomacy.¹⁵ Sanderson sharply disagreed, insisting that the Berlin government cared little for Zanzibar itself but had designs elsewhere, particularly in Uganda and Wittu.¹⁶ Second, Sanderson considered Germany to have been in a position of strength, with Britain on the defensive; Gillard took the opposite position.¹⁷ These two historians, however, share a common ground with students of Anglo-German relations. They confine their evaluation of the treaty, and its negotiation, to a study of Salisbury's African policy.

This African perspective to the Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty is traditional, many of the earliest writers taking this point of view. Furthermore, Mary Townsend's The Rise and Fall of Germany's Colonial Empire 1884-1919 (1930) portrayed Germany as anxious to secure a lasting British alliance by negotiating the treaty. The Germans accomplished this by settling several disputes with Britain in Africa. Importantly, Townsend's analysis included a more extensive discussion of the value the Germans placed on Heligoland. This involved a discussion of the change in

¹⁵Gillard, "Salisbury's Heligoland Offer," pp. 638-644.

¹⁶Sanderson, "Anglo-German Agreement," pp. 49-51.

¹⁷Gillard, "Salisbury's Heligoland Offer," p. 538.

German policy, the 'New Course' following the resignation of Bismarck. Paul Hubbel described the treaty in great detail. His work examined the treaty within the context of Anglo-German relations from 1884 to 1893, providing a balanced review of the treaty in European diplomacy and imperial rivalry.¹⁸

Oron J. Hale studied the Treaty of Heligoland-Zanzibar from an entirely different perspective. He evaluated the impact and influence of public opinion on the diplomatic relations between Great Britain and the German Empire. The 1890 treaty received attention in his Publicity and Diplomacy With Special Reference to England and Germany. Hale's investigation focused on the pressure public opinion exerted on officials in both countries. The Germans, however, had greater freedom from pressure groups than the British because of their governmental system. In addition, Salisbury did not enjoy unchallenged strength in parliament, making him vulnerable to public embarrassment.¹⁹ For Salisbury, the greatest potential public opinion danger to his negotiations with Germany arose from the sensationalism of H. M. Stanley, the African explorer.

¹⁸Mary Townsend, The Rise and Fall of the German Colonial Empire (New York, 1930); P. E. Hubbell, "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty of 1890" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1937).

¹⁹Oron J. Hale, Publicity and Diplomacy With Special Reference to England and Germany (Gloucester, Mass., 1940), p. 82.

When Stanley returned from exploring the upper Nile in early 1890, he gave a series of public lectures sharply critical of the government for ceding territory in Africa. Many Britons were enthralled with his oratory, and the press carried his message across the country. By the time the treaty was ratified, many newspapers were sympathetic to Stanley's opinion.²⁰ The Times of London carried an editorial asking why "the gentlemen of the Foreign Office" found it "a distasteful task to bring more regions within the influence of civilization and subjects of Queen Victoria?"²¹

In Germany such public agitation did not occur. Hale pointed out, however, that when Salisbury requested a postponement of the final negotiations until later in 1890, Count Hatzfeldt, the German ambassador to Great Britain, warned him that Dr. Karl Peters' arrival from Uganda was expected soon. The reputation of Peters, an aggressive explorer of East Africa and Stanley's German equivalent, made the warning quite clear to Salisbury.²² The German government arranged a press campaign emphasizing the importance of acquiring Heligoland to prepare

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 84-85.

²¹ The Times, June 13, 1890, quoted in Hale, Publicity and Diplomacy, p. 85.

²² Hale, Publicity and Diplomacy, p. 85.

public opinion for any unpopular or unfavorable colonial provisions in the treaty. Hale relied on the work of Manfred Sell (1926) for the most complete analysis of public reaction in the German press.²³

Hale's treatment of the treaty omitted any analysis of provisions of the agreement. In so doing, he avoided dealing with Salisbury's African policy and most significant portions of the treaty. In confining his study to public opinion and its impact on the outcome of the treaty and on German and British relations, Hale, nevertheless, agreed with those historians who emphasized the African portion of the treaty. His study of public opinion emphasized the agitation over African colonialism. Only to the Germans did Heligoland emerge as a factor in public opinion, and not a large one at that.

Earlier historians were not mistaken in their emphasis on the importance of Africa to the conclusion of the 1890 treaty. Indeed, it is unlikely that the British and the Germans would have concluded a treaty over Heligoland alone. The disagreements in Africa were a source of problems between the two governments, and the basis of the treaty was the settlement of these disputes. Consequently, the historical debate has revolved around

²³Ibid., p. 86. fn 13, citing Manfred Sell, Das Deutsch-Englische Abkommen 1890 im Lichte der Deutschen Presse (Berlin, 1926).

the nature of these disagreements and how and why they were settled. However, part of the Anglo-German Agreement has been slighted, and that is the significance of the small North Sea island of Heligoland. The Germans had made several earlier attempts to reclaim the islands, and the British knew of its latent importance to the Germans. Salisbury offered the island to the Germans, and this brought a rapid conclusion to the stalled negotiations.²⁴ This thesis will demonstrate the importance of Heligoland in making the Anglo-German agreement of 1890 and argue that at a critical juncture in the diplomatic negotiations the possibility of German possession of the island facilitated the settling of other serious areas of contention.

²⁴Count Hatzfeldt to Prince Bismarck, May 13, 1890, in E. T. S. Dugdale (ed.), German Diplomatic Documents, (4 vols., New York, 1928), 2: 28-29.

CHAPTER II
THE GERMAN ACQUISITION OF COLONIES
AND IMPERIAL RIVALRIES

A popular English adage of the early 1880s described three methods of building a colonial empire: "The English, which consists in making colonies with colonists; the German, which collects colonists without colonies; and the French, which sets up colonies without colonists."¹ By the end of 1884 the Germans had invalidated a part of this principle with the establishment of a sizable colonial empire. More importantly, Bismarck's colonial bid indicated the beginning of a new era in Anglo-German relations. Until this date Britain had been able to deal with Germany as a European power posing no threat to her vast empire. However, this traditional state of affairs had to be adjusted when the two countries came into conflict over imperial ambitions. Their ability to settle these conflicts so quickly with the sweeping Treaty of Heligoland-Zanzibar (1890) is indicative of their generally good relationship.

The goal of the 1890 treaty was the settlement of the disputes which had developed in Africa. However, as a

¹The Times, August 27, 1884.

part of the settlement the British ceded Heligoland to the Germans. German possession of Heligoland was not an issue associated with African rivalries. Yet, the tiny North Sea island became entwined in the diplomacy of the colonial settlement. While the island appeared to offer little value to the British, its surrender made the end of rivalries in Africa possible.

As discussed earlier, there is no clear agreement as to Bismarck's motives for obtaining colonies or when he decided to do this. Undisputedly, however, Bismarck's colonial bid reveals the Chancellor's ability to calculate and to execute a change in policy. Furthermore, whatever his motives may have been, he would have carefully considered the short term and long term consequences. The outcome was that Bismarck accomplished much with his colonial bid. "The number of birds Bismarck sought to kill with one stone is truly remarkable, even for him."²

The first definite step towards a colonial empire was taken in South West Africa. The Germans were not new to the region as they had developed trade and established missions there as early as the 1850s. However, no move had been made to establish sovereignty until Adolf Luderitz set up a factory at Angra Pequena. After some

²Kennedy, The Rise of Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914, p. 177.

speculation in Britain about German intentions, the German Charge d'Affaires in London, Baron von Plessen, officially inquired in September 1883 whether the British maintained any formal control or rights over the bay of Angra Pequena. He further inquired about the government's position on a German company establishing a trade center there.³

Lord Derby, the Colonial Secretary, responded that, while private interests existed, the British government had no claim to the bay. He also added that the individual claims of crown subjects would be a matter of government concern. Furthermore, Letters of Patent dated February 27, 1867, clearly established British claims to the islands in the bay. Derby informed the Germans that this matter would have to be handled jointly by the Cape Colony Government and the Foreign Office because of the colony's degree of self-government.⁴

In November 1883 Earl Granville, the Foreign Secretary, additionally informed the German government that de facto English sovereignty had been established over the area. Granville explained that legitimate British rights extended from the Cape frontier to the southern boundary

³Phillip Currie to the Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office, September 22, 1883, "Correspondences Respecting the Settlement at Angra Pequena on S. W. Coast of Africa," C. 4190, August 1884, Parl. Paps., Irish University Press Series, Africa, 18: 33.

⁴Colonial Office to Foreign Office, October 2, 1883, C. 4190, I. U. P., Africa, 18: 34.

of Portuguese Angola. Any activity by a foreign power in this area would be an infringement of those rights.⁵ Granville appeared to be under the impression that Germany was not interested in establishing colonies but only in establishing trade centers. The British, however, did not explain on what basis their extensive claims were made. On this issue the Germans made an inquiry. They also asked what protection and rights their traders had if the territory did belong to Britain.⁶

The last German inquiry received no response until after Bismarck annexed the area six months later. Bismarck interpreted this British dilatoriness as a lack of concern on Britain's part. However, the British response was delayed because of a disagreement within the government as to German intentions and British rights. The Cape Colony continued to press for annexation while the Foreign Office considered a protectorate sufficient. Lord Derby, the Foreign Secretary, thought a protectorate would give the Germans the security they desired for their agents in South West Africa. Other members of the Foreign Office were certain that, if the British did not claim the territory, the Germans would.⁷

⁶Munster to Granville, December 31, 1883, C. 4190, I. U. P., Africa, 18: 54.

⁷These proceedings are documented in the British Blue Book C. 4190, Nos. 31-37.

Finally, in May 1884, Lord Derby announced that the government was not prepared to take possession of the land between the Orange River and Angola. The government of Cape Colony took action independently of London and declared it would annex territory as far north as Walfish Bay, including Angra Pequena. Only days before the Cape Colony's announcement Bismarck had given orders to claim Angra Pequena and the surrounding region for the German Empire. When he learned of the British action he responded quickly and sharply, demanding that the London government bring its colony in line.⁸ This sudden shift in German policy completely surprised the British government, and negotiations were opened to settle the dispute.

Bismarck fully intended to carry his policy through, and in his usual fashion he cleared all obstacles. The Chancellor believed that one reason the British were so surprised by his move to acquire colonies was that his ambassador in London, Count Munster, had misrepresented German intentions in the Angra Pequena affair.⁹ Bismarck believed that either Munster did not fully understand his orders or he was deliberately softening German messages to

⁸Bismarck to Granville, June 5, 1884, C. 4190, I. U. P., Africa, 18: 71.

⁹Count Munster's pro-English sympathy was well known in Berlin and the fact that he had an English mother only strengthened Bismarck's suspicion of him. Louis L. Snyder, Diplomacy in Iron: The Life of Herbert von Bismarck (Malabar, 1985), p. 134.

London. At any rate Bismarck was not impressed with Munster's performance and seriously reprimanded him for not energetically fulfilling his duty.¹⁰ This was not enough to ensure the matter would be settled; therefore, Bismarck sent his son, Herbert, to carry out the negotiations.

Herbert took to his task enthusiastically and reported progress that satisfied his father. In a series of meetings with Granville that went quite roughly, Herbert used some of his father's less pleasant qualities--roughness and overbearing behavior--on the aging British statesman. Unfortunately, he did not balance those qualities with his father's wit and charm.¹¹

Herbert demanded that Britain recognize Germany's colonial ambitions, and he threatened that, if this was not done, Germany would oppose Britain in Egypt. Herbert von Bismarck's harsh diplomacy succeeded in winning both British acquiescence in Angra Pequena and British indignation. Granville informed Herbert in late June that the British government was not prepared to dispute German claims and granted recognition to the German protectorate.

¹⁰Bismarck to Munster, June 1, 1884, E. T. S. Dugdale (ed.), German Diplomatic Documents (4 vols.; New York, 1929), 1: 175-177.

¹¹Snyder, Diplomacy in Iron, pp. 135-136.

Despite the claims of the Cape Colony to the territory, Britain sided with the Germans.¹²

The establishment of this protectorate signified Germany's plunge into colonial development. Bismarck had consistently opposed the acquisition of overseas territory as late as 1883. Though the reasons for Bismarck's reassessment are still disputed, what is important is that he made a calculated change in the direction of his policy at this point. Beginning with South West Africa in late 1884, the foundation of a large African empire had been laid.

Before Granville and Derby had recovered from the annexation of Angra Pequena, the Germans immediately began enlarging their hold in the area, taking territory along the coast north and south of the bay. Derby learned from the Cape government that the German warships Elizabeth and Wolf had proclaimed protectorates from the Orange River to Walfish Bay, a British protectorate since 1871.¹³ The British offered no serious opposition to the German actions, but they did ask for information about the areas being claimed and the nature of the German annexations.

¹²Colonial Office to Foreign Office, July 8, 1884, and Foreign Office to Colonial Office, July 15, 1884, "Correspondence Respecting the Settlement at Angra Pequena," C. 4190, I. U. P., Africa, 18: 75, 77.

¹³Sir Hercules Robinson to Earl Derby, August 18, 1884, and Robinson to Derby, September 8, 1884, C. 4190, I. U. P., Africa, 18: 91, 99.

The British objected to coastal islands being included in the protectorate. The Germans quickly responded that no land presently under British control would be claimed.¹⁴

The British did not react so complacently when the Germans began extending their new colony inland. By August the Germans had secured the entire coast from Angola to the Orange River. In September the Germans made their first move eastwards, signing treaties with local chiefs that gave them territorial control. The British were determined to prevent the Germans from linking up with the Transvaal, whose population exhibited a pro-German nature.¹⁵

To prevent German influence in the Transvaal, the British organized an expedition to claim the land between German South West Africa and the Transvaal. In December the expedition completed its mission by establishing two frontiers. The British annexed Bechuanaland and proclaimed its western boundary to be 20 degrees east longitude thus halting the further German expansion. Its eastern boundary would be the Transvaal frontier already established by the London Convention.¹⁶ The Germans did not challenge such

¹⁴Baron von Plessen to Granville, September 23, 1884, C. 4190, I. U. P., Africa, 18: 114.

¹⁵The Transvaal had been openly pro-German going so far as to ask Bismarck to declare a colony there in 1874. J. Butler, "The German Factor in Anglo-Transvaal Relations," in P. Gifford and W. Louis, Britain and Germany in Africa, pp. 179-186.

¹⁶R. Robinson and J. Gallagher, Africa and the Victorians (New York, 1961), pp. 37-38.

determined opposition and accepted the western boundary as described by the British.¹⁷

During the period of the German annexation of South West Africa, Bismarck seized Cameroon and Togo. Unlike Angra Pequena, the Germans had been active in the Gulf of Guinea for a long time. German missionaries had arrived in the 1840s, and the Woermann Company, as well as others, had developed a lucrative trade in rubber and ivory by the 1860s.¹⁸ In fact, West Africa maintained a large non-industrial trade with Germany.¹⁹ Nevertheless, Bismarck had never shown any inclination to establish a colony or protectorate over the area until the spring of 1884. The Chancellor reasoned that British activity in the area was the best guarantee of protection for German trading interests.

Bismarck made his decision to annex Cameroon and Togo in March 1884 when discussions over South West Africa bogged down. Bismarck took this step to underscore his change in policy as well as to secure a German colony. He ordered Gustav Nachtigal to establish a protectorate in

¹⁷Butler, "The German Factor," p. 185.

¹⁸Harry Rudin, The Germans in the Cameroons (New York, 1938), p. 31.

¹⁹Smith, The German Colonial Empire (Chapel Hill, 1978), p. 123.

West Africa, and he placed the gunboat Mowe at Nachtigal's disposal for the mission. Nachtigal successfully completed his mission in July 1884 by signing treaties of protection with local natives which the imperial government immediately recognized.²⁰ Britain opposed the annexation of Cameroon but not Togo.

The German protectorate over Togo was actually a result of the decision to take Cameroon. A small German trading firm had been active on the coast since 1873, but it had received little attention from either the government or the public. In March 1884 this company petitioned the Emperor for a protectorate but received no response, and when Nachtigal was dispatched to the Gulf of Guinea he had no instructions concerning Togo. When he arrived there on July 2, the German agents there were very disappointed that the German flag would not be hoisted.²¹

Nachtigal departed to carry out his mission in Cameroon, but he quickly returned. On July 5, 1884, he declared German protection over the coastal Togo villages. Nachtigal believed this would forestall any possibility of the British expelling the Germans from the area.²² However,

²⁰Ibid., p. 35.

²¹Stoecker, German Imperialism in Africa (London, 1986), p. 84.

²²"Westafrika," 138/2, 1343, Records of German Embassy in London; in Smith, The German Colonial Empire, p. 69.

the British had no such intentions, and Granville even stated that the government had "no jealousy of the Germans as neighbors" in Togo and regarded "them as friendly rivals."²³ In fact, the British were largely indifferent to Togo as "the eventual collision with" the French in "Dahomey will most likely fall to the lot of Germany instead of England."²⁴ British interests in that section of West Africa were minor compared to those on the Ivory Coast and in Nigeria.

British interests in Cameroon had developed as a result of trade along the principal rivers of the area. One official reported that nearly 10,000 tons of goods were exported annually from the area with a market value over 120,000 pounds of sterling.²⁵ Britain had never established official control, however, even though tribal chiefs had sought protection and had made several requests to that effect as early as 1879.²⁶ The British eventually

²³ Granville to Mr. Scott, March 11, 1885, Foreign Office Confidential Print, 5161, in Gifford and Louis, Britain and Germany, p. 4.

²⁴ Memorandum by F. Ricard, December 4, 1884, enclosed in Northbrook to Granville, December 20, 1884, Public Record Office 30/29/140, Granville papers, in Gifford and Louis, Britain and Germany, p. 8.

²⁵ Consul Hewett, Memorandum, "Correspondences Respecting Affairs in the Cameroons," C. 4279, February 1885, Parl. Paps., Irish University Press Series, Africa, 51: 365.

²⁶ Cameroon Chiefs to the Queen, August 7, 1879, C. 4279, I. U. P., Africa, 51: 361.

decided to take the Cameroons but not until November 1883.²⁷ Fear that increased German activity would eventually exclude the British motivated Britain to annex the region. However, the British decided there was no urgency, and they delayed the operation until the spring of the following year. By that time, the Germans had decided to annex the Cameroons. Once the British discovered the German intentions in the area, a race ensued to see who could contact the chiefs first and secure treaties.

The Germans informed the British of Dr. Nachtigal's visit to West Africa, but they did not reveal the true nature of his mission. In fact, the German embassy notified Granville that Nachtigal would be completing a report for the German Foreign Office on commerce in the region.²⁸ Granville warmly welcomed the visit and instructed the Colonial Office to send letters of introduction to British officials in the region in preparation of the visit.²⁹

Once the British discovered the true nature of Nachtigal's mission from sources in Germany their attitude immediately changed. On May 16, Consul Hewett received orders to return at once to his post in West

²⁷ Colonial Office to Foreign Office, November 29, 1883, C. 4279, I. U. P., Africa, 51: 365.

²⁸ Count Vitzthum to Granville, April 19, 1884, C. 4279, I. U. P., Africa, 51: 371.

²⁹ Foreign Office to Colonial Office, April 23, 1884, C. 4279, I. U. P., Africa, 51: 372.

Africa and to secure the necessary treaties for annexation.³⁰ The message to Hewett did not, however, explain the new urgency that had replaced the previously relaxed London attitude. The surprised Consul did not learn of the German proceedings until he boarded ship for the Gulf of Guinea.

Shortly after Nachtigal's departure for Africa, Lord Derby and Lord Granville learned that more than a fact-finding mission was in progress. Several German newspapers carried articles describing the expedition as a quest for colonies in West Africa. Nachtigal had obtained authority from the German government to proceed with annexations wherever German commercial interests existed. This of course meant the Cameroon River region.³¹

Although the Germans won the race to annex Cameroon, it was still necessary to secure the new colony. Again the official British response was rather mild and accommodating. The British did object to the annexation of certain regions and requested guarantees for the rights of British subjects in the area. This accommodating attitude has largely been attributed to the benevolence of Gladstone.

³⁰Foreign Office to Consul Hewett, May 16, 1884, C. 4279, I. U. P., Africa, 51: 374.

³¹Lord Ampthill to Granville, April 23, 1884, and War Office to Granville, May 2, 1884, C. 4279, I. U. P., Africa, 51: 373-375.

Gladstone expressed his good will to the Germans by stating that they were justified in launching a colonial policy. He wrote to Lord Granville, "I think that as far as I understand the matters at issue the Germans are on the most part substantially right."³²

Despite the willingness of the British government to accommodate the Germans, various private and commercial groups created problems for the Germans. These groups, including the African Trade Association, the Congo District Association, and the African Steamship Company, all hindered the Germans in establishing control by creating native disturbances and by encouraging their agents to make territorial claims behind the German coastal protectorate.³³

Such activity, of course, only agitated the Germans and delayed any possible settlement between Berlin and London. In December, Bismarck officially notified the British that any attempt to surround the new colony would be considered an "unfriendly act" as his government had determined to extend trade and commercial interests into the interior.³⁴ Granville directed Edward Malet, the

³²Gladstone to Granville, December 31, 1884, in W. O. Aydelotte, Bismarck and British Colonial Policy (West Port, Conn., 1970), p. 168.

³³Examples of the agitation can be found in various correspondences in C. 4279, I. U. P., Africa, 51.

³⁴Malet to Granville, December 1, 1884, C. 4279, I. U. P., Africa, 51: 437.

British ambassador in Berlin, to reassure Bismarck that the British had accepted the German position and would "in no way endeavor to impede its extension inland to the upper country."³⁵

This, however, did not appease the Chancellor or end the difficulties in Cameroon. Bismarck complained that the British empire was so large as to be unaffected by German advances and that public opinion in Germany favored the colonies. England should take the opportunity to show herself friendly to Germany, as Germany had so often done for England.³⁶ The perceived hostility of the British, as evidenced by their activity at Victoria, also distressed the Germans. Granville repeated his assurances and promised that such actions were without official status.³⁷

Although the British government condemned the individual initiative of private companies, it supported the actions of its consuls. In the race between Nachtigal and Hewett, the British Consul managed to beat the Germans to one location. This was Victoria, a Baptist mission settlement. The new colony of Victoria became a base for

³⁵Malet to Count Hatzfeldt, December 5, 1884, C. 4279, I. U. P., Africa, 51: 437.

³⁶Granville to Malet, December 10, 1884, C. 4279, I. U. P., Africa, 51: 437-438.

³⁷Granville to Munster, December 11, 1884, C. 4279, I. U. P., Africa, 51: 38.

British expansion into the interior as well as a base of resistance for the natives opposed to the Germans. Tension inevitably developed when British agents, with the approval of Vice-Consul White, annexed to Victoria land already claimed by Germany. In addition, the National African Company supplied weapons to natives from its factory at Victoria. Such abuses pushed Bismarck to the limit of his patience, and he ordered the shelling of Victoria to end the gun-running. As a consequence, the Baptist mission there also took heavy damage.³⁸ Fortunately, the action did not escalate, and the governments advised the Consuls to be cautious as negotiations over West Africa were about to begin.

In the Reichstag Bismarck also played down the action, urged moderation, and reasserted his desire for good relations with England. Bismarck attributed British slowness in dealing with African problems to Britain's governmental system. He also stated that he understood the shock of the British public at the entry of Germany into colonial matters and that he was confident that the troubles would soon be resolved. The Chancellor restated his grievances against non-official British agents stirring up the natives, and he assured the Reichstag that

³⁸ Hewett to Granville, December 20, 1884, C. 4279, I. U. P., Africa, 51: 440.

they would be dealt with justly.³⁹ The Chancellor's overture for an understanding opened the door for negotiations. However, the German suppression of the native uprising firmly established Germany's intention of staying in Cameroon.⁴⁰

Granville approached Bismarck in February 1885 and offered to settle disputes in West Africa. While the final agreement fell short of resolving all of the conflicts, it did arrange a process for further expansion by defining "spheres of influence." Both powers agreed not to interfere or to acquire any further territory in areas where the other already had an interest. They also agreed not to occupy inland territory behind the other's coastal territory. This prevented the closing off of the Cameroon colony to the inland trade, which Bismarck had earlier complained the British were attempting to do. The Germans promised to compensate the Baptist mission for the

³⁹Malet to Granville, January 11, 1885, C. 4279, I. U. P., Africa, 51: 445-446.

⁴⁰Bismarck was particularly irritated by the British company's use of mercenaries. The Germans arrested several agents who had removed boundary markers from German territory. The issue was sensitive enough that during the negotiations Granville withdrew the claims made by these agents. Rudin, The Germans in the Cameroons, p. 48.

damages suffered during the shelling, and the British, in exchange, agreed to withdraw from Victoria.⁴¹

During the negotiations the Germans attempted to further this conciliatory feeling by proposing a guarantee of equal commercial treatment. The Germans hoped that this agreement would establish maximum duties on imports and provide for balanced trade in the colonies. The British politely refused such an arrangement, but they did promise to maintain fair trade relations and they assured the Germans that duties would be levied only for the purpose of meeting the necessary expenses involved in the protectorates' administration.⁴² Although the Germans would have preferred a formal agreement, they promised to adhere to the same principle.⁴³

The acquisition of Cameroon presented difficulties to both the British and the Germans. While Bismarck was determined to annex African territory, he allowed, at least in his own mind, the British enough time to prepare for his action. Also Gladstone accepted the Germans'

⁴¹Granville to Munster, May 1, 1885, "Agreement between Great Britain and Germany relative to their respective Spheres of Action in portions of Africa," C. 4442, June, 1885, Parl. Paps., Irish University Press Series, Africa, 8: 611.

⁴²Granville to Munster, May 16, 1885, C. 4442, I. U. P., Africa, 8: 613.

⁴³Munster to Granville, June 2, 1885, C. 4442, I. U. P., Africa, 8: 613.

desire to expand overseas. Each time Germany established a colony, British public opinion denounced the action. Despite this, as in the case of Cameroon, the two governments worked out most of the difficulties resulting from the German acquisitions. The development of German East Africa, however, presented numerous problems that were difficult to resolve. Attempts to settle these disputes provided only temporary relief. The rivalries resulting from German expansion in East Africa required a major treaty to end conflicts.

The German colony in East Africa, unlike the other African territories, was not an enterprise planned by Bismarck. Carl Peters had declared protectorates in the name of His Germanic Majesty along the east coast of Africa near Zanzibar without official authority. Bismarck reluctantly accepted the fait accompli, and he gave approval for Peters to obtain the native chiefs' recognition of German sovereignty. Before Peters could depart for Zanzibar and East Africa, however, Bismarck ordered him to cancel the expedition. Peters ignored the order, and he proceeded to proclaim the protectorate and expand its territory. Bismarck then faced the dilemma of granting recognition to a protectorate in an area considered to be a sphere of British influence.⁴⁴

⁴⁴Smith, The German Colonial Empire, p. 32.

Before Bismarck granted recognition, he requested an explanation from the British of their position in East Africa and Zanzibar. This time the British did not delay a response. Edward Malet explained to Bismarck that British presence had kept the peace in Zanzibar since the 1850s. Furthermore, Britain had developed extensive trade and influence with the Sultanate of Zanzibar and the territories under the Sultan's control on the mainland. While Britain had not annexed the territories, Her Majesty's Government considered the maintenance of the prosperity and independence of the Sultan important to British interests.⁴⁵

Because the British showed no formal title to the area or protested German actions, Bismarck proceeded to recognize Peter's protectorate. Emperor William made the proclamation, granting the colony a charter on March 3, 1885. Granville received the news on March 7.⁴⁶ The charter granted the German Society for East Africa, under the leadership of Carl Peters, control of the territories not under the suzerainty of Britain. These included Usagera, Naguru, Useghu, and Ukami.

⁴⁵Malet to Hatzfeldt, January 16, 1885, "Correspondences Relating to Zanzibar," C. 4609, January 1886, Parl. Paps., Irish University Press Series, Africa, 68: 28.

⁴⁶Mr. Scott to Granville, March 5, 1885, C. 4609, I. U. P., Africa, 68: 29.

The British responded to this action in a friendly manner. Granville informed Count Herbert von Bismarck, who was in London negotiating a settlement to the Cameroon affair, that Britain recognized the "hinterlands" now claimed by Germany. He additionally stated that the British did not interpret this German action as a threat to the security of Zanzibar. Granville reminded Count von Bismarck, however, that Zanzibar was very important to Britain and that the object of British policy there was to support the Sultan's independence. He also added that objections to the German presence in East Africa would arise only if Germany inhibited free trade, as the French often did.⁴⁷

British complacency diminished as the Germans continued to expand their holdings and interests in East Africa. The British first became concerned over German expansion when Gerhard Rohlfs arrived in Zanzibar. Dr. Rohlfs had been sent to Zanzibar as Consul General for the German Empire. The British had been informed that he would be negotiating a commercial treaty with the Sultan,⁴⁸ but the German objectives turned out to be far more sweeping.

⁴⁷ Herbert von Bismarck to Prince von Bismarck, March 7, 1885, Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 1: 190.

⁴⁸ Munster to Granville, February 25, 1885, C. 4609, I. U. P., Africa, 68: 28.

In addition to a new commercial treaty, Rohlfs presented the Sultan with a proposal to define the boundaries of Germany's possessions, a demand for the recognition of a German protectorate over Witu, and a formal recognition of the territory already acquired by the Germans. The Sultan protested these German actions, being encouraged to do so by the British Consul in Zanzibar, John Kirk. Bismarck interpreted this action as an attempt by the British to hinder German colonial ambitions, and he made an immediate protest to the British ambassador.⁴⁹

Granville instructed Malet to assure Bismarck that the British would not hinder German enterprise. To further this policy, Kirk was ordered to dissuade the Sultan from opposing German annexations. Granville realized, however, that Germany had major plans for East Africa which might lead to the exclusion of the British in the area. To counter this move, or at least to strengthen British claims, Granville also ordered Malet to describe British colonization schemes around the source of the Nile and from the coast to the lakes.⁵⁰

The situation in East Africa continued to deteriorate. The Sultan attempted to resist German expansion

⁴⁹Malet to Granville, April 28, 1885, C. 4609, I. U. P., Africa, 68: 36.

⁵⁰Granville to Malet, May 25, 1885, C. 4609, I. U. P., Africa, 68: 41.

with armed force. Despite promises to the contrary from London, the Germans believed that Kirk was supporting the Sultan.⁵¹ Bismarck decided that the stalled negotiations with the Sultan would accomplish nothing, and two courses of action were then taken. A squadron from the German navy was ordered to Zanzibar to obtain the Sultan's recognition of German claims.⁵² Bismarck also proposed that an international commission should determine the legitimate claims of the Sultan. The British consented to this.⁵³ These tactics worked quite well for the Chancellor; on August 14 the Sultan recognized the protectorates and withdrew his claims, and the commission began work in October.⁵⁴

The following year, Britain and Germany concluded an agreement defining the Sultan's territory and

⁵¹Granville to Malet, May 30, 1885, C. 4609, I. U. P., Africa, 68: 43.

⁵²Bismarck to Munster, June 2, 1885 (Communicated to Granville by Munster, June 6), C. 4609, I. U. P., Africa, 68: 49. Bismarck explained his actions as necessitated by the Sultan of Zanzibar claiming territory to which he had no right. He further promised that the squadron would only demand recognition on this point and would not force the surrender of territory belonging to the Sultan.

⁵³Salisbury to Malet, June 30, 1885, C. 4609, I. U. P., Africa, 68: 60. Gladstone's government fell on June 8 and Salisbury formed a new cabinet. Salisbury was anxious to obtain German co-operation in rising difficulties with Russia over Afghanistan. Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 1: 207-216.

⁵⁴Kirk to Salisbury, August 14, 1885, C. 4609, I. U. P., Africa, 68: 74.

establishing spheres of influence. This convention also marked the commencement of the scramble for East Africa. The British and Germans limited the Sultan's control to a coastal strip of five to ten miles in depth between the Rovuma River to the Tanna River. This excluded Witu from the domain of Zanzibar. The spheres of influence were similar to the West African agreement of the previous year. Each country agreed to refrain from obtaining territory or interfering in the other's sphere. Also, Britain pledged to support Germany in acquiring leases on the ports of Dar-es-Salaam and Pangani. The Germans joined the 1862 agreement between Britain and France that recognized the Sultan's sovereignty and independence.⁵⁵ The following month the Sultan reluctantly consented to lease the ports, and he renounced any claim to Witu and recognized the German protectorate there.⁵⁶

Although this agreement laid the foundation for the partition of East Africa, the British launched the race for the interior lands with the formation of the British East Africa Association. The Association, headed by Sir William Mackinnon, immediately pursued the

⁵⁵ Earl of Iddesleigh to Hatzfeldt, November 1, 1886, "Further Correspondences relating to Zanzibar," C. 4940, February 1887, Parl. Paps., Irish University Press Series, Africa, 68: 166-167.

⁵⁶ Sultan of Zanzibar to Consul Holmwood, December 4, 1886, C. 4940, I. U. P., Africa, 68: 179.

development of the recently acquired sphere of influence. The Sultan granted Mackinnon's company in May 1887 a concession of the entire coastal strip within the British zone.⁵⁷

Zanzibar's displeasure with the Germans hampered their expansion into East Africa. The Sultan's ill-will was so strong that the Germans did not receive a concession along the coast in their sphere until after the Sultan's death in 1888. The new Sultan, Seyyid Khalifa, granted the German East Africa Company's request in April of that year. Even under the new Sultan, however, the Germans were not completely trusted, so he refused to grant them the same privileges of collecting all the duties and exercising judicial authority.⁵⁸ Even stronger resentment was felt towards the Germans on the mainland. Their efforts to establish the company's administration were violently resisted.⁵⁹

The British East Africa Company sought formal recognition of its control through a petition for a charter. Salisbury's government granted the charter in September of 1887, forming the Imperial British East Africa

⁵⁷J. L. Evans, The British in Tropical Africa: An Historical Outline (New York, 1969), p. 293.

⁵⁸Colonel Euan Smith to Salisbury, April 14, 1885, "Further Correspondences respecting Zanzibar," C. 5603, December 1888, Parl. Paps., Irish University Press Series, Africa, 68: 194.

⁵⁹Smith, The German Colonial Empire, pp. 95-97.

Company.⁶⁰ With charter in hand, Mackinnon pursued his ambition to link his company with Cecil Rhodes' company. This necessarily meant excluding the Germans from Uganda and the lakes region. Thus, the great drive to reach Lake Tanganyika began. The British set out to secure the area under the nominal control of Emin Pasha, while Carl Peters attempted to conclude a treaty with the Kabaka of Uganda.⁶¹

During this period of East African controversy, Salisbury attempted to keep the Nile and Egypt under British control as well as to maintain good relations with the Germans. The situation in East Africa only frustrated these efforts. The Germans' control of Witu as well as the lake region gave them an excellent opportunity to encircle British East Africa and gain control of the Upper Nile.⁶² In light of the growing rivalries and the prospect of further German expansion, Salisbury offered in 1889 to make a comprehensive settlement of colonial rivalries with the Germans.

The African aspects of the colonial settlement had developed over a short period of time in the 1880s.

⁶⁰Minute by Salisbury, December 22, 1887, Foreign Office 84/1837 in Gifford and Louis, Britain and Germany, p. 15.

⁶¹Gifford and Louis, Britain and Germany, pp. 15-16.

⁶²Ibid., pp. 16-17.

However, Heligoland's role in Anglo-German diplomacy developed throughout the nineteenth century. The British had taken Heligoland in a simple conquest during the Napoleonic Wars. These same wars, however, created a spirit of nationalism in Germany which developed into the movement for unification. As German nationalism developed, demands for the uniting of Heligoland with the Fatherland increased.

CHAPTER III

THE BRITISH AND HELIGOLAND

The island of Heligoland served as a useful tool in Anglo-German diplomacy largely because the British government eventually determined it to be far less valuable than did the Germans. To the British, Heligoland was, under the right conditions, expendable, but to the Germans it was a prize worth pursuing. The British decision to cede Heligoland did not come easily, however. As late as the 1880s the British Admiralty still regarded the island as strategically important and worth retaining.¹ Furthermore, in 1898, less than a decade after the cession, Alfred Thayer Mahan rhapsodized over Heligoland's historical importance to Britain in his The Influence of Sea Power on the French Revolution and Empire. It had been the "Pearl of the North Sea" and the cornerstone of British naval strategy in the region.² Perhaps Britain had erred.

¹ Lord Fitzmaurice, The Life of Lord Granville (2 vols.; New York, 1905), 2: 361.

² Alfred T. Mahan, The Influence of Sea Power on the French Revolution and Empire (2 vols.; Boston, 1898), 2: 276-277.

If Heligoland had its defenders, it also had its critics. The Colonial Office, which had administrative responsibility over the island, paid scant interest to it. Heligoland was regarded by the officials of Downing Street as sufficiently unimportant so that it could be shifted from department to department for no reason other than to balance the work load of the clerks. On one occasion the Colonial Office considered assigning supervision of Heligoland to an assistant clerk.³ By the 1880s parliament was still unwilling to accept the Admiralty's assessment of Heligoland's importance by voting sufficient money to build a harbor or to fortify the island.⁴ As we shall see, the importance attached to the island steadily declined in the nineteenth century. By the 1880s the British were willing to give up a burdensome possession if advantages could be gained elsewhere. A decade later, on the eve of the great naval race with Germany, Britain might well have decided differently.

Heligoland, of course, had not always been a British possession. Originally, the island was a part of the Duchy of Schleswig, a duchy which, while a member of the Holy Roman Empire and later the German Confederation,

³Brian L. Blakeley, The Colonial Office, 1868-1892 (Durham, N.C., 1972), pp. 51, 63n.

⁴3 Hansard, 277 (April 3, 1883): 163.

was ruled by the King of Denmark.⁵ When the British obtained Heligoland, however, only a small Danish minority resided on the island, the majority of the population being German.

The acquisition of Heligoland by the British has been treated as a footnote to the history of the Napoleonic Wars. Paul Knaplund dismissed it as a "symbol and instrument of naval power and nothing else."⁶ While possession of the island did not determine the final outcome of the war, Heligoland did hold some strategic importance. Vice-Admiral Russell, the Commander-in-Chief of the British fleet in the North Sea, attached tremendous importance to Heligoland. When Russell learned that Denmark had declared war on England in 1807, he immediately headed for Heligoland. Upon his arrival, he sent word to the Admiralty of his action, declaring his intention to isolate the Danish garrison on the island while awaiting further instructions.⁷

⁵A detailed account of the many intricacies of Heligoland's history from the Middle Ages through British occupation is provided in Paul Hubbell "The Helgoland-Zanzibar Treaty of 1890" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1937), pp. 1-55.

⁶Paul Knaplund, The British Empire, 1815-1939 (2nd ed.; New York, 1969), pp. 24-25.

⁷Vice-Admiral Russell to the Secretary of the Admiralty, September 2, 1807, quoted in John Laughton, ed., The Naval Miscellany, Publications of the Navy Records Society, (125 vols.; London, 1920-1963), 20: 379.

He also stated that he would like to seize the island. He expressed his attitude in the following manner:

So strongly, Sir, am I impressed with the propriety of the measure that, had I any force to spare, I should immediately take it, with the hope that I should anticipate their lordship's intentions.⁸

Russell was not the only one who harbored enthusiasm for taking Heligoland. A letter to the editor appeared in The Times from a group of merchants who urged the government to acquire the island. The merchants had trade interests in Hamburg, and they feared that the French would soon be able to stifle imports. The merchants also emphasized that it would also be in the government's interest to take such action.⁹

Such efforts to convince the government of the desirability of acquiring Heligoland were not necessary. Members of government shared Admiral Russell's opinion, and they had already discussed the seizure of the island before the receipt of his dispatch or the appearance of the merchants' letter.¹⁰ The government summarily decided that the island could quickly and easily be taken,

⁸Ibid., 20: 379.

⁹The Times, August 31, 1807.

¹⁰Edward Thornton to the Hon. Charles Bagot, Under-Secretary of State, August 31, 1807, in The Naval Miscellany, 20: 380-383.

and Admiral Russell received his orders to proceed with the engagement.¹¹

The government had several reasons for its decision. Heligoland was declared to be of "essential importance" for preserving communication by letter between Britain and the northern part of Europe. If the Danes continued to hold the island, the mailboats could not carry on their normal operations. Even more importantly, Heligoland commanded the outlets of several major rivers which carried commerce to the North Sea.¹² The island as a British base would facilitate the effort to blockade the river ports. In addition, Heligoland would also enable the British easily to blockade many of Denmark's key ports. Finally, the government believed Heligoland could be used as a depot for war supplies for the navy and that a store of trade goods could be deposited there prior to being smuggled into European ports in small ships and boats.¹³ This latter consideration proved very important, the island being used by smugglers during Napoleon's Continental System boycott of British goods.¹⁴

¹¹Ibid., 20: 379.

¹²These are listed as the Hever, Eider, Elbe, Weser, and Jahde rivers. Ibid., 20: 382.

¹³Ibid., 20: 382-383.

¹⁴J. H. Rose, A. P. Newton, and E. A. Benians, eds., The Cambridge History of the British Empire, vol. II, The Growth of the New Empire (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 14-15.

On September 4, 1807, Admiral Russell, acting under orders, seized the island. Following the conquest, he established a policy which Britain maintained with little alteration until the cession of the island in 1890: the retention of local government and customs as much as possible.¹⁵ Even after an English merchant community had established "little London" on the island and developed a prosperous trade center, the Heligolandians retained their German culture virtually unchanged.¹⁶

When the war ended, Great Britain retained Heligoland with full sovereignty as arranged by the Treaty of Kiel.¹⁷ To compensate Denmark, Britain promised to use her good offices to protect Danish claims to Schleswig and Holstein. In addition, the British apparently secretly paid the Danes a monetary indemnity for Heligoland.¹⁸ Seventy-five years later the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, James Fergusson, said the island had been retained because it was "so useful during the war."¹⁹ Its

¹⁵ Russell to Secretary of the Admiralty, September 6, 1807, in The Naval Miscellany, 20: 383-385.

¹⁶ Rose, Newton, Benians, CHBE, pp. 14-15.

¹⁷ Treaty of Kiel, January 14, 1814, Article III, British and Foreign State Papers (London, 1831), I: 218-240.

¹⁸ Hubbell, "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty," p. 36.

¹⁹ Hansard, 344 (July 10, 1890): 1308.

military value remained the key factor, as a marine garrison was kept there until 1821.²⁰

The tiny island of Heligoland twice captured the attention of Europe--the first time when the British seized the island in 1807 and the second when Britain ceded it to Germany in 1890. The years in between, however, marked significant changes in the island's status. The advantages and disadvantages of British possession of the island fluctuated over the years, being influenced primarily by the changing political structure of Europe, particularly the unification of Germany, naval considerations, trade, and the cost of administering the island itself.

Throughout the nineteenth century Great Britain maintained a superior navy and a relatively small army. Both services used the island, although the military significance of Heligoland steadily evolved during the British occupation. The shallow waters around Heligoland provided an excellent anchorage for a fleet and this, coupled with its location in the North Sea, made the island valuable. The British, however, gradually withdrew from continental politics, and Heligoland was increasingly regarded more as a balance to power rather than as an instrument of

²⁰ Hansard, 344 (July 10, 1890): 1308; and C. K. Webster, The Congress of Vienna, 1814-1815 (London, 1934), p. 122.

power. This was seen as early as the 1820s. As Europe settled down after the Napoleonic Wars and the French danger receded, Britain withdrew from active intervention in Europe. As a by-product of this policy, the artillery was removed from Heligoland and the marines were withdrawn.²¹

On two occasions during the nineteenth century the military importance of Heligoland was clearly appreciated and, to a limited extent, exploited. The first occasion was during the Crimean War when refortification of the island was discussed lest the Russians make a diversion in Northern Europe to counter the campaign at Sevastopol. More importantly, the island was given new importance because of the passage of the Foreign Enlistment Act of 1854.²² This act strengthened the existing laws allowing the government to enlist aliens into the regular army. The German states provided a large number of recruits for the "British Foreign Legion."²³

²¹Hubbell, "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty," pp. 39-40.

²²This controversial act divided public opinion over British participation in the Crimean War. Much of the press also opposed the bill. Several editorials in December of 1854 in The Times denounced government action. One opposition member of parliament commented that had the government not exerted such force through the whips and allowed a free vote, the Aberdeen government would have fallen. 3 Hansard, 136 (December 22, 1854): 893.

²³The term "British Foreign Legion" became popular among officials after the passage of the Foreign Enlistment

Heligoland served as an excellent, almost indispensable mustering point for these troops. The German Confederation had declared its neutrality in the Crimean War, forcing British agents to move the newly recruited troops quickly and secretly out of Germany. The government supported this effort by constructing barracks on the island.²⁴

The use of Heligoland as a base was not completely successful. The presence of the military gave a great boost to the island's economy, but it also caused many problems. During the winter there was a continual shortage of food, and in the summer there was never enough water, as the island depended on rainfall for fresh water. More seriously, however, housing was insufficient for the 5000 troops gathered there.²⁵ As a result, Heligoland was never again used for such large scale military activity.

The Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 again revived military interest in the island. This time, however, there was no discussion of fortifying the island. The British were determined, nevertheless, to defend their neutrality,

Act. The Queen took exception to the label and successfully pressed the name "British-German Legion" before she would review the troops. C. C. Bayley, Mercenaries for the Crimea: The German, Swiss, and Italian Legions in British Service 1854-1856 (London, 1977), p. 109.

²⁴₃ Hansard, 138 (May 4, 1855): 116-1129.

²⁵ War Office 2/65, p. 185-186; quoted in Bayley, Mercenaries for the Crimea, p. 137.

including that of the tiny dependency in the North Sea. To ensure this, the fleet increased its presence around the island.

The danger came from France, which had plans for a Danish alliance and the landing of troops in Schleswig. This, of course, would be facilitated by the use of Heligoland. Britain made it clear, however, that the neutrality of the island would be strictly observed.²⁶ Another French fleet attempted a blockade of the German coast, but the British would not permit Heligoland to be used as a coaling station. This forced the French fleet to return home to refuel.²⁷ Such actions made the Germans realize the importance of Heligoland being in friendly hands, if not their own. It also explains why the British Admiralty attached importance to the island when consulted by Lord Granville in 1872 in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War.²⁸

The unification of Germany fundamentally changed Heligoland's value as a military outpost. Traditionally, the island had been retained as a possible counter-weight to French expansion into a divided Germany. The rise of

²⁶ Memo on the "Question of Danish Neutrality," February 18, 1907, No. 91, in G. P. Gooch and H. Temperly, eds., British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898-1914 (10 vols.; London, 1932), 8: 107-108.

²⁷ Hubbell, "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty," p. 83.

²⁸ Lord Fitzmaurice, The Life of Granville (2 vols.; New York, 1905), 2: 361.

the powerful German Empire and the decline of France eliminated the original British interest in the island.

Although the military situation had changed, trade remained a factor in the retention of the island. The British maintained and encouraged commerce through Heligoland. Parliament gave the ships built in Heligoland the same privileges enjoyed by British ships. In addition, the government lowered duties on materials from the island.²⁹ In the interest of trade the government also tried to turn Heligoland into a communication center. In 1867 the British government arranged for postal rates to Bremen and Hamburg from Heligoland, and it entrusted a private firm to carry the mail. This replaced the service provided by the post office of the free city of Hamburg, which until then had handled the mail to and from Heligoland.³⁰ These small actions were taken by the British to try to boost the declining economy of the island. Unfortunately the island's economy remained depressed, and the colony was increasingly viewed as an economic liability.

²⁹Act of Parliament, June 22, 1820, British and Foreign State Papers, 7: 863-865; and Order in Council, June 10, 1843, B. F. S. P., 32: 1273.

³⁰The separate conventions were negotiated by John Ward, the Resident Minister to the Free Cities. The formation of the North German Confederation influenced this arrangement. B. F. S. P., 62: 880-892.

In 1864 the British even attempted to promote Heligoland's self sufficiency by granting the island a semi-responsible government. An Order in Council was issued which allowed a legislative body on the island to raise taxes and to plan a budget.³¹ The provisions of this Order were only temporary and constituted a five year experiment. Before the five years were completed, however, a second Order in Council of 1868 nullified the Order of 1864.³² Disraeli's Conservative government was apparently convinced that the experiment had completely failed and that such measures would not restore the sagging economy of Heligoland.

The only profitable ventures on the island were tourist resorts and gambling. Gambling was the most profitable and contributed most to the island's revenues. However, the scandals associated with the gambling tables finally forced their closure in 1871. This left only the tourist industry as a money-maker. The resorts had steadily grown from 1830 onward and brought private

³¹Order in Council, January 7, 1864, House of Commons, Sessional Papers, 1890, xlix, 503, No. 308; quoted in Hubbell, "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty," p. 505.

³²Order in Council, February 29, 1868, House of Commons, Sessional Papers, 1890, xlix, 503, No. 308, quoted in Hubbell, "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty," p. 507.

interests profit. This did not, however, keep the island's administration from deficits.³³

Changing government forms and lowering tariffs did not help the island's financial situation, and the abolition of gambling only made the situation more serious. Building a harbor for Heligoland would probably have done the most good. However, parliament had never been willing to grant money for such work, and, as one official argued, it would have been difficult to justify spending money on Heligoland when so much needed to be done for harbors in England.³⁴

The governor's reports for Heligoland continued to show deficits. Each year the colony required over 8000 pounds sterling of which only two-thirds could be generated from taxes on the island. The last two reports from the governor, 1888 and 1889, showed diminished savings in the

³³Hubbell, "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty," pp. 41-43. "Sea Bathing became a popular 'cure' in the nineteenth century and Heligoland was one of eight resorts on the North Sea frequented by tourists. In Heligoland most of the tourists came from Germany. Hubbell draws his information from Major Brohm, Helgoland in Geschichte und Sage seine nachwiesbaren Landverluste und seine Erhaltung (Cuxhaven, 1907), whom he credits with the best history of Heligoland. By the 1880s Heligoland's claim to fame was its bathing industry, which explains Karl Peters' remark on the Treaty of Heligoland-Zanzibar that two Kingdoms were traded for a bathtub. See Oron J. Hale, Publicity and Diplomacy, p. 85.

³⁴Odo Russell to Lord Granville, June 21, 1873, in Paul Knaplund, Letters From the Berlin Embassy, 1871-1874, 1880-1885 (Washington, 1944), pp. 109-110.

postal savings bank, a decline in the population, and shortfalls in the tax and toll revenues. The governor explained the population decline on an economy that offered no incentive for the young to stay. Otherwise, the island was a great place to live because of the low crime-rate and healthful environment. The lack of savings was attributed to the low incomes and the cost of maintaining a fishing fleet on the rough North Sea. The governor, however, offered no reason for the unbalanced budget. This is understandable since the budget had not been balanced since the island had been granted fiscal responsibility in 1868.³⁵

The financial liabilities of British possession of Heligoland make it understandable why some questioned its real value to Great Britain. On March 30, 1885, Sir Henry Holland, later Lord Knutsford, stated in the House of Commons that, as a member of the Royal Commission on Colonial Defense and Protection of Trade, he could say that "from a strategical point of view Helgoland was of no use to this country."³⁶ The Admiralty had changed its

³⁵ Report by Governor O'Brien to Lord Knutsford, April 14, 1888, "Report on Blue Book for 1887," C. 5249-6, June 1888, Parl. Paps., Irish University Press Series, Colonies, LIII: 351-357; Report by Governor Brakley to Lord Knutsford, April 16, 1889, "Report on Blue Book for 1888," C. 5620-6, May 1889, Parl. Paps., Irish University Press Series, Colonies, 56: 229-233.

³⁶ 3 Hansard 296 (March 30, 1885): 1010-1018.

opinion of the previous decade when the island was believed to hold some strategical military value.

In response to Holland's statement, another member of parliament, Mr. Gorst, proposed that Heligoland be ceded to the German Empire. This idea received little serious consideration in the Commons. In fact, the Secretary of State for Colonies, Michael Hicks Beach, replied that the people of Heligoland were "exceedingly well pleased to be connected with England rather than with Germany."³⁷

The strongest point in favor of the British retaining Heligoland was the fact that it was British territory. Queen Victoria embodied his feeling, summing up the position nicely when she said "one shouldn't give up what one has."³⁸ Victoria made the statement to Lord Salisbury when he was in the process of negotiating the Treaty of Heligoland-Zanzibar in 1890. In trying to explain his reasoning to the Queen, Salisbury stated that no real purpose for holding the island could be found and that the island had been retained in the first place for sentimental reasons. In 1807 the Hanoverian and English

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Queen Victoria to Marquis of Salisbury, June 12, 1890, G. E. Buckle, The Letters of Queen Victoria (3rd series, 3 vols.; London, 1930), 1: 615.

thrones had been linked, and the island had a close proximity to the old Kingdom of Hanover.³⁹

Salisbury may have simplified the original intent in taking Heligoland and adding it to the British empire, but he did put the question of cession in focus. Heligoland no longer benefited the British as it once had, and Salisbury's foreign policy was far too sophisticated to let sentiment stand in the way of real diplomatic progress. He realized the Germans placed great value on the island and that significant gains could be made for Britain if the island were relinquished. This realization paved the way for the settlement of the African difficulties already discussed. Salisbury understood that the Germans placed a higher value on Heligoland than the British. At the appropriate time in the complicated negotiations Salisbury used the German desire for the island to his advantage.

³⁹Marquis of Salisbury to Queen Victoria, June 12, 1890, *Ibid.*, pp. 614-615.

CHAPTER IV
HELIGOLAND IN ANGLO-GERMAN DIPLOMACY
PRIOR TO THE PROPOSAL FOR CESSION

The German desire to acquire Heligoland rested on two factors. First, the island's inhabitants were German, and nationalistic principles demanded its possession by the Fatherland. Following the unification of Germany in 1871 German nationalism was initially limited largely to Europe. As early as the 1870s Germany began to make serious inquiries about obtaining the island of Heligoland. In the 1880s, as this nationalism manifested itself in the acquisition of a colonial empire, Heligoland remained both a prize in itself and a counter in the colonial negotiations which were eventually finalized in 1890.

Secondly, the island was believed to have military value. On this ground the Germans had been interested in acquiring the island even prior to unification. As early as 1855 there were suggestions that the German Confederation should obtain Heligoland for a harbor. In 1864 Bismarck himself entertained the idea of building a harbor and naval station for Prussia. His plan required both

the surrender of Heligoland and surrender of land by Denmark for a canal through Schleswig-Holstein.¹ The question of Heligoland was not raised again until the 1870s following the unification of Germany and the beginnings of the modernization of the Prussian navy.

In 1871, as the German army demonstrated its superiority and unification was achieved, the Germans smarted under the impact of a French blockade and their inferiority on the sea. Although the British had not allowed the French to use Heligoland as a base, the waters nearby were shallow enough for safe anchorage.² This was a humiliation the German admirals did not forget.

Admiral Stosch quickly began to reform the German Navy, and under his leadership Vice-Admiral Jachman made a proposal for the cession of Heligoland to Germany. Bismarck merely mentioned the idea in passing to the British ambassador, but rumors began to circulate in London that Heligoland would indeed be ceded to Germany. It was even reported that Germany would acquire Pondicherry in India from France as part of the war settlement, and, in return,

¹Plans for the Kiel Canal were not put into effect until 1887. Bismarck submitted his plans February 22, 1865 but no action was taken. Paul Hubbell, "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty," p. 245.

²The Times, June 20, 1870. The former governor's son, Henry Maxes, wrote the editor in opposition to the cession of Heligoland, and in the letter recalled the island's role during the Franco-Prussian War.

Pondicherry would be exchanged for Heligoland.³ In preparation for such a proposal, Lord Granville, the Foreign Secretary, consulted the War Office and the Admiralty about their positions on Heligoland.⁴ The Germans were slow, though, in pursuing the subject, and they delayed raising the issue until the following year.

In 1873 Odo Russell, British ambassador to Germany, reported to Lord Granville the German government's continuing interest in the North Sea colony. Russell had attended a dinner party given by members of the German parliament, and there he learned that the new German ambassador to England, Count Munster, would be raising the question of Heligoland. Russell told Granville that Munster would attempt to arrange the purchase of the island. However, Russell also added that Bismarck had not instructed Munster to make any such offer, but only "to establish the best relations he can with Her Majesty's government."⁵

Bismarck did not follow through on the proposed exchange because Pondicherry was not ceded. However, a

³W. F. B. Lawrie, "Pondicherry for Heligoland in 1871; and Heligoland Ceded to Germany in 1890," Asiatic Quarterly Review, 10 (July-October, 1890): 36-52.

⁴Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, The Life of Lord Granville (2 vols.; 2nd ed.; New York, 1965), 2: 361-362.

⁵Odo Russell to Lord Granville, June 21, 1873, in Paul Knaplund, Letters From the Berlin Embassy, 1871-1874, 1880-1885 (Washington, 1944), pp. 109-110.

large part of the French indemnity did go to Admiral Stosch's naval program. The Chief of the Admiralty, Count Leo von Caprivi, still had plans for Heligoland in Germany's naval defense. However, he left such planning in the hands of Stosch and Admiral von Tirpitz.⁶

Caprivi suggested to Bismarck in 1884 that the question of Heligoland be raised again. Bismarck promised Caprivi that he would take care of the matter.⁷ This led Bismarck to make his offer to Britain for Germany to take over the island.

Simultaneous to Germany's contact with Britain on the issue of the cession of Heligoland, the expansion of German colonial interests in Africa and the Pacific began diplomatically to divide England and Germany. At the same time the British were experiencing difficulties with the French in Egypt, and Bismarck used this situation to his

⁶Grand Admiral von Tirpitz, My Memoirs (2 vols.; New York, 1919), 2: 88-90, 49-54. Tirpitz's original plan called for elaborate engineering schemes creating a huge harbor at Heligoland and heavy fortifications on the island to make a close blockade of the coast impossible. His thinking, of course, was to strengthen Germany's naval defenses in future wars with France. The offensive part of his plan consisted of a large fleet to bombard key French ports and to engage the French fleet on the high sea. The development of the torpedo under Tirpitz however, lessened the need for obtaining Heligoland as ships in a blockade would no longer be safe in the shallow waters near the island.

⁷Leopold von Caprivi, Die Ostafrikanische Frage und der Helgoland-Sansibar Vertrag (Berlin, 1934), pp. 35-36 quoted in Hubbell "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty," pp. 249.

advantage, playing off Britain and France against each other. He desired eventually to obtain support from Britain for German colonial expansion by withdrawing Germany's small interest in Egypt in favor of the British. If this failed to produce results, he would continue to use the Egyptian situation to Germany's advantage.⁸

Bismarck instructed Munster to pursue cordial relations with England and demonstrate the willingness of Germany to continue support of England. In return, Munster should suggest that the Heligoland question be resolved as an indication by Britain of a continued desire for good relations. Bismarck further suggested that a Heligoland treaty could be arranged with terms very favorable to Great Britain, including a German promise to construct a large harbor facility on the island for the benefit of British trade.⁹

Count Munster reported to Bismarck that Lord Derby, the colonial Secretary (1882-1885), had already raised the question, presenting Munster with an excellent opportunity to impress on Derby Germany's interest in the island. In fact, Derby appeared to be asking the Germans to relieve him of the burden of governing the island.

⁸For documentation of this diplomacy see: Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 1: 155-168.

⁹Prince Bismarck to Count Munster, May 5, 1884, Ibid., 1: 172-173.

Derby complained that, although Heligoland was a small colony, it often gave him the greatest amount of trouble. Every official he sent to the island immediately began requesting a transfer. Munster, following his orders, offered to make some sort of arrangement for taking over the island.¹⁰

However, before Munster could negotiate further, the Anglo-German dispute over Angra Pequena flared up. Bismarck then ordered the ambassador to drop the Heligoland question until further notice and to concentrate on pursuing a favorable settlement in Southwest Africa.¹¹ In a Foreign Ministry report, Bismarck explained that he dropped the Heligoland question in order to prevent the British from using it as a possible compensation for German acquiescence in the Angra Pequena dispute.¹² According to Granville, the British had never intended to pursue the Heligoland question in this manner, seeing it instead as a means to "secure a perfectly satisfactory end to the Egyptian financial mess."¹³

¹⁰Count Munster to Prince Bismarck, May 8, 1884, *Ibid.*, 1: 172-173.

¹¹Prince Bismarck to Count Munster, May 25, 1884, *Ibid.*, 1: 173.

¹²Prince Bismarck to Count Hatzfeldt, May 24, 1884, *Ibid.*, 1: 174.

¹³Lord Granville to Lord Northbrook, August 16, 1884, in Fitzmaurice, Life of Granville, 2: 361.

Granville and Gladstone had actually planned to cooperate with the Germans in colonial expansion, and neither considered Heligoland relevant to colonial questions. Even after Germany began acquiring colonies, Granville wrote a memorandum for Gladstone stating his intention to raise the Heligoland matter in the cabinet as soon as the Egyptian question was resolved.¹⁴

Bismarck's second attempt to obtain Heligoland came in 1889. Although this offer failed and Bismarck would be out of office before Salisbury would offer to cede the island in 1890, Heligoland was accorded a new prominence in Anglo-German diplomacy. Bismarck's offer was an outcome of both Bismarck's diplomatic efforts to secure an alliance with Britain in 1889 and the negotiation of the colonial disputes in Africa.

Colonial disputes strongly influenced Anglo-German relations in the 1880s. As discussed earlier, conflicting claims in East Africa and the partition of that region caused the two countries to drift apart. Bismarck's diplomacy, however, aimed at establishing a strong friendship with England, and he was determined that colonial objectives would not stand in the way of these good relations.

On August 21, 1888, Count von Berchmen of the German Foreign Office, requested Count von Hatzfeldt, the

¹⁴Granville to Gladstone, January, 1885, Ibid., 2: 425.

German ambassador to London, to inquire about the possibility of an alliance with England. The object of the alliance would be for Great Britain to prepare for a possible confrontation with France. If the British did ally themselves with the Germans and, indirectly, the Austrians, Italians, and Russians, France would be isolated and could not threaten European peace.¹⁵

Bismarck had a general European objective in mind when making his alliance offer to Britain. In this context he regarded the whole question of Heligoland as actually of minor importance compared to his grand alliance scheme. In fact, he originally had not intended to involve Heligoland in the alliance bid. In his memoirs Bismarck argued that the obtaining of Heligoland only satisfied a sense of nationalism.¹⁶

In a memo to his Foreign Office in 1889, Bismarck commented that any hasty or premature action on the Heligoland issue could jeopardize the difficult discussions over an alliance. Furthermore, it would be best for the British to make the offer so as not to make the Germans appear greedy or to stir up opposition in England to close Anglo-German relations. If such were to happen, it

¹⁵Berchmen to Hatzfeldt, August 21, 1888, in Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 1: 369.

¹⁶Otto von Bismarck, The Kaiser vs. Bismarck, translated by Bernard Miall, (New York, 1921), p. 176.

would completely negate any advantages to be gained from the Emperor's upcoming visit to Great Britain.¹⁷

William II, however, considered the matter of Heligoland quite important. One of his objectives while in Great Britain was to discuss the island's future with Lord Salisbury. The Emperor claimed to have been interested in Heligoland since childhood, when a tutor had instilled in him the significance of England's navy and the strategic value of the island.¹⁸ The Emperor also admitted that on his last visit to the island in 1873 he had determined to make the island a part of Germany.¹⁹

As for the proposed alliance, Lord Salisbury was reluctant to make a commitment, fearing that it would endanger his government's parliamentary majority.²⁰ Herbert von Bismarck reported to his father that he had had confidential discussions with Salisbury and that the Prime Minister felt the plan was a good idea and was in the best interest of European peace. Salisbury expressed his

¹⁷Bismarck to the Foreign Office, June 23, 1889, Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 1: 384.

¹⁸William II, My Early Life (New York, 1926), p. 209.

¹⁹William II, August 10, 1890, in Johannes Benzler, Die Reden Kaiser Wilhelms II (4 vols.; Leipzig, 1913) quoted in Hubbell, "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty," p. 248.

²⁰Hubbell, "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty," p. 257.

regrets for not being able to do more than to "leave it on the table without saying 'yes' or 'no.'"²¹

Bismarck had failed to secure the alliance with England that he considered so valuable. As already mentioned, this was largely due to the fact that Salisbury had to rely on a coalition to support his government. The Liberal Unionists who supported his Conservative government were ardent imperialists, and the colonial rivalries that had developed between Germany and Great Britain obstructed any possibility of an alliance. This friction would have to be removed if better relations were to be fostered. Joseph Chamberlain made the first suggestion that the two governments resolve their colonial differences by exchanging Heligoland for German colonial concessions in Africa. Thus, Heligoland became entangled in the colonial negotiations in 1889.

Chamberlain proposed to Herbert von Bismarck that an exchange for Heligoland could be arranged. Chamberlain, who was most interested in placating the Cape Colony, suggested that Heligoland be exchanged for all of German Southwest Africa. He assured Herbert that he would personally guide the agreement through parliament. The younger Bismarck was impressed with Chamberlain's offer. The point that sparked the most interest, however, was

²¹Herbert von Bismarck to Otto von Bismarck, March 22, 1889, Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 1: 373-374.

Chamberlain's promise of an alliance if colonial differences could be settled.²²

The German Chancellor welcomed the news of movement in the British position, but he urged his envoy to move slowly.²³ This caution was, apparently, designed to allow Chamberlain and Salisbury to cultivate favorable opinion on the subject and to allow the Emperor's visit later in the year to have more impact.²⁴

Hatzfeldt reported to Bismarck that a conversation with Salisbury about the Emperor's visit had led to a discussion of Chamberlain's proposal for trading Heligoland for Southwest Africa. Hatzfeldt learned that the Prime Minister had not been fully informed of the offer. Furthermore, Salisbury expressed little interest in aiding the Cape Colony in territorial acquisitions as Great Britain would profit little from such an arrangement. Salisbury also added that he didn't think Heligoland would be worth that much to the Germans. To this, Hatzfeldt agreed, and he reported to Bismarck that the Prime

²² Herbert von Bismarck to Otto von Bismarck, March 27, 1889, *Ibid.*, 1: 375-377.

²³ Otto von Bismarck to Herbert von Bismarck, March 29, 1889, *Ibid.*, 1: 378; and Otto von Bismarck to Count Hatzfeldt, April 13, 1889, *Ibid.*, 1: 378-380.

²⁴ Hubbell, "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty," p. 263.

Minister had promised to discuss colonial policy and Heligoland again.²⁵

Bismarck continued to take a cautious stand on the whole matter. Bismarck's marginal comments explained his reason: "We must wait for the initiative of the English and the moment when England needs us."²⁶ In reply to inquiries by the Emperor and to instruct his Foreign Office, Bismarck argued that, if the Germans were to open discussions, it would only make the Heligoland business more difficult by opening the way for criticisms of German policy as being designed to manipulate England.²⁷ The Chancellor's prime concern appeared to be the protection of the developing German colonies. His colonial concerns made him hesitant in negotiating with the English; not until his position changed would the matter be reopened.

This shift in the emphasis of Bismarck's policy occurred suddenly in August 1889. Bismarck, apparently tired of the continuing squabbles with the British in East Africa, expressed concern that colonial circles in

²⁵Hatzfeldt to Bismarck, April 13, 1889, Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 1: 379-380.

²⁶Marginal note made by Otto von Bismarck on a dispatch from Herbert von Bismarck to Brechmen, June 23, 1887, Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 1: 380-381. Brechmen had relayed Emperor William's concern about obtaining Heligoland in time to sign a treaty during his visit to England.

²⁷Otto von Bismarck to Count Brechmen, June 23, 1889, *Ibid.*, 1: 381-382.

Germany were interfering far too much in politics and must be restrained. Bismarck also made the statement that good relations with England and the friendship of Salisbury were far more important than any colony.²⁸

What the final outcome of Bismarck's relaxation of Germany's colonial disputes with Britain would have been will remain uncertain. In February 1890 he began to shift the focus of his diplomacy back to Europe and to minimize colonial issues. His goal once again was to include Great Britain in some sort of a multi-power alliance. With Bismarck's declining concern for colonial matters, Heligoland could be exchanged for a German colony in Africa. Unfortunately, Bismarck was unable to complete the negotiations begun in 1889, as he left office in March 1890.

Despite the shift in the German position, many minor differences had to be overcome before any exchange could be made. For the British the willingness to cede Heligoland arose because of developments in Africa. On the German side, however, as has been shown, the cession of Heligoland was strongly tied to Germany's cooperation in Egypt. Apparently, Chamberlain and a majority of the British imperialists believed that Germany had been

²⁸Felix Rachfahl, Bismarcks englische Bündnispolitik (Freiburg, 1922), p. 25, quoted in Hubbell, "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty," pp. 277-278.

compensated for her Egyptian aid when Britain allowed the Germans to acquire colonies in the South Pacific and Africa. A letter to The Times, written by a friend of Salisbury, elaborated this belief. The letter argued that the British had accommodated the Germans in every measure, often times sacrificing British interests. The British had allowed the Germans to develop extensive trade throughout the colonies as well. The letter went on to propose that the Germans were now obligated in some fashion to the British, and they should be willing to make concessions if the best possible relations were to be achieved.²⁹ This is where the Germans and the British ran into the most trouble. The rival claims in Africa were never so serious as to preclude their settlement. However, both sides in the African negotiations believed that the other owed something and thus should be willing to make further concessions.

This being the case, it is not a surprise that the African negotiations were protracted, each side holding out at various times for some additional concessions. The process which had dragged on since 1888 came to a rapid conclusion in the spring of 1890. Two reasons can be given for this. First, Salisbury made a definite offer to cede Heligoland if certain arrangements could be made in

²⁹The Times, August 22, 1888.

Africa. Second, Count Hatzfeldt and Frederick Holstein of the German Foreign Office were determined to win an English alliance at almost any price. As will be seen, the combination of these two factors produced the Treaty of Heligoland-Zanzibar.

CHAPTER V

MAKING THE TREATY OF HELIGOLAND-ZANZIBAR

In March 1890 Otto von Bismarck fell from power, leaving the discussions with England on colonial matters unresolved. Both sides were apprehensive of what would follow in the old Chancellor's absence. The Germans, of course, had to find a replacement for Bismarck both in the chancellery and at the foreign office. The British understood that a change in policy could easily follow the shakeup of the German government. What this new policy exactly would be and what it would mean for colonial aspirations was a primary concern.

Public opinion in Great Britain held that the German Emperor would pursue an aggressive and ambitious policy in Africa. The opinion was so widely held that The Times reported on March 20, 1890, that Salisbury had been forced to give assurances to his own party that the government would give its full attention to African matters.¹ A later article in The Times stated that William II would indulge in schemes to secure all of East Africa for Germany, at the expense of the British, "now that

¹The Times, March 21, 1890.

the restraining hand of Prince Bismarck has been withdrawn."²

Concern for colonial ambitions, particularly in East Africa, had motivated Lord Salisbury to propose that the disputes be settled by arbitration. The offer had been made prior to Bismarck leaving office.³ The idea of arbitration was acceptable to Bismarck, but only if it included questions concerning all of Africa rather than just Zanzibar and East Africa. To open negotiations, it was suggested that Sir Percy Anderson of the Colonial Department of the British Foreign Office should go to Berlin to prepare for arbitration.⁴ This had been agreed to, and Anderson was ready to leave for Berlin in March 1890, but the change in the German government delayed his departure until May of that year.

Before Anderson left for Berlin, he had a meeting with Count Hatzfeldt, German Ambassador to England, to give both sides the opportunity to clarify their positions. Anderson expressed the concerns of Lord Salisbury that the Emperor would be following a more aggressive colonial policy. Hatzfeldt confirmed this would certainly be possible, since the Emperor, freed from the influence of

²The Times, April 3, 1890.

³Hatzfeldt to Bismarck, December 22, 1889, Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 2: 29.

⁴German note attached to the previous document.

Bismarck, was now surrounded by those who desired a more ambitious colonial plan. Hatzfeldt commented that for this reason a colonial settlement was all the more urgent.⁵

Hatzfeldt reported to the new Chancellor, Leo von Caprivi, that the discussion with Anderson had gone quite well and that the question of Zanzibar and German possession of Witu seemed the primary obstacle to a general settlement of frictions in Africa. Hatzfeldt also implied that the matter could be more easily resolved if the Sultan of Zanzibar would fully relinquish claims to any coastal territory.⁶

Anderson arrived in Berlin on May 3, 1890, and the talks began on May 5 with Dr. Krauel of the German Foreign Office. The negotiations began positively, and it soon became apparent that arbitration would not be necessary. The only difficulty rested with the demarcation of the boundary in the lake region of East Africa. As discussed in an earlier chapter, both the British and the Germans

⁵ Memorandum by Sir Percy Anderson, April 29, 1890, "Correspondence Respecting the Negotiations Between Great Britain and Germany Relating to Africa," FO 403, Confidential Print (6146) December 1891, No. 1. Here after cited as Confidential Print (6146).

⁶ Hatzfeldt to Caprivi, April 30, 1890, Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 2: 30-32. See also Memorandum by Sir Percy Anderson, April 30, 1890, and Salisbury to Malet, April 30, 1890, Confidential Print (6146), No. 2, and No. 3.

had explored the area and had laid claim to it. The British desired to construct the 'Stevenson Road' to connect their possessions north and south of the lakes. The Germans desired the same land between Lake Victoria Nyanza, south of Uganda, and Lake Tanganyika, on the border of the Belgian Congo, to control the east-west trade.

Anderson reported that he had been able to secure concessions from the Germans regarding the lake region. The Germans had agreed to divide the territory, giving control to the British on the north side of Victoria Nyanza. Anderson further reported, however, that the Germans would not easily relinquish their claims to the districts between the lakes.⁷

Since Anderson and Krauel had reached an impasse in their discussion, it was determined to let Salisbury and Hatzfeldt settle the differences in London before proceeding with the negotiations. On May 14, Hatzfeldt reported to Baron Marschall, the new head of the German Foreign Office, the results of his discussion with Lord Salisbury. In this meeting both had agreed to speak openly and without reserve concerning the African matters.⁸

⁷Malet to Salisbury, May 8, 1890, Confidential Print (6146), No. 10.

⁸Hatzfeldt to Marschall, May 14, 1890, Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 2: 32-34.

Salisbury opened the discussion by informing Hatzfeldt that the German claim to the lake region was based on a "Hinterland theory" which had no basis in international law.⁹ He further stated that the British could not possibly be expected to relinquish their settlements in the region. Hatzfeldt reminded Salisbury that the question of that territory was only minor compared to the goal of resolving Anglo-German colonial friction.

In an effort to come to a more inclusive agreement, Salisbury outlined his entire objectives for the discussions already underway. He promised to agree to the partition of the region around Victoria Nyanza, establishing the German frontier at a line running between the two lakes. In return for this concession, the Germans should surrender their protectorate over Witu, and the islands off the coast of that protectorate, Manda and Patta. In addition, Salisbury revealed another British objective which had been kept secret until this time, the establishing of a British protectorate over the island of Zanzibar to replace the earlier three power protection of the island.¹⁰ In exchange for this, Salisbury agreed to

⁹The hinterland theory held that any land to the rear of a territorial coastal claim was under the control of the occupying power. Great Britain never gave recognition to such claims.

¹⁰France was the third party which guaranteed the independence of Zanzibar, and arrangements would have to be made for its withdrawal in favor of Britain.

arrange for the British parliament to pass an Act surrendering Heligoland to Germany. Hatzfeldt also reported that Salisbury was under a great deal of public pressure not to make concessions in East Africa because of Henry Stanley's speeches stirring up colonial chauvinism.¹¹

Baron Marschall objected to Hatzfeldt that Salisbury's concessions around Lake Tanganyika would prevent German contact with the Belgian Congo, and this would give the British control of the East-West trade routes. Marschall insisted that the boundary in the northern area of dispute must be 1' south latitude. The southern boundary of the German sphere would have to be on the Rovuma River, which was the boundary of the Portuguese colony. These concessions would give the Germans access to Lake Nyassa. Only on these conditions could a partition be worked out in conjunction with a German surrender of Witu, Manda, and Patta.¹² At the same time Marschall made other counter-proposals. Germany would yield to the British claims to Lake Ngami in Southwest

¹¹Hatzfeldt to Marschall, May 14, 1890, Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents 2: 32-34. The best example of his rhetoric is a speech reported in The Times, May 14, 1890.

¹²Marschall to Hatzfeldt, May 17, 1890, Die Grosse Politik, 8: 14, quoted in Hubbell, "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty," p. 321.

Africa in return for a British concession in Togoland. The desire here was to extend the boundary of Togoland north into territory claimed by the British Gold Coast.¹³

On May 22, Hatzfeldt telegraphed that Lord Salisbury could not be pressured into a quick settlement because of Stanley's attacks in the press. He also reported that Salisbury wished to delay the negotiations until the public sentiment toward Africa had calmed down. The ambassador also added that Salisbury had agreed to the western boundary of German East Africa having contact with the Belgian Congo.¹⁴

Marschall telegraphed his reply on May 23. He declared that Lord Salisbury's proposed delay in negotiations "would be most unwelcome because of the influence it would have upon public opinion [in Germany] and on account of the danger that further differences were likely to arise through expeditions into the interior of Africa."¹⁵

On May 22 the negotiations concerning Africa were the subject of a debate in parliament. The government

¹³Anderson to Malet, May 15, 1890, Confidential Print (6146), No. 29.

¹⁴Hatzfeldt to German Foreign Office, May 22, 1890, Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 2: 35-36.

¹⁵Marschall to Hatzfeldt, May 23, 1890, Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 2: 36. The expedition refers to Dr. Peters' travels in East Africa.

addressed questions of concern in Africa. Members expressed their support of Salisbury's resistance to German pressure for many concessions, particularly concerning Zanzibar and British East Africa. Munro Fergusson urged the government not to abandon interest in the Stevenson Road. J. Maclean of the opposition suggested that the negotiations remain suspended until the government could discern the national feeling on the African issues.¹⁶

On the same day as the debate in the Commons, Lord Salisbury addressed the Merchant Taylor's Company. In his speech he promised to calm the fears expressed over Africa. Under no circumstance would he come to an agreement unacceptable to the interests of the trading companies, the missions, and the others who had done great work in Africa. He concluded his speech by saying: "I think to sign away any of the rights which" have been acquired, "would be an unjust thing." "To commit this country to the defense of territory which it cannot get at" required the assent of parliament.¹⁷

Similarly, on May 24, 1890, William II gave a dinner in honor of Queen Victoria. Edward Malet, the British ambassador, was in attendance and afterwards had a conference with the Emperor and Chancellor von Caprivi.

¹⁶₃ Hansard 344 (May 22, 1890): 1549-1576.

¹⁷The Times, May 23, 1890.

It was rumored that the stalled negotiations over Africa were discussed.¹⁸

William II's personal interest in the negotiations had profound impact on their progress. On May 25 Hatzfeldt received new directions from the German Foreign Office. The possession of Heligoland, for reasons of the Kiel Canal, and the possession of the coastal strip in East Africa without a lease from the Sultan were of high importance. The disputed district at the north end of Lake Tanganyika was also important, as was the area northwest of Lake Nyassa on the southern boundary of the German territory. Therefore, in exchange for the exact line in the north along the Kagera River, extending from Lake Victoria to the Belgian Congo, all could be ceded in the Southern boundary dispute. The arrangement already discussed over Lake Ngami and Togoland were satisfactory. In addition, the cession of Witu would be arranged as well as the British protectorate over Zanzibar. If Heligoland was not, however, relinquished by Britain, the original German demands would be pressed.¹⁹

Salisbury responded to Hatzfeldt that the terms were acceptable, but he wished to secure the approval of:

¹⁸The Times, May 26, 1890.

¹⁹Marschall to Hatzfeldt, May 25, 1890, Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 2: 36-37.

those whose interests were at stake. This, of course, meant that the Prime Minister would have to confer with the British Imperial East Africa Company and the Scottish Missionary Society.²⁰

Marschall was again quickly in contact with his ambassador in London, emphasizing the significance of Heligoland. He argued that the island was "far and away the most valuable object of the negotiations now pending." Marschall also pointed out that the Emperor placed the utmost importance on Heligoland for the sake of the Kiel Canal and German naval strength and that the Emperor placed more value on winning the island than any colonial concessions. Marschall's despatch instructed Hatzfeldt to argue that such a favorable opportunity for the settling of Anglo-German problems would not likely occur again. The two most threatening issues to Anglo-German relations-- East Africa and Heligoland--could be settled with little difficulty to either side. The German government would be unable to prevent the open discussion of British hostility in holding such a tiny island at the expense of German defense.²¹

Hatzfeldt replied to Berlin the following day, May 30. He reassured the Foreign Minister that he was

²⁰ German note to the above cited despatch.

²¹ Marschall to Hatzfeldt, May 29, 1890, Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 2: 37-38.

conscious of the importance of Heligoland, but he did not believe it was wise to reveal its true value to Salisbury early in the negotiations. Hatzfeldt informed his superior that Salisbury did not realize the true importance of the island, and if he did, this revelation would make any colonial concessions more difficult. The only colonial settlement that could then be made would be to waive all German claims in Africa in exchange for the island.²²

On this point Hatzfeldt underestimated Salisbury. Salisbury had possessed many earlier opportunities to surrender the island to Bismarck, but he had never made the offer. The Prime Minister knew that Bismarck would never put such a high price on the island. Salisbury must be given credit for understanding the Germans, or at least Bismarck, quite well.

In response to Hatzfeldt's despatch of May 30, Marschall responded that the Emperor agreed with Hatzfeldt, and he should hold fast to the German claims in the north of East Africa. If this failed, Hatzfeldt was to make concessions regarding the southern boundary and to adjust the northern boundary as outlined in the previous communication. No further concessions could be made without consulting Berlin. The despatch concluded with a threat. If Salisbury again asked to delay the discussions,

²²Hatzfeldt to Marschall, May 30, 1890, *Ibid.*, 2: 38-39.

he should be informed that the German government would recognize as valid any treaties being made by Dr. Peters' current expeditions north of Lake Victoria Nyanza.²³

The desire of Marschall for a quick settlement remained elusive. The Foreign Minister reported to Emperor William that Salisbury was having difficulty with his colleagues on concessions in Africa and Heligoland, and that Heligoland should probably be postponed for a later agreement. William objected strongly, insisting that the questions of Zanzibar and Heligoland be linked.²⁴

On June 4, Marschall despatched instructions to Hatzfeldt that would undermine Salisbury's reluctance to proceed with the negotiations. Hatzfeldt was informed that he could only come to an agreement which would settle all outstanding disagreements permanently. If the Germans were to meet British demands in the lake region, then the coastal territory, including the islands of Manda and Patta, was to become a German possession. In addition, the British could have territory for the Stevenson Road, and the Germans would also agree to freedom of trade, settlement, and religion in the colony as proposed earlier by Salisbury. The success of the agreement should

²³Marschall to Hatzfeldt, May 21, 1890, *Ibid.*, 2: 39-40.

²⁴Marschall to William II, June 4, 1890, *Ibid.*, 2: 40.

also be an assurance of the continuity of European policy.²⁵

During these discussions, Salisbury had arranged a debate in parliament as a feeler for the cession of Heligoland. Sir George Campbell made a motion that the governor's salary for Heligoland be stricken from the vote of supply. He argued that there was simply no reason for retaining a summer bathing spa for a few Germans at government expense. Campbell asserted that Heligoland should be exchanged for something desired by the Germans. The consensus of parliament seemed to be that a "very hard bargain" should be driven for the island.²⁶ As Salisbury expected, the cession of the island would face a hard fight in parliament.

On June 3 and 7 Salisbury held special meetings of the cabinet to consider the cession of Heligoland and the colonial settlement. Most members expressed some concern over giving too much to Germany. Lord Cranbrook criticized the attempt to use European territory as a compensation for gains in Africa.²⁷

²⁵Marschall to Hatzfeldt, June 4, 1890, Ibid., 2: 40-41.

²⁶3 Hansard 344 (June 2, 1890): 1749-1840.

²⁷Salisbury to Queen Victoria, June 3 and 7, 1890, Cabinet Reports from the Prime Minister to the Crown.

The Times also carried several articles speculating on the negotiations being carried on with Germany. Most of the articles criticized German colonialism and extolled the virtues of the British in Africa. The focal point of public opinion seemed to be that the government should secure the Stevenson Road. If this were done, then the British government would be justified in making a treaty with Germany.²⁸

The negotiations continued with only slight modifications in the proposals. On June 5, Hatzfeldt reported that Salisbury would consult his cabinet on the terms outlined for an agreement. If the decision were favorable, Anderson could return to Berlin to arrange the final details.²⁹

Marschall quickly responded to Hatzfeldt's report, informing the ambassador that the terms were acceptable to the German government. German consent to the terms of the colonial agreement had been expected since William II had taken a personal interest in the negotiations and had made the possession of Heligoland the goal. However, the despatch concluded with a surprise. Hatzfeldt was informed that if Salisbury and his cabinet could not

²⁸The Times, June 5, 1890 and June 13, 1890.

²⁹Hatzfeldt to Marschall, June 5, 1890, Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 2: 41-42.

accept the settlement as it stood, then all negotiations were to be broken off and only "effective possession" of the disputed territory would settle matters.³⁰ The mood of the German government appeared to change, and the message to Hatzfeldt contained veiled threats of force.

For Salisbury the task of winning approval of the treaty with Germany was not an easy one. The cabinet divided over the issue of surrendering Heligoland. Several members placed real value on British possession of the island. Their opposition rested on the belief that war with Germany was not entirely impossible. That being the case, then the island would be a valuable base for the English fleet.³¹

In addition, the Queen herself opposed giving up the island. Her reason for this is not clear other than her recorded statement to the Prime Minister that "giving up what one has is always a bad thing."³² The Queen also expressed concern about handing over loyal subjects to another power. Salisbury convinced the Queen to accept the treaty by including special provisions in the treaty

³⁰Marschall to Hatzfeldt, June 6, 1890, Ibid., 2: 42.

³¹Salisbury to Queen Victoria, June 10, 1890, Cabinet Reports from the Prime Minister to the Crown.

³²Queen Victoria to Salisbury, June 12, 1890, Buckle, The Letters of Queen Victoria, 3rd series, 1: 615.

regarding the status of Heligoland. These included exemption from military service for all Heligolanders living when the treaty was signed and their right to choose either British or German citizenship.³³

Salisbury was never able to win a unanimous endorsement from the cabinet, but despite the opposition the proposal was accepted. This was made possible by Queen Victoria giving her consent to the terms of the treaty. Hatzfeldt had informed Berlin on June 11 of Salisbury's difficulty with his cabinet, but he added in his report that approval was likely. The official announcement that assent was given came on June 14.³⁴

Anderson returned to Berlin on June 16 to work out the remaining details of the treaty. The major obstacles had been worked out between Salisbury and Hatzfeldt. Anderson and Krauel then concentrated their talks on areas outside of East Africa and on the specifics of Heligoland's surrender.

The British government requested that the Germans grant privileges to the British subjects in Heligoland to safeguard their private interests, including the right to fish the waters of Heligoland and to operate lighthouses

³³Salisbury to Queen Victoria, June 10, 1890, Cabinet Reports from the Prime Minister to the Crown.

³⁴Hatzfeldt to Marschall, June 11, 1890, Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, 2: 42-43.

and signal stations. The Germans accepted this with little difficulty.³⁵

The negotiations came to a close quickly because the German government was under growing criticism within the Reichstag. The main opposition came from colonial interest groups who voiced concern that an overseas empire was being given up for little in return.³⁶ Anderson accommodated Krauel and Marschall, and the work came to a close when the final draft was sent to London on June 28 for approval.³⁷ Salisbury gave his approval to the treaty on June 30, and the document was signed on July 1.³⁸

About a month later Chancellor von Caprivi made the official defense of the treaty in a lengthy memorial to the Reichstag. Caprivi stated that where concessions had been made, as in the case of Zanzibar, the English had older claims than the Germans. Caprivi further declared that the losses were not significant, and it was

³⁵Sir Edward Malet to Salisbury, June 24, 1890, Confidential Print (6146), No. 114.

³⁶Malet to Salisbury, June 22, 1890, Confidential Print (6146), No. 76.

³⁷Malet to Salisbury, June 28, 1890, Confidential Print (6146), No. 149.

³⁸Salisbury to Malet, June 28, 1890, Confidential Print (6146), No. 154.

better for England to have the territory than a power less friendly to Germany.³⁹

For Salisbury approval of the treaty was more complicated. The Queen had expressed her reservations, public opinion was mixed, and, most significantly, parliament had to approve the cession of Heligoland to Germany. The debate which had taken place already on the island assured that there would be strong opposition.

The understanding was clear to both the British and the German governments that, although each had accepted the terms of the treaty, the British parliament must approve the surrender of Heligoland before the treaty could go into effect. The bill for the cession of Heligoland was submitted to parliament on July 3, 1890.⁴⁰

The most intense questioning of the government came on the following day. Several issues were raised by the opposition, some of which Salisbury had already addressed during the negotiations. Earl De La Warr spoke for the opposition and criticized the government for presuming that the subjects of Heligoland could be guaranteed the rights and privileges they enjoyed as British subjects. De La Warr further argued that the government had

³⁹ Memorial to the Reichstag, Leo von Caprivi, July 28, 1890, quoted in Hubbell, "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty," p. 345.

⁴⁰ 3 Hansard, 346 (July 3, 1890): 787.

abandoned the inhabitants of Heligoland by not defining their rights in the treaty and limiting German authority over the population.

Salisbury responded that it would be impossible to include in any treaty a delimitation of the rights of Heligoland. The Prime Minister continued that everything possible had been done to protect British subjects by allowing them to retain their British citizenship. Furthermore, the Germans had pledged to preserve the island's laws and customs.⁴¹

The debate in the House of Commons during the following days raised the issue of Heligoland's value to the security of Great Britain. Mr. Channing, over the course of several days, repeatedly urged the government to release any reports made by the Admiralty or the War Office concerning Heligoland. The opposition argued that a proper decision could not be made unless the government released its confidential information.

The government continually refused to divulge any reports or even to acknowledge that they existed. The First Lord of the Treasury, Mr. W. H. Smith, defended the government's position. He stated that any information the government possessed could not be conveniently published. He also argued, in the absence of any such

⁴¹₃ Hansard, 346 (July 4, 1890): 787-789.

information, that a correct assessment of the value of the island could be drawn from the fact that no government since 1821 had armed or garrisoned the island.⁴²

By the end of July the debate in parliament had shifted emphasis from the cession of Heligoland to the terms of the treaty itself. Opposition members raised several issues concerning the treaty. Apparently not all members were convinced that the treaty would end the colonial disputes with Germany. Mr. Sumners suggested the government include clauses in the treaty that provided for arbitration of any disputes arising in connection with the treaty.⁴³

The sharpest criticism of the government, however, came just prior to the passage of the Heligoland Bill. Mr. Channing pointed out that colonial governments, particularly Cape Colony, were displeased with the treaty. He went on to condemn the government for ignoring the interests of the colonies and for denying them any role in the negotiating process. The government quickly responded that the colonies had been allowed to express their views when possible on matters affecting their interests.⁴⁴

⁴²₃ Hansard, 346 (July 8-10, 1890): 1094-1095, 1104-1107, 1729-1730.

⁴³₃ Hansard, 347 (July 29, 1890): 1180.

⁴⁴₃ Hansard, 347 (July 31, 1890): 1152-1153.

The final issue raised during the debate was that the treaty allowed the Germans to set tariffs in violation of the Berlin Act of 1885. The government was criticized for allowing the Berlin Act to be nullified. Some members went so far as to suggest that this treaty would only encourage imperial rivalries.⁴⁵ Despite such attacks the bill easily won approval in both houses of parliament.

On August 4 the Heligoland Bill became law, making the final acceptance of the treaty official.⁴⁶ The passing of the Bill, however, had raised a legal and constitutional question respecting the authority of the crown to cede territory in a time of peace. William Gladstone criticized the bill as an "unexampled abdication of the crown's right of independent treaty making." The government defended its action by arguing that parliament had not reserved its power of assent but that the crown had requested the assent as a stipulation of the treaty.⁴⁷

The challenge to the government actually had a basis in law. In the case of "Parlement Belge" (1879) it had been determined that the government could not exercise the power to cede territory in peacetime because it

⁴⁵ 3 Hansard, 347 (August 1, 1890): 1530-1533.

⁴⁶ Act of Parliament, August 4, 1890, British and Foreign State Papers, 82: 668.

⁴⁷ 3 Hansard, 347 (July 24, 1890): 769-770.

extended the power of the crown over the rights of subjects without the consent of parliament. Following the treaty the government's actions were condemned by the decision of "Walker v. Baird" (1892).⁴⁸

Salisbury's motives, however, were far removed from raising a constitutional question. To win Queen Victoria's approval of the treaty he had assured her that the surrender of Heligoland would in no way constitute a precedent.⁴⁹ Salisbury's other motive appeared to be a protection against the cession of further territory by later governments.⁵⁰

The dispute over the government's actions in passing the Heligoland Bill did nothing to impede the execution of the terms of the treaty. On August 10, 1890, in great pomp and ceremony, William II presided over the transfer of power in Heligoland from Great Britain to Germany.⁵¹

Both sides at the negotiating table congratulated themselves on a job well done; British colonial interests had been secured, and, for the Germans, the elusive goal

⁴⁸Hubbell, "The Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty," p. 347.

⁴⁹Salisbury to Queen Victoria, June 12, 1890, Buckle, Letters of Queen Victoria, 3rd series, 1: 615.

⁵⁰Cecil, Life of Robert, Marquis of Salisbury, 4: 299-300.

⁵¹A full account of the ceremony is given in The Times, August 11, 1890.

of acquiring Heligoland had finally been attained. The treaty was also hailed as the beginning of a new era in Anglo-German relations.

Hatzfeldt and his colleagues at the German Foreign Office clearly intended the Treaty of Heligoland-Zanzibar to be the first step in drawing England into the Triple Alliance. There is even a suggestion that Hatzfeldt had been working secretly toward that end with Friedrich Holstein, without Bismarck's knowledge, since he became ambassador to Great Britain. The plan involved a complicated scheme to have Great Britain replace Russia in the Bismarckian system.⁵²

Salisbury's objectives had been much more limited in scope. His initial proposal had been to resolve conflicts of interest through arbitration. By the time of his offer to cede Heligoland, he had enlarged his goal to define the limits of British and German colonies in Africa. This, of course, would remove a growing obstacle to good Anglo-German relations.

Given the objectives of each side, Salisbury was more successful. The treaty did open the possibility of

⁵²Holstein to Hatzfeldt, June 8, 1890, quoted in Norman Rich, Friedrich von Holstein, (2 vols.; New York, 1965), 1: 327-328. In the letter Holstein comments on the progress of the colonial negotiations and suggests that "now that Bismarck is gone, we two might discuss an Anglo-German agreement." This additional agreement apparently was designed to be an Alliance.

bringing Britain and Germany closer together as the Entente Cordiale did for France and Great Britain after 1904. However, in the years following the treaty of 1890 Germany and England drifted apart.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Even though both the British and German governments were satisfied with the treaty, public reaction was mixed. Before the signing of the treaty on July 1, 1890, public opinion in England appeared to be against the treaty. The expressions of disapproval were directed particularly at Salisbury. The reaction to the treaty in Germany was initially more favorable. Public opinion in Germany, however, changed as the terms of the treaty became more publicized, and colonial interest groups objected that a colonial empire had been sacrificed.

The major attack in the British press came on June 18 with a lengthy letter to the editor of The Times critical of Salisbury's treatment of the Heligolandiers. The letter stated that the Heligolandiers had no desire to be bartered away.¹ The following day The Times ran an article from a foreign correspondent which criticized Salisbury for pushing his desire to oblige the Germans to the limit.² The opposition press voiced its objections ever

¹The Times, June 18, 1890.

²The Times, June 19, 1890.

stronger. An article in the Standard suggested that Salisbury's government would not survive the negative public reaction and that the Prime Minister should make plans to step down.³ Members of parliament took note of public opinion, and they pressed the government to address the expressed grievances.⁴

Supporters of the treaty quickly responded to the attacks on Salisbury and the settlement. Several letters and editorials in The Times and other papers explained the advantages won for Great Britain by the treaty.⁵ This press campaign quieted the attacks in the press. However, even after the treaty was signed, ardent imperialists complained that the surrender of any territory, even Heligoland, could not be justified.⁶

In Germany the press initially favored the treaty in light of the acquisition of Heligoland. However, by the end of June the conservative press was criticizing provisions of the treaty. One paper stated that while Heligoland was a great gain for Germany, it was slender compensation for the losses in Africa.⁷

³Standard, June 21, 1890.

⁴3 Hansard, 345 (June 22, 1890): 1480-1483.

⁵The Times, June 20, 1890; and Hale, Publicity and Diplomacy, pp. 84-85.

⁶Punch, July 6, 1890.

⁷Vossische Zeitung, June 18, 1890; The Times carried a translation of a German editorial June 19, 1890.

The conservative German press had been dominated by Bismarck, and it generally voiced Bismarckian policy. The conservative press became markedly hostile to the treaty after the publication of a letter by Bismarck critical of the negotiations. The former Chancellor's opinion seemed to be that the German government had made a poor attempt to win English friendship and had failed.⁸

The Reichstag was also mixed in its reception of the treaty. The government received criticism from almost all parties. The opponents reproached the Chancellor and Foreign Secretary for paying too high a price for Heligoland and for showing a level of friendship to the English which was never reciprocated. Caprivi responded that the value of Heligoland was being underestimated and that Germany had more than enough colonial territory to develop. Caprivi continued to defend the treaty from attacks well into 1891.⁹

Despite the criticisms, the signing of the Treaty of Heligoland-Zanzibar in 1890 marked the high point in Anglo-German relations. Until the early twentieth century very few British or German statesmen gave serious thought to the possibility of a war between the two countries.

⁸A translation of the letter appeared in The Times, July 31, 1890.

⁹Hubbell, "The Helgoland-Zanzibar Treaty," pp. 451-453.

In fact, Bismarck frequently argued that Great Britain was the natural ally of Germany. Throughout Bismarck's long career, he had tried to bring Germany and England closer together. In fact, although neither country could find an area of serious conflict in the nineteenth century, the two countries steadily drifted apart.

In this light the Treaty of Heligoland-Zanzibar can be viewed as a product of Bismarckian diplomacy. The treaty was not concluded during his tenure in office, but the groundwork for the treaty had been laid. It is impossible to determine what sort of treaty Bismarck would have concluded with the British. Nevertheless, it is clear that he disapproved of the treaty concluded by his successors. His memoirs contain a critical analysis of the German government's failure, but it is difficult to determine how objective the former Chancellor may have been.¹⁰

Caprivi had been anxious to demonstrate his ability and to move out from under Bismarck's shadow. By concluding a treaty covering such broad issues, Caprivi succeeded where Bismarck had failed. However, the content of Caprivi's treaty must also be given serious consideration. One of the chief criticisms of the treaty within Germany was that it conceded too much to the British for the

¹⁰Otto von Bismarck, The Kaiser vs. Bismarck, pp. 175-178.

limited gains Germany received in return. This criticism is justified by the fact that the Germans relinquished numerous claims to African territory for an island in the North Sea.

Bismarck possessed greater skill as a diplomat than did his successors. Bismarck had developed German colonies for various purposes in the 1880s. As previously discussed, historians disagree over the exact nature of Bismarck's colonial scheme, but the important point in analyzing the 1890 treaty is that Bismarck had used Germany's colonies as part of his diplomacy with Great Britain. The German colonies were an effective tool in making an imperial power like Britain sensitive to German ambitions.

The colonial agreement of 1890 was the direct outcome of Bismarck's colonial policy; it brought an end to growing Anglo-German rivalries. This is where Caprivi deviated from Bismarckian policy. Bismarck's goal had been to win a formal alliance with Great Britain and any treaty he concluded would likely have contributed to this result. The diplomatic foundation Bismarck had laid in 1889, including the acquisitions of colonies, was far more complicated than the simple exchange of an island for colonial concessions. Bismarck had sought to make circumstances so complicated that the British

would abandon their isolation and come to terms with Germany.¹¹

For Salisbury the treaty was a great success. The Prime Minister had obtained an end to colonial rivalries with Germany and preserved the stability of British diplomacy in Europe. In effect, he had limited German expansion into British areas of interests for a very small price--a few concessions in Africa and the tiny island of Heligoland.¹²

Heligoland became entwined in this African settlement because of its long, but minor, role in Anglo-German relations. The Germans had held the island to be a part of the fatherland, and they had often called for its union with Germany. This idea was really more of a product of nationalism than of history. The only claim Germany had to the island was that the majority of its inhabitants were German. But, until the British seized the island in 1807, it had been a part of Denmark. The nationalism that developed in Germany, however, called

¹¹H. W. Koch, "The Anglo-German Alliance Negotiations: Missed Opportunity or Myth?" History 54 (1969): 137-156. Koch argues that Bismarck's efforts failed because he over-played Anglo-German antagonisms and only made relations more difficult.

¹²It has been argued that Salisbury's prime objective was to safeguard the Upper Nile. This analysis, however, limits the potential of Salisbury's policy toward Europe. G. N. Sanderson, "The Anglo-German Agreement of 1890 and the Upper Nile," English Historical Review 78 (1963): 49-72.

for the rejoining of all German people no matter what their history may have been. This is the feeling Emperor William II exhibited when he placed the acquisition of the island above gains in Africa.

The value of Heligoland went beyond sentimentality on the part of an emperor. Bismarck as well as the German admirals realized the military value of the island during the unification of Germany. Its value rested on the fact that the island commanded strategic water passages on the northwest coast of Germany. Possessed by a foreign power, Heligoland would facilitate a close blockade of the German coast. In addition, the island could be used as an excellent staging ground for invading troops. For a better defense of their coast the Germans desired the island.

The advance of technology, particularly the torpedo and long range artillery, however, diminished the island's strategical value. Bismarck as well as Salisbury was aware of this fact. Between 1870 and 1890 the Germans made several offers to take the island. Each time, however, the possibility was thwarted by some other diplomatic complication. For example, when Bismarck surprised the British with the sudden acquisition of territory in southwestern Africa in 1884, the discussions on the surrender of the island were brought to a halt.

The postponement of the Heligoland question made the matter less urgent to Bismarck. By the time of his alliance offer of 1889 and the resulting settlement of the African issues, the possession of the island by Germany could hardly be considered more than a cosmetic correction. This is why Bismarck would, most likely, not have concluded a treaty over such a minor issue.

Salisbury understood Bismarck's assessment of the island's value, and he never made a proposal to cede the island in dealing with the Chancellor. By the spring of 1890 Bismarck was no longer in office. The negotiations that had been interrupted by his fall from power resumed with a renewed German eagerness to make a settlement. Salisbury ably took advantage of the situation by offering the island in exchange for the British demands. Once this was done, the negotiations were rapidly concluded.

As already mentioned, following the treaty there was no flowering of an Anglo-German alliance.¹³ Granted, the treaty restored the amiable relations between Berlin and London that had deteriorated during the scramble for Africa; but no permanent harmony resulted. This was

¹³Rich, Friedrich von Holstein, 2: 724; Rich points out that Holstein worked to shift the emphasis of the negotiations from a colonial agreement to the development of an alliance.

largely due to the fact that the Germans had acted too quickly in making the treaty.¹⁴

The ending of conflict, while it renewed a sense of cooperation, left the two countries to pursue their interests independently of each other. The treaty had so well defined the British and German areas of control that there was little need for close relations between the two governments on a regular basis.

This alone would not have prevented Britain and Germany from drawing closer. But, when coupled with Germany's dynamism and ambition during the reign of William II, the growing alienation was a natural outcome. The common interests of Germany and Britain were embodied in the spirit of the treaty, but the shift in their common interests in the 1890s negated any positive and lasting impact the treaty had on Anglo-German relations. Thus, the agreement of 1890 gave way to the entente of 1904.

¹⁴Hubbell, "The Helgoland-Zanzibar Treaty," pp. 437-439.

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APPENDIX A
THE TREATY OF HELIGOLAND-ZANZIBAR

The Undersigned,

Sir Edward Baldwin Malet, Her Britannic Majesty's
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary;

Sir Henry Percy Anderson, Chief of the African De-
partment of Her Majesty's Foreign Office;

The Chancellor of the German Empire, General von
Caprivi;

The Privy Councillor in the Foreign Office, Dr.
Krauel;

Have, after discussion of various questions af-
fecting the Colonial interests of Germany and Great Britain,
come to the following agreement on behalf of the respective
Governments.

Article I. In East Africa the sphere in which the
exercise of influence is reserved to Germany is bounded--

1. To the north by a line which commencing on the
coast at the north bank of the mouth of the river Umba,
runs direct to Lake Jipe; passes thence along the eastern
side and round the northern side of the lake, and crosses
the River Lume; after which it passes midway between the
territories of Taveita and Chagga, skirts the northern
base of the Kilimanjaro range, and thence is drawn direct
to the point on the eastern side of Lake Victoria Nyanza
which is intersected by the first parallel of south lati-
tude; thence, crossing the lake on that parallel, to the
frontier of the Congo Free State, where it terminates.

It is, however, understood, that on the west side of the lake, the sphere does not comprise Mount Mfumbrio; if that mountain shall prove to lie to the south of the selected parallel, the line shall be deflected so as to exclude it, but shall nevertheless return so as to terminate at the above named point.

2. To the south by a line which, starting on the coast at the northern limit of the Province of Mozambique, follows the course of the River Rovuma to the point of confluence of the Mainje; thence it runs westward along the parallel of that point till it reaches Lake Nyasa; thence striking northward, it follows the eastern, northern, and western shores of the lake to the northern bank of the mouth of the River Songwe; it ascends that river to the point where it approaches most nearly the boundary of the geographical Congo Basin defined in Article I of the Act of Berlin, as marked in the Map attached to the 9th Protocol of the Conference.

From that point it strikes direct to the above named boundary, and follows it to the point of its intersection by the 32nd degree of east longitude; from which point it strikes direct to the point of confluence of the northern and southern branches of the River Kilambo, and thence follows that river till it enters Lake Tanganyika.

The course of the above boundary is traced in general accordance with a map of Nyasa-Tanganyika Plateau, officially prepared for the British Government in 1889.

3. To the west by a line which, from the mouth of the River Kilambo to the 1st parallel of south latitude, is conterminous with the Congo Free State.

The sphere in which the exercise of influence is reserved to Great Britain is bounded--

1. To the south by the above mentioned line running from the mouth of the River Umba to the point where it reaches the Congo Free State. Mount Mfumbrio is included in the sphere.

2. To the north by a line commencing on the coast at the north bank of the mouth of the River Juba; thence it ascends that bank of the river, and is conterminous with the territory reserved to the influence of Italy in Gallaland and Abyssinia, as far as the confines of Egypt.

3. To the west by the Congo Free State, and by the western watershed of the basin of Upper Nile.

Article II. In order to render effective the delimitation recorded in the preceding Article, Germany withdraws in favour of Great Britain her Protectorate over Witu. Great Britain engages to recognize the sovereignty of the Sultan of Witu over the territory extending from Kipini to the point opposite the Island of Kwyhoo fixed as the boundary in 1887.

Germany also withdraws her Protectorate over the adjoining coast up to Kismayu, as well as her claims to

all other territories on the mainland, to the north of the River Tana, and the islands of Patta and Manda.

Article III. In Southwest Africa the sphere in which the exercise of influence is reserved to Germany is bounded--

1. To the south by a line commencing at the mouth of the Orange River, and ascending the north bank of that river to the point of its intersection by the 20th degree of east longitude.

2. To the east by a line commencing at the above named point, and following the 20th degree of east longitude to the point of its intersection by the 22nd parallel of south latitude, it runs eastward along that parallel to the point of its intersection by 21st degree of east longitude; thence it follows that degree northward to the point of intersection by the 18th parallel of south latitude; it runs eastward along that parallel till it reaches the River Chobe; and descends the center of the main channel of that river to its junction with the Zambezi where it terminates.

It is understood that under this arrangement Germany shall have free access from her Protectorate to the Zambezi by a strip of territory which shall at no point be less than 20 English miles in width.

The sphere in which the exercise of influence is reserved to Great Britain is bounded to the west and

northwest by the above mentioned line. It includes Lake Ngami.

The course of the above boundary is traced in general accordance with a map officially prepared for the British government in 1889.

The delimitation of the southern boundary of the British territory of Walfish Bay is reserved for arbitration, unless it shall be settled by the consent of the two Powers within two years from the date of the conclusion of this agreement. The two Powers agree that, pending such settlement, the passage of the subjects and the transit of goods of both Powers through the territory now in dispute shall be free; and the treatment of their subjects in that territory shall be in all respects equal. No dues shall be levied on goods in transit. Until a settlement shall be effected, the territory shall be considered neutral.

Article IV. In West Africa--

1. The boundary between the German Protectorate of Togo and the British Gold Coast Colony commences on the coast at the marks set up after the negotiations between the Commissioners of the two countries of the 14th and 28th of July, 1886; and proceeds direct northwards to the 6th degree 10th minute parallel of north latitude; thence it runs along that parallel westwards til it

reaches the left bank of the River Aka; ascends the mid-channel of that river to the 6th degree 20th minute parallel of north latitude; runs along that parallel westwards to the right bank of the River Dehawe or Shavoe; follows that bank of the river till it reaches the parallel corresponding with the point of confluence of the River Deine with the Volta; it runs along that parallel westward till it reaches the Volta; from that point it ascends the left bank of the Volta till it arrives at the neutral zone established by the Agreement of 1888, which commences at the confluence of the River Dakka with the Volta.

Each Power engages to withdraw immediately after the conclusion of the Agreement all its officials and employees from territory which is assigned to the other Power by the above limitation.

2. It having been proved to the satisfaction of the two Powers that no river exists on the Gulf of Guinea corresponding with that marked on Maps as the Rio del Rey, to which reference was made in the Agreement of 1885, a provisional line of demarcation is adopted between the German sphere in the Cameroons and the adjoining British sphere, which, starting from the head of the Rio del Rey Creek goes direct to the point about 9 degrees 8 minutes east longitude, marked "Rapids" in the British Admiralty chart.

Article V. It is agreed no Treaty or Agreement, made by or on behalf of either Power to the north of the River Benue, shall interfere with free passage of goods of the other Power, without payment of transit dues, to and from the shores of Lake Chad.

All Treaties made in territories intervening between the Benue and Lake Chad shall be notified by one Power to the other.

Article VI. All the lines demarcation traced in Articles I and IV shall be subject to rectification by agreement between the two Powers, in accordance with local requirements.

It is specially understood that, as regards the boundaries traced in Article IV, Commissioners shall meet with the least possible delay for the object of such rectification.

Article VII. The two Powers engage that neither will interfere with any sphere of influence assigned to the other by Articles I to IV. One Power will not in the sphere of the other make acquisitions, conclude treaties, accept sovereign rights or Protectorates, nor hinder the extension of influence of the other.

It is understood that no Companies nor individuals subject to one Power can exercise sovereign rights in a

sphere assigned to the other, except with the assent of the latter.

Article VIII. The two Powers engage to apply in all the portions of their respective spheres, within limits of the free zone defined by the Act of Berlin of 1885, to which the first five Articles of that Act are applicable at the date of the present Agreement, the provisions of those Articles according to which trade enjoys complete freedom; the navigation of the lakes, rivers, and canals, and of the ports on those waters, is free to both flags; and differential in their incidence, which may be levied to meet expenditures in the interest of trade; and no monopoly or favour in matters of trade can be granted.

The subjects of either Power will be at liberty to settle freely in their respective territories situated within the free trade zone.

It is specially understood that, in accordance with these provisions, the passage of goods of both Powers will be free from all hindrances and from all transit dues between Lake Nyasa and the Congo State, between Lake Nyasa and Tanganyika, on Lake Tanganyika, and between that lake and the northern boundary of the two spheres.

Article IX. Trading and mineral Concessions and rights to real property, held by Companies or individuals, subjects of one Power, shall if their validity is duly

established, be recognized in the sphere of the other Power. It is understood that Concessions must be worked in accordance with local laws and regulations.

Article X. In all territories in Africa belonging to, or under the influence of, either Power, missionaries of both countries shall have full protection. Religious toleration and freedom for all forms of divine worship and religious teaching are guaranteed.

Article XI. Great Britain engages to use all her influence to facilitate a friendly arrangement, by which the Sultan of Zanzibar shall cede absolutely to Germany his possessions on the mainland comprised in existing Concessions to the German East African Company, and their dependencies, as well as the island of Mafia.

It is understood that His Highness will, at the same time, receive an equitable indemnity for the loss of revenue resulting from such cessions.

Germany engages to recognize a Protectorate of Great Britain over the remaining dominions of the Sultan of Zanzibar, including the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, as well as over dominions of the Sultan of Witu, and the adjacent territory up to Kismayu, from which her Protectorate is withdrawn. It is understood that if the cession of the German coast has not taken place before the assumption by Great Britain of the Protectorate of Zanzibar,

Her Majesty's Government will, in assuming the Protectorate, accept the obligation to use all their influence with the Sultan to induce him to make that cession at the earliest possible period in consideration of an equitable indemnity.

Article XII. Concerning Heligoland--

1. Subject to the assent of the British Parliament, the sovereignty over the island of Heligoland, together with its dependencies, is ceded by Her Britannic Majesty to His Majesty the Emperor of Germany.

2. The German Government will allow to all persons natives of the territory thus ceded the right of opting for British nationality by means of a declaration to be made by themselves, and, in the case of children under age, by their parents or guardians, which must be sent in before the 1st January, 1892.

3. All persons native of the territory thus ceded, and their children born before the date of the signature of the present Agreement, are free from the obligation of service in the military and naval forces of Germany.

4. Native laws and customs existing will, as far as possible, remain undisturbed.

5. The German Government binds itself not to increase the Customs Tariff at present in force in the territory thus ceded until 1st January, 1910.

6. All rights to property which private persons or existing Corporations have acquired in Heligoland in

connection with the British Government are maintained; obligations resulting from them are transferred to His Majesty the Emperor of Germany. It is understood that the above term, "rights to property," includes the right of signalling now enjoyed by Lloyd's.

7. The rights of British fishermen with regard to anchorage in all weathers, to taking provisions and water, to making repairs, to transshipment of goods, to the sale of fish, and to the landing and drying of nets, remain undisturbed.

Berlin, July 1, 1890.
EDWARD B. MALET.
H. PERCY ANDERSON.
V. CAPRIVI.
K. KRAUEL.

APPENDIX B
THE HELIGOLAND BILL

Act of the British Parliament, to assent to certain provisions in an Agreement between Her Majesty and the German Emperor.

Whereas an Agreement, dated the 1st of July, 1890, has been concluded between Her Majesty the Queen and His Majesty the German Emperor, whereby, amongst other things, it was provided by the provisions set out in the Schedule to this Act that, subject to the assent of Parliament, the sovereignty of the Island of Heligoland, together with its dependencies, should be ceded to His Majesty the German Emperor:

And whereas it is expedient to give such assent:

Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:--

1. The assent of Parliament is hereby given to those provisions of the said Agreement which are set out in the Schedule to this Act, and it shall be lawful for Her Majesty the Queen to everything that appears to Her Majesty necessary or proper for carrying into effect those provisions.

2. This Act may be cited as "The Anglo-German Agreement Act, 1890."

August 4, 1890.

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Disagree (Permission not granted)

Agree (Permission granted)

Student's signature

Kevin Nick Beyer

Student's signature

Date

4/20/88

Date