“Three and a Half Men”:
The Bülow-Hammann System of Public Relations before the First World War

by

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of History in the Graduate School of Duke University

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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This dissertation analyzes the history of the press bureau of the German Foreign Office before the First World War. Methodologically, the work tries to locate European international history in a larger political, intellectual, and cultural context by examining German statesmen and their attempts to cultivate a consensus for their policies in the Reichstag and the press from 1890 to 1914. Relying upon official documents, memoirs, personal letters, and published newspaper articles, it argues that the death of the “Old Diplomacy,” usually associated with the years after the Versailles Peace Treaty, actually began as early as 1890. This development caused German statesmen after Bismarck’s dismissal to invent new ways of building public support for their policies through the creation of what is labeled here the “Bülow-Hammann System” of public relations. Eschewing Bismarckian methods of compulsion, this new system cultivated personal connections with journalists from trusted newspapers who would toe a government line for inside information. The system initially worked well to meet the new openness of the international milieu after 1890. But eventually these methods failed to stem criticism on the nationalist right and socialist left after 1909, when Germany’s position vis-à-vis France, Britain, and Russia greatly deteriorated. As a result, more modern methods of dealing with public opinion had to be developed in Germany after 1914—the dissemination of outright propaganda and the use of modern press conferences—to cultivate support for governmental policies.
filiolis meis et puellae meae
Der Handelnde ist immer gewissenlos; es hat niemand Gewissen als der Betrachtende.

Goethe, *Maximen und Reflexionen* (1824)
# Contents

Abstract .............................................................................................................................. iv  
List of Tables ........................................................................................................................ x  
List of Abbreviations .......................................................................................................... xi  
Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................... xii  
Introduction: From the Old to the New Diplomacy ............................................................ 1  
  The Death of an Old Man ............................................................................................... 1  
  Bismarck and the Old Diplomacy ................................................................................. 9  
  Methodology and Historiography ............................................................................... 23  
Chapter 1: The Rise of the Public-Opinion Problem, 1890-1897 ..................................... 33  
  Bismarck's Last Withdrawal ....................................................................................... 33  
  Bismarck's Dismissal .................................................................................................. 36  
  The New Course .......................................................................................................... 42  
  The Public-Opinion Problem and the New Course .................................................... 50  
  The Transformation of European Politics .................................................................. 60  
  The Army Bill and the Coming of Hammann ............................................................. 66  
  Marschall's “Flücht nach Öffentlichkeit" .................................................................... 79  
  The Development of the Press Bureau ....................................................................... 94  
Chapter 2: Germany's Place in the Sun, 1895-1902 ........................................................ 105  
  A Telegram from the Kaiser ....................................................................................... 105  
  The Inauguration of Weltpolitik ............................................................................... 109  
  Bülow, Weltpolitik, and the Public-Opinion Problem .................................................. 127  
  Old Diplomacy against the New .............................................................................. 145
The New Diplomacy Triumphant ..............................................................................158

Chapter 3: The Isolation of Germany, 1900-1906..................................................178
  The Journalists at Algeciras..............................................................................178
  The Rise of the Bülow-Hammann System......................................................180
  The End of Anglo-German Collaboration, 1902-1903.................................192
  The End of Britain’s Splendid Isolation...........................................................200
  The Reaction to the Entente and the Russo-Japanese War .........................211
  German Diplomacy Triumphant: The Tangier Landing ...............................225
  German Diplomacy Defeated: The Algeciras Conference ...........................238

Chapter 4: The End of the Bülow-Hammann System, 1906-1914.....................262
  Bülow’s Fainting Fit in the Reichstag............................................................262
  Hammann’s Power at its Zenith ....................................................................266
  Germany’s Encirclement and the Daily Telegraph Affair..............................281
  The Bosnian Crisis.........................................................................................305
  The End of the Bülow-Hammann System......................................................320

Conclusion: “Three and a Half Men”.................................................................347
  Bethmann and the Enabling Act.................................................................347
  “Three and a Half Men”...............................................................................350

Appendix 1: Tables...............................................................................................359

Appendix 2: Translations of German Epigraphs................................................368

Works Cited.........................................................................................................370
  Archival Sources............................................................................................370
  Published Document Collections and Government Publications..............371
  Memoirs, Published Diaries, and Contemporary Writings.........................372
List of Tables

Table 1: The German National Press (1914) ................................................................. 360
Table 2: Reichstag Election Results for the Major Parties (1890-1912) .................... 366
Table 3: Reichstag Election Results for the Major Parties ........................................... 367
## List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BArchL</td>
<td>Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde</td>
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<tr>
<td>BD</td>
<td><em>British Documents on the Origins of the War</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>BHdAD</td>
<td><em>Biographisches Handbuch des deutschen Auswärtigen Dienstes 1871-1945</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>BS</td>
<td><em>Biographisches Staatsarchiv</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DD</td>
<td><em>Die deutschen Dokumente zum Kriegsausbruch</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>DDF</td>
<td><em>Diplomatische Dokumente</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>EK</td>
<td>Philipp Eulenburg's political correspondence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td><em>Die große Politik der europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MdR</td>
<td><em>MdR. Biographisches Handbuch der Reichstage</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nl.H</td>
<td>Nachlaß Hammann (Papers of Otto Hammann)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NdB</td>
<td><em>Neue deutsche Biographie</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ö-UA</td>
<td>Österreichisch-Ungarns Außenpolitik von der bosnischen Krise 1908 bis zum Kriegsausbruch 1914</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA-AA</td>
<td>Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (records of the Reich Foreign Office)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH</td>
<td><em>Die geheimen Papiere Friedrich von Holsteins</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rk.</td>
<td>Reichskanzlei (records of the Reich Chancellor's Office)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBVR</td>
<td><em>Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Reichstages</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Schulthess</td>
<td><em>Schulthess' europäischer Geschichtskalender</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>YIVO-NY</td>
<td>YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, Center for Jewish History, New York, N.Y.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bd.</td>
<td>Band (archival unit / file)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bde.</td>
<td>Bände (archival units / files)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bl.</td>
<td>Blatt (sheet)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nl.</td>
<td>Nachlaß (personal papers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no.</td>
<td>number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leg. Per.</td>
<td>Legislative Period (Legislaturperiode)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>secr.</td>
<td>secreta (secret files)</td>
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<tr>
<td>secretiss.</td>
<td>secretissima (most secret files)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ser.</td>
<td>series</td>
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papers of Otto Hammann and the files of the Reichskanzlei accessible to me. Tatiana Falk was very resourceful in getting me particularly hard-to-find microfilm from the University of Michigan. In a more general sense, I would also like to thank the staffs of the National Archives in Washington, the YIVO Institute for Jewish History in New York, the Hoover Institution, and Yale University Library. Finally, research funding for this dissertation was made available to me through a Summer Research Fellowship granted by the Graduate School at Duke University.

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Altogether, the assistance and contributions of all the individuals and organizations detailed above made possible what follows. Of course, any remaining errors of fact or interpretation are mine alone.
Introduction: From the Old to the New Diplomacy

Much has been written on the question whether this new kind of journalism has influenced opinion, but that aspect of it is comparatively unimportant. Its influence in actually converting readers from one set of opinions to another has probably been quite slight, and to do it justice, it makes no great pretensions in that respect. What it has done has been to throw the old machinery of politics out of gear and profoundly to change the atmosphere of public life.

J.A. Spender, The Public Life

The Death of an Old Man

In the summer of 1898 Otto von Bismarck, the former German chancellor, was a mere shell of his old self. Physically he had deteriorated greatly in the eight years since his forced resignation in 1890. He was plagued by problems with his circulatory system that were so bad that one leg had gone numb. Mentally his condition had also seemed in a state of decline. Only two years earlier, in October 1896, he had revealed to the Hamburger Nachrichten the secret of the Reinsurance Treaty he had made with Russia in 1887. It seemed so obviously contrary to the policy of alliance with Austria-Hungary he had maintained for so long that Francis Joseph, the Austrian emperor, remarked that Bismarck was apparently becoming senile. Many in Germany

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2 The Hamburger Nachrichten had been associated with German liberalism after 1848, but was so closely allied with Bismarck by the 1880s—when Hermann Hofmann (1850-1915) edited the paper—that it became the leading organ in Bismarck’s oppositional campaign of the 1890s. In foreign affairs this meant the advocacy of a rapprochement with Russia to the detriment of relations with Britain. Already by 1892, when the paper began to aim its attacks directly at Chancellor Leo von Caprivi, the result of Bismarck’s campaign had led some circles to call the Hamburger Nachrichten the “world’s most-cited paper.” With a daily circulation of between 15,000 and 20,000, however, its popular appeal in the imperial period remained relatively limited. Kurt Koszyk, Deutsche Presse im 19. Jahrhundert, ed. Margot Lindemann, vol. 6, Geschichte der deutschen Presse (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1966), 252-3; and “Hofmann, Hermann,” in BS, vol. 1, 555. For more information on this and other German newspapers, see Table 1 in Appendix 1.
agreed with the assessment at least partially: even the chancellor’s own son Herbert³ had to correct the old man on the details of the alliance with Russia.⁴ It came as no surprise to many observers when Bismarck finally succumbed to a respiratory illness on 30 July 1898.

Bismarck’s style of politics had been coming to its end even as the old man had been coming to his. Indeed, by the turn of the century the age of mass politics seemed to have arrived in Germany. The Reichstag elections in June 1898 appeared to confirm this transformation in Germany. They had resulted in another stunning success for the two parties that contained Bismarck’s most hated political rivals, the Center party and the Social Democrats, whose seats in the Reichstag had increased to 102 and 56 seats respectively.⁵ This development had a parallel one at the cultural level, with the creation of an American-style mass newspaper press in the middle of the 1880s, the so-called Generalanzeiger (or for-profit) press, and the increase in the total number of newspapers and their circulations.⁶ It had an analogue at the grassroots political level,

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³ Herbert von Bismarck (1849-1904) served as his father’s state secretary from October 1885 until his resignation in support of the old man in March 1890. For more information on Herbert von Bismarck, see Louis L. Snyder, Diplomacy in Iron: The Life of Herbert von Bismarck (Malabar, Fla.: R.E. Krieger, 1985).
⁴ Lothar Gall, Bismarck. Der weisse Revolutionär (Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein, 1980; reprint, Munich: Ullstein, 2002), 833-5 (page citations are to the reprint edition). Gall’s treatment is probably still the best modern biography of Bismarck.
⁵ For the electoral results of this and all other Reichstag elections in the Wilhelmine period, see Tables 2 and 3 in Appendix 1.
⁶ A nice discussion of this topic is Thomas Nipperdey, Deutsche Geschichte 1866-1918, vol. 1, Arbeitswelt und Bürgergeist (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1990), 796-801. Perhaps the best example of this new form of newspaper was August Scherl’s Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger. Scherl (1849-1921) brought modern methods of newspaper management from America to Germany in the 1880s, thereby creating the new Anzeiger press. These methods ranged from cost-cutting in distribution, to financing the paper through advertisements rather than subscriptions, to inexpensive classified ads, to emphasis on juicy local stories like crime or divorce scandals—all to the detriment of high politics. They resulted in skyrocketing circulations that had reached approximately 250,000 by 1912, which indicated the growing cultural and social importance of the common man in Germany before the war. By its very nature, the Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger lacked the direct political affiliations of the more obviously partisan newspapers and therefore was not as important politically as its circulation suggested. For more on Scherl’s life and the numerous papers he owned, see Franz Menges, “Scherl, August,” in NdB, vol. 22, Rohmer—Schinkel (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2005), 699.
too, with the growth of new right-wing political pressure groups, such as the Pan-German League and the Navy League. All told, these developments showed that the lower-middle classes and the working classes were becoming political and social forces to be reckoned with, even if they were still not the dominant sectors of society. And there were parallels to this development in the other countries of Europe, especially France and Britain, where a general social and political democratization had been developing since at least the 1880s.

The dominant figure of the era, William II, was perhaps more savvy in recognizing the importance of the new mode of politics than the chancellor he had sent packing. In typical fashion he and his court descended on Bismarck’s estate just days after the death of the old man. According to the Reichsanzeiger, the Kaiser had telegraphed Bismarck’s son on 1 August—to Herbert’s extreme annoyance—pledging to honor his father: “I shall prepare a last abode for his remains in Berlin, in the cathedral, by the side of my ancestors.” It was to be a monument to the German nation. Herbert, following instructions from his father, adamantly refused and informed William that he intended to bury the body in a simple grave on the Bismarck estate. It seemed that Bismarck preferred to remain the perennial Prussian Junker even in death. Here,

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8 *Reichsanzeiger*, quoted in the *New York Times*, 2 August 1898. Here William can be seen—an ironic last twist for Bismarck in many ways—in the tradition that had grown in the years since 1890 of appropriating Bismarck’s legacy for contemporary political purposes. For a fascinating cultural treatment of this subject, see Richard E. Frankel, *Bismarck’s Shadow: The Cult of Leadership and the Transformation of the German Right, 1898-1945* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2005). The full title of the Reichsanzeiger was the *Deutscher Reichs-Anzeiger und Königlich-Preussischer Staats-Anzeiger*. For the sake of brevity, I will henceforth refer to it by the short form utilized above.
William can be seen as he often preferred to be: as a representative of the German people, rather than a king in the service of particular Prussian interests.

In such appeals to the German people, the Kaiser showed that he had recognized the death of Bismarck's style of governing and wished at least partially to win the approval of the German people. Hence, the leaders he brought into the highest levels of the German foreign-policy establishment in this period were men who seemingly knew how to respond to the new mode of politics. The two most important statesmen in this respect were Bernhard von Bülow⁹ and Alfred von Tirpitz.¹⁰ After their respective appointments as state secretaries of the Foreign Office and of the Naval Office in 1897, Bülow set the change of course for Germany with his notion of Weltpolitik, while Tirpitz worked to provide the muscle for the turn in policy with the building of a battleship navy. In forging the new direction in foreign policy, both men took greater account of the views

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⁹ Bernhard von Bülow (1849-1929) had a long career in the German diplomatic service before he was appointed as state secretary of the Foreign Office in 1897. He had served as second and first secretary of the embassy in Paris from 1878 to 1884, first secretary of the embassy in St. Petersburg from 1884 to 1888, German minister in Bucharest from 1888 to 1894, and finally ambassador in Rome from 1894 to 1897. The Kaiser considered Bülow's appointment as state secretary of the Foreign Office in 1897 to be a stepping-stone to catapult him to the chancellorship, which Bülow ultimately took over in 1900. The best treatment of Bülow's political career is undoubtedly Katherine Lerman, The Chancellor as Courtier: Bernhard von Bülow and the Governance of Germany 1900-1909 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). There are also two recent German treatments that give a very brief overview of Bülow's life and career: Gerd Fesser, Reichskanzler Bernhard Fürst von Bülow. Eine Biographie (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1991); and Peter Winzen, Bernhard Fürst von Bülow. Weltmachtstrategie ohne Fortune—Wegbereiter der großen Katastrope (Göttingen and Zürich: Muster-Schmidt Verlag, 2003).

¹⁰ Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz (1849-1930) had joined the Prussian Navy in 1865 and oversaw the development of torpedo technology in the Navy in the 1870s and 1880s. He was subsequently appointed as chief of the General Staff for the Navy in 1892. In this position, he began to lobby the Kaiser for the construction of a large battleship fleet to protect German global economic interests in the Mahanian sense. He then commanded the Far Eastern cruiser squadron from 1896 to 1897 before his appointment as state secretary of the Reich Naval Office in 1897. He served in that position until 1916, overseeing the passage of the naval bills of 1898, 1900, 1908, and 1912. The literature on Tirpitz's career and strategic thought is very voluminous. For some of the more recent treatments, see Michael Epkenhans, Tirpitz: Architect of the German High Seas Fleet (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2008); Rolf Hobson, Imperialism at Sea: Naval Strategic Thought, the Ideology of Sea Power, and the Tirpitz Plan, 1875-1914 (Boston: Brill, 2002); and Christian Roedel, Kreiger, Denker, Amateure. Alfred von Tirpitz und das Seekriegsbild vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2003), which is a less useful study on the same subject as Hobson’s study.
of the public. Bülow attempted to cultivate public opinion with his newly revamped Press Bureau in the Foreign Office; likewise Tirpitz conducted a more overt propaganda and publicity campaign from the Reich Naval Office to ensure the passage of his naval bills.11

Thus, the shift to a more participatory mode of politics by the late 1890s was challenging both the domestic system of social and political domination by the possessing classes, as well as the international system of foreign policy conducted by a few grandees—what was later termed the “Old Diplomacy.” As this study will show, after 1890 it gradually became impossible for the German government to ignore parliamentary and newspaper opinion when it conducted foreign policy. The response to the changing context of international politics led, I argue, to the development of completely new methods for cultivating a good press in “public opinion”—a system, in other words, that was a halfway house between Bismarckian methods of repression and the more modern system of propaganda that developed during the First World War.

This new system, which I have termed the Bülow-Hammann system of public relations, had its origins in the exigencies of the domestic politics of the early 1890s. In the wake of his forced retirement, Bismarck’s successors tried to create a new system that was less dependent on the person of the chancellor for the conduct of foreign and domestic policy. When it came to public opinion, this shift meant that Bismarckian methods of control were almost entirely abandoned, and there was a real opportunity for an open and frank discussion of the goals, methods and conduct of foreign policy. But this new-found freedom of public debate caused a crisis for the government by 1893, for

it encouraged the populist nationalist pressure groups of the right to agitate and criticize the foreign policy of the government for the first time.

This emergency led to the appointment of a skilled journalist, Otto Hammann, in early 1894 as the public-relations officer in the Foreign Office. Hammann gradually instituted new methods for cultivating public support for the government. As a system of public relations, it was more subtle in its control of newspapers, for it relied on personal ties between Hammann and a small circle of editors and journalists. He provided his trusted friends and confidants inside information; in return, they wrote articles that were amenable to the government, its policy, and its point of view. In contrast to Bismarckian methods, the Bülow-Hammann system eschewed bribes, government subvention, and repression. Yet it differed fundamentally from the modern system that developed in the First World War, which used a large government apparatus to distribute propaganda and modern press conferences to interact with journalists. In contrast, influencing the press before the war was a small-scale endeavor, involving “three and a half men,” as Bülow later remarked ironically.

The Bülow-Hammann system reached the zenith of its effectiveness during Bülow’s chancellorship (1900-1909), years in which Hammann and the chancellor

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12 On Hammann (1852-1928), see below, pp. 78-80, Heilbron, “Hammann, Otto,” *Deutsches biographisches Jahrbuch* 10 (1931): 93-108; “Hammann, Otto,” *BHdAD*, vol. 1, 189-90; Otto zu Stolberg-Wernigerode, “Hammann, Otto,” in *NdB*, vol. 7, *Grassauer-Hartmann* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1965), 590; and E. Zechlin, “Otto Hammann,” *Vossische Zeitung*, 23 January 1926. In its political orientation, the *Vossische Zeitung* was aligned broadly with the Left Liberals. It was one of the oldest newspapers in Berlin, having been founded in 1704 by Michael Rüdiger, a local book publisher. By its 200th birthday in 1904, it was owned by the Lessing family, had a daily circulation of nearly 25,000 copies. The *Vossische Zeitung* was unique among progressive organs in its representation of the liberal intelligentsia rather than the business classes. While the ownership of the paper was relatively stable in the two decades after Bismarck’s dismissal, the *Vossische Zeitung* went through a string of editors before the Ullstein organization finally acquired it in 1913. Isolde Rieger, *Die Wilhelminische Presse im Überblick 1888-1918* (Munich: Pohl & Co., 1957), 113; and Joseph Kürschner, *Handbuch der Presse* (Berlin: Herman Hillger Verlag, 1902), 605.

13 On this see below, pp. 355-6.
collaborated effectively in the cultivation of public opinion—so much so, that it was later said in some quarters that Bülow had played the musical instrument of public opinion like a master. But the Bülow-Hammann system was in many ways a double-edged sword: in its quiet admission that public opinion was important and had to be cultivated in the press and the Reichstag, the ability of statesmen to conduct an independent foreign policy was partially limited. Ironically, this could be seen in the wake of system’s greatest success—the creation of the “Bülow Bloc” in the Reichstag elections of 1907—when Bülow’s resignation followed almost immediately in 1909 because of his inability to maintain popular and parliamentary support for his policies after the Daily Telegraph Affair.

With Bülow’s retirement in 1909, the Bülow-Hammann system went into a phase of dramatic decline. Hammann was unable to recover his previous position, as he was largely alienated from the decision-making establishment on the Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin. In effect, this development left the new chancellor, Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg in a serious bind during his tenure in office (1909-1917), for he could not find support for his foreign policy in public opinion on either the right or the left of the political spectrum. Among the nationalist parties and pressure groups of the right,

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15 Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg (1856-1921) had served in the Prussian administration from his entry into the service in 1882 until his appointment as the Prussian minister of the Interior in 1905. He worked in that position until he took over as state secretary of the Reich Interior Office in 1907. Bülow suggested him as a suitable successor for the chancellorship when he resigned, and the Kaiser appointed him after Bülow’s departure in the summer of 1909. The standard study on Bethmann is still Konrad H. Jarausch, The Enigmatic Chancellor: Bethmann Hollweg and the Hubris of Imperial Germany (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1973). A more recent treatment is Günter Wollstein, Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg. Letzter Erbe Bismarcks, erstes Opfer der Dolchstoßlegende (Göttingen: Verlag Musterschmidt, 1995).
Bethmann’s foreign policy was often criticized for not doing enough to protect
Germany’s interests in the world. Meanwhile, the parties of the left—most notably, the
Social Democrats—asserted that his policies were too militaristic. In the face of hostility
on all sides, Bethmann and his advisors tried to retreat to the methods of the Old
Diplomacy by conducting foreign policy in the shadows, away from the penetrating gaze
of public opinion, thus further reducing Hammann’s influence in the Foreign Office.

A handful of studies have examined the Press Bureau in the past: most
importantly as a bureaucratic organization in the Foreign Office, but secondarily as a
body that was important in conducting foreign policy in the Wilhelmine period. This
work contributes something new to the history of the Press Bureau in two major ways.
First, it places the public-relations policy of the Foreign Office alongside diplomacy to
show that the two worked largely in tandem from 1897 to 1909. It shows, to put it
another way, that the press division of the Foreign Office was much more than just the
bureaucratic agency historians portrayed it to be in the past. As the agency responsible
for monitoring the press, winning the support of journalists, and defending the policies
of the chancellor against his political enemies, it became crucial to the operations of the

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16 The most recent study of the Press Bureau as a bureaucratic office is Peter Jungblut, “Unter vier
Reichskanzlern: Otto Hammann und die Pressepolitik der deutschen Reichsleitung 1890 bis 1916,” in
Propaganda. Meinungskampf, Verführung und politische Sinnstiftung (1789-1989), ed. Ute Daniel and
Wolfram Siemann (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1994), 101-16. There is also, however,
one much older study that was conducted in the Nazi period: Walter Vogel, “Die Organisation der amtlichen
Presse und Propagandapolitik des Deutschen Reiches von den Anfängen unter Bismarck bis zum Beginn des
Jahres 1933,” Zeitungswissenschaft. Monatsschrift für internationale Zeitungsforschung 16, no. 8/9 (1941):
1-108. Both studies, however, do not use the Hammann papers available in the Bundesarchiv at Berlin-
Lichterfelde.

17 Gudrun Jilg, “Der neue Kurs in der deutschen Pressepolitik: Die Pressestelle des Auswärtigen Amtes unter
Dr. Otto Hammann” (Ph.D. diss., University of Vienna, 1959). Jilg’s study places the Press Bureau in the
context of German foreign policy, but relies only on published primary sources, especially Hammann’s
memoirs. It has also been reproached for its emphasis on trivial matters—such as Hammann’s culinary
tastes—that relate hardly at all to foreign policy. See Gunda Stöber, Pressepolitik als Notwendigkeit. Zum
Verhältnis von Staat und Öffentlichkeit im Wilhelminischen Deutschland 1890-1914 (Stuttgart: Franz
Steiner Verlag, 2000), 15-16.
government under Bülow. Second, what follows is the first study of the Press Bureau that examines its history and political significance by using all of the crucial unpublished archival sources alongside those that have been available since Hammann first published his memoirs in 1919. It relies upon research in the Hammann Papers in the Bundesarchiv at Berlin-Lichterfelde, alongside Hammann’s memoirs and the archival sources of the Foreign Office and the Reich Chancellery which are also held in Berlin.

**Bismarck and the Old Diplomacy**

Before an understanding of this shift in the public-relations policy of the Kaiserreich can be elaborated, something should be said about the way German foreign and press policy was conducted before 1890. The constitution that Bismarck wrote for the North German Confederation in 1867 following the defeat of Austria at Sadowa was a complicated document that delicately balanced the numerous corporate, confessional, state, and regional interests of Germany. The federal government of the new German state consisted of two larger branches: an executive branch represented by the Kaiser—who was also the king of Prussia—his chancellor, and their staffs; and a legislative branch represented by the Bundesrat, a body that consisted of appointed delegations of the twenty-five states of the empire, and by the Reichstag, an imperial diet elected on the basis of universal manhood suffrage.

Within this system the executive branch of the Reich maintained wide-ranging powers under the constitution. The Kaiser possessed a threefold position in the German state: first, he was the king of Prussia; second, he was the commander-in-chief of the

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18 The constitution was extended to encompass the states of the south in 1871 after the defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian War—with only very minor modifications, such as one that changed the title of president to emperor. Nevertheless, the powers granted to him under the modified constitution did not change.
army, or **Bundesfeldherr**, and as such possessed **Kommandogewalt**, the right to command the forces of all the states of Germany in wartime (and the great majority of them in peacetime); and third, he officially exercised the civil power of the Reich government as Kaiser and was thereby responsible for imperial foreign policy, the appointment of Reich officials and the execution and administration of the laws of the empire.

In practice, much of the authority granted to the Kaiser outside of the military sphere was exercised by the chancellor or by officials that he deputized to act on his behalf. The chancellor—the “**höchste Reichsbehörde**” of the state—was the most important Reich officer, since he was supposed to oversee the activities of the Reichstag and the Bundesrat. He was usually also the minister-president and foreign minister of Prussia, something that made it easier for him to supervise the operation of the Bundesrat as its president.¹⁹ Further, the chancellor was considered the only individual responsible for what the constitution delineated as “Reich matters”: the conduct of foreign policy, the navy, and the supervision of customs, trade and the postal service.²⁰

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¹⁹ Bismarck relinquished the minister-presidency from 1872 to 1873. His successor, General Leo von Caprivi, also gave up the office to Count Botho zu Eulenburg (1831-1912) from 1892 to 1894. Caprivi maintained the position of Prussian foreign minister in those years, however, for he would have lost control over the Prussian delegation to the Bundesrat and thereby threatened his authority as Reich chancellor if he had not.

²⁰ Orders relating to the army only required the counter-signature of the chancellor if they were issued by the Kaiser in his presidential capacity as chief political officer of the Reich. If, on the other hand, the Kaiser issued orders as commander-in-chief, thereby invoking his Kommandogewalt, he did not need the counter-signature of the chancellor. The chancellor, therefore, was not constitutionally responsible for orders of the latter type. In practice, the distinction—despite is nebulous nature—meant that the army was not necessarily relegated to the realm of Reich matters, as the navy was. With the navy, the Reich Naval Office was supposed to be under the immediate control of the Reich chancellor, who was (at least constitutionally) responsible for the actions taken by that office. Burt Estes Howard, _The German Empire_ (New York: AMS Press, 1969), 329, and 346-7. The wording of the constitution reflects this distinction between the navy and the army. Defining the navy explicitly as a Reich matter, it is much vaguer regarding the army: *viz.*, it refers to “imperial military affairs and the navy” in Article 4 of the imperial constitution. *Verfassung des
He could delegate his authority to subordinates, and he was expected to countersign the orders and decrees of the Kaiser to guarantee their constitutionality.\textsuperscript{21}

The constitutional position of the chancellor meant that he had extensive power and acted as an intermediary both between the federal and the state governments, and between the Kaiser and the legislative branch. Bismarck translated the constitutional prerogatives of the chancellor into a system of personal rule that made him the lynch-pin of the government. Domestically and administratively he cowed his subordinates and created a government dependent on—if not always loyal to—he for the conduct of day-to-day business in the Reich government. Before 1878 he maintained direct control by personally signing all documents that related to Reich matters. In the spring 1878, when the Reich Chancellery was formed, Bismarck made it clear that the new office was not going to be tied to any idea of parliamentary responsibility.\textsuperscript{22} Rather, the state secretaries who held the offices that eventually came out of the reorganization of the Reich government in that year were his direct subordinates. They were forbidden to communicate with the Kaiser and between themselves—that is, of course, unless they had first gained Bismarck’s approval. Bismarck rarely called the state secretaries together as a group to discuss policy collectively,\textsuperscript{23} for, as he had often groused about the Prussian Ministry of State before 1878, the collective principle implied in cabinet


\textsuperscript{22} Gall, 649-50.

\textsuperscript{23} Exactly two times in his chancellorship.
government was the equivalent of having “to ask eight asses for permission . . . to eat one spoonful of soup.”

In practice, then, the daily conduct of imperial business depended heavily on Bismarck’s personal position. Count Alfred von Waldersee, the chief of the general staff of the army during Bismarck’s last years in office, commented on the situation in 1889:

> The ministers are entirely his creatures; he commands the Ministry of State and endures no opposition; all the diplomats abroad report only what they believe he would prefer to hear. The entire world pays court to him and his family. It is really loathsome to see how obsequious people act in the presence of his sons, who do not notice that it is all only about fear of [their] father.

By the time of his retirement, many of Bismarck’s subordinates were chafing at his personal rule; his dismissal was in many ways a palace coup organized and brought to fruition by disgruntled subordinates.

More important for the purposes of this study, Bismarck’s system of personal control spilled over into the realm of public relations as well. There Bismarck relied heavily on methods of manipulation and compulsion. After 1875, Bismarck restricted his relations with the press dramatically, limiting his direct interaction to what came to be known as the “semi-official” (offiziös) press. The only stable organ of the semi-official press in Bismarck’s chancellorship was the mouthpiece of the Foreign Office, the

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24 Hans Goldschmidt, *Das Reich und Preussen im Kampf um die Führung* (Berlin: Carl Heymanns Verlag, 1931), 7 and 94.
25 Diary entry, 28 February 1889, in Alfred Waldersee, *Denkwürdigkeiten des General-Feldmarschalls Alfred Grafen von Waldersee*, ed. Heinrich Otto Meisner, vol. 2, 1888-1900 (Osnabrück: Biblio Verlag, 1967), 41. Alfred von Waldersee (1832-1904) had worked alongside the elder Moltke in the 1880s before taking over as chief of the general staff in 1888, a position he had to give up in 1891 after he lost the favor of the Kaiser. Although he had worked for Bismarck’s downfall in 1890, after his fall from grace Waldersee became one of the most important members of the Bismarck Fronde.
27 For a more lengthy contemporary discussion of the “semi-official” press from Bismarck to Bülow, see St. Petersburger Zeitung, 24 October 1900, Deutschland 126, Bd. 2, PA-AA. The date of publication is in accordance with the Julian calendar, which was still then used in Russia.
conservative Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung.28 It was “semi-official” in the sense that it was always obligated to support the chancellor’s foreign policy, even while it could retain some independence in the domestic realm. Bismarck categorized the remainder of the press into those papers that were friendly to the regime (reichsfreundlich) and those that were hostile to it (reichsfeindlich)—i.e., those that followed the official lead given in the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung and those that did not.29 For those newspapers of the latter category, no hostages were spared. When, for example, the Conservative Kreuzzeitung, by publishing a series of five articles, tried to implicate Bismarck in financial scandals that involved liberal politicians, speculators, and Jewish financiers in 1875, he called for a boycott of the paper and labeled its subscribers accomplices in the slander of the government.30 What was more, he took careful note of the nearly one

28 Appearing once daily, the paper had an average daily circulation of 6,000 copies in the years before the war. Bismarck had gained control of the paper in 1863. Throughout his years in office it had stayed afloat with the help of regular government subventions. This close connection with the chancellor meant that the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung took on the posture of a government organ ostensibly above party interests. It had to support the government unconditionally and to publish any official announcements, which were often set in a special font to denote their origin. Even though both Caprivi in the early 1890s and—somewhat more superficially—Bülow in the early 1900s worked to give greater freedom to the paper, it remained up to the war mainly a source of news for journalists and those in the know, rather than a popular organ followed by the public at large. Heinz-Dietrich Fischer, “The Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung (1861-1945): A Portrait of a Famous Paper,” International Communication Gazette 13, no. 1 (1967): 35-39; Oron J. Hale, Publicity and Diplomacy: With Special Reference to England and Germany 1890-1914 (New York: D. Appleton Century, 1940), 66; and Posadowsky-Wehner to Bülow, 29 October 1906, and Bülow to Posadowsky-Wehner, 10 November 1906, Bd. R 43 / 1565, Rk., BArchL. Cf. Koszyk, 251-3.

29 Keyserlingk, 28.

30 This paper, also known as the Neue Preußische Zeitung, was the central political organ of the Conservative party. It was better known as the Kreuzzzeitung (the name I will subsequently use) because of the large Maltese cross that adorned its front page. The paper had originally been founded as a reactionary newsheet in 1848 to combat liberalism in Prussia. Though the Kreuzzzeitung, with an average circulation of 8,500 copies in 1902, could not compete with the major liberal papers in its popular appeal, it was still of first-class importance as the news source for the Junker and the issues that concerned him: e.g., high society, agricultural prices, or the machinations of the emperor’s court. A small circle of party leaders tightly controlled the policies of the paper and often comprised its main contributors. Most important among them was Wilhelm von Hammerstein (1838-1904), the paper’s editor from 1881 to 1895. Like many journalists, Hammerstein also served in the Reichstag, heading a right-wing faction in the party, the so-called Kreuzzzeitung group, which had grown out of opposition to the Kartell alliance of 1887 with the National Liberals. Following a major scandal in 1895 over the embezzlement of funds from the paper’s coffers, Hammerstein earned a three-year prison sentence, and one of his closest collaborators, Dr. Hermann
hundred East Elbian nobles, the so-called Deklaranten, who opposed his boycott; later Bismarck blacklisted them in the official gazette, the Reichsanzeiger, so as to sabotage any future hopes they might have for appointment within the offices of the government.\textsuperscript{31}

The most important measures he took in this regard, however, related to the Anti-Socialist Law of 1878, and the other methods he employed to coerce opinion through the press. Among other repressive measures, the Anti-Socialist Law suppressed upwards of forty newspapers that represented the Social Democratic party (SPD) and threatened with prison sentences and fines those who tried to continue to publish the outlawed periodicals. Thenceforth, the SPD press had to go underground, continuing many of its publishing endeavors abroad, and away from the prying eyes of the censor. Just as important, Bismarck’s system was not above outright bribery either. He utilized the notorious Guelph fund, which he had seized from the Hanoverian dynasty after the Austro-Prussian War, to help publish articles written by, or friendly to, the government. The money became an extra source of income provided to the chancellor for which he could not be held accountable in the Reichstag.\textsuperscript{32}

Bismarck’s personal rule was perhaps most obvious, though, on the international scene. His position in this regard made him the prototypical figure posited by analysts of the “Old Diplomacy” after the First World War. Harold Nicolson, a British diplomat who

\textsuperscript{31} Gall, 627-9.

\textsuperscript{32} For more on the Guelph fund, see below, pp. 33-4.
was “born and nurtured in the Old Diplomacy,” identified five major characteristics of that method of conducting relations between states. First, a defining characteristic of the Old Diplomacy, according to Nicolson, was that the international system was centered on the European states system. Second, that system was divided into component members that were either great powers or small powers; and their individual status and prestige was based primarily on the size of armies they could field, the financial resources they could devote to defense expenditure, and the responsibilities and interests they had. Third, an important responsibility of the great powers was to preserve peace among the small powers, by intervention if necessary, as a part of the larger aim of maintaining peace in Europe generally. Fourth, all the powers maintained professional diplomatic establishments based on “a more or less identical model,” which was composed of men with similar education, experience, goals, and codes of conduct. And fifth—and perhaps most significant—a defining characteristic of the Old Diplomacy “was the rule that sound negotiation must be continuous and confidential,” something conducted out of public view by those few men who shared the same social background, norms, and assumptions about the world.

In such a system, the statesmen engaged in these secret negotiations would literally be men wielding a great deal of power to determine the destiny of their own and

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34 Nicolson, 102-3.
others’ nations. This fact was particularly important in the German context, for the constitution granted the Kaiser—and, in practice, the chancellor—the right to make treaties and alliances, the right to declare war and conclude peace, and the right to receive and accredit ambassadors.35 Exercising such wide-ranging powers, Bismarck fit perfectly into the mold of the Old Diplomacy. He utilized the prerogatives granted him under the constitution to extend his personal rule to the realm of German foreign policy. On account of his low opinion of the abilities and talent of the men who made up the German diplomatic service, Bismarck was loathe to allow members of the policy-making apparatus in Berlin to exert any influence on policy. “Like non-commissioned officers,” he once said characteristically, “my diplomats must move into position on command, without understanding why.”36

Diplomats in the field were allowed little freedom to influence Berlin’s policy. After 1877, they could not communicate with the government to which they had been accredited without first running the message by the Foreign Office (or, more specifically, the chancellor). Further, Bismarck’s expectation was for reports from his foreign representatives that were in narrative form—without analysis or suggestions about a line of policy to pursue, or anything that could be construed as independent thinking. His overbearing influence reached even into trifling instructions about how reports and memoranda were to be composed: he forbade the use of Latin orthography, dictated methods of pagination and abbreviations to be used, insisted on German of a high

35 See Article 11 of the imperial constitution in “Verfassung des Deutschen Reichs,” no. 218, in Huber, 293-4. For a declaration of war, the consent of the Bundesrat was necessary unless Germany had been attacked by a foreign power. In addition the Reichstag maintained the power of the purse, which was a further way that the legislative branch could in theory limit the ability of the Kaiser to make war.
literary quality lacking verbosity, criticized exaggerated or flourishing signatures, and
even demanded uniform colors of ink and specified letterheads for the paper used in
composition.\textsuperscript{37}

Because of Germany’s central position in Europe, to many observers it appeared
that Bismarck also personally wielded the levers of the European states system. It is not
within the scope of this study to go into great detail about the creation and development
of Bismarck’s system of alliances. Suffice it to say, a major driving force behind the move
toward a peacetime system of alliances was the perennial conflict between Russia and
Austria-Hungary in the Near East that stretched back to 1878 and the Congress of
Berlin.\textsuperscript{38} From Bismarck’s perspective the conflict between Austria and Russia was
intolerable so long as France seemed poised for a war of revenge on Germany’s western
border. He therefore had conceived as early as 1877 a comprehensive solution to the
problem that ultimately connected the majority of the great powers to Germany directly
or indirectly. It was to be, as Bismarck described it at the time, “a complete political
situation in which all the powers excepting France will need us and be held back as far as
possible from a coalition against us by their relations to one other.”\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{37} Lamar Cecil, \textit{The German Diplomatic Service, 1871-1914} (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press,
1976), 241-2, and Röhl, 22. According to Röhl, Bismarck’s instructions of this kind—astoundingly—ran to
nearly thirty-two volumes in the files of the Foreign Office by the time of his retirement in 1890.
\textsuperscript{38} His other major goal was to isolate France from the other great powers of Europe. Bismarck assumed that
after the humiliating defeat of 1870-1871, France would be the permanent enemy of the Kaiserreich,
something that was confirmed repeatedly by the patriots’ public demonstrations in France. See Harvey
Clark Greisman, “The Enemy Concept in Franco-German Relations, 1870 1914,” \textit{History of European Ideas}
19 (1994): 41-6; and Nathan N. Orgill, “Between Coercion and Conciliation: Franco-German Relations in the
Bismarck Era, 1871-90,” in \textit{A History of Franco-German Relations in Europe: From “Hereditary Enemies” to
example of the continued importance of this idea after 1890, see below, p. 77.
\textsuperscript{39} Memorandum by Bismarck, 15 June 1877, no. 294, \textit{GP}, vol. 2, 153-4.
The central pivot of the system was the Dual Alliance of 17 October 1879, a defensive alliance between Germany and Austria that prescribed both military assistance—if Russia should attack either of the two empires—and neutrality if either were attacked by some country other than Russia.\footnote{The text of this treaty—as well as most of the others negotiated by Bismarck—is available in English translation in Alfred Francis Pribram, ed., \textit{The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary 1879-1914}, 2 vols., trans. Denys P. Myers and J.G. D’Arcy Paul (New York: H. Fertig, 1967).} Especially important for the years after 1890, however, was the treaty’s popularity across the political spectrum in Germany. Although the specific language of the treaty was not published in detail, its general outline became known to the German public by the early 1880s, showing the slow decline of the Old Diplomacy that was already under way. Almost immediately, a kind of political consensus developed in support of the alliance in parliament and the press.

Despite public support for the treaty, the creation of the alliance was based upon a more Machiavellian calculation, namely that it would allow Bismarck to play Austria and Russia off against one another in the Near East, where they would both vie for German backing. Hence, Bismarck went even further in his foreign-policy reorientation to renew the original Three Emperors’ League of October 1873 signed by Germany, Russia and Austria-Hungary. In June 1881, a revised version of the treaty developed from a vaguely conceived agreement for the defense of conservative principles into a full-blown defensive alliance. The new alignment obliged each of the powers to maintain a stance of benevolent neutrality if one of the signatories went to war with a non-signatory power. Bismarck rounded off his alliance system in the spring of 1882 when Italy joined Austria and Germany in a new Triple Alliance, which was intended as a further way of
isolating France in Europe. Finally, because Britain was placed in a position of almost permanent hostility with France in Africa and with Russia in Asia, Bismarck could presume that she would remain friendly with Germany, even without the existence of a direct link to the Kaiserreich in the form of an alliance.

Yet this initial solution for maintaining the status quo by necessity placed Bismarck in the awkward position of mediator between the two powers competing in the Near East. A larger crisis in the Balkans in the mid-1880s forced him to revise his alliance system. To make a complicated story short, Russian maneuvers attempted to make Bulgaria into a satellite state, something Austria roundly opposed. The thorny question seemed likely to cause a war with the Romanovs by the middle of the decade. Perhaps the most significant result of the growing Austro-Russian friction was the Tsar’s refusal to renew the Second Three Emperors’ League when it expired in 1886; this, in turn, forced Bismarck to create a new and even more complicated system of emergency “stopgaps” to maintain the status quo.41 Bismarck accomplished this task with a complete reorientation of his alliance system in 1887. The initial move was the signature of the First Mediterranean Agreement of February 1887 between Italy, Austria-Hungary, and Great Britain that provided for the maintenance of the status quo in the Mediterranean Sea. The agreement was a check on both French aspirations in Africa and Russian ambitions in the Near East. This was supplemented in December of 1887 with the Second Mediterranean Agreement—signed by the same powers—which called for the maintenance of the status quo in the Balkans as well.

By far the most important new development in the system for the purposes of this study, however, was the creation of the Reinsurance Treaty between Russia and Germany in June 1887. Although Tsar Alexander III was completely fed up with Austria-Hungary by this time, he was more amenable to the maintenance of a connection to Germany—an unbroken link that dated back at least to 1813. Bismarck, knowing the Mediterranean Agreements would check Russian ambitions in the Near East, sweetened the deal by offering to support both the Russian position with regard to Bulgaria as well as any efforts the Tsar might make to gain control of Constantinople and the Turkish Straits. In its finalized form the treaty included these provisions, while also stipulating that both powers would remain neutral in a war with a third power that did not involve a German attack on France or a Russian attack on Austria.42

The completely secret nature of treaty diverged fundamentally from the other agreements Bismarck arranged between the European powers before 1890. The Triple Alliance, for instance, was already known to the European public in nearly all its larger details by early 1888.43 An article in the Viennese Neue Freie Presse likewise reported the treaty arrangements made between the three contracting powers in great detail on 11 February, a report that was basically confirmed the next day in the liberal Kölnische Zeitung.44 Rumors of the Mediterranean Agreements circulated immediately in the

43 Reichsanzeiger, 3 February 1888, in Schulthess (1888): 21-3. Alongside the Reichsanzeiger, the Viennese Abendpost and the Pester Lloyd, the most authoritative German-language paper in Hungary, both published a snippet of the terms of the treaty with commentary.
44 Neue Freie Presse, 11 February 1888; and Kölnische Zeitung, 12 February 1888. The Neue Freie Presse was a liberal Viennese daily originally founded in the Revolutions of 1848. The National-Liberal Kölnische Zeitung was one of the few German newspapers that had an international reputation, something that derived both from its use of modern methods of production, as well as its status as a mouth piece of the Foreign Office after 1890. Dr. August Schmits edited the paper from 1872 to 1901, when Ernst Moritz Posse took over as editor, performing those duties until 1922. The Kölnische Zeitung had a comparatively large daily
press and public opinion as well. Especially in London, the allusions of the *Neue Freie Presse* to supplementary agreements between Britain, Italy, and Austria for protecting their mutual interests in the Mediterranean caused a stir and interpellations of the government in the House of Commons as to the exact nature of these agreements. Many British observers suspected they were out-and-out alliances.45

The intense public knowledge and discussion of the Triple Alliance and the Mediterranean Agreements contrasted starkly with the Reinsurance Treaty, which remained a closely guarded—and dangerous—secret for nearly ten years following its conclusion. The secrecy resulted logically from the very nature of the Reinsurance Treaty: by promising support to Russia at the Straits and in Bulgaria, it cancelled out the Mediterranean agreements that Bismarck had helped to engineer behind the scenes to check Russian power; it also went against the spirit of the Triple Alliance more generally and directly contradicted Germany’s alliance obligations to Romania. The understanding with Russia was, in other words, an extremely anachronistic example of the “cabinet diplomacy” that seemed increasingly out of touch with contemporary realities.

This fact becomes clearer if one examines the culture of secrecy that surrounded the arrangement. On the Russian side, knowledge of the treaty was restricted mainly to the Tsar, his foreign minister, Count Nicholas de Giers, and a

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circle of perhaps three to eight other decision-makers. On the German side, the circle of statesmen who knew of the agreement was probably somewhat larger, though on the whole Bismarck tried to restrict knowledge to only those individuals who absolutely had to be informed as to its existence, which included mainly the ambassador to Russia and officials in the highest echelons of the Foreign Office, such as the state secretary and his privy councilors. References to the agreement and the verbiage used to discuss it were of necessity vague: the arrangement became, in the diplomatic parlance of the time, “a secret treaty,” “the matter in question,” “the secret matter,” “a secret document,” or, after its non-renewal, “something that no longer exists.” Furthermore, even the highest authorities in the state were kept in the dark about the document. William II, for example, learned of its existence only two months after his accession to the throne, and even then Bismarck asked him to burn the letter informing him of the treaty. This letter, Bismarck explained to William at the time, “touches on matters and questions that as a rule I believe are disadvantageous to leave behind in the papers and that should otherwise be handled verbally, so long as their actual development is not under discussion.” Thus, any public reference even to good relations with Russia after 1887 had to be guarded and vague, for if the treaty were to be leaked to the press, Bismarck

46 See the discussion of who knew what in Russia—i.e., when the treaty lapsed after Bismarck’s dismissal—in George F. Kennan, The Fateful Alliance: France, Russia, and the Coming of the First World War (New York: Pantheon, 1984), 33-6.
47 Holstein to Eulenburg, 27 March 1890, no. 372, EK, vol. 1, 516.
48 Eulenburg to Holstein, 28 March 1890, no. 373, ibid., 517.
49 Holstein to Holstein, 16 April 1890, no. 315, PH, vol. 3, 301-2.
50 Kiderlen-Wächter to Holstein, 21 September 1890, no. 328, ibid., 319.
would undoubtedly lose the confidence both of the other European statesmen abroad and public opinion at home.

Just as in his control of public opinion and the machinery of state, then, it seemed that Bismarck—as the preeminent practitioner of the Old Diplomacy—was the great switchman of Europe who kept the trains of foreign policy running on schedule according to his larger plan from 1871 until 1890, without consulting the public. It was he who made Germany the center of the European states system after unification; it was he who created and oversaw the development of the system of secret alliances that Woodrow Wilson excoriated in the first of his Fourteen Points;\(^{53}\) and it was he who had supposedly manipulated the great powers of Europe, like so many pawns in a chess game.

**Methodology and Historiography**

Traditionally diplomatic historians have focused their attention squarely on the individuals who made foreign policy after 1890 as though they were similar to Bismarck, except that they lacked his dexterity for managing foreign affairs. In essence, this methodological assumption is based on the idea that international politics were still very much in the mode of the Old Diplomacy up to the outbreak of war in 1914. Although diplomatic history has never—not even in its heyday of fashion between the 1920s and the 1960s—completely ignored the context surrounding decision-makers, there is still

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\(^{53}\) Wilson, for all his statements to the contrary, was just as happy to conduct the negotiations at Versailles behind closed doors as any of the prewar diplomats he had criticized repeatedly after 1917. This fact was perplexing to many members of the press who covered the peace process in 1919, since it seemed very unclear what he meant when he said that diplomacy ought always to be conducted “frankly and in the public view,” but nevertheless prevented an open forum within the peace conference itself. See Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2003), 56-7, and 495.
very much a strain in the historiography that focuses on individuals and their decisions as all important in determining the course of events that led up to the war.54

This kind of focus can be seen in the Rankean Primat der Außenpolitik that was the reigning assumption of German historians after 1918, and even, to a certain extent, in the works of those German historians who, following Eckart Kehr,55 tried from the 1960s on to flip that tradition on its head by asserting a Primat der Innenpolitik.56 It can be seen in the numerous monographs that were written in the interwar period and—as Gordon Craig put it so wonderfully—“had been literally copied out of the bound volumes of the Public Record Office, tricked out with Latin tags (sub spe rati, rebus sic stantibus, and the like) and impressive footnotes (FO France / 1749; from Lyons, no. 249, very confidential, March 4, 1869), and sent forth to grace the lower shelves of university libraries.”57 It can be seen in the major overviews of European diplomacy that were written before the 1960s, which can sometimes seem to be the stereotypical accounts that follow the decisions and actions of individual bureaucrats, without ever getting above the minutiae of events.58 And it can even be seen in a more recent strain of the

54 Probably the best example of a modernized version of this idea is Hildebrand, Das vergangene Reich, which repeatedly asserts as its primary methodological premise the primacy of the external situation that dictated the options open to German statesmen. A recent historiographical discussion of this issue in the context of German history is Brendan Simms, “The Return of the Primacy of Foreign Policy,” German History 21, no. 3 (2003): 275-91.
56 The most important critics of Wehler and his followers are Geoff Eley and David Blackbourn, who have critiqued Wehler’s method as a top-down approach to studying the history of the Kaiserreich. See David Blackbourn, and Geoff Eley, The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 19-20.
historiography that inculpates the individual statesmen and their actions as the moving force behind the war. In short, it remains very much a standard assumption that statesmen are the necessary and proper focal point for diplomatic history.

While this study in no way denies the importance of the decision-makers in the outcome of events before 1914, its major purpose is to place their actions in a larger political, military, and intellectual context. From this vantage point, foreign affairs must be construed more broadly than the traditional diplomatic historian of the interwar period ordinarily would have done. Here diplomacy is one aspect—albeit a crucial one, to be sure—of a holistic system of relations that includes the domestic political situation of the states involved, their overall military policies, and “public opinion,” the larger focus of the study presented here.

This focus on “public opinion” leads to an obvious problem of methodology—namely, how does the historian go about measuring popular sentiment? Considering the wide range both of social and economic interests and of political attitudes in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century, any study that attempts to measure the opinions of common people must by necessity remain limited either in terms of time or social space, in order to manage the available source material. To tackle this problem, I have largely

59 A number of historians have recently attempted to measure public sentiment in specific social strata over a short period of time as it relates to the outbreak of World War I and attitudes toward it after 1914. Wolfgang Kruse, for example, has reexamined the attitudes of the working classes toward the outbreak of the war. See Wolfgang Kruse, Krieg und nationale Integration. Eine Neuinterpretation des sozialdemokratischen Burgfriedenschlusses 1914/1915 (Essen: Kartext Verlag, 1993). Jeffrey Verhey has likewise debunked the “myth” of popular enthusiasm for the outbreak of war. See Jeffrey Verhey, The Spirit of 1914: Militarism, Myth, and Mobilization in Germany (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Benjamin Ziemann draws similar conclusions on the attitude of rural Bavarians. See Benjamin Ziemann, War Experiences in Rural Germany 1914-1923, trans. Alex Skinner (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2007), 15-27. And David Silbey has examined the British working class and its general attitudes toward the First World War from 1914 to 1916. See David Johnson Silbey, “Their Graves like Beds: The British Working Class and Enthusiasm for War, 1914-1916” (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1999).
contented myself with defining public opinion the way that decision-makers of the time would have done: as newspaper opinion, insofar as the decision-making apparatus was interested in it; as the parliamentary opinions represented in the Reichstag and its electoral processes; and as the sentiments of the numerous pressure groups that sprouted up in the 1890s. This approach recognizes both the inherent interconnectedness of each of these different realms in helping to compose public opinion collectively for German statesmen before the First World War, as well as the centrality of political issues and party opinion in making up the Wilhelmine political public sphere.

This study, then, makes a conscious effort to bring this larger context of “public opinion” into the account of Germany foreign policy after 1890, going beyond the actions of the statesmen and minor clerks in the various European foreign offices. By doing so, it attempts to demonstrate how increasingly public opinion was limiting the options open to German statesmen in the 1890s and early 1900s. It combines the traditional focus on decision-makers and the documents they have left behind, with the broader limiting context of newspaper, party, parliamentary and public opinion. The argument advanced here about the gradual decline of the Old Diplomacy and the development of the Bülow-Hammann system can be seen, then, as diverging from the historiography of German decision-making and the origins of the First World War in two major ways: (1)

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in its portrayal of international relations before 1914 as being increasingly influenced by
the external factor of public opinion, which statesmen now had to take into
consideration; and (2) in its interpretation of the official press policy conducted by the
government as a process of “cultivation” rather than one of “manipulation.”

For the first of these subjects, traditionally it has been a common assumption
since Woodrow Wilson enunciated the Fourteen Points that a major source of the
catastrophe had been the secret alliance system and the methods of the cabinet policy
that created it, what I have repeatedly referred to here as the Old Diplomacy. The basic
assumption of this historiographical stance is that a major underlying cause of the war
was the retention of a wide range of power in the hands of a semi-feudal elite, which
detailed historiographical argument following this line of reasoning came in the 1920s
with the publication of Sidney B. Fay’s seminal work, The Origins of the World War,
which concluded that the “greatest single underling cause of the War was the system of
secret alliances which developed after the Franco-Prussian War.”\footnote{Sidney B. Fay, The Origins of the World War, vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan, 1929), 34. Fay details the chronological development of the alliance system in great detail. See ibid., 34-8, and 50-352.} Although Fay’s work
now seems largely outdated, his view continues to be central to our understanding of the
long-range causes of the war, for much of the recent historiography on the subject still
harkens back to the Old Diplomacy and the alliance system as a major cause of the war.
James Joll, for instance, has asserted that “the methods of conducting international
relations and the basic structure of international alignments were to a large extent those


\footnote{Sidney B. Fay, The Origins of the World War, vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan, 1929), 34. Fay details the chronological development of the alliance system in great detail. See ibid., 34-8, and 50-352.}
devised by Bismarck to meet Germany’s needs in the 1870s and 1880s.”63 Paul Kennedy, in his major study of the rise of the “Anglo-German antagonism,” concluded that the causes of the estrangement were “to be found not among such nebulous elements as race religion and culture but in the cold world of Machtpolitik, in the perception of clashes of interest between the two nations.”64 It remains, in short, an assumption for many historians that war can be explained largely if not entirely in the decisions of the policy-making elite that collectively resolved to go to war in 1914.65

This study shows definitively that the world of the Old Diplomacy was rapidly crumbling after 1890. Following Bismarck’s departure, agreements that had often been secret—known to a handful of men at best—became open and public knowledge, even while specific clauses of the treaties were withheld from the public until after the war. Henceforth, German statesmen had to think about whether the public would support their policies, and increasingly tried to develop methods for influencing the public’s views through debates and speeches in the Reichstag and friendly articles in the press. Increasingly, however, their policies—and the options open to them generally—were limited by the question of how far they could count on the support of “public opinion.” As will be shown below, German foreign policy in regard to the major events of the 1890s and 1900s—the decision not to renew the Reinsurance Treaty, the turn to Weltpolitik,

64 In this conception, Kennedy apparently includes economic competition as the most important ingredient in the power-political competition between the two states; newspapers and public opinion played only a secondary “contributory role.” Paul M. Kennedy, The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1914 (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1980), 410, and 464-6. Dominik Geppert has recently argued—contra Kennedy—that newspaper opinion and the Anglo-German conflict that played out in the press was of fundamental importance in understanding Anglo-German relations in these years. Geppert’s view is, of course, much closer to my own. See the discussion in Dominik Geppert, Pressekriege. Öffentlichkeit und Diplomatie in den deutsch-britischen Beziehungen (1896-1912) (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2007), 5-12.
German policy during the Boer War, the retreat in the First and Second Morocco Crises, the intransigent support offered to Austria-Hungary in the Bosnian and July Crises—were all made with reference to the probable attitude public opinion would adopt toward the decisions statesmen made.

The second historiography this study attempts to revise centers on the methods utilized by the government to deal with the public-opinion problem. In the field of Imperial German history two historiographical schools treat this subject. The first of these, which I will refer to, for the sake of simplicity, as the “manipulation” school, sees public support as something that was successfully manufactured by the government from above. At its heart, the manipulation school seeks to explain the retention of power by the Prussian Junker nobility in the new German Reich as the successful employment of “social imperialism” as a way of deflecting the socio-political crisis that arose from industrialization and the increasing electoral strength of the Marxist Social Democratic party. A prestigious foreign policy, imperialist expansion, battleship construction—all were ways of deflecting attention away from the domestic situation and tricking the masses into the acceptance of the anachronistic feudal social situation.

66 In reality, the concept of manipulating public opinion from above, was a smaller part of the argument advanced by Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Volker Berghahn, and Fritz Fischer asserting a primacy of domestic politics as a way of understanding why the war happened and the German Sonderweg. Much of their research—especially the former two—was supposed to have built upon the earlier work of Eckart Kehr.
70 The most extreme version of this interpretation is Günter Heidorn’s Monopole—Presse—Krieg, a highly ideological Marxist treatment of the role of newspapers in German foreign policy from 1902 to 1912 written in the former GDR. Going beyond the usual focus on a nationalist foreign policy, Heidorn saw a more active agent at work: “to the press,” he argued, “it appeared that the main task was to rectify the policy of the regime;” in this way, his work examined “not just the reflection of the imperialist foreign policy in the press,
Though much of this historiography was written in opposition to the established Rankean tradition that had asserted the primacy of foreign policy, it seemed to accept the assumption that the central actors were still from the same noble social caste that had always made up the political elite in Germany. In response to this sort of thinking, a completely new historiographical school arose in the 1970s and 1980s. For this new “self-mobilization” school, the nationalist and imperialist fervor in foreign policy that seemed to characterize public opinion from the early 1890s until 1914 was seen as the result of spontaneous organization and mobilization from below, rather than from above. Here, for example, Geoff Eley viewed the new nationalist associations of the radical right as populist groups that tended to develop their own programs and views about the diplomatic and military policies of the Kaiserreich, increasingly in direct opposition to the government.71 Wolfgang Mommsen, who examined the workings of the nationalist press in the same period, reached similar conclusions: while the government had initially encouraged nationalism in the press with the turn to an imperialist foreign policy after 1897, it quickly lost control of the situation when nationalist newspapers began to criticize the government’s policy for its failure to safeguard what they perceived as Germany’s national interests abroad.72

71 See Reshaping the German Right, though aspects of his argument can be found in most of the other works by Eley cited in the bibliography.  
This study charts a middle course between the extremes of manipulation and self-mobilization. With the establishment of the Bülow-Hammann system at the end of the 1890s, the government reclaimed some of its ability to influence public opinion. Under Bülow, the system reached its zenith of development. In these years, the government had at least four or five significant papers at its disposal to represent its views, and the chancellor was always concerned to win the support of parliament and press for his policies. Yet, at the same time, the government never truly gained control over the press of the radical right or the extreme socialist left. Moreover, because the Press Bureau was supplied with little in the way of manpower and finance, its field of action in public opinion always seemed, to Hammann and his assistants, far too limited in comparison with its potential to coordinate and cultivate correct opinions in the press. All told, the potential for the government to influence the press in the Wilhelmine period stood somewhere between the two poles of official manipulation and of self-mobilization from below.

In making this case, I have structured the study in such a way that the machinery of the German Foreign Office and its general policy is placed within the larger context of public opinion, party politics, and military policy. The first chapter analyzes the rise of the “public-opinion problem” as a result of the failed public-relations policy of the government after Bismarck’s dismissal in 1890. It shows that the foundation was laid for the Bülow-Hammann system in the years from 1894 to 1897, when Hammann was brought into the Foreign Office and began to make the connections in the world of journalism that were necessary to defend the government without resorting to manipulation. The second chapter then turns to the age of Germany’s “World Policy”
(1897-1902), the period in which the Bülow-Hammann system became firmly entrenched in practice. It demonstrates how the utilization of the system, in conjunction with the pursuit of a prestige-policy abroad, seemed to solve the public-opinion problem for the time being. The third chapter takes the story up through the years of the first Morocco Crisis (1902-1906). In these years the system was used very effectively to defend the government at precisely the time when Germany’s foreign position declined immensely. Finally, the fourth chapter finishes the story by examining the fall of the Bülow-Hammann system in the period just before the war (1906-1914). It shows how Bülow ultimately resigned because he could not maintain the political consensus he had built up for his policies after 1900, and how this in turn caused Hammann to lose influence in the Foreign Office just before the war.
Chapter 1: The Rise of the Public-Opinion Problem, 1890-1897

Bismarck’s evil genius was probably most apparent in the way he carried a vendetta. He thrived on conflict. Most of his major political maneuvers revolved around menacing some foe selected for the purpose of fighting: first the liberals in the 1860s; then the Catholics in the 1870s; finally the Social Democrats in the 1880s. But he also took opposition personally and almost lived for it. Oftentimes he tried to ruin his enemies’ lives; sometimes he succeeded. Once he went so far as to boast of the sleepless nights he had, tossing and turning because of some slight that had been done to him in his days as a young man. Characteristic of Bismarck was the statement he made about the execution of a political adversary, Robert Blum, in 1848: “When I have an enemy in my power,” he remarked brutally, “I have to destroy him.”

In the public realm, Bismarck used the press to dog his enemies. He kept the notorious “reptile fund,” known more respectably as the Guelph fund, to manipulate the press. It had gained the epithet “reptile fund” because it provided a secret source of

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1 Memorandum by Caprivi, 23 May 1890, no. 1378, GP, vol. 7, 29. For my translations of the German epigraphs, see Appendix 2, Translations of German Epigraphs.
revenue for Bismarck to send the “reptiles” (i.e., his political enemies) back into their holes. ³ Later on, though, the newspapers that accepted money from the fund became the “reptiles,” on account of the dirty work they did for Bismarck in his press attacks. ⁴

In March 1890—in the midst of the chaotic days leading up to his forced retirement—Bismarck reportedly made a last-ditch withdrawal from the reptile fund. According to one contemporary observer,

> The idea of taking over Bismarck’s legacy while also becoming his enemy frightened everybody at this time. The Bismarcks intended to heighten these fears even more and prepared themselves for a fight. Bismarck’s withdrawal of 231,000 marks from the Guelph fund cannot be explained in any other way. . . . This happened in the very last days [of Bismarck’s chancellorship] between 17 and 20 March.⁵

The implication behind this anecdote, of course, is that Bismarck’s withdrawal was intended to continue his subvention of the press in pursuit of his enemies even in retirement. In other words, it would appear that even during the resignation crisis Bismarck determined to continue with his time-honored tactics as soon as it was certain he would be forced from the scene. The only difference was that before 1890 Bismarck had pursued his enemies with a cloak of legality as the foremost representative of the German state; when the cloak dropped, he was perfectly ready to carry on his vendetta, as always—except that now he would attack the servants of the state rather than its purported enemies.

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⁵ *PH*, vol. 1, 149.
Bismarck’s campaign challenged the logic of his successor’s foreign policy, the so-called New Course: it criticized, in essence, the decision to drop the connection to Russia embodied in the Reinsurance Treaty. That decision, so momentous for the course of international history after 1890, was a part of a larger departure from the Bismarckian tradition that included a new stance toward the political parties and public opinion: the government would no longer attempt to marginalize the parties of the left in the Reichstag, and neither would it continue to try to influence the press through subventions or any other form of direct or indirect pressure. Unexpectedly the new policies coalesced to create a public-opinion crisis for Bismarck’s successors. Between 1890 and 1893, the government’s foreign policy came under heavy criticism from the parties and pressure groups of the extreme right for the new stance it took toward Russia, its apparent retreat in German colonial policy, and its trade policies with the states of central Europe. By the mid-1890s Bismarck became the figurehead for this new trend of popular conservative opposition to the government in foreign policy. With the subsequent introduction of a new army bill in late 1892, the government similarly alienated the parties of the left and middle (the Center party, the Left Liberals, and the Social Democrats), which all thereupon retreated into their more traditional stance of opposition to the government as well. All told, by late 1893 the policies of the New Course were extremely unpopular across the political spectrum. This public-opinion crisis, in turn, led the government to make a significant departure in the realm of its public relations policy—namely, to abandon its hands-off policy toward the newspaper press and to create instead a new press bureau in the Reich Foreign Office that would coordinate and direct all relations of the government with the world of journalism.
**Bismarck’s Dismissal**

The war of words that Bismarck apparently had in mind when he made his last withdrawal from the reptile fund would have surely seemed fantastic to him a year and a half earlier in June 1888, when William II had ascended to the throne. At that time the young Kaiser had seemed, if anything, putty in the hands of the old man, an eager novice on the best of days, but lazy, cruel, impetuous, and vain on the worst of them. Bismarck’s confidence that he could manage the new monarch may have had something to do with his relationship to the Reichstag in 1888. In the 1887 elections he had intentionally provoked a war-scare to reduce the power of the parties of the left. He succeeded in forming the so-called *Kartell*: a parliamentary bloc that united—for the first and only time in the history of the Kaiserreich—a right-leaning majority of Conservatives, Free Conservatives and National Liberals. At the time of its inception, the *Kartell* must have seemed a Godsend to the conservative elite, for it could have been used to enact a far-reaching legislative program.

Yet the *Kartell* was also a fragile union that never really had the whole-hearted support of the Conservatives. Above all, it required a very pro-active stance on the part of the government in order to hold the coalition together. Instead of nurturing the alliance, Bismarck had allowed the work of the state to languish after 1888. The government introduced very little new legislation in these years; the few measures that Bismarck did push through the *Kartell* Reichstag—e.g., a seven-year army bill, the

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6 In part, this could be explained by the potential for a rift between the *Kartell* parties that had existed since its inception in 1887. As Lothar Gall has mentioned, the Conservatives had gained only two seats in the Reichstag election, while the National Liberals and the Free Conservatives had made dramatic gains. The Conservatives feared Bismarck would return to the liberal course of the 1870s. Gall, 782-3. It may also be explained by something as simple as Bismarck feeling supremely confident in his political position or getting tired of politics as he aged.
renewal of the anti-socialist legislation, an increase on the grain duty, new taxes on alcohol and sugar—were widely unpopular. What was worse, Bismarck spent months at a time in 1888 and 1889 away from the bustle of Berlin on his estates at Friedrichsruh and Varzin, allowing his son Herbert to direct the day-to-day activities of the government. To outside observers it must have seemed that the old sorcerer was trying to freeze time.

William II, for his part, was happy to have the old man away in the seclusion of the countryside. He had privately expressed his desire to be his own man by dispensing with the Bismarck—perhaps in only six months time, he had reportedly bragged at his accession.7 In practice, he undertook his own policy initiatives. On the domestic scene, it was a question of whether to win the support of the masses through continued Bismarckian persecutions of the SPD and its press, or instead to abandon repression and grant concessions to the proletariat to regulate the conditions of work in the factories, as the Kaiser desired. In foreign affairs, the new monarch wrestled with whether to maintain the Reinsurance Treaty and friendly relations with Russia generally—as was dictated by the Bismarckian alliance system—or instead to prepare for the conflict with Russia that he and his military advisors felt was inevitable, but which Bismarck supposedly could not see coming.

The Kaiser surrounded himself with a number of advisors of like mind on these issues: Philipp zu Eulenburg, the minister in Oldenburg from 1888 to 1890 and the Kaiser’s seemingly effeminate “best friend”; Count Alfred von Waldersee, the chief of staff for the army from 1888 to 1891 and a close confidante of William II in the first two years of his reign; the Kaiser’s liberal uncle, Grand Duke Frederick I of Baden; Friedrich Eyck, Bismarck. Leben und Werk, vol 3 (Zürich: Eugen Rentsch Verlag, 1944), 550.
von Holstein, the old privy councilor in the Foreign Office; and Adolf Marschall von Bieberstein, the minister who had represented Baden in Berlin since 1883 and became the state secretary of the Foreign Office in 1890. In general terms, they desired to help the Kaiser gradually assert his independence, so that he could take over from Bismarck as the old chancellor became too old to perform the functions of his office effectively.

By early 1890, however, what united the members of the anti-Bismarck camarilla most was their ardent desire to see the preservation of the Kartell majority in the Reichstag elections scheduled for February. They feared, in other words, that Bismarck would deliberately destroy his own creation, the Kartell, in order to demonstrate how indispensable he was to the emperor.

The final crisis that began in the fall of 1889 thus focused primarily on social questions and domestic politics, rather than on questions of foreign policy. Unlike Bismarck and many other conservative observers, William II believed that many of the grievances and demands of the workers were justified and ought to be addressed by the government.

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8 Philipp zu Eulenburg (1847-1921) served in the diplomatic service in a number of the smaller German states before his appointment as the ambassador in Vienna, where he represented Germany from 1894 to 1903. Eulenburg eventually fell out of favor by the late 1900’s, when he was publicly accused of homosexuality. An older, quite sympathetic treatment of Eulenburg’s life and career is Johannes Haller, *Philipp Eulenburg: The Kaiser’s Friend*, 2 vols., trans. Ethel Colburn Mayne (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1930). Count Frederick I of Baden (1826-1907) was the uncle of William II and a noted liberal proponent of constitutional monarchy. As such, Frederick I was an enemy of Bismarck’s for many years by 1890, and he worked very hard pushing for Bismarck’s dismissal in early 1890. Friedrich von Holstein (1837-1909) was perhaps the most significant man behind the scenes in the Foreign Office following Bismarck’s dismissal. He had served under Bismarck in the Political Division, but by the late 1880s had come to disagree with him fundamentally with regard to the Reinsurance Treaty of 1887. On Holstein, see Norman Rich, *Friedrich von Holstein: Politics and Diplomacy in the Era of Bismarck and Wilhelm II*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965). Adolf Marschall von Bieberstein (1842-1912) represented Baden in Berlin from 1883 to 1890, when he took over for Herbert von Bismarck as state secretary of the Foreign Office. He served in this function till he fell out with the Kaiser in 1897 and was reappointed to the embassy in Constantinople before moving to London in 1912 just before his death.

9 Röhl, *Germany without Bismarck*, 34; and idem, *Wilhelm II. Der Aufbau der persönlichen Monarchie 1888-1900* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2001), 266. By this time Waldensee, according to Röhl, had begun his fall from grace; it was really the other men who were leading the charge against the dissolution of the Kartell.

government. This view led to friction with Bismarck as early as May 1889, when a major strike occurred in the Westphalian mining industry. At that time, the Kaiser received a delegation of workers and eventually intervened on their behalf to force the owners to the negotiating table, placing the blame for the strike squarely on the shoulders of the greedy mine-owners.\textsuperscript{11} In a larger sense, William II’s intervention in the matter showed the general strategy he wished to employ to win over the proletariat: concessions to the reasonable demands of the workers on questions like the regulation of working hours and conditions.

Bismarck, on the other hand, believed that this strategy was nothing more than “humanitarian day-dreaming.”\textsuperscript{12} Characteristically he preferred conflict to concession. Hence, in October 1889 he instigated the final crisis between himself and the Kaiser by introducing into the Reichstag an even stricter anti-socialist law than the one already on the books, one that would be permanent if passed. The National Liberals demurred at one specific—and harsh—provision of the law, which granted the police the power to expel suspected subversives from their homes. As the bill went through committee and the initial readings in the Reichstag, the Conservatives advocated the passage of the law without revisions. But on the eve of the Reichstag elections in early 1890, they finally made it known that they would vote for the law without the expulsion clause if Bismarck made a statement that he would support it in that amended form.

At a crown council meeting held on 24 January 1890 to deal with the social question, the Kaiser reiterated his position and announced a draft of a bill that embodied

\textsuperscript{12} Eyck, vol. 3, 565.
his ideas about the protection of the workers vis-à-vis their employers. He also came out for the passage of the anti-socialist law in its modified form. With great emotion, Bismarck threatened to resign in response, stating that there could be no question of an amended law. Should the bill fail to pass, he said passionately, it would be better to “let the waves get higher”—even if it led to an open conflict.\(^{13}\) The crown council unanimously refused to back the Kaiser’s suggestions in Bismarck’s presence, and William II left the meeting grumbling that these were not his ministers, but Bismarck’s.\(^{14}\)

By now it was clear that the chancellor was deliberately trying to wreck the Kartell, in order to force the Kaiser to abandon his desire for personal rule and return to the tried-and-true strategy of conflict between crown and parliament employed so successfully in the 1860s. In such a situation, Bismarck would be indispensable, for only he could hope to navigate the ship of state in such dangerous seas.\(^{15}\) Bismarck’s plan ultimately succeeded in its preliminary stage. He refrained from giving his approval to the modified bill; the Conservatives then made strange bedfellows with the left by voting to defeat the anti-socialist law on 25 January. In such circumstances, the Kartell naturally suffered irreparable damage in the elections of 20 February. The Free Conservatives and the National Liberals lost over half their seats, dropping to twenty and forty-two seats respectively, while the Conservatives lost seven seats. The opposition parties, on the other hand, saw a dramatic increase in their representation, with the

\(^{13}\) Ballhausen, 509.
\(^{14}\) Röhl, *Germany without Bismarck*, 49.
\(^{15}\) This much is clear even from the evidence provided by Bismarck’s otherwise very tendentious memoirs, where one can see it at work, if one reads carefully between the lines. See Otto von Bismarck, *The Kaiser vs. Bismarck: Suppressed Letters by the Kaiser and New Chapters from the Autobiography of the Iron Chancellor*, trans. Bernard Miall (New York: AMS Press, 1971), 90–1. Bismarck may have even been thinking of resorting to a coup to solve the conflict. See Röhl, *Germany without Bismarck*, 45–55, for an extended discussion of this question.
Social Democrats making the most impressive gains, capturing more votes than any other party.16

To Bismarck the election validated his calls for conflict, and he made a number of moves to solidify his position for the troubled times ahead. He planned the introduction of an even harsher anti-socialist law that would deny subversives not only their homes but also their citizenship. He also proposed a fresh army bill to ensure the inauguration of a new *Konfliktszeit* along the lines of his conflict with the Prussian Landtag in the 1860s. And finally, in order to shore up his control over the governmental apparatus, Bismarck dug up an old cabinet order of 1852 that barred Prussian ministers from communicating with the Prussian king unless the minister president was present. All these measures, Bismarck thought, would finally force William II to give up his ideas of personal rule.

Bismarck was mistaken. Though perhaps wavering initially in the wake of the elections, William II continued to seek a more moderate course, and he was encouraged in this desire by the anti-Bismarck camarilla. He wanted to give up the anti-socialist bill, seek a more moderate army bill, and generally follow a course that would not lead to a clash with the new oppositionist Reichstag. By early March it was obvious that Bismarck was grasping at straws to hold onto power, that he could not maintain his position in opposition to the emperor. The cabinet order of 1852 was the most obvious manifestation of this problem for Bismarck. On the morning of 15 March 1890 William II dragged Bismarck out of bed, reproached him for blocking access to the ministers, and

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16 See Tables 2 and 3 in Appendix 1.
demanded either the chancellor’s resignation or the abrogation of the cabinet order. Bismarck dragged his feet initially, but formally resigned office five days later.

**The New Course**

The new men who would lead the German foreign-policy establishment in the wake of the Bismarcks’ retirement had a tendency to view Russo-German relations in a very different light than Bismarck had. The most important of these men was undoubtedly the new imperial chancellor and Prussian minister-president, Georg Leo von Caprivi, a career military man who had been a model Prussian officer up to 1890. The choice of Caprivi as Bismarck’s successor was in many ways a strange one because of his well known tendency to stubbornness. But his independent streak was balanced in part by the strength of his character, his devotion to duty, and his ability to learn quickly. On account of his extensive political experience as an officer, it seemed Caprivi could survive in the world of civilian politics while maintaining the support of the army—truly crucial if the waves really did get high, as Bismarck had predicted. What was more, Caprivi had dealt with the Reichstag as the head of the admiralty from 1882 to 1888 and had a reputation as a moderate, which would be of decisive importance in a post-*Kartell* Reichstag.

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17 Caprivi had fought in the wars of unification and had risen steadily to the rank of lieutenant general by 1882. In this latter year he was appointed the head of the Prussian admiralty, a position that he held until his resignation and return to the army in 1888. At the time of his appointment, Caprivi commanded the Tenth Army Division in Hanover. On Caprivi’s life, see Heinrich Otto Meisner, *Der Reichskanzler Caprivi. Eine biographische Skizze* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1969).
19 Röhl, *Germany without Bismarck*, 57-8.
Caprivi believed it was his special task “to bring the nation back to a normal state of affairs after the preceding age of great men and events.” In other words, he felt the time had come for a fundamental break with the most divisive elements of the Bismarckian system. As a typical military man, Caprivi feared that war between Russia and Germany was imminent, and he felt it would be most wise to allow the Reinsurance Treaty to lapse after its expiration. As a moderate, he wished to end the perennial Bismarckian search for enemies within the state, preferring to work with the parties of the middle and the left wherever that was possible. As a leader with a strong moral sense, he wished to dispense with the dishonesty and persecution that typified the Bismarckian publicity system, favoring real freedom of discussion in the public sphere. And as a leader of limited expertise in diplomacy, he wished to encourage the growth of a kind of collective government of the Kaiser’s ministers and bureaucrats, where Bismarck had tried to institute a rigid type of personal control. Taken together, these were the primary elements of what subsequently was dubbed the “New Course.”

Though foreign-policy issues had not played a decisive role in the events of February and March 1890, it just so happened that the resignation crisis coincided almost exactly with a great departure in the longstanding foreign policy of the Kaiserreich. Bismarck’s secret Reinsurance Treaty with Russia, known only to a handful of men in Russia and Germany, was set to expire on 18 June 1890. In response to the Bismarck crisis, Count Nicholas de Giers, the Russian foreign minister, had dispatched to Berlin his ambassador, Count Pavel Shuvalov, with instructions to renew the treaty

20 Otto Hammann, Der neue Kurs (Berlin: Reimar Hobbing, 1918), 73.
immediately.\textsuperscript{21} Shuvalov arrived in Berlin on 17 March, where he found Bismarck clinging desperately to power, but receptive to his proposals.

On his side, Bismarck probably desired to use the issue of the alliance negotiations as a way of remaining in office longer.\textsuperscript{22} He told Shuvalov that his retirement was against his will and quite falsely attributed it to the unpopularity of his peaceful stance toward Russia, rather than the potent domestic questions that were really at issue. In this patent falsification, Bismarck was playing on the widely known Russophobia of the Kaiser’s inner circle. The state secretary, Herbert von Bismarck, played the same game as his father in those hectic March days. After interviews with Shuvalov on the question of the alliance negotiations he wrote two memoranda that maintained—again quite falsely—that the Russians would not conduct such crucial discussions with a new chancellor.\textsuperscript{23}

The Kaiser responded to these memoranda characteristically. Late in the evening on 20 March he summoned Shuvalov for an early meeting the next morning. The urgency of the summons suggested to some in the Russian embassy that the Tsar himself had been murdered—as in 1881.\textsuperscript{24} At the morning meeting, William did his best to reassure Shuvalov that he was fully ready to renew the Reinsurance Treaty even without Bismarck, who was retiring, he said, only on account of ill health.\textsuperscript{25} The interview seems

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\textsuperscript{21} Count Nicholas de Giers (1820-1895) was a conservative of the old sort who had worked closely with Bismarck to promote a pacific policy that kept Germany on relatively friendly terms with Russia. He served as foreign minister for the majority of Alexander III’s reign, from 1882 to 1895. Count Pavel Schuvalov (1830-1908) was the Russian ambassador in Berlin from 1885 to 1894.  
\textsuperscript{22} For an extended discussion of this matter, see Röhl, \textit{Aufbau}, 344-5.  
\textsuperscript{23} Memoranda by Herbert von Bismarck, 20 March 1890, nos. 1366 and 1367, \textit{GP}, vol. 7, 3-4.  
\textsuperscript{24} Nichols, 53.  
\textsuperscript{25} See, for example, Schweinitz to Caprivi, 16 May 1890, no. 1373, \textit{GP}, vol. 7, 20-21.
\end{flushright}
to have allayed the Russians’ fears (especially those of the notoriously suspicious Tsar Alexander III) as to the meaning of the Bismarck crisis.\footnote{Serge Gorianov, “The End of the Alliance,” \textit{American Historical Review} 23, no. 2 (1918): 344.}

At the same time the Kaiser made these assurances, the Bismarcks, father and son, were quite literally on their way out. Caprivi, for his part, was inclined to obsess about his shortcomings in the field of diplomacy. When he first found out about the Reinsurance Treaty and heard the news of its impending renewal, he felt overwhelmed by the situation. Caprivi recognized that the Reinsurance Treaty inherently contradicted the obligations of the Dual Alliance with Austria-Hungary. He was subsequently wary about renewing the treaty without consulting one of the few experts who really understood the agreement. Because Herbert von Bismarck had resigned with his father, Caprivi was left with little to go on besides his own personal inclinations of dropping the treaty and the advice of the privy councilors in the Foreign Office. The most important of these men was Friedrich von Holstein, the only man on duty when Caprivi came to request the appropriate documents on the agreement.\footnote{Holstein to Eisendecher, 16 April 1890, no. 315, \textit{PH}, vol. 3, 301-2.} Holstein, a secret opponent of the Reinsurance Treaty, urged Caprivi to let it lapse. He was able to win the support of other policy-experts in the Foreign Office, as well as the German ambassador to Russia, Hans Lothar von Schweinitz.\footnote{Hans Lothar von Schweinitz, \textit{Denkwürdigkeiten des Botschafters General von Schweinitz}, vol. 2 (Berlin: Reimar Hobbing, 1927), 404. The views of the Foreign Office councilors in the matter are summed up in a lengthy memorandum by Berchem, 25 March 1890, no. 1368, \textit{GP}, 4-10. Schweinitz (1822-1901) was a noted adherent to the Russian policy of Bismarck, serving as the German ambassador in St. Petersburg from 1876 to 1902.} As a group, these men brought all their influence to bear upon the Kaiser, who agreed that the treaty could not be renewed, despite his inclinations to the contrary.\footnote{Schweinitz, vol. 2, 404-5.}
Schweinitz made the official explanation to the Russians in subsequent days. Caprivi, he remarked, wished not to commit himself to any major decisions in such hectic times; Germany’s attitude toward Russia would not change in the least. In private, Caprivi and his advisors were much more explicit in the rationale for non-renewal. On 28 March Caprivi argued that the Reinsurance Treaty might harm relations with Britain and was inconsistent with the Triple Alliance and Germany’s obligations to Romania. If news of the treaty ever leaked to the public, the revelations would be especially damaging to the credibility of the new regime in Berlin. In early May, Giers made several concessions to get the Wilhelmstrasse to agree to renew the treaty, finally winning over Schweinitz in St. Petersburg. Caprivi remained firm, arguing that the treaty would offend Britain, alienate Germany’s allies, and eventually force a decision between Russia and Austria-Hungary. Furthermore, the value of an alliance in a nationalist age would be severely restricted if it “lacked the support of public opinion,” a consideration of special importance in Germany, Caprivi asserted. The connection to Austria-Hungary had a broad base of support among the public, which placed the Reinsurance Treaty squarely in conflict with popular sentiments. Caprivi’s reasoning was borne out after

30 Memorandum by Caprivi, 28 March 1890, no. 1369, GP, vol. 7, 10-11.
31 These included dropping the blank-check protocols that Bismarck had inserted into the original treaty, offering support to Russia in Bulgaria and at the Turkish Straits. Giers, in other words, conceded almost any German reservations about the treaty to maintain the connection to Berlin. When this maneuver failed to budge the Wilhelmstrasse, Giers went even further, proposing a simple exchange of notes. None of these measures were enough to convince Caprivi of the necessity of renewing either the treaty or a modified version of it.
32 Memorandum by Caprivi, 22 May 1890, no. 1379, ibid., 32.
33 Caprivi’s memorandum was a synthesis of all the arguments advanced against the renewal of the treaty by councilors in the Foreign Office since the end of March, especially with regard to the importance of the public-opinion factor. See, for instance, memorandum by Berchem, 25 March 1890, no. 1368, ibid., 4-10, which argues that public support for a war would be an absolute necessity; or memorandum by Holstein, 20 May 1890, no. 1374, ibid., 22-3, which makes it clear that fear of revelation to the public—especially by Bismarck—was forefront in even Holstein’s mind. Holstein was especially worried on account of a recent
the fact: the parties of the left and center—with the perennial exception of the SPD—greeted the renewal of the Triple Alliance in the summer of 1891 with accolades that confirmed the government’s assertion about the political popularity of the connection to Austria-Hungary.34

Simultaneous developments in the field of Anglo-German relations undoubtedly encouraged Caprivi’s Russian policy. In May 1890, Lord Salisbury reopened negotiations between Germany and Britain over the delimitation of colonial spheres in East Africa and on the island of Zanzibar.35 The East Africa problem had been a source of dispute since the late 1880s. Salisbury and Bismarck had opened up negotiations about the matter informally in December 1889, but they made little headway toward resolution beyond agreeing to Salisbury’s proposal for arbitration.36 The problem remained up in the air at the time of Bismarck’s dismissal.

The Helgoland-Zanzibar Agreement that resulted from the reopening of negotiations was a prime example of how the old diplomacy was supposed to work in theory. One of the major reasons the negotiations had been contentious up to May 1890 was the variety of special interests involved on both sides: the two main trading interests in the region, the British and German East Africa Companies, both attached considerable significance to any agreement that might be reached. In Germany, especially, African

interview that Bismarck had granted to the Russian newspaper Novoe Vremya, which had been published on 28 April 1890, according to the Julian calendar. See below, pp. 54-5.
34 For the opinion of the major political parties on the Reinsurance Treaty, see Karl Hatzfeldt, Das deutsch-österreichische Bündnis von 1879 in der Beurteilung der politischen Parteien Deutschlands (Berlin: Ebering, 1938; reprint, Vaduz: Kraus Reprint, 1965).
35 Lord Robert Cecil, the Marquess of Salisbury (1830-1903), led three Conservative governments in the Victorian period (1885-1886, 1886-1892, and 1895-1902), serving as state secretary for foreign affairs in each of the three cabinets.
36 Hatzfeldt to Bismarck, 22 December 1889, no. 1674, GP, vol. 8, 6-8.
colonies were very popular, and nascent pressure groups such as the Colonial Society were predisposed to put heavy demands on the Foreign Office to protect and expand German claims. In spite of these obstacles, the ambassador to London, Count Paul von Hatzfeldt, approached the foreign minister on 13 May and suggested that they could solve the problem with ease if they discussed things unofficially and confidentially, as between two gentlemen—“as merely Lord Salisbury and Count Hatzfeldt.” In these conditions, Salisbury went so far as to express his willingness to cede the island of Helgoland in the North Atlantic to Germany in return for Zanzibar and the renunciation of certain claims in Witu and Uganda. The Kaiser, Chancellor Caprivi, and the new state secretary, Baron Adolf Marschall von Bieberstein, were all very impressed with the offer. Helgoland seemed extremely important since it guarded the mouth of the Kiel Canal then under construction; and Britain would seemingly renounce her “Cape-to-Cairo” dream in Africa if the agreement were signed. The treaty reached a speedy conclusion on the basis of the gentleman’s agreement of 13 May. The official gazette, the *Reichsanzeiger*, published the details of the agreement on 17 June 1890.

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37 This organization had been formed in 1887 as a fragile union of the Colonial League (founded in 1882) and the Society for German Colonization (founded in 1884). It was among the earliest of the populist nationalist organizations of the right, seeing itself as the main advocate for colonization and for Germans living outside of Germany. See Pauline Safford Relyea Anderson, *The Background of Anti-English Feeling in Germany, 1890-1902* (Baltimore: American University Press, 1939), 177-82.

38 Count Paul von Hatzfeldt-Wildenburg (1831-1901) had a long career in the Prussian and German diplomatic service. He was appointed as the attaché in Paris in 1859, before attaining a promotion to be the second secretary in Paris the next year. He then served in successive positions in the diplomatic service: as secretary of legation at the Hague from 1866 to 1868; as a privy councilor in the Foreign Office from 1868 to 1874; as minister in Madrid from 1874 to 1878; as ambassador in Constantinople from 1879-1881; as state secretary in the Foreign Office from 1881 to 1885; and finally as the longstanding ambassador to London, one of the most eminent positions in the service, from 1885 to 1901.

39 Hatzfeldt to Marschall, 14 May 1890, no 1676, *GP*, vol. 8, 11.

40 *Reichsanzeiger*, 17 June 1890, England 96, Bd. 1, PA-AA. For the finalized text of the agreement, see “Vertrag über Kolonien und Helgoland,” 1 July 1890, no. 10032, *Das Staatsarchiv*, vol. 51 (1890-1): 151-7.
From the outside—and especially to Tsar Alexander III—it seemed by July 1890 that the departure of Bismarck had inaugurated a great turn in German foreign policy. Germany, it appeared, was backing away from conservative Russia and moving into the arms of her most bitter rival, Great Britain. Better relations with Britain had always been, from its very inception, a major goal of the New Course; and the desire to strengthen ties with Britain was certainly a key factor on the German side behind the Helgoland-Zanzibar Treaty. Nevertheless, it remained unclear whether the new entente with Germany would eventually lead to the direct adhesion of the British to the Triple Alliance. What had seemed an unanswered question to the Tsar and his advisors in the summer of 1890 was seemingly answered for them by the summer of 1891.

Another goal of the New Course was closer ties between Germany and her allies, Austria-Hungary and Italy. Caprivi made a major move in this direction in the summer of 1890. To reassure the Austrians about a recent visit the Kaiser and he had made to St. Petersburg in the middle of August, Caprivi communicated—for the first time—the terms of the Reinsurance Treaty to Kaiser Francis Joseph and the Austro-Hungarian foreign minister, Count Gustav Kálnoky, in a meeting between the emperors at the Rohnstock maneuvers in Silesia from 17 to 19 September 1890. The visit went off harmoniously. “Our dealings with the Austrians were most cordial,” reported Alfred von Kiderlen-Wächter, who attended the maneuvers. “The chancellor seems to have come to like [Austrian Foreign Minister] Kálnoky really well. H. M. took a walk in the park with Kálnoky for more than an hour, telling him everything, specifically about something that

41 Count Gustav Kálnoky von Köröspatak (1832-1898) represented the Dual Monarchy in London, Rome, Copenhagen, and Russia, before becoming the Austro-Hungarian foreign minister in 1881. He continued to serve in that position until his resignation in 1895.
no longer exists [i.e. the Reinsurance Treaty].” Yet Caprivi did even one better than his imperial master in these demonstrations. In August he had repeated to the Tsar and Count Giers that nothing had changed in the Bismarckian policy toward Russia; though the direct line to St. Petersburg was severed, he would still support Russia in the maintenance of the Straits Convention of 1871. Now Caprivi seemed to contradict himself: a solution of the Straits question along Russian lines was impossible. Germany would no longer make concessions to the Tsar in the Near East without first getting Austrian consent. Caprivi even suggested to Kálnoky the creation of a tariff union between the Triple Alliance powers to meet foreign commercial competition from the United States, France, and Russia. All told, when viewed from the perspective of an outside observer, it was obvious that a major shift in the alignment of the powers had begun.

**The Public-Opinion Problem and the New Course**

Almost from its very inception, Caprivi defended the New Course as a necessary move to create a clear and consistent policy that the German public could support. A complicated system of alliances that ran counter to public opinion, he asserted privately,

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42 Kiderlen-Wächter to Holstein, 21 September 1890, no. 328, *PH*, vol. 3, 357.
43 Gorianov, 347-8. For Caprivi’s view on the question, see memorandum by Caprivi, 8 September 1890, no 1612, *GP*, vol. 7, 352-3. Nevertheless, Caprivi had not completely abandoned the Russians. In August 1890 Lord Salisbury wanted to put pressure on Russia to allow free passage for British ships through the Straits, and Caprivi declined to give full support to Britain for fear of alienating Russia. Caprivi to Hatzfeldt, 8 August 1890, no. 2100, ibid., vol. 9, 46-7. State Secretary Marschall went even further than Caprivi: German public opinion would see such a move as a direct departure from the longstanding principles that had regulated Near Eastern policy since Bismarck’s time. In view of Bismarck’s press campaign against the government, this type of move was completely unfeasible. See Marschall to Hatzfeldt, 31 August 1890, no. 2103, ibid., vol. 9, 49-52.
simply could not be maintained once the sorcerer had left the scene.45 Even in public he alluded to the change that had taken place. In a speech before the Reichstag on 16 May 1890, for example, Caprivi made it clear that the strength of the Triple Alliance was based upon the public support and respect it had garnered: “We have confidence in our strong alliances, even more so as they become increasingly founded in popular sentiment.”46 A major aspect of Caprivi’s calculation made logical sense: the alliance with Austria was popular with the political parties in Germany, while simultaneously seeming the more natural of Bismarck’s alliances in the east, as it was based to a certain extent on ties of nationality, language, and culture.47

Yet Caprivi’s policies caused a firestorm in public opinion, which became increasingly unmanageable as time went on. A major source of this criticism originated with Bismarck on account of the break with Russia. His letter of resignation—obviously composed with a view to publication—was intended as the first salvo in this publicity campaign. Ignoring the more obvious frictions between chancellor and Kaiser in domestic policy, it focused instead on Germany’s relations with Russia. The Kaiser’s recent orders with regard to Russian policy could not be executed, Bismarck wrote in March 1890, because they

45 Memorandum by Caprivi, 23 May 1890, no. 1378, GP, vol. 7, 29.
46 Reichstag speech by Caprivi, 16 May 1890, 8th Leg. Per., Session 1, SBVR, vol. 129, 112. Caprivi’s speeches are also available in Georg Leo von Caprivi, Die Reden des Grafen von Caprivi im Deutschen Reichstage, Preußischen Landtage und bei besonderen Anlässen 1883-1893, ed. Rudolf Arndt (Berlin: E. Hofmann, 1894).
47 Konrad Canis, Bismarcks Außenpolitik 1870-1890. Aufstieg und Gefährdung (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2004), 158. The obvious exception was the Social Democrats who could at times view the alliance with askance. In the debate over the Army Bill, for instance, Karl Liebknecht complained that, according to Caprivi’s rendering before the Reichstag, the Triple Alliance was justified on highly circular logic: “er ist uns eine Stütze, die wir stützen müssen.” Reichstag speech by Karl Liebknecht, 1 December 1892, 8th Leg. Per., Session 2, SBVR, vol. 145, 81.
call into question all the results of importance to the German Empire which our foreign policy has for decades, under unfavorable circumstances, achieved, in the opinion of both Your Majesty’s predecessors, as regards our relations with Russia, and whose great significance for the present and the future was demonstrated to me by Count Shuvalov upon his return from St. Petersburg.⁴⁸

If the reference to the Reinsurance Treaty was necessarily vague because of the secrecy that surrounded the alliance between Russia and Germany, Bismarck was nevertheless much more explicit before the Prussian Ministry of State. “Today I am persuaded that I can no longer represent even His Majesty’s foreign policy,” he told the Prussian ministers on 18 March 1890.

Notwithstanding my confidence in the Triple Alliance, I have never lost sight of the possibility that it might at some time be dissolved; for in Italy the monarchy is not very firmly established; the engagement between Italy and Austria might be endangered by the Irredenta; in Austria only the trustworthiness of the present Emperor excludes a change during his lifetime; and it is never safe to count upon the attitude of Hungary. On this account I have constantly endeavored never to break down the bridge between us and Russia.⁴⁹

Bismarck had, it is true, contended with William II over the subject almost from the beginning of the new Kaiser’s reign.⁵⁰ In making these demonstrations in the midst of the resignation crisis, however, Bismarck wanted to make his staunch support of the connection to Russia the center of public discussion when the real issue was about domestic politics and how to deal with the growing electoral success of the SPD in the Reichstag. Yet the issue of Russian relations remained the center of Bismarck’s campaign against the New Course up to and beyond the grave.

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⁴⁹ Minutes of the Prussian Ministry of State, 17 March 1890, in ibid., 110.
⁵⁰ See the lengthy discussion of this issue in Röhl, Aufbau, 169-77.
It is not necessary to elaborate here all of the details of Bismarck’s press campaign. Needless to say, he was barred from publishing his letter of resignation—as he so avidly desired—and instead had to content himself with a detached campaign undertaken from the relative seclusion of his estates. He also lost his most important press contacts with semi-official newspapers such as the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* after his dismissal because the government denied him access to their pages. Nevertheless, he steadily built up a new base of support after 1890, as a number of different German journalists eventually associated themselves with his post-dismissal struggle against the government. Far and away the most important of these individuals was the political editor of the *Hamburger Nachrichten*, Hermann Hofmann. He had known Bismarck since 1888 and often relied upon the old man to help settle his debts; after 1890 he was a frequent visitor to Friedrichsruh and the articles he wrote greatly increased the prestige and circulation of his newspaper.

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51 The standard works are: Manfred Hank, *Kanzler ohne Amt. Fürst Bismarck nach seiner Entlassung 1890-1898* (Munich: Tuduv-Verlagsgesellschaft, 1977); and Wolfgang Stribrny, *Bismarck und die deutsche Politik nach seiner Entlassung* (1890-1898) (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1977). The files of the Foreign Office are packed with materials that deal with this subject, totaling nearly seventy files in all, the majority of which are newspaper clippings and press reports. See Deutschland 122, no. 11, Bde. 1-67, and Deutschland 122, no. 11, secr., Bde. 1-3, PA-AA. Many of the interviews and articles in the campaign are available in published versions as well. For a complete listing of these and where they are available, see Hank, 719-22.


53 These journalists included: Emil Hartmeyer (1820-1902), the owner and editor of the nationalist *Hamburger Nachrichten*; Maximilian Harden (1861-1927), the editor of *Die Zukunft*; Hugo Jacobi (1842-1906), the editor of the Free Conservative *Münchener Allgemeine Zeitung* in 1890; Dr. Moritz Busch (1821-1899), a journalist and longstanding ally of Bismarck; Dr. Horst Kohl (1855-1917), a gymnasium professor and prodigious writer on Bismarck’s behalf; and Dr. Heinrich von Poschinger (1845-1911), a privy councilor in the Reich Interior Office from 1876 to 1901. Many of Bismarck’s press interviews in retirement were published by the latter in Heinrich von Poschinger, ed., *Fürst Bismarck. Neue Tischgespräche und Interviews* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1895). See also Hank, 122-62.

54 Hank, 16-17.

55 Hofmann’s articles on Bismarck’s behalf form the largest amount of material in the press campaign conducted against the New Course after 1890. All the articles Hofmann published for Bismarck in these years have been collected together in Hermann Hofmann, *Fürst Bismarck 1890-1898. Nach persönlichen Mitteilungen des Fürsten und eigenen Aufzeichnungen des Verfassers, nebst einer authentischen Ausgabe...*
Many of the articles that appeared in this public-relations war were fairly harmless, or dealt primarily with the domestic sphere and social questions. In the summer of 1891, for instance, when a report of The Times suggested that William might have been justified in his dismissal of Bismarck, the Münchener Allgemeine Zeitung was mobilized, dismissing the article as “gossip” bandied about by Bismarck’s opponents. In the first few months of his retirement, Bismarck’s revelations to the press gained the attention of the Foreign Office, which feared he would wreck the foreign policy of the New Course and damage the credibility of the government. One specific concern was for the personal reputation of the Kaiser. Bismarck could, for example, make the Kaiser’s “peace policy” seem a farce, if he were to publish a secret letter written by William during the crisis of 1887 in which he had declared belligerently, “My opinion is that Paris must be destroyed.”

But by far the greatest concern early on was that Bismarck would divulge secret information to the press about the Reinsurance Treaty and Germany’s relations with Russia and her other allies. The most important interview Bismarck granted immediately after his dismissal was with the Berlin correspondent of the Novoe Vremya,
to whom he conceded that the future belonged to a Russo-German alliance. The interview caused concern in Viennese political circles—in spite of the reassuring words of Count Kálnoky to the German ambassador—and fueled a feeling of uncertainty in Italy, too. The Kaiser was particularly incensed, feeling that Bismarck had shown himself to be “illoyal [sic] to his Sovereign and country.” In the Foreign Office, moreover, the timing of the matter looked even worse, as the interview coincided with the Russian attempt to renew the Reinsurance Treaty in May of 1890. Holstein, for his part, was nonplussed. The interview, he reflected, was probably a deliberate move coordinated between Friedrichsruh and St. Petersburg to alienate Germany from Italy, Austria, and Britain. Such was grounds enough for the rejection of the renewed Russian offer, for these references seemed especially hurtful to Germany’s allies.

The immediate question on the side of the government was, of course, how or even whether to respond. Paul Kayser in the Foreign Office had already suggested in April that it was ridiculous to play the role of a “ministry of propriety” as Caprivi desired; the government ought to declare a public-relations war on Bismarck and the section of opinion that supported him. Nevertheless, as its official policy, the government maintained a “dignified silence,” in keeping with Caprivi’s hands-off policy toward the

59 Novoe Vremya, 28 April 1890, in Poschinger, 294. The date presumably follows the Julian calendar. The Novoe Vremya was a highly important conservative newspaper in St. Petersburg that maintained a daily circulation of approximately 30,000 in the 1890s. Table 6 in Appendix 1 of Louise McReynolds, The News under Russia’s Old Regime (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991), 298.
60 Reuß to Caprivi, 21 May 1890, and Solms to Caprivi, 21 May 1890, Deutschland 122, no. 11, Bd. 2, PA-AA.
61 William II’s marginalia, The Times, 21 May 1890, Deutschland 122, no. 11, Bd. 2, PA-AA. The quote is in English in the original.
62 Holstein to Eulenburg, 19 May 1890, no. 395, EK, vol. 1, 541.
64 Eulenburg to Holstein, 18 April 1890, no. 388, EK, vol. 1, 534-5.
press.\textsuperscript{65} Behind the scenes, however, Caprivi acted to blunt Bismarck’s attack. He instructed the embassies abroad to emphasize that Bismarck’s statements were his alone and in no way reflected the policy of the current chancellor or the Foreign Office. After all, there was a difference “between the Bismarck of earlier and of now,” even if the Kaiser was unwilling to intervene directly and damage the public image of Germany’s greatest living statesman.\textsuperscript{66} In the end, Caprivi’s policy of reserve was successful. It reassured Austria as to Germany’s intentions, but did so without involving her leading statesmen in an embarrassing public discussion about the current state of Russo-German relations.\textsuperscript{67}

On the heels of the very first Bismarckian barrage in the spring of 1890, the signing of the Helgoland-Zanzibar treaty caused another heated public discussion about the goals and consequences of the New Course. On the whole, the German press received the treaty positively, seeing the acquisition of Helgoland as militarily important enough to justify the far-reaching surrender of territory in East Africa.\textsuperscript{68} Especially in newspapers controlled by the Center party and the Left Liberals, the treaty was greeted with satisfaction; Eugen Richter’s \textit{Freisinnige Zeitung} went so far as to lament that Britain did not have any other small parcel of territory in Europe to trade for African territories and goodwill.\textsuperscript{69} Though the approval was more grudging on the right, even

\textsuperscript{65} See Eulenburg’s description to this effect in Eulenburg to Holstein, 25 April 1890, no. 317, \textit{PH}, vol. 3, 302-4.

\textsuperscript{66} Decree by Caprivi, 23 May 1890, Deutschland 122, no. 1, Bd. 2, PA-AA.

\textsuperscript{67} Postscript, 27 May 1890, Reuß to Caprivi, 21 May 1890, Deutschland 122, no. 1, Bd. 2, PA-AA.


\textsuperscript{69} \textit{Freisinnige Zeitung}, 19 June 1890. As the personal paper of the Left-Liberal leader Eugen Richter (1838-1906), the \textit{Freisinnige Zeitung} took on the character of an official party organ for the Progressive party before 1893 and for the re-formed Liberal People’s party after that date. As with the progressive rump he led after 1893, Richter directed the affairs of the \textit{Freisinnige Zeitung} in an almost dictatorial way. From 1893
there a qualified endorsement of the treaty was granted early on in the pages of the *Post*, the *Kreuzzeitung*, and the *National-Zeitung*.

Even Bismarck initially gave qualified approval to the treaty in the pages of the *Hamburger Nachrichten*, primarily on account of the positive effect it would have on Anglo-German relations. Yet, at the same time, he also gave ammunition to the opposition in colonial circles with his vague declaration that he would have never signed the agreement in its final form.\(^70\) Indeed, it seemed to some Germans that Caprivi had capitulated to the British, giving a ransom in African territory for a sandbar in the Atlantic.\(^71\) By and large, most members in German imperialist circles had a tendency to complain about the treaty, “through which the ‘key’ to all of Africa (Zanzibar) had been given up for the pants-button of Helgoland.”\(^72\) The treaty, in short, seemed a clear announcement by the government that there would be no more colonial expansion in East Africa.\(^73\) Hence, a general trend in public opinion—especially to the right of the Center party—was that it came to be seen more and more as a national humiliation.

It was this nascent but growing movement of opposition—a fringe nationalist movement at the time—that would become extremely important in the subsequent years

\(^70\) See *Hamburger Nachrichten*, 4 July 1890, and 13 July 1890, in Hofmann, 279-81. Bismarck was vague about what he would have done differently.

\(^71\) Eulenburg to Caprivi, 25 September 1890, no. 448, *EK*, vol. 1, 574.

\(^72\) Hammann, *Kurs*, 20-1.

of the Wilhelmine period. The political shift was especially clear from the reaction of those groups that sympathized with the criticism from imperialist circles. In both the Kölnische Zeitung and the liberal Frankfurter Zeitung an open letter to the German people entitled “Deutschland wach auf!” which had been paid for by individuals critical of the treaty, appeared on 28 June 1890. This document pointedly condemned the Helgoland-Zanzibar Treaty for ruining the German colonial empire with the merest stroke of a pen and called upon the Reichstag to abrogate the treaty with a nationalist majority that crossed party lines.74

By the middle of July, the individuals who had spearheaded the 28 June notice sent out a letter to interested individuals soliciting support for the formation of a league that would call the attention of the government to nationalist public opinion. By the spring of 1891 the movement under the leadership of Carl Peters had developed to such an extent that a constituent assembly revived the Allgemeiner deutscher Verband of 1886.75 After suffering declining membership in the early 1890s, the league eventually reinvented itself as into the Pan-German League (Alldeutscher Verband) in 1894 and made its main goal the creation of a genuine “nationalist opposition” that would shatter

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74 Frankfurter Zeitung, 28 June 1890; and Kölnische Zeitung, 28 June 1890. The Frankfurter Zeitung had been founded in 1856 by Leopold Sonnemann (1831-1909) as a paper for the business elite. By the time of unification, Sonnemann had converted the paper to an avowedly progressive organ that took up the banner of parliamentary government and democratic reform in opposition to Bismarck. In order to maintain the independence of the paper, Sonnemann created an editorial board early on and maintained a policy whereby all contributions to the paper would be anonymous. The relatively extensive foreign news service of the Frankfurter Zeitung dated to these early years, when Sonnemann sent correspondents out to the major continental cities of Paris, Berlin, Hamburg and Vienna. Turk, 21.

75 Besides founding the Pan-German League, Carl Peters (1856-1918) was also a major German explorer and advocate of colonization from the 1880s on. He was an especially important figure in Germany’s colonization efforts in Africa. “Peters, Carl,” in BS, vol. 2, 968.
partisan and factional disputes on the right and unite all sympathetic groups under the umbrella of Pan-German leadership.\textsuperscript{76}

In any case, the German government could not directly intervene in the matter until late July—only after the House of Commons had finally agreed to the details of the treaty. Caprivi, himself, laid out the larger outline of the ultimate public defense of the treaty privately at the end of June, pointing out that the agreement virtually guaranteed “friendly relations with England.”\textsuperscript{77} The government cited this specifically as its overriding justification for the treaty in the \textit{Reichsanzeiger} on 29 July 1890, arguing that Germany had achieved this goal in a fair bargain: the boundary changes in East Africa were reasonable, while Zanzibar was strategically unnecessary for guaranteeing those holdings; the acquisition of Helgoland was, moreover, a great boon militarily, providing a naval outpost on the Atlantic for the defense of the German coastline and commerce in the event of a war with France. In the Reichstag, Caprivi went even further, quoting Bismarck himself on 5 February 1891: “The maintenance of good relations with Lord Salisbury has more value for His Highness than all of Witu,” the former chancellor had written on one occasion, adding later that “England is more important for us than Zanzibar and East Africa.”\textsuperscript{78}

Bismarck responded almost immediately with a salvo of his own in the \textit{Hamburger Nachrichten}, where he asserted that Caprivi was trying to make him

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\textsuperscript{76} Eley, \textit{German Right}, 48.
\textsuperscript{77} Konrad Canis, \textit{Von Bismarck zur Weltpolitik: Deutsche Außenpolitik 1890 bis 1902} (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1999), 67.
\textsuperscript{78} Reichstag speech by Caprivi, 5 February 1891, 8\textsuperscript{th} Leg. Per., Session 1, \textit{SBVR}, vol. 130, 1331-2.
\end{flushleft}
responsible for the failures of the New Course.\textsuperscript{79} The move was significant for it marked a new departure in the development of the Bismarck Fronde—a movement that intended to bring about the fall of Caprivi and Bismarck’s return to office. The campaign ultimately culminated in Bismarck’s victory in a run-off election to the Reichstag as a representative of the National Liberals in Hanover in April. The result was almost electric. In government circles it seemed Bismarck was returning like the ghost of Hamlet’s father to avenge himself on his enemies by making more public revelations, but this time in the Reichstag.\textsuperscript{80} Furthermore, Bismarck’s victory coincided roughly with the birth of the Pan-German League that spring, which demonstrated the extent to which the public-opinion problem was growing in the first years of Caprivi’s chancellorship.

\textbf{The Transformation of European Politics}

The events of 1890 and 1891, in addition to their obvious impact on German domestic politics, had a major destabilizing effect in the world outside of Germany as well. In Britain, the public greeted the news of the Helgoland-Zanzibar treaty as a largely positive development, with the press and Parliament seeing the deal as a fair trade. Some commentators even suggested that the treaty signified the accession—symbolically, at least—of Britain to the Triple Alliance.\textsuperscript{81} For their part, French journalists echoed these observations, seeing the Helgoland-Zanzibar treaty as a threat to the security of France. The founder of the revanchist \textit{Nouvelle Revue}, Madame Juliette Adam, for example, suspected that the treaty included secret provisions calling for British naval

\textsuperscript{79} \textit{Hamburger Nachrichten}, 8 February 1891, in Hofmann, 315-17. See also the articles of 11, 15, and 19 February 1891, in ibid., 317-21, and 325-8.
\textsuperscript{80} Holstein to Eulenburg, 18 April 1891, \textit{EK}, vol. 1, 667-8.
\textsuperscript{81} This was view especially of the conservative \textit{Daily Telegraph}. See Langer, \textit{Franco-Russian Alliance}, 80. This opinion is echoed in Gabriel Monod, “French Affairs,” \textit{Contemporary Review} 58 (July 1890): 19-39.
protection in the Baltic in return for German diplomatic support in Egypt. At the official level, French and Russian statesmen privately reiterated their own versions of these ideas. The French ambassador in Berlin reported Russian fears about a *quid pro quo* along the lines suspected by Madame Adam; and the Russian ambassador in Paris complained that the treaty had virtually brought an “entente” into being.

These developments gained even greater importance in May 1891, when the new prime minister of Italy, the Marquis di Rudini, was able to win Caprivi over for the renewal of the Triple Alliance a year before its expiration date. This move was especially crucial for two reasons. First, it was a natural development in light of the discussions held at Rohnstock on the state of Germany’s relations with Austria and Russia. Second, it was understood as a part of the negotiations with Italy that she would try to move closer to Britain, especially in her African policy. Rudini was so eager for a closer relationship with London that he wrote up a draft agreement for Britain to join the Triple Alliance—something Caprivi only objected to because he felt it was overly ambitious—and then inspired articles in various Italian newspapers that suggested Britain had in fact joined a new Quadruple Alliance. In the House of Commons awkward questions were put to Salisbury, who denied anything was amiss. He could not, however, convince his parliamentary critics that there really was no secret alliance between the Triplice powers and Britain.

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82 *Nouvelle Revue*, 15 July 1890. Adam’s utterances eventually aroused suspicion in Britain about these questions, and Salisbury had to answer interpellations on the matter in Parliament at the end of June. Juliette Adam (1836-1936) had founded the *Nouvelle Revue* in 1879 and edited it for eight years, remaining an important figure in the daily operations of the publication until the very end of the 1800s.


84 Marquis Antonio di Rudini (1839-1908) had recently become the Italian prime minister and foreign minister after the fall of Francesco Crispi. He served from 1891 to 1892 and was later prime minister again from 1896 to 1898.
Caprivi’s economic policies also strengthened the ties between the Triple Alliance partners. Already in 1890 Holstein reported that Caprivi was studying the “thick files” on Germany’s trade treaties that were set to expire in 1892, with a view to the creation of a central European customs union that would strengthen the economic bonds of the Triple Alliance.85 Caprivi wanted specifically to prevent an embarrassing situation in which Italy, Austria-Hungary, and Germany would be allied politically while engaged in a tariff war. He therefore proposed a tariff union that would provide for mutual concessions between Germany and her alliance partners. Germany would win lower duties on the manufactured goods it exported to the other countries that made up the trading union; in return she would concede lower duties on grain imported into Germany. The entire system would have a term of twelve years, expiring in 1903. Delegates from Belgium, Italy, and Austria-Hungary all met with the German representatives in Berlin to sign the treaties on 6 December 1891. Caprivi then placed the treaties before the Reichstag for ratification on 10 December. In speaking on behalf of the bill, he emphasized that it placed the good of the nation as a whole above specific economic or class interests. Germany’s economic power would be strengthened overall because German industry would have access to more external markets. He conceded that German agriculture would have to tolerate more foreign competition, a sacrifice that would ensure cheaper bread for the masses.86

85 Holstein to Eulenburg, 4 July 1890, no. 408, EK, vol. 1, 560.
86 Reichstag speech by Caprivi, 10 December 1891, 8th Leg. Per., Session 1, SBVR, vol. 118, 3301-9. The grain tariff was specifically lowered from 5 to 3 ½ marks per 1,000 kg of imported grain. See the final text of the treaty as approved by the Reichstag in Text of Trade Treaties, 8th Leg. Per., Session 1, SBVR, vol. 125, Anlage no. 570, 3215-3424.
As far as public-opinion policy went, the government faced opposition to the treaties primarily on the right. The Junker agrarian elite were highly critical of Caprivi’s trade treaties and because of them increasingly joined in the clamor against the government that was centered on the Bismarck Fronde. At the end of December 1891, the Hammerstein group within the Conservative party moved very quickly to force party newspapers to adopt an oppositional stance toward economic policies that did not favor the agrarians. When, for instance, the Conservative Correspondenz—a small party journal with a circulation of less than 400 copies\(^{87}\)—published an article that spoke favorably of the trade treaties in the wake of their ratification, the Kreuzzeitung created such a ruckus that the Correspondenz had to later admit that this was not the official line of the Conservatives, a majority of which had opposed ratification in the Reichstag.\(^{88}\)

In the face of the changing conditions of international politics, French statesmen had begun to maneuver almost from the beginning of Caprivi’s tenure as chancellor to end French isolation. When Bismarck retired in March 1890, it was expected in Paris that the Triple Alliance would collapse without its creator; afterward French diplomacy in many ways moved into an active stage. The first step in the direction of improving relations with Russia came at the end of May, just on the heels of the final German rejection of a renewal of the Reinsurance Treaty. On 29 and 30 May the French government, in an obvious gesture to the reactionary Tsar, rounded up a number of revolutionary exiles hiding in Paris and put them on trial for a terrorist plot against the Tsar, gaining the heartfelt thanks of Alexander III.\(^{89}\) Relations between the two states

\(^{87}\) Wernecke, 319.
\(^{88}\) Retallack, 82.
\(^{89}\) Laboulaye to Ribot, 31 May 1890 and 2 June 1890, nos. 71 and 74, DDF, ser. 1, vol. 8, 98 and 102.
warmed steadily over the course of late 1890 and early 1891, as it seemed more and more that Germany was strengthening her ties with Britain and the other members of the Triple Alliance.

The most obvious manifestation of a burgeoning Franco-Russian détente could be seen in the naval maneuvers held at Kronstadt in July 1891, when a French fleet was invited to visit the Tsar. The exchange went off well, so much so that the normally stiff and reactionary Alexander III made the ultimate gesture of removing his hat for the playing of the “Marseillaise” at a gala dinner attended by dignitaries from both states. The visit was tremendous popular success as well: the French visitors, it seemed, were greeted everywhere with cheering crowds and public adulation. To the German ambassador in Russia, General Lothar von Schweinitz, who held a front-row seat for the entire spectacle, the visit seemed to be an ominous sign of the last death gasp of the old regime, Bismarckian policy, and the Old Diplomacy: “today, wearing the medals of the Black Eagle, Saint Stephan, and Saint Andrew on my chest, I’ll participate in the parade as a living anachronism,” he wrote his wife morosely.90

An entente was not far off. On 27 August Alexander III sent a vague communication to the French government through the Russian ambassador, suggesting that the two states should cooperate if the peace of Europe were threatened by a third power.91 Consistently, in the wake of these events, the French tried to get the Russians to commit to a military alliance directed more clearly against Germany. The upshot of these efforts came when the two powers finally agreed to a military convention on 10

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90 Schweinitz to his wife, 12 August 1891, in Schweinitz, vol. 2, 427. These decorations were the three highest orders of chivalry in Prussia, Austria-Hungary, and Russia respectively.
91 See Giers to Mohrenheim, 9 August 1891, Appendix 1, in Kennan, 260; and Mohrenheim to Ribot, 15 August 1891, no. 514, DDF, ser. 1, vol. 8, 683-4. The dates follow the Julian calendar.
August 1892. It outlined the measures for military cooperation embodied in the Franco-
Russian alliance of 1894: Russia would come to the aid of France if she were attacked by
Germany, or Italy supported by Germany, and vice versa if Russia were attacked by
Germany, or Austria supported by Germany. Both powers’ armies would mobilize
simultaneously if any of the partners of the Triple Alliance mobilized, aiming a large
proportion of their forces against Germany. Finally, the two powers agreed to military
collaboration in times of war and peace. The convention was to remain in force for the
duration of the Triple Alliance.92

The Russian foreign minister, Giers, had remained consistently opposed to the
project during the negotiation process because the convention implied a complete
severing of the old relationship with Germany and committed Russia to Germany’s
bitterest enemy, France. The Tsar preferred to move slowly but deliberately in the
direction of the eventual conclusion of an alliance. In September 1892, however, he
faced a rude shock. At that time, a domestic political crisis erupted in France over
corruption in the Panama-Canal construction project, a crisis that implicated many
parliamentary deputies in the acceptance of bribes from the virtually bankrupt company
charged with constructing the canal. Alexandre Ribot, the French foreign minister, and
Charles de Freycinet, the French premier, had been the leading political figures in
pushing forward the Franco-Russian negotiations up to August 1892.93 Following the
Panama scandal, however, they were turned out of office. Even worse, the Russian

93 Alexandre Ribot (1842-1923) was the French foreign minister from 1890 to 1893, French premier from
1892 to 1893, and in 1895, and the French finance minister in that same year. Charles de Freycinet (1828-
1923) served off and on as the French premier and foreign minister in the 1890s. From 1890 to 1892 he was
both the premier and the war minister.
ambassador, Baron Arthur de Mohrenheim, appeared to be implicated in the affair; newspaper reports to this effect began to surface by the end of 1892. All told, the Panama affair confirmed in the Tsar’s mind the dangers of tying Russia to a French republic that seemed perpetually unstable because of its rapid turnover in governments. Subsequently, he dallied in committing Russia any further until the fall of 1893. By then, the storm caused by the Panama crisis had finally blown over, and a new expression of goodwill could be found in the exuberant reaction of the French public to the visit of the Russian fleet to Toulon in October. In December, the Russian government took up again the question of formally adopting the convention. By early January 1894 both powers committed themselves to a military alliance on the terms of the convention of 1892; and now—with Germany boxed between France and Russia—Bismarck’s famous “nightmare of coalitions” was a reality.

The Army Bill and the Coming of Hammann

Suspicion of Russia had always been a fundamental consideration behind the change in direction embodied in the New Course. As the Franco-Russian rapprochement grew in the months immediately following Bismarck’s dismissal, fear of Russia and France in German decision-making circles also grew. German statesmen had no direct knowledge of the drawn-out negotiations conducted between the French and the Russians after the summer of 1891. But it was clear both that a fundamental shift in the international system was taking place from that time on as well as that this

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94 See Kennan, 201-8. Baron Arthur de Mohrenheim (1824-1907) was the Russian ambassador in Paris from 1884 to 1898 and one of the biggest proponents of the Franco-Russian alliance.
transformation involved France and Russia coming together against Germany. The mutual fleet visits made this fact fairly apparent.

The changed international situation was made even more ominous for the Foreign Office because Bismarck continued his campaign criticizing its new stance toward Russia. Bismarck’s popularity vis-à-vis the government reached its highest point in the summer of 1892 as a result of a serious publicity defeat he handed to Caprivi and his administration at the time. At the end of June 1892, Bismarck traveled to Vienna to attend the marriage of his son Herbert to a Hungarian countess. During the trip he planned to visit Kaiser Francis Joseph and other important personages he knew from his days as the chancellor. The Foreign Office, fearing that Bismarck would use his trip as a further platform to criticize the government and strengthen the movement of opposition that had arisen since 1890, ordered the German ambassador, Prince Henry VII Reuß, to decline any wedding invitation and to prevent the participation of the German embassy in any festivities that accompanied it, as they would inevitably be critical of the New Course.95 The Kaiser went even further and wrote to Francis Joseph directly requesting him to refuse an audience to his “rebellious subject” Bismarck.96

95 Caprivi to Reuß, 9 and 12 June 1892, Deutschland 122, no. 11, secr., Bd. 1, PA-AA. Prince Reuß (1825-1906) was the German ambassador in Vienna from 1878 to 1894 and a man the Foreign Office suspected of Bismarckian sympathies.
96 William II to Francis Joseph, 14 June 1892, in Österreichische Rundschau 59 (1919): 109-10. This letter later came to be known as the infamous “Uriasbrief,” or Uriah letter. The letter got its name from Uriah the Hittite of Old Testament fame. Uriah the Hittite was the husband of Bathsheba, who had an affair with King David while Uriah was away at war. After Bathsheba became pregnant with David’s child, he sent for Uriah at the front. David subsequently learned that Uriah was above reproach, for he would not stay the night in his own home and sleep with his wife Bathsheba while his comrades were still fighting, and thus he preferred to sleep the night with David’s servants instead. In order to dispose of Uriah, David subsequently wrote a letter to Joab, who was away campaigning with the army, and ordered that when Uriah returned he should be abandoned in the heat of battle by the army so that the enemy would kill him. See 2 Sam. 11: 1-27.
The letters sufficed to prevent any Austrian or German statesmen in Vienna from receiving Bismarck officially and from attending the wedding. Bismarck immediately guessed what had happened and conducted an interview with Dr. Moritz Benedikt of the Viennese *Neue Freie Presse* that was published on 23 June 1892. In the article, he disavowed any talk of reconciliation with the Caprivi government and went further to criticize the foreign policy of the New Course. Austria, he alleged, had gotten the better end of the stick with the trade treaties and was now favored more generally at the expense of relations with Russia. In his tenure as chancellor, Bismarck continued, he had never viewed friendship with Russia as incompatible with the Austrian alliance, but rather saw this friendship as a useful way of containing Austrian ambitions in the Balkans. His successors considered this policy to be too complicated, he argued; while the Tsar trusted Bismarck and his authority, no such trust existed for Caprivi, and because of this, Bismarck asserted, “the wire that connected us to Russia has been severed.” Prince Reuß tried to reassure the Foreign Office of the Austrians’ goodwill the day after the revelation, but he also noted Bismarck’s popularity in Vienna as well as the widespread support for the Triple Alliance among the public there more generally. The vague allusion to the Reinsurance Treaty must have baffled the unknowing public. But the danger inherent in further revelations was quite obvious to the chancellor and his advisors.

In the midst of this campaign, Caprivi was forced to rethink the policy he had conducted with regard to public opinion up to 1892. As can be gleaned from Caprivi’s

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97 Dr. Moritz Benedikt (1849-1920) was a major figure in the editorial staff of the *Neue Freie Presse* until he took over as chief editor of the newspaper in 1908. “Benedikt, Moritz,” in *BS*, vol. 1, 90.
98 *Neue Freie Presse*, 23 June 1892, in Poschinger, 371-9, especially 376.
99 Reuß to Caprivi, 25 June 1892, Deutschland 122, no. 11, *secr.*, Bd. 1, PA-AA.
overarching views about the proper relationship between the government and public opinion—as well as from the government’s largely unresponsive reaction to the criticism of the Helgoland-Zanzibar treaty—the main policy the chancellor followed with regard to relations with the press was largely a hands-off one. This policy he made clear not only in his orders and commands within the Foreign Office, but also in his dealings with the larger public. Shortly after Caprivi became chancellor, *The Times* already noticed a significant change:

some of the journals (like the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* and others that could be named), which used to fatten themselves on the scraps of information and inspiration flung them by the official servants of Prince Bismarck, have been afflicted with a famine-stricken and paralyzed look.\(^{100}\)

In practice, this meant that Caprivi had restricted his relations with print journalists to making official announcements in the *Reichsanzeiger* and the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*. What was more, this last paper moved away from its former position as a direct mouthpiece of the government; under the new regime it was to have a wider degree of independence than it had ever enjoyed under Bismarck.\(^{101}\) Finally, Caprivi even disavowed using the Guelph fund to subvent the reptile press, returning the secret source of revenue to its rightful owner, the Duke of Cumberland, in early 1892.\(^{102}\)

In the wake of Bismarck’s election to the Reichstag, however, Caprivi first considered abandoning this laissez-faire press policy. He summoned a novice diplomat, Julius von Eckardt, to Berlin to defend the government, then, after some second

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\(^{100}\) *The Times*, 17 April 1890.

\(^{101}\) Nichols, 241.

thoughts, decided to abandon the project.\textsuperscript{103} But in the midst of Bismarck’s Vienna trip, Caprivi reconsidered yet again. Most significantly, he contacted Otto Hammann, whom he had met for the first time in his garden outside the chancellor’s residence that summer and who would ultimately serve as the press expert in the Foreign Office after 1894.\textsuperscript{104} Caprivi’s new acquaintance was especially significant for the future, because the military threat posed by Russia and France increasingly called for a new and more expensive army bill. Hammann ultimately helped to make its passage possible.

The idea of a fundamental reform of the army, whose genesis stretched back to the earliest days of Caprivi’s chancellorship, was a pet project of the Kaiser’s. Bismarck had first suggested an army bill in early 1890 as a part of his attempt to destroy the Kartell, and William II had rejected the idea reluctantly on the advice of his closest intimates in the camarilla, who argued it would place him in a dependent position vis-à-vis the old man. All that kept the emperor from pursuing the project after the fateful days of March 1890 was the simple fact that new army increases had absolutely no support in the Reichstag. Caprivi had done his best to meet the Kaiser’s demands with the passage of the so-called “little” Army Bill on 28 June 1890, which increased the number of men in the artillery by 18,000 and gained the approval of an overwhelming majority in the Reichstag, excepting only the Left Liberals and the Social Democrats.\textsuperscript{105}


\textsuperscript{104} Hammann, 15-16.

\textsuperscript{105} Vote on the little Army Bill, 28 June 1890, 8\textsuperscript{th} Leg. Per., Session 1, SBVR, vol. 114, 677.
The process of passing the bill was nevertheless a hard lesson for Caprivi: the parliamentary majority came only with significant concessions on the government’s side, the most important of which reduced the term of service of the 18,000 men provided for in the bill from three to two years.\(^{106}\)

The little Army Bill, however, was a patch-job in the view of the most important leaders in the army. By June 1891 they convinced William II that the time was ripe for a showdown with the Reichstag to increase the size of the army. He, in turn, took a harder line on the issue of reducing the three-year service for the entire army to two years—the measure that the little Army Bill proved would be necessary to win parliamentary support for the provision. It was, the Kaiser wrote Caprivi, a question of the longstanding prerogatives of the crown:

What was compellingly argued before by Grandpa [William I] in his memoranda is important still today. And even if the army increased in personnel [by another two-year service concession], it would be depleted of inner strength and discipline. Furthermore, during and after the struggle of [18]60-66, the two-year service issue, which the representatives of the people—especially the Left Liberals—have always exploited to bully and push around kings, has been marked as a question of power.\(^{107}\)

The course that the Kaiser wished to pursue, Caprivi responded, would force the government to resort to a coup d’état, for it lacked the support of the Reichstag and the people. With a threat of resignation Caprivi was able to put off the matter for a short period of time, but the emperor remained confident that he could bring Caprivi around on the issue.\(^{108}\)

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\(^{106}\) The concession of two-year service was especially important in winning over the Center party, which was the largest faction in the Reichstag after 1890. See Karl Bachem, *Vorgeschichte, Geschichte und Politik der Deutschen Zentrumspartei*, vol. 5 (Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1967), 139-44.

\(^{107}\) William II to Caprivi, 15 June 1891, in the appendix of Meisner, 73-75.

\(^{108}\) Caprivi to William II, 16 June 1891, and William II to Caprivi, 16 June 1891, in ibid., 75-8.
William II was aided in this by the growing friendship between the French and the Russians. Whatever was not already known about the alliance negotiations between the two powers became knowledge available to any discerning observer in 1892: on Bastille Day the French newspaper *Le Figaro*, in an article entitled “Flirt ou Alliance?,” revealed, for all intents and purposes, the negotiations that had taken place over the course of the last year, arguing that it was high time to end the flirtation and conclude the “marriage contract” for a direct Franco-Russian alliance.\(^{109}\) The growing public awareness of the new relationship between France and Russia was echoed by an increasing sense of urgency felt in army circles. The new chief of the general staff after 1891, Count Alfred von Schlieffen, expressed this newfound dread for Germany’s strategic position in Europe just before the Army Bill was introduced into the Reichstag. He calculated that the combined peacetime forces of the French and the Russians were nearly double the size of the German army that could be mobilized under Bismarck’s legislation of 1887.\(^{110}\)

German fears about a Franco-Russian matrimony, then, had grown to such an extent by late 1892 that Caprivi for once determined to do something that flew in the face of public opinion. On 23 November he introduced a big Army Bill into the Reichstag. If

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\(^{109}\) *Le Figaro*, 14 July 1892. The revelation of the paper was mostly ignored at the time, but it became more important as time went by. The article was signed with the pseudonym “Conscius,” but in St. Petersburg at least it was apparent that the article had been inspired by the French government as a way of putting pressure on Alexander III to make a definitive military commitment in the negotiations that were taking place at the time. The article eventually gained importance, for Caprivi invoked it in the Reichstag as evidence that France and Russia had concluded some kind of arrangement and that the Army Bill was therefore necessary. *Le Figaro* was a conservative republican paper that represented intellectual circles in Paris that had a daily circulation of roughly 36,000. Claude Bellanger, et al., *Histoire générale de la presse française*, vol. 3, *De 1871 à 1940* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1972), 296.

\(^{110}\) Schlieffen to his sister Marie, 13 November 1892, in Alfred von Schlieffen, *Briefe*, ed. Eberhard Kessel (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1958), 296. Schlieffen calculated that the ratio of forces would be roughly five French or Russian soldiers for every three Germany could field. This estimate took into account the forces Russia would presumably utilize in Galicia against Austria-Hungary. Count Alfred von Schlieffen (1833-1913) served as the chief of the general staff until his retirement in 1906.
passed, it would increase the standing army by approximately 90,000 men to a total strength of roughly 603,000 soldiers, at an additional annual cost of nearly 60 million marks. Knowing the bill would be highly unpopular despite its apparent necessity, Caprivi included several provisions intended to blunt criticism in advance. The most important of these made two- rather than three-year service the norm in the army and stipulated that the budget would have a life of only five years, down two years from the traditional Septennat of Bismarck’s days.\footnote{Reichstag speech by Caprivi, 23 November 1892, 8th Leg. Per., Session 2, \textit{SBVR}, vol. 145, 7-21.}

Despite these dramatic concessions, Caprivi faced formidable opposition. Among the parties, military increases were almost universally unpopular. The Social Democrats and the Left Liberals opposed the idea as a matter of principle.\footnote{For the Social Democrats it was the principle of opposition itself, while for the Left Liberals it was the principle of empowering the Reichstag and the people in the face of the Prussian militarist state.} The Center party was divided on the issue, with the aristocratic leadership supporting the law while its more democratic base opposed it. The National Liberals supported the Army Bill in principle, but rejected the specific proposals made by the government. The Free Conservatives were divided between the industrialists who were behind it and the Junkers who opposed it. Finally, the Conservatives opposed the bill in its current form, believing it would lower discipline and morale while also eroding the hard-won privileges of the army—such as the Bismarckian seven-year term on military legislation—that dated back to the Constitutional Conflict of the 1860s.\footnote{For an extended discussion, see Nichols, 214-19. These criticisms echoed the misgivings of the Kaiser and those who criticized two-year service in army circles; they preferred to attain the increase without giving up the principle of three-year service.} The bill seemed especially inopportune on the left and center of the political spectrum. Most of the burden of new taxes for the army reorganization was expected to fall on the shoulders of the lower classes, who, they
believed, had suffered the most economically since 1886.¹¹⁴ Fears of this kind swirled among the Social Democrats, Left Liberals and the Center party: the Social Democratic leader Wilhelm Liebknecht argued, for example, that military spending was already reaching a “crescendo.”¹¹⁵ Eugen Richter, the dictatorial leader of the Left Liberals, complained of the tax burden the bill would occasion for the masses.¹¹⁶ And Dr. Ernst Lieber, an important leader in the Center party, claimed the bill would ruin Germany economically while she was still at peace.¹¹⁷ What was worse, these three parties controlled a working oppositional majority of approximately 207 seats in the Reichstag.

Nevertheless, Caprivi was determined to push the measure through the imperial diet, for it was, he asserted, a matter of Germany’s national survival in the coming years. He argued as much in his speech to the Reichstag introducing the bill, citing the Figaro article as evidence of Germany’s changed foreign situation, but he also repeated these sentiments privately as well.¹¹⁸ Caprivi’s draft of the law finally went to committee in January 1893, where it was rejected on 17 March. By the time the committee reported to the Reichstag on 24 April, it was obvious that the bill would not be accepted as Caprivi drafted it. Hammann encountered the chancellor in his office at the time, pacing back and forth in his office and muttering, “I have to save Germany.”¹¹⁹ In army circles pessimism ran even deeper: dissolution of the Reichstag now seemed a certainty.

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¹¹⁴ On the economic downturn after 1886, see Berghahn, Germany, 11-17.
¹¹⁵ Reichstag speech by Liebknecht, 1 December 1892, 8th Leg. Per., Session 2, SBVR, vol. 145, 75. Liebknecht (1828-1900) represented the SPD in the nineteenth voting district of Saxony from 1867 to 1871, and 1874 to 1881. From 1881 to 1887 he represented the fifth voting district of Hesse-Nassau. And from 1888 to 1900 he represented the sixth voting district of Berlin. “Liebknecht, Wilhelm,” in MdR, 388.
¹¹⁶ Reichstag speech by Richter, 30 November, 1892, 8th Leg. Per., Session 2, SBVR, vol. 145, 53.
¹¹⁷ Reichstag speech by Lieber, 14 December 1892, ibid., 327-31. Ernst Lieber (1838-1902) represented the Center party in the third voting district of Wiesbaden from 1871 to 1902. “Lieber, Ernst,” in MdR, 388.
¹¹⁸ Reichstag speech by Caprivi, 23 November 1892, 8th Leg. Per., Session 2, SBVR, vol. 145, 12.
¹¹⁹ Hammann, Kurs, 49.
Waldersee in particular believed that new elections would yield nothing better for the government; in turn, it seemed the Kaiser would have to revise the provision for democratic suffrage in the imperial constitution.\textsuperscript{120}

To stave off the coming crisis, a Center deputy, Baron Carl von Hoyningen-Huene, introduced an amended version of the bill on 3 May that trimmed the increase by 14,000 men, setting the total peacetime strength of the army under the new law at nearly 590,000 soldiers.\textsuperscript{121} Caprivi spoke before the Reichstag and asserted that the amended version of the bill was as far as the government could go in the way of concessions to the left. When the Reichstag voted on 6 May, the results—210 against the bill and 162 for it—were disappointing for the government, but predictable in view of the composition of the Reichstag. The entire Social Democratic caucus and the majority of Left-Liberal and Center delegates voted against the bill, while the weaker parties of the right formed the minority.\textsuperscript{122} The chancellor dissolved the Reichstag and called for new elections.

The Caprivi government now entered into the greatest domestic crisis it had faced yet.\textsuperscript{123} To address this problem, Caprivi developed an entirely novel solution that pointed in the direction of the future public-relations policy of the Kaiserreich. In December 1892 he enlisted two men to defend the bill and the government’s policy in general: Major August Keim, and the future press chief of the Foreign Office, Otto

\textsuperscript{120} Diary entry of 19 March 1893, in Waldersee, vol. 2, 287-88.
\textsuperscript{121} Carl von Hoyningen-Huene (1837-1900) represented the twelfth voting district of Breslau from 1884 to 1890, and the eighth voting district of Breslau from 1893 to 1898. “V. Hoyningen-Huene, Carl,” in Mdr, 356.
\textsuperscript{122} Vote on the big Army Bill, 6 May 1893, 8th Leg. Per., Session 2, SBVR, vol. 147, 2215-17.
\textsuperscript{123} Röhl, Aufbau, 523.
Hammann. Keim had won a reputation as a journalist specializing in military subjects and was put in charge of the overarching operations of the public-relations campaign for the bill in the middle of October 1892, before its introduction had even become public knowledge. Hammann had a reputation as a moderate Bismarckian, who nevertheless disapproved of the more egregious attacks of the Bismarck Fronde. He eventually came to serve as Keim’s right-hand man in the campaign for the bill during its first two readings and the election held in the summer. Both men occupied a room on the upper level of the chancellor’s residence on the Wilhelmstrasse. They received a “ridiculously small” budget for their activities and generally “conducted a fruitful propaganda campaign with the diligence of a worker-bee and an indestructible confidence in the accomplishment of the deed.” Early on, they employed both military and economic experts to defend the bill dispassionately in the press, as a way of separating the strategic necessity of the measure from partisan bickering it would inevitably produce.

The defeat of the bill after its second reading threw this improvised publicity apparatus into a higher gear. Hammann had left town on the weekend of 6 May expecting that the vote would not come till early the next week; he had been gone only a few hours before he received an urgent telegram from Caprivi: “Come back, 162 against 210, dissolution.” The character of the campaign on the government’s side was markedly non-partisan, for Keim and Hammann campaigned only on behalf the bill and

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124 The most detailed sources on Keim and Hammann’s activities in the army bill campaign can be found in the memoirs they wrote: August Keim, Erlebtes und Erstrebtes. Lebenserinnerungen von Generalleutnant Keim (Hannover: Ernst Letsch Verlag, 1925), 49-77; and Hammann, 42-54.
125 Keim, 49 and 54.
126 Ibid., 50.
127 Hammann, 48.
128 Hammann listed the various individuals who wrote these pamphlets on behalf of the government, but unfortunately included no bibliographical information about them. See ibid., 48-9.
129 Ibid., 51.
those who would support it, rather than for specific parties. Keim’s activities were especially effective. He worked as an independent contractor, so he was able to subvent articles in local papers, but the government did not have to claim responsibility for them. Between the dissolution of the Reichstag on 6 May and the elections on 15 June, Hammann and Keim also made special use of talking points related to France and the attitude of the French press toward the Army Bill. In the early stages of the fight for the law, the French press had been remarkably quiet about the matter, something that may have resulted from pressure placed upon the Parisian newspapers directly by the French government. After the failure of the Hoyningen-Huene proposal, however, the attitude of the more patriotic organs—most notably La Patrie—became increasingly vociferous in their celebration of the defeat of the Army Bill. Even more useful for Keim and Hammann, though, were the exuberant dreams of French expansion to the Rhine, expounded by a French officer named Jules Molard, who asserted that the river was the natural boundary between a France and a Germany ranged against each other for eternity as hereditary enemies.

After the polls closed on 15 June, Keim and his wife stayed up all night in the Reich Chancellery tabulating the results to determine if the chancellor could somehow

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130 In this procedure, Caprivi’s modus operandi differed starkly from that of Bismarck when he had held elections on the issue of his army bill in 1887. At that time, Bismarck had differentiated between the parties that were state-supporting (the Conservatives, Free Conservatives, and the National Liberals) and those that were “Reichsfenfe,” enemies of the state (the Social Democrats, the national minority groups, and the Center party). Caprivi disavowed this idea, preferring to view all parties as equally patriotic and—to employ a phrase he used at another time—to get the good from wherever he could find it. See Nichols, 254-5.

131 Keim, 67.

132 Hammann, 52-3. Cf. the introduction to Jules Molard, Puissance militaire des états de l’Europe (Paris: Plon, 1893), especially 1-4, where Molard argues that the Rhine had been the natural frontier between Germany and France going back to the late Roman Republic and the Gallic campaigns of Julius Caesar.
patch together the majority he needed. The results of the election were difficult to measure. The only party that emerged from the election in a clearly stronger position than earlier was the Social Democrats, who increased their share of the seats in the Reichstag from 35 to 44. Nevertheless, the other two groups that had opposed the army bill, the Left Liberals and the Center party, both lost seats, the former going from 66 to 37, the latter from 106 to 96. At the same time, the “state-supporting” parties that polled for the bill maintained their strength or increased it: the Conservatives retained 72 seats; the Free Conservatives increased their caucus from 20 to 28 seats; and the National Liberals went from 43 to 53. The results for the smaller parties had a tendency to tip the balance in favor of the Army Bill, as well. Among the national minority groups that would inevitably vote against the law, the Alsace-Lorrainers lost 2 seats, while the Guelphs lost 4. The Poles, who supported the increase out of their fear of Russia, gained 3 seats to hold 19 altogether. And the anti-Semitic Christian Socialists, also supporters of the bill, won 11 new seats to increase their strength to 16.

All told, Caprivi felt that the outcome of the election was an unequivocal victory for the government. By the middle of July he was able to construct a slender majority of 201 votes for—with 185 against—the Army Bill. He therefore praised Keim for his work on behalf of the bill, recommended him for the Order of the Crown, third class, and a three-month vacation, generally asserting that the new military increase was primarily

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133 Keim, 69.
134 See Tables 2 and 3 in Appendix 1.
135 Vote on the big Army Bill, 15 July 1893, 9th Leg. Per., Session 1, SBVR, vol. 152, 139-43. The majority that voted for the bill combined the state-supporting parties’ votes with those of various splinter groups: viz., 72 votes from the Conservatives, 28 from the Free Conservatives, and 53 from the National Liberals, along with 16 from the anti-Semitic Christian Socialists, 19 from the Poles, and 13 from the new Liberal Union (the Left-Liberal splinter group that broke with Richter on supporting the bill).
due to Keim’s efforts.\textsuperscript{136} Though Hammann was not commended with any official award or medal, Caprivi also recognized his talents and service in pushing through the bill. In the second half of 1893, the chancellor called on Hammann—to the latter’s great astonishment—to join the Foreign Office directly as its “press expert.”\textsuperscript{137}

\textit{Marschall’s “Flücht nach Öffentlichkeit”}

By early 1894, then, Caprivi had laid the foundation for what would eventually evolve into the Bülow-Hammann system of public relations. After 1 January 1894, Caprivi decreed, all government officials were to pass any press communications to Hammann in advance before releasing them to any journalists. Hammann would henceforth manage the public-relations activities of both the Foreign Office and the Reich Chancellery in one unified press bureau.\textsuperscript{138} Conferring these responsibilities on Hammann marked a veritable revolution in the relationship of the government to the press. The laissez-faire policy initially pursued by Caprivi, and the use of unofficial contacts by government functionaries, were now to be abandoned in favor of a more formal and controlled apparatus. The goal, Hammann wrote in retrospect, “was to give up the anomaly of an unsystematic division of the press service, in which the right hand occasionally was ignorant of what the left was doing.”\textsuperscript{139}

The new press chief was in some ways atypical of the diplomatic corps of the Kaiserreich. He had been born into a solidly middle-class German family near Weimar in 1852, and was, on that count, part of a marginalized social class in an organization

\textsuperscript{136} Keim, 73.
\textsuperscript{137} Hammann, 55.
\textsuperscript{138} Memorandum by Caprivi, 23 December 1893, Bd. R 43 / 1559, Rk., BArchL.
\textsuperscript{139} Hammann, 55.
that was avowedly noble. Yet, in other ways he seemed to fit in very well in the elite governmental circles of the German Empire. Like the Kaiser, and the last two chancellors he would serve, Bülow and Bethmann, he began his adult life in the early years of the newly formed empire and developed a keen sense of his German identity rather than particularistic loyalties to one region or state within Germany. Hence, he was reputed to have had no love for the French, and neither was he “enamoured” of the British. Before the 1880s he had followed the career path of a typical professional bureaucrat in Germany. Trained in the law and awarded a Doctor of the Law degree in 1875, he worked an entry-level position for a short period in the Weimar civil-service.

Early on, though, Hammann’s career took an irregular turn when he shifted his attention to literary pursuits and political journalism. He published some original belletristic works, which were dedicated to a son who had died at a young age and even demonstrated some lyrical talent. More importantly, he moved to Berlin in 1877 and worked as the local correspondent for a number of conservative newspapers: the *Schlesische Zeitung*, the *Hamburgischer Correspondent*, the *Münchener*

140 His father was a factory owner (*Fabrikbesitzer*) there. See “Hammann—60 Jahre!,” 26 January 1912, Bd. N 2106 / 44, NL.H, BArchL.
141 *Daily Graphic*, 7 May 1910, Bd. N 2106 / 44, NL.H, BArchL.
143 The *Schlesische Zeitung* was originally founded in 1742. It was a Free-Conservative organ in the Wilhelmine period, and although its circulation figures are not available for the years before the war, it printed 135,000 copies daily in 1944. “Schlesische Zeitung,” in *BS*, vol. 2, 1077.
144 The *Hamburgischer Correspondent* was also founded in the eighteenth century, attaining some of the widest circulation figures (30,000 in 1806) in the early nineteenth century. In the period of the Kaiserreich it was aligned broadly with the National Liberal party. “Hamburgischer Correspondent,” in *BS*, vol. 1, 460-1.
*Allgemeine Zeitung*, the *Pester Lloyd*,¹⁴⁵ and the *Deutsche Tageblatt*.¹⁴⁶ This last paper, which represented the Conservative Party, suggested Hammann’s own political leanings as a moderate conservative in these early years.¹⁴⁷ In 1891, moreover, he published a pamphlet on socialism in Germany that demonstrated a growing reputation as a political commentator.¹⁴⁸ But even more significant was the fact that from the middle of 1889 to end of 1893 he worked as the editor of the *Neueste Mitteilungen*, the official organ of the Prussian Literary Bureau.¹⁴⁹ In this capacity, Hammann had at his disposal a sum of over 7,000 marks supplied annually by the Reich Interior Office and intended to finance the paper.¹⁵⁰ Hammann’s initiation into the world of political journalism was completed when Caprivi selected him to collaborate with Major August Keim.

In spite of the appointment, however, various factors worked to check the development of a truly effective system analogous to what existed in later years under Bülow. Most importantly Caprivi’s position became politically unstable in his last year in office. The apparent victory of July 1893 in the Reichstag was in reality pyrrhic at best. While Caprivi was able to marshal the votes he needed to pass the Army Bill, the Reichstag itself became even more polarized politically than it had been before the

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¹⁴⁵ The *Pester Lloyd* was a liberal German-language newspaper that appeared in Hungary.

¹⁴⁶ For more on Hammann’s early career as a journalist, see *Das Kleine Journal*, 23 June 1913, Bd. N 2106 / 44, Nl.H, BArchL. This latter paper was a Left-Liberal organ with a very modest circulation. The *Deutsche Tageblatt* was a minor Conservative paper founded in 1881 that was co-edited in the 1880s by Martin Griesemann, who later became the editor of the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*. Retallack, 77.

¹⁴⁷ Jungblut, 101.


¹⁴⁹ The first edition that appeared under his editorship was in the middle of June 1889; the last number of 1893 was his last edition as editor. See *Neueste Mitteilungen*, 12 June 1889, and *Neueste Mitteilungen*, 28 December 1893. The *Neueste Mitteilungen* was founded in 1882 to cultivate favorable sentiment sympathetic to the regime throughout Germany. Appearing weekly, it functioned both as the mouthpiece of the chancellor and the Prussian Ministry of State and as a news service for conservative regional papers. The *Neueste Mitteilungen* was financed from the Guelph Fund in Bismarck’s time. It ceased publication on 7 December 1894.

¹⁵⁰ Bl. 164, Bd. R 43 / 1605, Bd. 1, Rk, BArchL.
summer elections. Many of the newly elected delegates who had supported Army Bill diverged dramatically with Caprivi on most of the other important issues of the day, ranging from his passiveness in foreign policy, to his passage of the trade treaties after 1892, to the open feud between Bismarck and the Kaiser, and even to his uneasiness with the rising domestic forces of anti-Semitism and agrarianism that had seemed to completely conquer the far right in the election. The liberal humor magazine Kladderadatsch got to the root of Caprivi’s dilemma in the wake of the election: a political cartoon, “The Trojan Horse,” depicted Caprivi dragging the Army Bill into the Reichstag as a Trojan horse filled with his bitterest enemies on the right.\textsuperscript{151} Perhaps just as dire for the chancellor’s position was the disintegration of the camarilla that had been directed against Bismarck in 1890, and the rise in both the Reich and the Prussian governments of new men who were both willing to do away with Caprivi and determined to conduct policies independent of his.\textsuperscript{152} In the face of these problems Caprivi eventually resigned in October 1894—tired of the factionalism and back-biting in the government, wearied by the Kaiser’s unpredictability, and drained by the constant attacks from the press.

The problems that Caprivi faced after the passage of the Army Bill were directly reflected in the public-relations policy of the newly formed Press Bureau. Hammann, by his own admission, entered Caprivi’s service as an “outsider” and a novice to foreign affairs, but was now expected to create a unified apparatus to deal with the press.\textsuperscript{153}

\textsuperscript{151} Kladderadatsch, 16 July 1893, 116. The Kladderadatsch was a satirical weekly paper that sympathized in a general sense with the National Liberal party. Its weekly circulation was approximately 40,000 copies in the Wilhelmine period. Wernecke, 320.

\textsuperscript{152} For a more detailed discussion of this developments, see Röhl, Germany without Bismarck, 85-117.

\textsuperscript{153} Hammann, Kurs, 57.
Hammann would gradually build up his contacts in the world of Berlin journalism after 1894, and he simultaneously gained a familiarity with the problems facing German diplomacy in the 1890s. But perhaps the most fundamental problem Hammann faced in these early years was the bureaucratic anarchy that dogged Caprivi’s last two years in office. If the officials in the government had increasingly formulated their policies independently of the chancellor after 1892, they also had cultivated their own individual press contacts at the same time, a development that accelerated because of Caprivi’s hands-off approach to print journalism before 1894. This anarchy prevented the effective centralization of the government’s public-relations policy that had been decreed by Caprivi in early 1894. The results of this trend could be seen in two major public-relations crises faced by Hammann and the Foreign Office between 1894 and 1897: the so-called “Kladderadatsch affair” of early 1894 and the controversy surrounding the Leckert-Lützow Trial of 1896.

The Kladderadatsch affair began in December 1893 with a direct attack on the personnel of the Foreign Office by the humor magazine Kladderadatsch. In an article entitled “The Fourth Man in Skat,” the Kladderadatsch wrote of a permanent Skat game that was taking place in Berlin with three regular players.154 They were Privy Councilor von Oyster-Friend, a wise old fox who liked to play with ambassadors and chancellors; Privy Councilor von Dumpling from south Germany, a playboy who deceived the gullible

154 “Der vierte Mann im Skat,” Kladderadatsch, 24 December 1893, 206. For an extremely detailed treatment of the Kladderadatsch affair, see Helmuth Rogge, “Die Kladderadatschaffäre. Ein Beitrag zur inneren Geschichte des Wilhelminischen Reichs,” Historische Zeitschrift, vol. 195 (August 1962): 90-130. Skat is a three-handed German card game. In Skat, the players use thirty-two cards, bid against one another (with the winning bidder choosing a trump card), and then play to see who can take the most tricks, as in Pinochle or Bridge. Typically the two players who lose the bid play against the bid-winner to keep him from taking enough tricks to make his bid. A fourth player can also join in if each of the players skips one game in four.
with his easygoing nature before stabbing them in the back; and Count Troubadour, who was admired for the songs he composed and for his selflessness, but who always came from out of town to play the game, charging the bill to the Skat account. All three had been scheming at their Skat game for some time behind the back of chancellor, and they only recently added a fourth member to the game: Baron Axel von Varnbüler, for whom they had secured a position as the representative of Württemberg in Berlin. The underlying implication behind the revelation was that the Skat players, who were used back-biting and conniving because of the very nature of their game, were transferring their scheming to the political scene. They were, in short, the puppet-masters who determined the policy of the government without actually having to take responsibility for it.

Although the article would have made very little sense to the uninitiated observer and attracted little public notice, in official circles it was immediately clear that Privy Councilor von Oyster-Friend, Privy Councilor von Dumpling, and Count Troubadour were none other than Friedrich von Holstein, Alfred von Kiderlen-Wächter, and Philipp zu Eulenburg respectively—among the most important members of the camarilla that had originally worked to bring about Bismarck’s fall. It was also clear that somebody

155 Baron von Varnbüler (1851-1937) was appointed as the minister representing Württemberg in Berlin in 1894. He had earlier served in the Prussian civil service in Silesia, but left after Bismarck’s dismissal to become the Württemberg minister in Russia. He moved on to Vienna and then finally settled in at Berlin in 1894, where he served as minister and sat in the Bundesrat for Württemberg. The editor of the Kladderadatsch believed that Varnbüler’s friend Eulenburg had arranged the appointment when it became known that his former position as the minister representing Württemberg in Vienna was being eliminated because of the recent withdrawal of the Württemberg Legation in the Austrian capital. Polstorff to Holstein, 2 February 1894, no. 401, PH, vol. 3, 412-13. On Varnbüler more generally, see Isabel V. Hull, The Entourage of Kaiser Wilhelm II 1888-1918 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 101-3.

156 Holstein was an oyster connoisseur who often began his dinners with oysters; like the dumpling (Spätzle), Kiderlen was originally from Swabia; and Eulenburg was a composer of some note, who enjoyed writing and performing Nordic ballads for the benefit of the Kaiser. See Rich, vol. 1, 403, and Rogge, 94-5.
was working behind the scenes to supply the magazine with its information, and that whoever it was had access to the most recondite information about the lifestyle, background, and personality of all three “Skat players.” In short, it was distinctly possible that the Foreign Office had a mole of some kind. Obsessively suspicious by nature, Holstein was incensed by the satire and remained preoccupied by the affair in the first few months of 1894, to the detriment of his official duties. On 28 December 1893, for instance, he stayed up until late in the evening writing to Eulenburg about the matter, bemoaning the impotence of the Berlin police to investigate and put a stop to the attacks, and even complaining—should the Kaiser refuse to intervene on his behalf—that he would surrender his cards and get out of the little Skat game that seemed so upsetting to the Kladderadatsch. 157

Initially suspecting prominent leaders within the Bismarck Fronde, Eulenburg, Holstein and Kiderlen all set out in the early weeks of January to discover the source of the article. Before long, Eulenburg discovered evidence suggesting that Ludwig Raschdau, a self-proclaimed enemy of Holstein in the Foreign Office, 158 was one source of information for the press attacks. 159 Independently, Hammann came to suspect another disgruntled official in the Foreign Office as well, Ernst von Bothmer, who was a privy councilor in the legal division of the Foreign Office and likewise an enemy of

157 In other words, Holstein would resign if the Kaiser did not defend him. Holstein to Eulenburg, 28 December 1893, no. 872, EK, vol. 2, 1172-3.
158 Ludwig Raschdau, Unter Bismarck und Caprivi: Erinnerungen eines deutschen Diplomaten aus den Jahren 1885-1894 (Berlin: E.S. Mittler & Sohn, 1939), 347-57. Raschdau (1849–1938) was a privy councilor in the Political Division of the Foreign Office from 1885 to 1894.
159 Eulenburg to Kuno Moltke, 15 June 1895, no. 1112, EK, vol. 3, 1502-3; Hammann, Kurs, 60; and Rogge, 115-16.
Holstein.\textsuperscript{160} In spite of these suspicions, Caprivi preferred not to make any official moves to protect Holstein, Kiderlen, and Eulenburg. He had counseled Hammann against becoming involved in the terrible bureaucratic rivalries that followed Bismarck’s fall; Hammann, for his part, felt that Holstein and Kiderlen took the magazine attacks too seriously. Nevertheless, Hammann did make some attempt to bring an end to the situation. He approached a representative of the magazine, Dr. Johannes Trojan—whom he knew through a mutual friend—about putting an end to the unwanted publicity.\textsuperscript{161} The intervention failed completely, however, and the attacks continued in the January issues of the \textit{Kladderadatsch}.\textsuperscript{162}

A new article of 28 January reinvented the three Skat players as Insinuans, Intrigans, and Calumnians. It told a fable about the trio, who had slandered many noble knights in order to remove them from their official positions. The three scoundrels met a fitting end, when a common hero exposed their machinations with his humorous writings. The king then placed the three in a fiery oven, where Insinuans suffered the lies of the other two, and Intrigans and Calumnians had to endure his horrible music. The fable suggested that the goal of the attacks was nothing less than the removal of the Skat players from their official positions.\textsuperscript{163} In the weeks following this latest barrage, the \textit{Kladderadatsch} became even more aggressive in its assault. The editor of the \textit{Kladderadatsch}, Wilhelm Polstorff, sent a circular letter to the Foreign Office on 2

\footnote{160 “Bemerkungen zu den Briefen Kiderlens,” undated, Bl. 38-9, Bd. N 2106 / 26, NLH, BArchL; and Otto Hammann, \textit{Bilder aus der letzten Kaiserzeit} (Berlin: Reimar Hobbing, 1922), 17.}

\footnote{161 Trojan (1837-1915) was one of the leading editors at the \textit{Kladderadatsch} after 1862. “Trojan, Johannes,” in \textit{BS}, vol. 2, 1156.}

\footnote{162 Hammann, \textit{Kurs}, 58 and 60.}

\footnote{163 “Die drei Männer im feurigen Ofen,” \textit{Kladderadatsch}, 28 January 1894, 10. Insinuans was undoubtedly Eulenburg, while Intrigans was Holstein, and Calumnians Kiderlen.}
February, explaining that Holstein, Kiderlen and Eulenburg were indeed the figures lampooned in the articles of December and January.\textsuperscript{164} Polstorff went on to detail the personnel appointments that the camarilla had made to purge Bismarckian supporters from the service, concluding that the “ostrich-like” policy of the government was simply lamentable.\textsuperscript{165} On 25 February, the journal again directly challenged Holstein and Kiderlen by pointing out that the two “Reich officials” in question had neither filed a libel suit nor turned in their resignations; instead, they preferred to say and do nothing.\textsuperscript{166} A modest official pronouncement in the Reichsanzeiger at the end of February did little to calm the controversy as it now began more public attention, especially in the liberal press.\textsuperscript{167}

The campaign reached its peak when Polstorff’s private letter to the Foreign Office was leaked to the liberal Frankfurter Zeitung.\textsuperscript{168} The publications of the letter on 7 March caused a din in the liberal press, which encouraged a new round of articles and political cartoons in the Kladderadatsch on 11 March. One of its cartoons depicted various Left-Liberal newspapers as a company of volunteer firefighters struggling to put out a fire for the chancellor, missing the source of the fire—Holstein and Kiderlen—while drenching Caprivi with water.\textsuperscript{169} The last of these attacks brought Holstein and Kiderlen’s frustrations to a head. Kiderlen challenged Polstorff to a duel and wounded

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Polstorff (1843-1906) was editor-in-chief of the Kladderadatsch until his death. “Polstorff, Wilhelm,” in BS, vol. 2, 992.
\item Kladderadatsch, 25 February 1894, 31.
\item In response to the 25 February attack of the Kladderadatsch, the Reichsanzeiger remarked that it was the “expression of an obscure personal enmity that is afraid to step into the open.” Quoted in Rogge, 103.
\item Frankfurter Zeitung, 7 March 1894.
\item Kladderadatsch, 11 March 1894, 40. For the cartoon, see Figure 2, in Appendix 1.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
the editor in the third round of shooting on 18 April.\textsuperscript{170} This dramatic climax ended the Kladderadatsch affair, though Hammann continued to keep an eye on the journal in the following months.\textsuperscript{171}

The second major crisis of this sort was sparked by the visit of the new Tsar, Nicholas II, to Silesia from 3 to 7 September 1896, where he attended maneuvers of the German army at Breslau. During the Tsar’s stay the Kaiser doted on him as a part of a larger pet project to use personal diplomacy to detach Russia from France.\textsuperscript{172} By all accounts the exchange went very well. The Kaiser and the Tsar exchanged friendly letters in the wake of the visit;\textsuperscript{173} and in German diplomatic circles generally it seemed that the visit had done much to make up for the failures of the New Course.\textsuperscript{174}

When the Tsar’s entourage moved on to Paris in October, however, the French public received him with a passion reminiscent of the Toulon fleet visit of 1893, and things began to look worse for Germany. “The French people can count certainly on Russian help in a war,” the German ambassador reported from Paris, “and because of this Russian statesmen desire in a time of peace to strengthen their influence in Europe and exploit France financially.”\textsuperscript{175} The deflated hopes from the September maneuvers provoked an analysis in the press of German foreign policy since 1890, producing something of a consensus that emphasized Germany’s growing isolation from other great powers, especially France and Russia. In the course of this public discussion, Bismarck

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{170} Kiderlen and Polstorff, were only briefly imprisoned for about a month before returning receiving pardons from William II at the end of November. Nevertheless, Polstorff eventually died of the wound he had suffered in the duel. Forsbach, vol. 1, 137-40; and \textit{New York Times}, 27 November 1894.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{171} Kiderlen to Hammann, 27 July 1894, Bd. N 2106 / 26, NLH, BArchL.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{172} Cecil, \textit{Wilhelm II}, 275.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{173} Nicholas II to William II, 8 September 1896, no. 2859, and William II to Nicholas II, 8 September 1896, no. 2860, \textit{GP}, vol. 11, 359-60.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{174} Goluchowski to Eulenburg, 13 September 1896, no. 1264, \textit{EK}, vol. 3, 1739.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{175} Münster to Hohenlohe, 22 October 1896, no. 2869, \textit{GP}, vol. 11, 372.}
\end{footnotes}
let loose his most famous thunderbolt from Friedrichsruh. On 24 October he revealed the existence of the 1887 Reinsurance Treaty, and reported that Caprivi and his advisors had decided not to renew the agreement in March of 1890 during the dramatic period that surrounded his dismissal. Ever since this departure from Bismarckian policy, he contended in the *Hamburger Nachrichten*, Germany’s international situation had gotten worse.\(^{176}\) The revelation, Eulenburg reported, had dropped like a bomb on the Foreign Office, where there was confusion both over the goals of the disclosure and how best to respond to it.\(^{177}\)

Eventually the government decided to refuse to comment on the disclosure—Hammann disapproved of this from the very beginning\(^{178}\)—claiming in the *Reichsanzeiger* that it involved secrets of state not fit for public discussion. By early November it became clear that official silence would not still the public clamor over Bismarck’s revelations. The government finally convinced the Kaiser to give up this tactic, along with any idea that Bismarck could be prosecuted for his disclosures.\(^{179}\) Instead, State Secretary Marschall went before the Reichstag to answer the government’s critics. Marschall told the Reichstag that no treaty had ever existed with Russia that conflicted with Germany’s treaty obligations to other powers; and, what was more, the alleged treaty that Bismarck had described in the *Hamburger Nachrichten* (i.e., the Reinsurance Treaty) would not be of such a nature that it would necessarily prevent

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\(^{176}\) *Hamburger Nachrichten*, 24 October 1896, in Hofmann, vol. 2, 370-3. This original clipping made by the Foreign Office is in Hammann’s papers: Bl. 44-5, Bd. N 2106 / 5, N.I.H, BArchL. Two more articles on the matter appeared in subsequent days: *Hamburger Nachrichten*, 31 October and 1 November 1896, in Hofmann, vol. 2, 373-5, and 376-80; again, the original Foreign-Office clippings are in Hammann’s papers: Bl. 46-9, Bd. N 2106 / 5, N.I.H, BArchL.


\(^{178}\) Ibid.

\(^{179}\) David Burnett King, “Marschall von Bieberstein and the New Course, 1890-1897” (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 1962), 201-2.
Russia from coming to terms with a third power like France. 180 In short, Marschall never publicly admitted to the treaty, and he was able to disavow his putative British sympathies by reaffirming that Germany could support her Triple Alliance partners while working for better relations with Russia at the same time. The speech was well received. Marschall was particularly pleased that he could get the government off the hook without making Bismarck look bad, as that would have ranged the “worst elements on the side of the government” (i.e., the Social Democrats and the Left Liberals), while pushing “everything better” into Bismarck’s camp. 181

The matter gained even greater importance as a result of another public-relations problem in 1896 and 1897, the Leckert-Lützow-Tausch affair. 182 This episode resulted from a formal dinner held during the Tsar’s September visit, when William II spoke of the friendship he felt for Russia, and Nicholas II politely responded in French with the remark that he felt the same way “que Votre Majesté.” 183 Based upon faulty information gleaned from its contact with the Kaiser’s civil cabinet, Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau reported that Nicholas II had actually said that he held the same view toward Germany “que feu mon pére,” which suggested the Tsar was a Germanophobe of the first order. 184 The report went out in the morning editions of a number of papers in Berlin and quickly

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180 Reichstag speech by Marschall, 16 November 1896, 9th Leg. Per., Session 4, SBVR, vol. 147, 3262-5.
181 Marschall to Eulenburg, 24 November 1896, EK, vol. 3, 1759.
182 The Leckert-Lützow affair has been treated in some detail by Dieter Fricke, “Die Affäre Leckert-Lützow-Tausch und die Regierungskrise von 1897 in Deutschland,” Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft 8 (1960): 1579-1603. Fricke’s article is a former GDR work of fairly high quality.
184 Hammann, Kurs, 77. The full response of the Tsar that the morning papers reported was: “Je puis Vous assurer, Sire, que je suis animé des mêmes sentiments traditionels que feu mon père.” The German translation of this erroneous passage released by Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau is in Schulthess (1896): 104.
snowballed into something that might actually harm the Kaiser’s project of improving relations with Russia.

Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau released a correction in the days immediately following the incorrect report, but the matter held the attention of the press in following weeks. On 28 September 1896 the liberal Welt am Montag essentially accused the Kaiser’s court of deliberately planting the incorrect report in order to damage Russo-German relations and force a more pro-British policy. The anti-Semitic Staatsbürger-Zeitung went further, tracing the false report and its purported intent back to Marschall in the Foreign Office, a report which the Welt am Montag also confirmed on 4 October. The whole matter, these newspapers complained, stunk of a mismanagement of both public relations and foreign policy by the Foreign Office. As Marschall and Hammann began to look more deeply into the matter, the roots of the nebulous affair led back to the head of the Political Division of the Berlin police, Eugen von Tausch. This mysterious police official was a devoted Bismarckian and—so it seemed to Marschall, Hammann, and Holstein—a shadowy leader behind the press attacks of the Fronde going back to 1890. The matter was made all the more dangerous, Holstein wrote Eulenburg, because whoever was behind Tausch, “in all probability the central figure for the realization of all the plots hatched against the New Course in the past six years,” could not let him fall.

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186 Welt am Montag, 4 October 1896, in Politische Polizei, 6-7. The Staatsbürger-Zeitung was a nationalist, anti-Semitic daily with a very small circulation of 5,000. Wernecke, 323.
“without exposing themselves to the danger that he might ‘rat.” To put it another way, Tausch might expose any number of his secret informants within the Fronde, many of whom formed a part of William II’s entourage. But faced as he was with the growing realization that these false reports were really the work of Tausch, Marschall decided to brave these dangerous waters and make his famous “Flucht nach Öffentlichkeit” (i.e., a retreat to public opinion) at the end of November: he would charge the journalists who published the false reports with libel.

There followed a dramatic public trial that exposed the seedy underbelly of the political police and its apparent connections to the Bismarck Fronde. It came out that the author of the piece, a nineteen-year-old journalist by the name of Heinrich Leckert, had gained the information from an unnamed informer and transmitted it to Karl von Lützow, who used his connections with the editorial staff to get it published in the Welt am Montag. Lützow, Hammann uncovered in his investigation, was an established journalist, who also performed undercover work as an agent of the political police, i.e., he worked for Tausch. The baffling web of police intrigue behind the matter grew even more complex. When Marschall himself testified on the second day, he informed the

\[187\] Holstein to Eulenburg, 24 November 1896, no. 586, PH, vol. 3, 584-7. Holstein had suspected that the Berlin police were conspiring with the Bismarck Fronde against the Foreign Office since nearly the beginning of the New Course.

\[188\] Die politische Polizei in Preußen, referenced in full above, is a stenographic report of the trial that was put together by the official organ of the SPD, Vorwärts, because the affair was an obvious embarrassment to the government and especially to the Kaiser. The original transcripts of the trial first appeared in the semi-official organ of the Foreign Office, the Kölnische Zeitung beginning with the first evening edition on the day of the trial. See the proceedings of the trial published in Kölnische Zeitung, 2-5 and 7-8 December 1896. The Foreign Office files for the trial consist almost entirely of the published transcripts clipped by the Press Bureau from the Kölnische Zeitung. See Deutschland 122, no. 3b, Bd. 1, PA-AA.

\[189\] Testimony by Rippler, 3 December 1896, in Kölnische Zeitung, 3 December 1896, and Politische Polizei, 26. Heinrich Rippler (1866-1934) was the editor of the Tägliche Rundschau from 1896 to 1922, and again from 1924 to 1928. The newspaper was a conservative paper with a daily circulation of about 60,000 that straddled the ideological line between the National Liberals and the Free Conservatives. “Rippler, Heinrich,” in BS, vol. 2, 1038; and Wernecke, 323.
court that the Foreign Office had not used the services of the secret police to uncover the authors of damaging articles since 1892.190 At that time he had discovered that another journalist who had made numerous attacks on the government, Ernst Schumman (alias Normann), was also a police agent for Tausch and was under his protection.191

Normann-Schumann, moreover, was known to have connections to General Waldersee, who had joined the Bismarck Fronde after 1892 when he fell out of favor with the emperor and who also had connections to the agrarian opposition, the army, and the court.

The culmination of the trial came on 4 December 1896 when Marschall denounced Tausch’s system of using secret agents active in the Berlin newspaper world to attack the Foreign Office covertly.192 He claimed that when he was slandered by these agents he had no course but to retreat to public opinion. The four-day trial ended on 7 December as a complete success for the government. The court found Leckert and Lützow guilty of libel and sentenced both to short one-and-one-half-year prison terms, completely vindicating the Marschall and the Foreign Office. The whole affair, which made the Kaiser’s blood boil, laid bare the essence of the government’s public-opinion problem. Reich politics were diverging ever more dramatically between the remnants of the Old Regime in Germany with the new and variegated populist forces that were

190 Testimony by Marschall, 3 December 1896, in Kölnische Zeitung, 4 December 1896, and Politische Polizei, 27-32.
191 Kiderlen to Hammann, 9 February 1897, Deutschland 122, no. 3a, secr., Bd. 1, PA-AA. Hammann was fishing around at the time for information about Normann-Schumann in preparation for Tausch’s perjury trial later in the year. See also, Kiderlen to Hammann, 7 February 1897, Bd. N 2106 / 26, Nl.H, BArchL, in which Kiderlen provides only very vague information about the earlier attacks conducted by Normann-Schumann.
192 Testimony by Marschall, 4 December 1896, in Kölnische Zeitung, 5 December 1896, and Politische Polizei 43-4, 49-50, and 59-60; and testimony by Hammann, 4 December 1896, in Kölnische Zeitung, 5 December 1896, and Politische Polizei, 60-1.
challenging it: between the interests of German nationalism and Prussian particularism, between the openness of the New Course and its reactionary nationalist critics, between the acceptance of some measure of parliamentary responsibility and the continued domination of the old nobility.\textsuperscript{193} If the government admitted, as it had during the New Course, that a popular consensus was necessary for its policies, then it would have to address its increasingly vociferous critics on the right and the left. Because of the major political divergence between the two sides, however, solving that problem seemed impossible without moving in the direction of either a full-scale parliamentary system or a more modern system of propaganda to woo the masses. That the problem had still not been completely solved became obvious in the early months of 1897.

In the event, Marschall charged Tausch himself with perjury for his false testimony during the Leckert-Lützow trial in a further attempt to vindicate the Foreign Office in May and June of 1896.\textsuperscript{194} By continuing to push the matter obstinately, he lost the confidence of William II, who feared that further revelations would implicate individuals even closer to him at court. Finally, under threat of outright dismissal, Marschall agreed to let the matter drop in return for his resignation and transfer to the embassy at Constantinople.\textsuperscript{195}

\textbf{The Development of the Press Bureau}

The main task Hammann faced in these early years in office was to streamline the public-relations apparatus of the government which had become too decentralized in the

\textsuperscript{193} Ekkehard-Teja P. W. Wilke, Political Decadence in Imperial Germany: Personnel-Political Aspects of the German Government Crisis, 1894-97 (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1976), 223.
\textsuperscript{194} The proceedings of the trial, which was held the next summer, were published in Kölnische Zeitung, 25-26 and 29-31 May 1897, and 1-6 and 9 June 1897.
\textsuperscript{195} On the terms of this deal, see King, 222-5.
early 1890s. The two publicity scandals discussed above suggested that the problem really at heart went back to the bureaucratic anarchy of the Caprivi period, something that continued—and in many ways grew worse—during Hohenlohe’s tenure.\textsuperscript{196} As far as the public-relations policy of the government went, the main problem in this sense was twofold. On the one hand, individuals within the Foreign Office and Chancellery might continue to cultivate their own press contacts with little regard to Hammann’s centralization efforts. On the other hand, competing government offices might conduct their own newspaper policy, sometimes without coordinating their efforts with Hammann, other times by carrying out a policy completely at odds with the official press policy of the Foreign Office.

Again, the \textit{Kladderadatsch} affair and the Leckert-Lützow-Tausch scandal were instructive in this sense. The \textit{Kladderadatsch} affair had really been a matter of individuals in the Foreign Office utilizing their own press contacts to attack bureaucratic rivals. By 1895, Holstein had come to suspect that the ultimate source of the articles was Bismarck and his supporters in the Prussian government who controlled the Berlin political police.\textsuperscript{197} If the attacks upon the Foreign Office were only suspected to originate with Bismarckians in the Berlin police in 1895, in the following two years the Leckert-Lützow-Tausch publicity trials had made this seem more of a certainty. It was, in other words, quite clear by the end of 1896 that a rival government office (the Berlin political police) was conducting a press policy that was intended to cause the fall of the remaining

\textsuperscript{196} Röhl, \textit{Germany without Bismarck}, 136-42.
\textsuperscript{197} Holstein to Eulenburg, 18 December 1895, no.1172, \textit{EK}, vol. 2, 1611. A clipping that discusses the \textit{Kladderadatsch} affair and relations between Bismarck and William II from the \textit{Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten}, 18 December 1895, is included as an enclosure here. The \textit{Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten} was an important regional nationalist newspaper with a comparatively large circulation of 148,000 in the period after 1890. Wernecke, 321.
proponents of the New Course. Both these cases were instructive of the problems faced since Caprivi’s time because they were attacks against the Foreign Office that abetted Bismarck’s own campaign against the government. Aside from his regular duties involved in monitoring the press and in investigating these scandals, then, much of Hammann’s time in the years from 1894 to 1900 was devoted to trying to bring about a centralization of the public-relations policy of the government.

The biggest challenge here arose as a result of competition with the analogue of Hammann’s Press Bureau in the Prussian government, the Prussian Literary Bureau. In the late 1890s a kind of dualism had developed between the press section of the Foreign Office and the Literary Bureau. It was never really clear after Caprivi’s resignation which of the two offices was to be charged with the larger leadership role for public relations. A significant event for this competition was the appointment of Ernst von Köller as the Prussian minister of the Interior in October 1894, during the ministerial shake-up occasioned by Caprivi’s resignation. Köller had a reputation as a real reactionary—in the Prussian-Junker sense of the word. He entered William II’s service refusing the state secretaryship of the Reich Interior Office and intending to reform the confusion that was then prevalent in the Prussian Ministry of State.

One aspect of this reform program was an attempt to win the leadership role in public relations for the Prussian Literary Bureau. This latter office—created in the midst

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198 Ernst Matthias von Köller (1841-1928) had previously served as the state undersecretary for Alsace-Lorraine from 1889 to 1894. He served as the Prussian minister of the Interior from October 1894 to December 1895. He eventually went on to lead the administration of Schleswig-Holstein from 1897 to 1901, before serving in Alsace-Lorraine again, as the state secretary from 1901 to 1908. “Köller, Ernst von,” in BS, vol. 2, 681.
199 Röhl, Aufbau, 762.
200 Röhl, Germany without Bismarck, 120-1. Which is to say, he wanted to represent the forces of Prussian particularism against the tendency toward nationalization in the Reich government offices.
of the Revolution of 1848 to deal with the numerous newspapers that were founded at the time—had the reputation in the latter part of the 1880s of being particularly ineffective in its leadership of public opinion. To revamp the Literary Bureau, Köller informed Hohenlohe in November 1894 that he intended to allow only the director of the Literary Bureau to maintain relations with the press. Any government offices that had cultivated their own press contacts would be expected to give them up, with the one exception of the Foreign Office. Nevertheless, it was obvious that Köller hoped to make the Literary Bureau the main office for press relations. In addition, he wished to make it clear beyond all doubt which reports in the press were of an official nature and to create an organ for that purpose, which ultimately led to the founding of the Berliner Correspondenz. Hohenlohe—who had worked closely with Köller in Alsace-Lorraine before his assumption of the chancellorship—granted his assent to the proposal as did the Prussian Ministry of State. In effect, this meant that from the outset of his tenure in the Foreign Office, Hammann had to struggle against the current to enact his own policy of centralization.

Almost from the beginning it was apparent that these efforts at centralization under the aegis of the Prussian Literary Bureau were doomed to failure. The first issue of the Berliner Correspondenz appeared in December 1894, but it was restricted mainly

201 The Revolution of 1848 was the seedbed of the modern German newspaper press. Many more significant papers of the Wilhelmine period actually had been founded in the midst of the revolution because there was freedom for the first time to have a truly free public sphere. See the fascinating discussion on the subject in Jonathan Sperber, The European Revolutions, 1848-1851 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 158-57. See also the account in Koszyk, 105-19.

202 Julius von Eckardt, Lebenserinnerungen, vol. 2 (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1910), 66. The Prussian Literary Bureau maintained a handful of individuals who basically managed an information service for the official papers at the local level and smaller organs that could not afford to maintain an independent news service. It also restricted itself primarily to domestic politics in the Bismarckian period.

203 Prussian Ministry of the Interior to Hohenlohe, 24 November 1894, Bd. R 43 / 1559, Rk., BArchL.

204 Vogel, 16.
to trivial matters such as official statistics about food prices, while the lead article was thoroughly reactionary in announcing Köller’s intention of bringing up the Social Democratic leader William Liebknecht on libel charges for refusing to stand for a toast to the Kaiser.\textsuperscript{205} In such circumstances, it was almost immediately evident that the \textit{Berliner Correspondenz} would not become the influential newspaper Köller intended it to be. What was even worse, the organ did not give a substantial enough portion of its pages to the Chancellery or the Foreign Office. In an analysis of the lines apportioned out to the various offices of the government in 1895, for instance, the \textit{Berliner Correspondenz} gave the Reich Chancellery and the Foreign Office forty-three and forty-five lines respectively; by contrast the Prussian minister of Agriculture received 2,470 lines, while Köller’s office received an astounding 5,386 lines.\textsuperscript{206}

Köller ultimately resigned after only one year of service because he had thoroughly alienated his ministerial colleagues. Out of office, he compounded the problems faced in the centralization by immediately conducting his own publicity campaign against his enemies in the imperial government—most notably Marschall and Karl Heinrich von Boetticher, the state secretary of the Reich Interior Office.\textsuperscript{207} In these actions he publicly aligned himself with the agrarians and the Bismarck Fronde.\textsuperscript{208} This complemented rumors that Marschall and Hammann brought to light during the Leckert-Lützow trial where it was alleged that the Literary Bureau had been one source

\textsuperscript{205} Jungblut, 107. Köller’s attempt to institute these proceedings for \textit{lèse-majesté} against Liebknecht was eventually blocked by Hohenlohe because the matter would require the approval of the Reichstag and no majority could be found for such a measure. See Röhl, \textit{Aufbau}, 782.

\textsuperscript{206} Prussian Literary Bureau to the Reich Chancellery, 18 December 1895, Bd. R 43 / 1559, Rk., BArchL.

\textsuperscript{207} Boetticher (1833-1907) served as the state secretary of the Reich Interior Office from 1880 to 1897.

\textsuperscript{208} Holstein to Bülow, 18 December 1895, no. 511, \textit{PH}, vol. 3, 513-14.
of false information.209 By 1898 Köller’s successor, Eberhard von der Recke, admitted that the whole scheme had been a failure and called for renewed efforts for the coordination of official press policy.210 There was a great deal of sympathy for Recke’s complaints throughout the government, but in practice the bureaucratic rivalry of earlier days survived. Alfred von Tirpitz’s response to Recke’s complaints was fairly representative of this mindset: the admiral claimed he welcomed the efforts at reform, but he assumed that his own propaganda bureau in the Reich Naval Office would maintain its independence in maritime questions.211

Altogether, the efforts at reforming the Prussian Literary Bureau were one development that helped to block Hammann’s aspirations to centralize all the government’s public relations in his own fledgling bureau in the Foreign Office. From the foregoing account it is clear that Hammann did not fully enjoy the confidence of the new chancellor after 1894, Prince Chlodwig von Hohenlohe. Even more significant, though, was the fact that during Marschall’s tenure, Hammann’s range of action remained limited. Evidence of this came to light in the midst of the Leckert-Lützow Trial, when Marschall described the relations between the Foreign Office and the press in some detail during his testimony:

> These relations are managed to a great extent by Herr Privy Councilor Dr. Hammann, who is my expert on the press. In these activities he has considerable room to exercise his own discretion; he meets with me in the morning and asks, “What can be said about this question, or can anything be said?” Then he receives the representatives of the press—in regard to the visitors he also has full discretion, though it is understood that he will only receive trustworthy people—and they get information from him. From time to time it happens that articles

209 Testimony by Marschall, 4 December 1896, *Politische Polizei*, 43-4; and testimony by Hammann, ibid., 60.

210 Recke to the Prussian Ministry, 1 April 1898, Bd. R 43 / 1560, Rk., BArchL. Recke (1847-1911) served as the Prussian minister of the Interior from 1895 to 1899.

211 Tirpitz to the Reich Chancellery, 14 April 1898, Bd. R 43 / 1560, Rk., BArchL.
are directly inspired; as a rule, that happens through me. I myself have little
intercourse with the representatives of the press; I receive only the representative
of the Kölnische Zeitung, and sometimes English correspondents. My press
expert has the strictest orders to limit his information to matters of the Foreign
Office and never to go into questions that lay outside of the purview of the
Foreign Office, so long as he has received no instructions from the Reich
chancellor to the contrary. This command is especially impressed upon him from
time to time, when any events occur that will greatly excite general attention. 212

Marshall’s testimony suggests that even under Hohenlohe aspects of the Bülow-
Hammann system were developing, despite that Hammann was not yet as politically
important as he would later become in the Bülow years. The most notable of these relate
to the daily routine, which seems to have already been firmly established in its general
form. Hammann would have a morning conference with his superior (Marschall in this
case), and he would get instructions that would guide him in his afternoon meetings with
trusted members of the press. Yet Hammann was still greatly restricted in the field that
was open to him at this time—namely the field of foreign affairs and policy formulation.

Beyond this, it is clear that Hammann was successful in beginning the process of
centralization of press relations in the Foreign Office, even while the process had not
reached the level of development it would attain after Bülow’s appointment as
chancellor. Most importantly, between 1894 and 1900 Hammann had already begun to
establish the press contacts that would eventually become so important in the Bülow
period. I shall treat these connections in greater detail below, 213 but it is important to
note at this point that by 1896 Hammann was collaborating with some of the men who
would make up his intimate circle of confidants after 1900. It is certain that he had
already established his connections to Dr. Heinrich Mantler of Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau

212 Quoted in Robert Brunhuber, Das Deutsche Zeitungswesen (Leipzig: G.J. Göschen’sche Verlagshandlung,
1908), 63-4. Cf. testimony by Marschall, 3 December 1896, in Kölnische Zeitung, 4 December 1896, and
Politische Polizei, 29-33.

and the Berlin correspondents of the liberal Kölnische Zeitung, Dr. Franz Fischer and his assistant, Arthur von Huhn. He had probably also begun to work with Dr. Ernst Francke of the National-Liberal Münchener Neueste Nachrichten as early as 1895.

Holstein, whose influence was decisive up to the middle of the 1900s, is a good example of the process that was occurring as Hammann gained more control over the press relations of the Foreign Office. In 1896, he wrote to Eulenburg that he had dramatically restricted his own relations with journalists:

Aside from [Franz] Fischer I only receive every so often Professor [Theodor] Schiemann, a history instructor at the war academy who occasionally writes an article on foreign policy in the [Conservative] Kreuzzeitung. The men of the press also know about this and leave me in peace.

He concluded this description of his press relations by noting that he had, for example, recently refused to see “a Jewish editor of the Berliner Tageblatt by the name of Staerk who was entirely unknown to me,” and who had, according to Hammann, “an especially bad reputation amongst his ilk.” And so, even Holstein was happy to give up a portion of his power to the efficient press expert.

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214 See testimony by Mantler, 3 December 1896, in Kölnische Zeitung, 4 December 1896, and Politische Polizei, 25-7; and testimony of Arthur von Huhn, 4 December 1896, Kölnische Zeitung, 5 December 1896, and Politische Polizei, 44. Huhn and Fischer successively directed the Berlin bureau of the Kölnische Zeitung in the Wilhelmine period, playing a very central role in the production of the paper because of its semi-official status under Bülow. Dr. Franz Fischer (1847-1904) occupied this position from 1884 until his death in 1904, and his assistant in the 1890s, Arthur von Huhn (1851-1913), took over the job until his own death in 1913. “Fischer, Franz,” in BS, vol. 1, 328; and Lehmann, 24-6.

215 See also Holstein to Eulenburg, 7 April 1895, no. 1101, EK, vol. 3, 1489, where Holstein mentions briefly an interview that Hammann had with Huhn regarding statements made by Bismarck in Munich about the Kaiser. Originally from Coburg, Professor Ernst Francke (1852-1921) had edited the paper from 1881 to 1892. An important social reformer, Francke also wrote articles for the hamburgischer Correspondent that were similar in origin and substance to those that he published in the Münchener Neueste Nachrichten, a National-Liberal paper with a circulation of about 128,000, after his move to Berlin in 1892. In this connection, Francke was especially useful to the Foreign Office as a liberal advocate of the navy that could be consistently counted on to support the government and its policies. On Francke, see Klaus-Peter Hoepke, “Francke, Ernst,” in NdB, vol. 5, Falck—Fyner (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1961 ), 325-6; and “Francke, Ernst,” in BS, vol. 1, 339.

216 Holstein to Eulenburg, 1 June 1896, no. 1232, EK, vol. 3, 1691.
The increase in Hammann’s stature in the Foreign Office resulted largely from the work he conducted in the years from 1894 up until 1897. Hammann was swamped with work in this period that related primarily to investigating the numerous attacks coming from the right-wing press that culminated in the Leckert-Lützow-Tausch affair. One example of this can be seen in the so-called “Köller Crisis” that led to the downfall of the Prussian minister of the Interior in late 1895. Hammann was at the center of events, as the primary investigator of rumors that Köller had leaked information to the press about a vote in the Prussian Ministry of State in order to damage the prestige of the government.\footnote{Marschall to Eulenburg, 20 December 1895, no. 1174, \textit{EK}, vol. 3, 1612. The leak to the press was only the spark of the crisis, which ultimately was about the other Prussian ministers’ refusal to continue to work with Köller. They all came together and forced the Kaiser to accept his resignation. See Röhl, \textit{Germany without Bismarck}, 142-6.} In the process of investigations such as this one, Hammann began to gain a good reputation with his colleagues in the Foreign Office. Holstein, as mentioned above, received Hammann kindly into the Foreign Office. By the end of the Tausch affair he had nothing but the highest praise for Hammann’s acumen in dealing with the press:

I think that Hammann, who has a remarkable pragmatism, common sense, and—especially as a journalist—a penetrating insight into the journalistic side of the Tausch trial, probably hit the nail on the head when he said that there are all sorts of people, who intend to overthrow the government and who would move heaven and earth to prevent the Tausch trial from reaching a conclusion.\footnote{Postscript, Holstein to Eulenburg, 7 January 1897, no. 1289, \textit{EK}, vol. 3, 1778. Hammann’s assessment of the situation was dead on. So much dirt had come to light in the Leckert-Lützow trial that many around the Kaiser wanted to prevent a repeat performance. Marschall’s resignation represented a deal brokered for this purpose: he was ultimately given the embassy in Constantinople in return for not pushing for a conviction in the libel proceedings against Tausch during the summer of 1897. See King, 217-25.}

Hammann’s importance within the Foreign Office only increased following the appointment of Count Bernhard von Bülow as state secretary in June 1897.
By the summer of 1897, the New Course had effectively ended. In the seven years since Bismarck’s retirement, his successors had faced a number of public-relations crises over Germany’s foreign policy, prompting the creation of a new policy and bureaucratic apparatus to deal with public opinion. Bismarck’s immediate successor as chancellor, Count Leo von Caprivi, had tried to take public opinion more seriously and allowed for a degree of freedom and open discussion that had never existed in Bismarck’s time. On the conservative end of the political spectrum, this completely changed the radical right, which had transformed itself by moving into a populist mode of opposition to the government’s foreign policy. In the colonial field, the nationalist right believed Caprivi had retreated from an active imperialist policy; in the economic realm, it felt Caprivi had favored industry over agriculture with the trade treaties; and the Bismarck Fronde specifically condemned the New Course for “severing the wire” to Russia. Much of this criticism on the right had been balanced out to begin with by a newfound support for the government in the political groups to the center and left of the political spectrum, the groups that effectively dominated the Reichstag after 1890. But with the introduction of the big Army Bill in late 1892, Caprivi lost this base of support too. The election of 1893 only furthered the chancellor’s long-term problems as it tended to increase the power of the radical right and the Social Democrats, both of which fundamentally opposed the government (although for very different reasons).

This problem led Caprivi to abandon his hands-off approach to public opinion by late 1893, when he appointed his collaborator in the passage of the big Army Bill, Otto Hammann, as the press expert in the Foreign Office. In spite of this move, Hammann was still unable to coordinate the public relations policy of the Foreign Office sufficiently
to make it clear that he alone was the point-man for the newspaper press for the government. In essence, the public-relations crises of the years from 1894 to 1896 demonstrated this fact; they showed that even though a significant shift had taken place in the direction of solving the public-opinion problem, the government had as yet no effective solution to the public-opinion problem that had arisen during the New Course. The appointment of Bülow to replace Marschall as state secretary of the Foreign Office in the summer of 1897, however, pointed in the direction of a possible solution to the public-opinion problem, a solution that would ultimately push Germany into the outside world to pursue an active imperialist policy to help restore the prestige of the government.
Chapter 2: Germany’s Place in the Sun, 1895-1902

The action of diplomacy is buried away in secret archives and “the man in the street” who has perhaps too large a share in ruling this country is influenced by what he sees and hears. The hostility of the German people may not have been greater than of other continental nations, but they have shown more ingenuity in driving it home to us. . . . One of the leading London clubs has, as a matter of historical interest, made a large collection of literature from all parts of the continent since that war [the Boer War] broke out, and both in volume and virulence the German section is *facile princeps*. All this sort of thing, coupled with the language of a large part of the German Press, has unquestionably created the impression that Germany is the country where we are best hated and that, however little the German government may share that feeling, it is bound to take it into account.

Valentine Chirol, 18 December 1901

A Telegram from the Kaiser

In early January 1896 an apparent offense of the British in South Africa set the Kaiser’s heart astir with righteous and paranoid indignation. Perfidious Albion had, so it seemed to William II, colluded in a most deceitful policy by sending forth the infamous Jameson Raid to wrest away the Transvaal’s independence. Upon hearing the news of the sortie, the Kaiser went into a kind of manic rapture: he and his advisors discussed a fanciful scheme of sending German marines into the Transvaal—without taking notice that this would be nothing short of a an act of war, since the Boer republic lacked *de-facto* suzerainty under the terms of the 1884 London convention.²

The Kaiser appears to have believed even more fancifully that the war would not be so bad because Britain would not use her navy to block the landing of the German force.

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¹ Chirol to Holstein, 18 December 1901, no. 791, *PH*, vol. 4, 219-20.
² Marschall to Herff, 31 December 1895, no. 2591, *GP*, vol. 11, 19-20. According to the terms of the convention, the British had surrendered the suzerainty granted them in the earlier 1881 convention, but this was limited significantly in the realm of foreign relations. The Boers could not conclude any agreement with a foreign power unless it was first approved by the government back in London. Hence, it was really *de jure* rather than *de facto* suzerainty. Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism*, 214.
Only the failure of the raid and its disavowal by the British government served to curb these schemes.

The emperor’s most important advisors finally convinced him to agree to a saner response on 3 January 1896: the dispatch of a telegram congratulating President Paul Kruger for successfully defending his country from a foreign invasion. The telegram to Kruger went as follows:

Berlin, January 3, 1896

I express my sincere congratulations that you and your people, without appealing to friendly powers for help, by dint of your own vigor, have been able to restore the peace against the armed hordes that invaded your country as disturbers of the peace, and to preserve the independence of the country against outside attacks.

Wilhelm I.R. 3

The public reaction was electric. On the British side of the channel, the telegram deflected attention away from the Colonial Office and Joseph Chamberlain’s culpability in the raid.4 The Standard—the organ of the Conservative government in power that was ordinarily quite friendly to Germany—received the news coldly. It seemed, the Standard asserted, that the Kaiser was trying “to obtain a little cheap credit for sympathy that was not called for in a legitimate sense, and for hostility that has not been provoked and can hardly be resented.”5 The representative of The Times in Berlin, Valentine Chirol, saw even more cause for concern in the telegram of the Kaiser. It was

nothing less than a “Staatsaktion”: “It must not be taken as merely the expression of the Emperor’s personal feeling [but as] a State document of the highest importance, the more so as it contains an unqualified recognition of the independence of the South Africa Republics.”

It was at home with German public opinion, though, that the telegram really showed how an active imperialist policy might help to solve the public-opinion problem. Here the praise for the Kaiser’s telegram was nearly universal. The National-Zeitung complained that the London papers’ excitement over the telegram only served to inculpate the government and the people with the “freebooters” who conducted the raid. The Kölnische Zeitung asserted that the entire country was “on the side of the Kaiser and the government,” as was the rest of Europe. The Berlin Post took the occasion—at the instigation of the Reich Naval Office—as direct proof that Germany must move in the direction of a global policy as a matter of national survival. Even Vorwärts condemned

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7 National-Zeitung, 5 January 1896, Bd. N 2106 / 54, NLH, BArchL. Founded by a central committee of the party in the confusion of the Revolution of 1848, the National-Zeitung was the official organ of the National Liberals. After Bismarck challenged the unity of the National Liberals with his turn to protectionism in the late 1870s, the National-Zeitung went into a period of decline. Its editors initiated a series of changes in 1890 intended to revamp its potential as an official party organ: this included the creation of the National-Zeitung Companie to strengthen the paper financially, as well as a change in the editor’s seat, with Ernst Köbner (1844-1903) replacing the editor who had run the paper since 1874. During the Wilhelmine period the paper represented the left wing of the party, but continued to languish because of competition in the Berlin Anzeiger press. In 1911 the National-Zeitung was finally converted to a local tabloid paper. Its daily circulation was indicative of the declining political importance of the newspaper, averaging about 16,500 before the war. Anderson, Background, 75; Kürschner, 775; and Wernecke, 322.

8 Kölnische Zeitung, 5 January 1896, Bd. N 2106 / 54, NLH, BArchL.

9 Post, 3 January 1896. The Post was the official paper of the Free Conservative party, which had purchased the paper from a Berlin bank in 1874. Officially eleven members of the party owned the paper. In practice, however, Baron Karl von Stumm-Halberg (1836-1901), a steel magnate and member of the Reichstag who
the raid as a “robbers’ expedition.” State Secretary Marschall summed up what seemed a perfect situation for the government in public opinion: “Our press is excellent. All the parties are in agreement; even Tante Voss [Vossische Zeitung] wants to fight.”

The Kruger Telegram came, then, as a welcome public-relations victory at home, a victory that was all the more welcome considering that William II’s personal popularity had steadily declined since 1890. If a major factor in the Kaiser’s low approval rating was the botched policy conducted in the colonial field, where Caprivi had seemingly retreated, the Kaiser’s decisive action in response to the Jameson Raid pointed in the direction of a possible solution to the public-opinion problem: namely, to push forward German claims in the world vigorously and court public opinion. Following the

had pushed for economic protectionism in the Bismarckian period, was the dominating force behind the paper. The Post, then, primarily represented industrialists and financiers of a conservative bent, which could be seen in its relatively modest daily circulation of between 14,000 and 15,000 before the war. On Stumm, see “Stumm-Halberg, Carl-Ferdinand Baron von,” in Dictionary of German Biography, vol. 9, Schmidt—Theyer (Munich: K.G. Saur, 2005), 633.

10 Vorwärts, 3 January 1896. Vorwärts was both the official organ of the Social Democratic party and the local party paper in Berlin. Its circulation, which surpassed 157,000 on the eve of the war, was higher than any other official party organ in Germany. In the early 1890s, Wilhelm Liebknecht was the leading force behind the policy of Vorwärts. But in 1897 the party leadership agreed to a major change as a result of pressure from the local organization in Brunswick to create an elected committee to run the paper. Henceforth, the policy of Vorwärts was controlled by this press committee, jointly composed of party leaders and average party members. The foreign news service of Vorwärts was negligible at best; much of what appeared in the paper on foreign policy was second-hand and viewed through the lens of Marxist theory and party doctrine. Alex Hall, Scandal, Sensation, and Social Democracy: The SPD Press and Wilhelmine Germany 1890-1914 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 34; and Rieger, 107.

appointment of Bernhard von Bülow in 1897, the government increasingly moved in this direction, something that ultimately put Germany more and more at odds with Britain. Germany came into conflict with Britain in the Far East, the Pacific, and Africa in these years, a conflict which was highly popular with those groups that had criticized the government so bitterly in the 1890s. All told, the new turn moved in the direction of solving the public-opinion problem and led to an increase of Hammann’s importance in the Foreign Office from 1897 to 1902.

**The Inauguration of Weltpolitik**

The New Course had most significantly diverged with the Bismarckian inheritance over its attitude toward Britain and Russia. As discussed above, Caprivi and his successors had tried to rationalize their treaty obligations from the start by dropping the Reinsurance Treaty with Russia. The Reich Foreign Office always conceived of this move as a kind of trade-off; what Germany would lose with the alliance connection to Russia would be balanced out by more intimate relations with Britain. The ultimate goal in this was Britain’s direct adherence to the Triple Alliance. Yet Caprivi and his advisors had never really closed the deal. First, Lord Salisbury heading a Conservative government, then Lord Rosebery leading a Liberal one after 1892, had remained content to uphold a loose affiliation with the German bloc rather than to agree to a hard-and-fast defensive alliance. Germany seemed alone in the world, evermore isolated. By 1894 it was apparent that Caprivi’s plan to exchange Britain for Russia had somehow

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12 Archibald Primrose, the fifth Earl of Rosebery (1847-1929), had served in the Liberal governments of the 1880s, becoming foreign secretary in 1886. He won the same position in 1892 and held it till 1894, when he became prime minister. He held that position until the fall of the Liberal government in 1895. John Davis, “Primrose, Archibald Philip,” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 45, *Pote-Randles* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 370-83.
faltered in the execution—all the more to Germany’s detriment, as it had led to the end of
French isolation with the Franco-Russian Alliance of 1894.

Faced with these glaring facts, German diplomacy entered a state of flux for the
next ten years. In this decade there appeared to be two options available to the Kaiser
and his advisors: either (1) admit defeat and attempt to repair the damage done in
Germany’s relations with Russia with the hope of ultimately reviving some new form of
the Reinsurance Treaty; or (2) utilize new tactics to attempt to bring Britain round to the
side of Germany and her allies as had been the original calculation behind the New
Course. The Foreign Office never completely renounced either of these alternatives. But
because the years after 1894 saw much greater attention directed to the extra-European
world for a variety of reasons, it was the latter of the two that continued to have the most
significance in the diplomacy of the next decade.

In the years between 1894 and 1896 it seemed there was rarely a major
diplomatic incident that the German Foreign Office did not try to utilize in order to teach
the British a lesson about playing coy when it came to the question of joining the
Triplce. By the time of the crisis occasioned by the Jameson Raid and the Kruger
Telegram, a new formula for conducting Anglo-German relations was firmly established
in the thinking of the Foreign Office. Holstein, still the fundamental force behind
German policy, summed up the thinking behind this tactical shift in late 1895. While
Germany had no intention of striking at Britain’s most vital interests in the world, it still
appeared that the best way to win her over to the Triple Alliance was to encourage as
much as possible her chief enemies in the world, France and Russia, as a way of
maintaining the pressure in the colonial realm. Because the British could not retreat
from Egypt or India, they would eventually have to come to the Triple Alliance in dealing with their more serious competitors in the world.\textsuperscript{13}

Alongside this tactical shift, which took place by 1896, a similar turn occurred in regard to the different factions that made up the Wilhelmine decision-making establishment.\textsuperscript{14} Up to 1894, two groups had opposed one another: (1) the Bismarck Fronde, which desired a return to the Old Course in domestic and foreign policy and was composed of the Bismarcks, the agrarians, and other disgruntled policy-makers like Waldersee; and (2) the advocates of the New Course, who included, among others, William II, Caprivi, Marschall, Holstein, and the Kaiser’s close friend, Philipp zu Eulenburg. The main glue that held the latter faction together was a fear of the Bismarcks, either because they might exact revenge if they returned to power (Holstein), or because their activities tended to harm the prestige of the Kaiser (Eulenburg).

By the time of the revelation of the Reinsurance Treaty in October 1896, however, a completely new faction had begun to coalesce around the person of the Kaiser. This new splinter group occupied the middle ground between the Old and the New Course, seeking to play the two groups off against one another for the benefit of the emperor. The first real move in the formation of this new middle camp was the appointment of Caprivi’s successor, Prince Chlodwig von Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst in the fall of 1894.\textsuperscript{15}

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\textsuperscript{13} Memorandum by Holstein, 30 December 1895, no. 2640, GP, vol. 11, 67-9.
\textsuperscript{14} This description of the decision-making factions and their mutation largely follows that given in King, 205-10. But it also corresponds well in a more general sense to the argument made in John Röhl’s original account of the rise of William II’s “personal monarchy,” Germany without Bismarck, and in the companion volume to that work by Röhl’s student, Katherine Lerman. See Lerman, 1-9, and 22-9.
\textsuperscript{15} Hohenlohe (1819-1901) was the ambassador in Paris from 1874 to 1885, the governor of Alsace-Lorraine from 1885 to 1894, and chancellor from 1894 to 1900. “Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, Chlodwig Fürst zu,” in BhdAD, vol. 2, 347-8. There has been relatively little written on Hohenlohe’s chancellorship. His published memoirs in office are Chlodwig von Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, Denkwürdigkeiten der Reichskanzlerzeit, ed. Karl Alexander von Müller (Stuttgart and Berlin: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1931). The most recent study of
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According to Eulenburg, the basic motive behind the appointment was the apparent collapse of the conservative principles of the Caprivi faction. To put it more explicitly, this latter group had, Eulenburg felt, relied too heavily on the parties of the far left and on the Center party to get through measures like the Army Bill. After Caprivi’s resignation, Hohenlohe stepped in as Eulenburg’s candidate, a seemingly ethereal character who could float above the factions without committing to one or the other.

Hohenlohe seemed ideal as Caprivi’s replacement. He had substantial diplomatic and administrative experience dating back to the 1860s. He got along well with the Bismarcks, but his reputation as a moderate meant he would not be directly associated with the Fronde. He was a Catholic, but was also loyal to the national idea, having helped assuage oppositional elements in southern Germany at the time of unification.

But most importantly, the aging Hohenlohe—he was seventy-five years old when appointed—would be more tractable than the obdurate Caprivi, allowing the rise of the emperor’s personal monarchy. As far as foreign policy went, the result of Hohenlohe’s pliancy was twofold: a continuation of Holstein’s dominance in the Foreign Office,

Hohenlohe’s chancellorship is Olav Zachau, Die Kanzlerschaft des Fürsten Hohenlohe 1894-1900. Politik unter dem “Stempel der Beruhigung” im Zeitalter der Nervosität (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 2007). Zachau’s treatment fills a fundamental gap in the literature on Imperial Germany. It attempts to resurrect Hohenlohe’s chancellorship from the dustbin of history by arguing that it advanced the democratization of the Kaiserrich and laid the foundation for Bülow’s later Weltpolitik. See ibid., 9-28.

16 See, for instance, the description of the situation in Eulenburg to William II, 3 November 1894, no. 1042, EK, vol. 2, 1398-1400, where Eulenburg argues that the Caprivi administration allowed “a kind of slide to the left” in order to strengthen and support itself, especially in the Reichstag.
18 This was the last of a number of objections Hohenlohe himself raised at the time of his appointment. See Hohenlohe, 4.
alongside a disturbing tendency on the Kaiser’s part toward erratic and forceful interventions in the field of diplomacy.19

The other individual who became even more important for the new bureaucratic faction focused on magnifying the Kaiser’s personal rule was the ambassador in Rome in these years, Bernhard von Bülow. Very soon after the inauguration of the New Course, Bülow had won the approval of both Eulenburg and the Kaiser, as he seemed to have considerable talents that marked him out as the man who could finally rejuvenate the reputation of the government at home and abroad in the wake of the confusion of the Caprivi years. He was a deft diplomat and certainly had the greatest experience in foreign affairs of any of the chancellors aside from Bismarck. He had served at the most important diplomatic posts abroad and made a steady advancement within the service.20 Finally, he was extremely affable, voluble, and articulate. He had, in other words, great promise both in his relations with other officials of the government as well as with politicians in the Reichstag.

Eulenburg was the most important patron and supporter of Bülow in the early 1890s. He oversaw Bülow’s appointment to the embassy in Rome in December 1893, having put him forward as the ideal candidate for the job as early as April of that year.21 It is clear, moreover, that even before this date Eulenburg had his friend in mind as the best candidate for the chancellorship, a man who could ultimately bring the Kaiser’s personal rule into being.22 Almost immediately after securing the transfer to Rome, Eulenburg was already suggesting Bülow was the obvious choice as state secretary of the

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19 Cecil, *Diplomatic Service*, 268. See also the lengthy discussion in Röhl, *Persönlichen Monarchie*, 814-25.
20 Lerman, 10-18.
Foreign Office. In March of the next year, he finally put Bülow forward as a man who could turn the Wilhelmstrasse into a well-oiled machine for the Kaiser:

The pool of candidates is small. I know of only Bülow. Should Holstein make problems ... then he will have to go. After all, His Majesty needs a trustworthy man of significance and public reputation in the highest of offices.... Bülow enjoys the highest reputation abroad; he will be suitable to almost all the parties and at any rate to the future chancellor, whoever that might be. There is a certain sentiment throughout the country that he would be the right man, and since I know him intimately I can also attest that he would be the right man for His Majesty.23

Eulenburg continued to champion Bülow in the coming years, constantly suggesting him as the replacement for Marschall. These efforts finally reached their fruition in June 1897, when Bülow took over at the head of the Foreign Office and became the expected successor of the aging chancellor, Hohenlohe.

By the time of Bülow’s appointment, Germany had emerged as a global leader in commerce and industrial production. The total value of German exports dramatically increased in the later decades of the imperial period, going from 2.9 billion marks in 1880 to 10.1 billion marks in 1913, with finished or semi-finished goods accounting for nearly 75 percent of the latter figure.24 In many of the older industries—e.g., iron or coal production—Germany began to out-produce Britain in the 1890s. In many of the newer industries—e.g., pharmaceuticals and dyes—Germany was already world leader.25 To many businessmen and national commentators, economic figures such as these indicated that it was no longer possible to count on the benevolence of the Pax

23 Memorandum by Eulenburg, 20 March 1894, no. 933, EK, vol. 2, 1260. Eulenburg’s emphasis. The comment about Holstein makes it clear that Eulenburg was revising his attitude at the time about Holstein’s own importance and position within the Foreign Office.


25 For a good general view of the shifting balance of economic and military power in the decades before the Great War, see Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987), 194-203. For a comparison of Britain and Germany more specifically, see Kennedy, *Antagonism*, 291-305.
Britannica to protect foreign trade. If the Kaisereich had become a preeminent economic power, a concomitant development was necessary in the military and colonial sphere. Germany needed both to acquire colonies as a way of ensuring new markets and outlets for her excess population, as well as to construct a powerful fleet that could protect these new global interests against foreign encroachments. The arguments made in this respect gained credence in the early 1890s, as the New Course came under such heavy criticism for its perceived failures in the colonial sphere, and as the nationalist pressure groups on the right gained a larger following by pushing for Weltpolitik, or a global imperialist foreign policy.

William II was in tune with the growing popular demand for a navy and prestigious acquisitions in the imperial realm. The emperor had desired a larger navy since he had come of age politically in the 1880s. He is supposed to have first read Alfred Thayer Mahan’s famous treatise, The Influence of Sea Power upon History, in 1894, when he wrote to an American friend that he was trying to commit it all to memory.²⁶ He came increasingly to feel in the middle of the 1890s that it was time to create the fleet he so desired and began to look for any opportunity to put forward his plans.²⁷ Nevertheless, both Hohenlohe and the Kaiser’s state secretary in the Naval Office, Admiral Friedrich Hollmann, had supported a more gradual development of the navy, feeling that annual Reichstag appropriations were adequate.²⁸ There was, they

²⁷ In the immediate wake of the Jameson Raid, for example, the Kaiser suggested that the crisis should be used to emphasize Germany’s naval inadequacy in South Africa during the affair in order to drum up support for naval expansion. See Anderson, Background, 231.
²⁸ Admiral Hollmann (1842-1913) was the state secretary of the Naval Office from 1890 to 1897. Hollmann diverged from the Mahanian orthodoxy as an advocate of cruisers rather than battleships. Jonathan Steinberg, Yesterday’s Deterrent: Tirpitz and the Birth of the German Battle Fleet (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 72-4. Steinberg’s work is the classic account of the passage of the First Naval Bill in English.
asserted, no need to resort to the multi-year budgets granted to the army. 29 During his years in office, Admiral Hollmann was unable to convince the Reichstag to grant the necessary funds for the naval increases envisioned by the Kaiser. The year 1897 represented a dramatic turning point, then, for it saw the appointment of Admiral Alfred Tirpitz as state secretary of the Naval Office. William II believed that together, Tirpitz and Bülow would prove to be more successful in winning over the Reichstag for naval increases than their predecessors had been.

Tirpitz differed dramatically from Hollmann in his ability to defend the need for naval increases and in his effectiveness as a propagandist. One of his chief innovations was to demand that, as much as possible, the navy should be justified for the protection it would offer to German economic interests in the world. 30 Moreover, Tirpitz made another decisive break with Hollmann’s tactics by arguing that Germany needed a fleet of battleships, rather than a coastal force of cruisers and swift torpedo boats. This led him to the conviction—still held privately in 1897—that Britain, as the preeminent naval power in the world, would be the main foil for the Kaiser’s new navy. 31 In his economic justification for the new naval construction, and in his emphasis on the development of a

29 Memorandum by Hohenlohe, [January 1896], in Hohenlohe, 152.
30 See Eckart Kehr, Schlachtsflottenbau und Partei-politik 1894-1901. Versuch eines Querschnitts durch die innenpolitischen, sozialen und ideologischen Voraussetzungen des deutschen Imperialismus (Berlin: Ebering, 1930), 38. Kehr set the subsequent parameters of the debate in Germany about the creation of the navy by asserting that social and economic problems on the domestic front were decisive in explaining the passage of the first two Naval Bills, which were to construct a fleet of battleships in Germany. Volker Berghahn’s major work, Der Tirpitz-Plan, examines the developments after the Second Naval Bill and attempts to extend Kehr’s original thesis up to the years just before the war. A recent treatment that works to refute Berghahn’s study by placing it in a larger transnational context is Dirk Bonker, “Militarizing the Western World: Navalism, Empire, and State-Building in Germany and the United States before World War I” (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2002).
31 See memorandum by Tirpitz, June 1897, Appendix, in Steinberg, 208-23. The memorandum is included both in the original German and in English translation.
battleship fleet, Tirpitz’s arguments seemed quite timely because they ran parallel to the ideas of Mahan that were so fashionable in the 1890s.\textsuperscript{32}

Bülow’s appointment as state secretary was likewise a dramatic departure. The general rationale behind the move—aside from the obvious fact of the Kaiser’s growing weariness with Marschall and his desire for personal rule—was that Bülow was a more suitable choice to restore the prestige of the Kaisereich and manage its development as a world economic and military power of the first order, while also obtaining public and parliamentary support for the move. His selection as state secretary was, then, part and parcel of William II’s plan to gain the approval of the Reichstag for naval increases. He was to become the Kaiser’s point man for the transition to \textit{Weltpolitik}. To William II, the sky seemed the limit: “Bülow will become my Bismarck,” he remarked on one occasion, “and just as grandpapa hammered Germany together to face the outside world, so shall we clean up the rubbish of parliamentary government and party politics at home!”\textsuperscript{33}

There has been some debate historically about how far Bülow developed his plans to make Germany a global power, what has been termed elsewhere his \textit{Weltmachtkonzept}.\textsuperscript{34} Yet Bülow did have some very general ideas about Germany’s shift to a world power.

\textsuperscript{32} His emphasis on a battleship fleet aimed at Britain was not exactly in line with the thinking of the Kaiser—or of the Berlin decision-making establishment more generally. William II had a tendency early on to view naval increases in terms of producing more cruisers for a raiding fleet aimed at preventing a Franco-Russian blockade in a continental war, rather than building big battleships for fighting decisive sea battles to win command of the sea. On this, see the dated—but still quite brilliant—discussion of the subject in Langer, \textit{Diplomacy of Imperialism}, 415-42, especially 427-35.

\textsuperscript{33} William II to Eulenburg, 25 December 1895, no. 1178, \textit{EK}, vol. 3, 1621.

\textsuperscript{34} The two standard accounts that try to delineate Bülow’s detailed plans in this sense are: Peter Winzen, \textit{Bülows Weltmachtkonzept. Untersuchungen zur Frühphase seiner Aussenpolitik 1897-1901} (Boppard am Rhein: Harald Boldt Verlag, 1977); and Barbara Vogel, \textit{Deutsche Rußlandpolitik 1900-1906. Das Scheitern der deutschen Weltpolitik unter Bülow 1900-1906} (Düsseldorf: Bertelsmann Universitätsverlag, 1973). Winzen’s ideas are available in briefer form: Peter Winzen, “Prince Bülow’s \textit{Weltpolitik},” \textit{Australian Journal of Politics and History} 22 (1976): 227-42. His attempt to extend the argument past 1900 is idem,
to Weltpolitik. Perhaps the most significant of those dealt with his role in pursuing the Kaiser’s project of a navy. In order for the move to succeed, it was clear Bülow would have to steer a delicate course in foreign policy. He would have to avoid a direct confrontation with Britain so that Tirpitz’s nascent navy would not be preemptively destroyed. But he would also have to encourage the growth of German commerce and oversee a vigorous policy that would allow for overseas expansion when possible. Bülow summed up the situation in a letter he wrote to Eulenburg shortly after his appointment as state secretary:

In foreign policy we must now proceed cautiously and quietly in order to maintain the Triple Alliance without stressing it in a provocative way, in order to tend to [soignieren] Russia without allowing ourselves to be tricked, [and] in order not to have to chase after England without completely cutting the strings that connect us there.

In practice, this meant Bülow moved even further away from Britain—the trend of German diplomacy since 1893—in favor of the policy of the so-called “free hand,” where

“Der Krieg in Bülows Kalkül: Katastrophe der Diplomatie oder Chance zur Machtexpansion?,” in Jost Dülffer and Karl Holl, eds., Bereit zum Krieg. Kreismentalität im wilhelminischen Deutschland 1890-1914 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 161-93. Bülow’s biographer, Katherine Lerman, basically rejects the idea that he had any detailed plans about the foreign policy before he came into office. See Lerman, 6-8. A more measured critique of Winzen’s argument is Canis, Bismarck zur Weltpolitik, 254-5. My own view is somewhere in the middle: Bülow probably had general ideas about how to pursue Weltpolitik, but he was undeniably also an opportunist, as one of Winzen’s reviewers noted. See Gregor Schöllgen, “Wer machte im Kaiserreich Politik? Zwischen ‘persönlichem Regiment’ und ‘polykratischem Chaos,’” Neue Politische Literatur 25, no. 1 (1980): 90.

35 Bernhard von Bülow, Denkwürdigkeiten, vol. 1, Vom Staatssekretariat bis zur Marokko-Krise (Berlin: Ullstein, 1930), 44-9, especially 47-8; Canis, Bismarck zur Weltpolitik, 255; and Winzen, Weltpolitik, 63-5. Such a policy was a tightrope walk of sorts. As Bülow wrote somewhat elegantly in his memoirs, “Wir dürften nicht ‘propter vitam vivendi perdere causas’”—in other words, Germany could not lose the reasons for living only to live. Bülow, vol. 1, 16. The Latin quote is from Juvenal’s Satires. See Juvenal Satura 8.84. A.J.P. Taylor described the situation best: Bülow’s “diplomatic task was to provide the grease (his own phrase—’pomadig’) by means of which Germany should slide past her rivals to world power.” Taylor, Struggle, 373. “Pomadig” was a favorite word of Bülow’s, smooth operator that he was.

36 Bülow to Eulenburg, 9 September 1897, no. 1347, EK, vol. 3, 1866.
Germany would occupy the space between Britain and the Franco-Russian alliance, playing the two groups off against one another to gain new territories in the world.

The move to *Weltpolitik* and battleship-building was clearly a policy that the Kaiser identified with personally. But the calculation behind the shift had domestic implications as well. For Eulenburg and Bülow, the 1890s had been a dangerous time, when the particularistic forces that opposed the Reich as a unified nation had seemed to gain ground while the Kaiser’s personal popularity simultaneously declined. The obvious bogey in this sense was the waxing power of the Social Democrats, and the concomitant calls in conservative circles to end the socialist threat with a *Staatsstreich* and a reactionary revision of the constitution to limit the electoral powers of the masses. For more moderate conservatives like Bülow and Eulenburg, the latter course of action was completely out of the question. In order to answer the threat without resorting to a coup, Bülow determined early on that he needed to pursue a successful global foreign policy. Such a course of action would help the state-supporting parties to forget their differences and rally together into a unified national coalition, or *Sammlung*.37 Although the attempt to put the so-called *Sammlungspolitik* into action worked better in theory than in practice,38 it meant that from the beginning Bülow needed to attempt to build a larger consensus for the Kaiser’s policies in order to answer the public-opinion problem that had arisen in the early 1890s.

37 Bülow, Eulenburg, and William II were the most devout proponents of the idea. The Kaiser, for instance, suggested as early as March 1895 that imperialism would be a good issue for electing a Reichstag that would be more amenable to the policies he wished to pursue. See Carroll, *Germany and the Great Powers*, 350.
The first move in this direction—in effect, the announcement in deed if not words that Germany had shifted gears to *Weltpolitik*—came with the German occupation of Kiaochow Bay on 14 November 1897. The larger impulse for the move was doubtless economic, as Germany needed to compensate for apparently shrinking markets in the United States and Canada.\(^3^9\) But there were other considerations as well. Ever since the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895,\(^4^0\) the government was under pressure from nationalist newspapers and the Pan-German League to win a port at China’s expense.\(^4^1\) William II, seeking a naval base in the Far East, added his voice to the din in 1896—making it a part of his larger aim to make Germany a world power—and Chancellor Hohenlohe could only convince him to delay the action till China provided some excuse that seemed to justify intervention.\(^4^2\) In the summer of 1897 naval officers narrowed the choice to Kiaochow. The murder of two German Catholic missionaries in Shantung gave the

\(^{39}\) Canis, *Bismarck zur Weltpolitik*, 256.  
\(^{40}\) The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-5 was fought to determine which of the two Asian powers would control Korea and dramatically underlined Japan’s new status as a major world power. She continually defeated China in the battles that were fought in the fall of 1894, and by early 1895 Japan was clearly in a position to dictate peace terms when plenipotentiaries of the two states finally met at Shimonoseki in the spring. Under the terms of the Treaty of Shimonoseki signed on 17 April, China was forced to acknowledge that Korea was independent (in effect making it a Japanese protectorate); she had to hand over a number of territories to Japan, the most important of which were the island of Formosa and the Liaotung peninsula with its major seaport on the coast, Port Arthur; and she had to open more ports to foreign commerce, granting many new trading concessions to the victors while also paying a fairly large indemnity. A good recent treatment of the Sino-Japanese War in English is S.C.M. Paine, *The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895: Perceptions, Power, and Primacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).  
\(^{41}\) Memorandum by Klehmet, 18 March 1896, China 20, no. 1, *secre.*, Bd. 6, PA-AA. The nine newspapers Klehmet mentions represented a broad spectrum of party opinion: the Conservative *Kreuzzeitung* and the agrarian *Deutsche Tageszeitung*; Bismarck’s paper, the *Hamburger Nachrichten*; National-Liberal organs like the *Hamburgischer Correspondent*, the *Magdeburgische Zeitung*, the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, the *Münchener Allgemeine Zeitung*, and the *Hannoverscher Courrier*; and the progressive *Frankfurter Zeitung*. As usual, the SPD was missing. Just on the eve of the seizure, the editor of the nationalist *Berliner Neueste Nachrichten*, Hugo Jacobi, told to Hohenlohe that Germany needed success in the Far East, putting forward Kiaochow as a prime location for expansion. Jacobi obviously intended to provide a springboard for the planned Naval Bill. See diary entry by Hohenlohe, 1 November 1897, in Hohenlohe, 398-9.  
Kaiser an excuse to abandon the diplomats’ “hyper-cautious” fear of annexation, the inquiries William II made to Nicholas seemed promising, and Berlin therefore resolved to grab the port.

The seizure caused a great deal of confusion all around. It took the statesmen of the other great powers by surprise, as Russian statesmen immediately contradicted William’s initial impression and pointed out that the territory in question was in the Russian sphere. A major diplomatic conflict ensued between the two countries. British statesmen took the news with more aplomb, objecting more to the way the seizure was conducted rather than to the annexation itself. Nevertheless, Bülow was firm that Germany would not cave in to Russia’s diplomatic pressure, and the end result was a new European scramble for concessions in China over the next few years.

Ironically, Bülow actually played a very small role in the first few weeks of the crisis because he was away on personal leave following the unexpected death of his brother on 1 November 1897. He was thus unable to develop a strategy for dealing with the press during the crisis, since he did not return to Berlin until the end of November.

Hammann, for his part, followed a longstanding policy of the Foreign Office by imposing

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43 William II to the Foreign Office, 6 November 1897, no. 3686, ibid., 67; and Holstein to Hatzfeldt, 13 November 1897, no. 630, PH, vol. 4, 43-6.
44 William to Hohenlohe, 7 November 1897, no. 3690, GP, vol. 14, 69, where William reports the Tsar’s answer to the inquiry after the missionaries’ murder: “Cannot approve, nor disapprove Your sending German squadron to Kiautschou [sic] as I have lately learned that this harbour only had been temporarily ours in 1895-1896.” William II focused on the second half of the pronouncement, but the Tsar had probably wished to avoid being rude. Nevertheless, the Kaiser’s impression of the interview was supported by earlier reports about the attitude of Russia toward German annexations in the Far East. See memorandum by Bülow, 17 August 1897, no. 3680, ibid., 59-60.
45 Salisbury to Lascelles, 12 January 1898, no. 3, BD, vol. 1, 4.
46 In the first and perhaps most significant of these, the Tsar gained direct control of Port Arthur, a move that Bülow approved of primarily to assuage Russia. See Bülow to Hatzfeldt, 5 January 1898, no. 3747, GP, vol. 14, 140-1. France gained control of the Canton peninsula in the summer of 1898, while Britain seized the Kowloon peninsula and Weihaiwai the following year.
47 Winzen, Weltmachtkonzept, 130-2.
a policy of quiet reserve on the semi-official organs. It was only on 4 December that the Kölnische Zeitung ultimately broke its silence to announce the official demands of the government. In spite of this fact, the chancellor could not have hoped for a better response in the papers outside the orbit of the government. All across the political spectrum—with the perennial exception of the SPD—the seizure met broad approval. Most significant endorsements came from the papers of the influential Left-Liberal press (viz., the Berliner Tageblatt, the Vossische Zeitung, and the Frankfurter Zeitung), which supported vigorous action in China, and the organs of the Center party, which initially approved of the action because the murdered missionaries had been Catholic. Indeed, Bülow even went so far as to praise the German press for treating the question “with the greatest discretion” in its apparent disinclination to discuss tension with Russia over the annexation.

Undoubtedly a major aspect of the government’s initial silence related to a parallel move in Germany’s new global policy, the announcement of the Kaiser’s new Naval Bill late in the evening on 27 November in the official Reichsanzeiger. Nevertheless, Bülow gave a major boost to the press applause about the seizure of Kiaochow when he gave his maiden Reichstag speech on Germany’s “Place in the Sun” on 6 December 1897. In the speech he sought to defend the establishment of German colonial and economic interests in China on par with the other major imperialist nations.

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48 Kölnische Zeitung, 4 December 1897.
49 Hale, 147-8.
50 Bülow to Hatzfeldt, 2 December 1897, no. 636, PH, vol. 4, 51.
51 Reichsanzeiger, 27 November 1897, in Schulthess (1897): 145-7. The actual draft of the First Naval Bill presented to the Reichstag is “Entwurf eines Gesetzes, betreffend die deutsche Flotte,” Anlage no. 4, SBVR, vol. 162, 1-10. Tirpitz timed the announcement so that the greatest opponent of the Naval Bill, Eugen Richter, the leader of the Liberal Union, would not have time to publish an article against it until either the following Monday night or Tuesday morning in his party newspaper, the Freisinnige Zeitung. Alfred Tirpitz, Erinnerungen (Leipzig: Hase & Koehler, 1919), 99.
of the world. The speech was, in effect, the announcement of the move to Weltpolitik:

“The times when the German left to his one neighbor the earth, the other the sea, and reserved for himself the heavens where pure doctrine reigns,” Bülow began to laughter and applause,

those times are over. We view it as one of our most noble tasks to encourage and cultivate the interests of our shipping, our trade and our industry, especially in East Asia. . . We must demand that the German missionary and the German businessman, German goods, the German flag, and German ships are respected in China in the same way as other powers. [Lively applause] Lastly we are perfectly ready to make allowance for the interests of the other great powers in East Asia on the assured assumption that our own interests will also find the respect they are due. [Applause] Put briefly: we do not wish to put anybody in the shade, but we also demand our own place in the sun. [Applause] 52

The speech was full of the rhetorical flourishes that would come to characterize the orations Bülow and Hammann would craft in later years. There is even some tantalizing evidence that Hammann had a hand in the preparation of this speech itself, which would mean he had already begun his collaboration with Bülow at this early stage in their relationship.53

In any event, the speech and the annexation were intended to pave the way for the Naval Bill that had been in the works since Bülow first took office in the summer. Bülow’s initial assessment of the parliamentary situation was quite bleak:

For the time being there would be little support on hand for the building of a fleet among the Conservatives. Under the circumstances, the Center would go along with it but would desire as a reward an extraordinary concession for itself. In

52 Speech by Bülow, 6 December 1897, 9th Leg. Per., Session 5, SBVR, vol. 159, 60. Bülow’s speeches were also printed in book form before the war. See Bernhard von Bülow, Fürst Bülow’s Reden, 3 vols., eds. Johannes Penzler and Otto Hötzsch (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1907-1909).
53 See the note on a clipping about the speech, undated, Bl. 1, Bd. N 2106 / 6, NL.H, BArchL, which implies that the phrase “unseren Platz an der Sonne” was lifted from Blaise Pascal by quoting him directly. For the quote in its original context, see Blaise Pascal, Pensées (Paris: Hachette, 1950), Section V, “La justice et la raison des effets,” no. 295, 114: “Ce chien est à moi, disaient ces pauvres enfants, c’est là ma place au soleil: voilà le commencement et l’image de l’usurpation de toute la terre.” This note makes it clear that the phrase did not come—as Peter Winzen posits—from the famous German historian Heinrich von Treitschke, whom Bülow admired greatly. Cf. Winzen, “Weltmachtpolitik,” 236.
fact, only the National Liberals and perhaps a section of the Left Liberals could be
certain [to support the bill], the so-called Wadenstrümpfler, the courtiers around
Rickert and Barth, but hardly Eugen Richter in the waders of his somewhat
narrow and Philistine outlook. In any event, firm opposition on the side of the
Social Democrats would certainly have to be reckoned with.\footnote{Bülow, Denkwürdigkeiten, vol. 1, 59.}

All told, it seemed unlikely that the Kaiser would have the necessary 199 votes that he
would need to pass the law. Yet dissolution of the Reichstag in the manner of the 1893
Army Bill did not seem promising either.\footnote{Chancellor Hohenlohe asserted, for example, that the arguments which would appeal to “nationally
minded gentlemen” would have no influence on the masses. Deaf to the arguments for naval construction, they would vote for the SPD, the Center, or the Left Liberals. Steinberg, 182. The Prussian finance minister from 1890 to 1901, Johannes Miquel (1828-1901), later echoed these sentiments in a conversation he had
with Bülow before the elections of 1898. Cf. Winzen, Weltmachtkonzept, 66. Tirpitz, however, showed himself to be more willing to roll the dice and dissolve the Reichstag. See diary entry by Hohenlohe, 1 December 1897, in Hohenlohe, 422-3. According to Jonathan Sperber, the government did not pursue the naval issue in the election of 1898. The only major political party that did campaign for the navy, the
National Liberals, actually lost both votes and seats in the election. See Jonathan Sperber, The Kaiser’s Voters: Electors and Elections in Imperial Germany (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 223-4; and Tables 2 and 3 in Appendix 1.}

The vast majority of the publicity work to overcome opposition to the bill was
actually performed by the new state secretary of the Naval Office, Alfred Tirpitz, and the
newspaper bureau he created for that purpose.\footnote{The classic account is Kehr, Schlachtflottenbau, 93-120. Surprisingly, the main work on the newspaper
bureau of the Reich Naval Office written by Wilhelm Deist, Flottenpolitik und Flottenpropaganda, contains
very little information on its activities during the passage of the First Naval Bill.}

Though the Center and Left-Liberal press had viewed Tirpitz’s appointment in the summer of 1897 as the harbinger of a new
\textit{Konfliktszeit} between parliament and the military—with the admiral playing the role of
“General Roon” for the navy\footnote{General Albrecht von Roon (1803-1879) was the Prussian minister of war from 1859 to 1873. He was the
architect of the military reform that was at the heart of the constitutional conflict of the 1860s: the increased
period of service in the regular army from two to three years and the decreased role of the reserve army
(\textit{Landwehr}) in Prussia.}\footnote{Kehr, Schlachtflottenbau, 73-4.}—Tirpitz actually proved himself a master of parliamentary
politics.\footnote{Kehr, Schlachtflottenbau, 73-4.} He and his associates in the Reich Naval Office expended great effort to win
over both the educated classes and the imperial diet. The admiral met personally with
the deputies of the Reichstag and the leaders of the major parties. He arranged tours of ships and shipyards. And he enlisted university professors to speak and write on behalf of the bill.59

Most important, on 17 June 1897 Tirpitz created the Information Bureau (Abteilung M II) of the Reich Naval Office to manage these activities and appointed Captain August von Heeringen as its department head.60 This office worked to prepare responses to the arguments of the opposition and compile statistics in support of the bill.61 It set up connections to the newspaper world with journalists and editors who were friendly to the navy. It even established tentative contacts with major nationalist pressure groups like the German Colonial Society and the Pan-German League.62 But perhaps the most significant in this respect were the links that Tirpitz and his bureau established to the German press corps. Tirpitz established connections to a slew of German newspapers—most significantly, in southern Germany where the Center party and the Liberal Union were particularly strong—which published articles in favor of the bill, oftentimes using statistics and ideas formulated by his newspaper bureau. He

59 Tirpitz, 96-7.
60 Deist, 71.
61 His biggest antagonist was Eugen Richter, the leader of the Progressive party and editor of the Freisinnige Zeitung. The newspaper bureau of the Reich Naval Office published numerous articles in the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung that answered nearly every criticism or attack Richter launched in his own paper. These articles were later collected together and published as Zum Flottengesetz. Entgegnungen der Norddeutschen Allgemeinen Zeitung auf die gegen die Marinevorlage gerichteten Angriffe (Berlin: Norddeutsche Buchdruckerei, 1898).
62 Eckart Kehr emphasized the collaborative support these groups, especially the Colonial Society, gave Tirpitz for the Naval Bill by funding 173 lectures and distributing 140,000 pamphlets—including 2,000 copies of Mahan’s treatise—to support the First Naval Bill. Kehr, Schlachtfлотенbau, 98-9. Geoff Eley, however, has emphasized more recently the tentative side of the relationship: Tirpitz and Heeringen were more concerned with winning over business and parliamentary opinion than with winning the support of the pressure groups. Ultimately organizations like the Pan-German League, the German Colonial Society, and the Navy League (formed after the First Naval Bill passed through the Reichstag) were more interested in opposing the notables and the parties they dominated, while Tirpitz saw it precisely as his task to win those groups over. Eley, German Right, 71-5.
utilized the semi-official *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* for many official communications. In the midst of the campaign, he founded an entirely new publication, *Nauticus*, which became the official organ of the Reich Naval Office. This publication, pseudonymously edited and written by “Nauticus,” was in reality a means for publishing articles written by naval officers or independent contractors of the navy’s newspaper bureau. A regular method for publishing these articles was to plant them in a sympathetic journals—the *Preußische Jahrbücher* and *Grenzboten* were two of Tirpitz’s regular channels—and then to “republish” them in *Nauticus*, thereby masking their official origins. In this manner, Tirpitz employed the pen of a number of individuals over the course of the campaign who collectively became the author “Nauticus.” The most notable of these outside the Naval Office were Ernst Francke, the editor of *Soziale Praxis*, Theodor Schiemann, the foreign affairs commentator for the Conservative *Kreuzzzeitung*, and Hugo Jacobi, the editor of the nationalist *Berliner Neueste Nachrichten*. All three were intimates of Hammann, the Foreign Office, or the Reich Chancellery.

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63 The original title was the *Jahrbuch für Deutschlands Seeinteressen, herausgeben von Nauticus*, but the journal eventually became known simply as *Nauticus*. Though Tirpitz maintained in public that it was a semi-official organ, in reality it was financed, written, and published entirely by the newspaper bureau of the Naval Office.

64 Schiemann (1847-1921) had written for the *Münchener Allgemeine Zeitung* until 1893, but thereafter wrote for the *Kreuzzzeitung*. A professor of Russian and East European history in Berlin, Schiemann’s articles helped to maintain the central political position of the *Kreuzzzeitung* in the face of competition from its more populist rivals. Schiemann wrote a widely-read commentary on the foreign situation that appeared every week on Wednesday. The significance of Schiemann’s editorials on the foreign situation grew directly from his close relations to the government, especially to Holstein. On Schiemann, see Klaus Meyer, *Theodor Schiemann als politischer Publizist* (Frankfurt am Main: Rütten & Loening, 1956), as well as his weekly articles from the *Kreuzzzeitung* published as Theodor Schiemann, *Deutschland und die grosse Politik, anno 1901-1914*, 14 vols. (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1902-1915).

65 Kehr, *Schlachtflottenbau*, 104-5.

66 See below, pp. 188-9.
The end result of these efforts was to create “a government by decibels,” where the uproar and polemics of the press and the educated classes seemed to undercut the opposition of the Reichstag to the bill.\(^6\) The culmination came with a mass meeting of businessmen in the Berlin Kaiserhof Hotel on 13 January 1898. The assembled industrial interests and the chambers of commerce of Bremen, Hamburg, and Lübeck came down heavily in favor of the bill as a necessity to protect German economic interests, and generally helped to win converts in the Reichstag.\(^6\) Together with Bülow’s putative successes in the Far East, the publicity campaign helped build up a bloc of votes in favor the bill. After a prolonged haggling over the specific provisions of the bill in committee,\(^6\) the measure eventually passed the Reichstag on 28 March 1898 by a vote of 212 to 139.\(^7\)

**Bülow, Weltpolitik, and the Public-Opinion Problem**

The First Naval Bill had two important results in regard to public opinion and German foreign policy. In the first place, Bülow’s position with the Kaiser was solidified.

\(^6\) This particularly apt phrase is Jonathan Steinberg’s. See Steinberg, 173-4.

\(^6\) The original letter proposing the meeting had been signed by the presidents of seventy-eight local chambers of commerce, with 251 signatures representing the business community overall. Eley, German Right, 74-5. The result of this campaign was to win over the Berliner Tageblatt and the Frankfurter Zeitung, two papers that represented the Left Liberals. Henceforth, amongst the Left Liberals only Richter’s Progressive party held fast to its opposition to the Naval Bill. Kehr, Schlachtschiffenbau, 117-18. The Berliner Tageblatt was founded by Rudolf Mosse (1843-1920) in 1871. In the Wilhelmine period the newspaper marched to the forefront of the German political press with a massive circulation that rose to over 230,000, competing for circulation with the Anzeiger press. Much of this success was due to the hard work of Arthur Levysohn (1841-1908), who edited the Tageblatt from 1881 to 1906. Under his leadership, the newspaper established a foreign news service that was relatively extensive, even outside the context of German journalism. It was, in fact, one of the more prominent foreign correspondents, Theodor Wolff (1868-1943), the representative of the paper in Paris, who took over for Levysohn as editor in 1906. Wolff maintained the progressive perspective of the Berliner Tageblatt in his years as editor, acting as a truly critical observer of the Kaiser’s foreign policy in the pre-war years. Kürschner, 149; Thompson, 128; and Wernecke, 319.

\(^6\) Financing the bill was an especially thorny issue. See Steinberg, 174-93.

\(^7\) Vote on the First Naval Bill, 26 March 1898, 9th Leg. Per., Session 5, SBVR, vol. 161, 1783-4. The vote on the most important provisions was actually held on the Saturday before the final approval of the bill. Cf. the debates of 28 March 1898, 9th Leg. Per., Session 5, SBVR, vol. 161, 1816-43.
The apparent success of German foreign policy in Bülow’s first months in power served to end the Kaiser’s recent bitterness with the Foreign Office. Bülow was, to put it another way, a stark contrast to Marschall. “The relationship [of the Kaiser] to Bülow is the best and most desired; since he assumed office,” wrote Count August zu Eulenburg to his cousin Philipp immediately after the passage of the law, “everything appears rosy.”

The other result was intricately related to the first. So far as the Kaiser viewed the situation, part of Bülow’s success came from his ability win the public over so quickly to support of the new imperialist departure in foreign policy.

The most obvious example in this regard was a revolution in the relationship between the government and the Bismarck Fronde. To begin with it had seemed that Bismarck would oppose the shift toward a global imperialist policy—this was his natural inclination—as he had opposed nearly every aspect of the New Course. During the press campaign leading up to the publication of the First Naval Bill, for instance, Bismarck had come out openly against a battleship fleet: “I believe that we need new cruisers,” he told Maximilian Harden, editor of the Zukunft, in an interview, “but I am very skeptical of parade ships [i.e., battleships], which only serve as a marker of prestige, and which, if the situation becomes serious, must be regarded as ships of lies because they achieve nothing.” But Tirpitz nevertheless visited Bismarck personally and won a qualified

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71 August zu Eulenburg to Philipp zu Eulenburg, 22 March 1898, no. 1364, EK, vol. 3, 1887. See also Fesser, 49. Count August zu Eulenburg (1838-1921) was the central manager of the Kaiser’s court before the war. He was a devoted Bismarckian and an agrarian opponent of Caprivi and the policies of the New Course. He was also a consistent advocate for Bülow once he obtained office. Hull, 23-5.

72 “Bismarcks Glossen,” Die Zukunft 20 (July-September 1897): 409-15, especially 413. Die Zukunft was a satirical weekly paper founded by Maximilian Harden (1861-1927) in 1892. It was highly critical of both the New Course and the Kaiser’s personal rule. Harden collaborated with Bismarck in his campaign against the government after 1890. The weekly circulation of the Zukunft was roughly 20,000 on the eve of the war. Wernecke, 324.
approval for the Naval Bill, which he trumpeted before the Reichstag in December 1897. Bülow’s efforts, moreover, neatly complemented those of the admiral. One of his first acts upon entering office was to make the pilgrimage along with Chancellor Hohenlohe to Friedrichsruh, where the aging Bismarck warmly received the state secretary. Herbert von Bismarck, for his part, expressed his approval of Bülow to his father and generally offered his support in the Reichstag. The government, finally, wasted no time in establishing better connections to nationalist organs that had sympathized with Bismarck, such as the Berliner Neueste Nachrichten and the Berliner Politische Nachrichten, both of which were funded by heavy industry and henceforth became among the strongest champions of the new regime.

After Tirpitz’s sustained propaganda campaign on behalf of the First Naval Bill, Bülow came increasingly to feel that a modern statesman needed only a competent and resourceful public-relations apparatus in order to overcome the opposition of the public and parliament to any measures that he wished to pass. Bülow had a long history of cultivating the press in his official life going back to at least the early 1890s. In his early diplomatic career, Bülow had developed contacts with the local press during his initial

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74 Hohenlohe, 364.
75 Röhl, Germany without Bismarck, 248-9. The Berliner Neueste Nachrichten represented the magnates of heavy industry in the Rhineland and along the Ruhr. Its leading force in the early 1890s had been Wilhelm von Kardorff. He had been one of the chief contributors to the Post until 1891, when he broke with the paper because of its support for Caprivi’s trade treaties with Austria-Hungary and Russia in the early 1890s. This opened a breech between Stumm and Kardorff that culminated in something like two-thirds of the party membership shifting its allegiance from the Post to the Berliner Neueste Nachrichten by March of 1894. By 1902, this support amounted to a daily circulation of nearly 20,000 copies in a morning and afternoon edition. The Berliner Politische Nachrichten was a relatively minor organ representing heavy industry that maintained a very small circulation of 450 copies daily. Wernecke, 318.
stints as minister at Bucharest and ambassador at Rome.\textsuperscript{76} He claimed privately that he preferred his interviews with journalists to those he had with statesmen.\textsuperscript{77} He had, for a very brief moment early in his life, even considered a career in journalism itself, only giving up the idea because the profession was not as glamorous or highly esteemed as diplomacy.\textsuperscript{78} In short, he believed, as one journalist noted after the war, that one could “make policy and govern only with the press, and not without or against it.”\textsuperscript{79} Hammann himself remarked that no other statesman was as intensely concerned with the “cultivation” of public opinion as Bülow.\textsuperscript{80}

Yet after the experience of the propaganda campaign for the First Naval Bill, Bülow also felt that newspaper interpretations and public opinion—even if they limited the options available to statesmen—could be molded and formed. As he wrote in his private notebook in July 1898, public opinion is “[t]he viewpoint that eighty or ninety intelligent and influential thinkers have formed—first, mostly in opposition to the views of the majority—which they then gradually spread and convert to a general sentiment \textit{[communis opinio]}.\textsuperscript{81} Tirpitz’s brilliant handling of the press with regard to the First Naval Bill, and the popular acclaim expressed by the public because of the seizure of

\textsuperscript{76} At Bucharest he apparently monitored the local press as one of his responsibilities. Bülow to Eulenburg, 23 September 1890, no. 417, \textit{EK}, vol. 1, 572. In Rome, he established connections with the foreign press corps, feeding, for example, \textit{The Times’} local correspondent, W.J. Stillman, with information for an article on Anglo-German relations in 1895. Marshall to Bülow, 4 February 1895, no. 2072, \textit{GP}, vol. 8, 474-5.

\textsuperscript{77} Bülow to Hammann, 3 October 1902, Bd. N 2106 / 7, Nl.H, BArchL.


\textsuperscript{79} \textit{Kölische Zeitung}, 26 November 1929. Reported by the Rome correspondent of the \textit{Kölische Zeitung} from 1891 to 1918, Friedrich Noack (1858-1930).

\textsuperscript{80} Hammann, \textit{Bilder}, 41. The view is echoed in modern scholarship. See Fesser, 67-8.

\textsuperscript{81} Quoted in Winzen, \textit{Weltmachtkonzept}, 67.
Kiaochow, also suggested a broader solution to the public-opinion problem. “Public opinion could only be utilized,” he wrote after the war, “if the national motive were emphatically stressed and the consciousness of the nation were awakened in opposition to the timid and despondent mood that reigned in the first decade after Bismarck’s retirement.” Subsequently, Hammann became ever more important to Bülow with the inauguration of Weltpolitik. In the period of his state secretaryship, this meant that Bülow was already prepared to collaborate with Hammann in cultivating and preserving public support for his foreign policy. Bülow had told Hammann in October 1897, after his appointment, that he wanted to consolidate his influence in the Foreign Office and announced his intention of taking press matters into his own hands. In practice, this meant that Hammann and Bülow began a systematic collaboration from 1898 on that would reach its fruition in the early years of Bülow’s chancellorship. This increasingly parallel development of the diplomatic and press policies of the foreign office became gradually more obvious following the passage of the Naval Bill.

The first episode that demonstrated that Bülow and Hammann were working to harmonize press policy and foreign policy was related to the possible conclusion of an alliance with Britain. On 25 March 1898, Arthur Balfour—Lord Salisbury’s nephew, a member of his Cabinet, and a firm believer in improving relations with Germany—

82 Bernhard von Bülow, Deutsche Politik (Berlin: Reimar Hobbing, 1916), 20.
83 Otto Hammann, Zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges. Erinnerungen aus den Jahren 1897-1906 (Berlin: Reimar Hobbing, 1918), 4. He also announced his intention to take back control of personnel matters from Holstein—to ensure his ambassadors would be loyal to him—and to rein in the Berlin political police as well.
approached Ambassador Hatzfeldt in London about a rapprochement with Germany.\textsuperscript{85} The move was only a feeler. Its main impulse was fear of Russian expansion in the Far East after the Sino-Japanese War and the desire to enlist German aid in blocking the Tsar’s advance in Asia. Four days following this initial interview, Hatzfeldt and Chamberlain, taking up the matter again as private gentlemen, met and the latter suggested a sort of defensive alliance. “If we now want to stand by the side of England,” Hatzfeldt reported back to Berlin, “in the event that Germany is attacked, England would stand by our side.”\textsuperscript{86}

Yet both sides failed fundamentally to understand what the other was after in this as in later negotiations on the subject of an alliance. On the British side, the idea—especially following the British request for the lease of Weihaiwei on 31 March 1898—was that the Germans, holding Kiaochow, would be ready to work with Britain to check further Russian expansion in China.\textsuperscript{87} In actuality, the Germans wished to embroil Russia further in the Far East—to continue, in other words, the policy of the free hand. Berlin put off the matter with polite reservations. The alliance, after all, would have to commit Britain in advance to support Germany in Europe as well as the Far East and win the approval of Parliament. It would also require significant colonial concessions in advance to pave the way with public opinion in Germany.\textsuperscript{88} Since it was doubtful that


\textsuperscript{86} Hatzfeldt to the Foreign Office, 29 March 1898, no. 3782, \textit{GP}, vol. 14, 198.

\textsuperscript{87} Balfour to Lascelles, 2 April 1898, no. 47, \textit{BD}, vol. 1, 31.

\textsuperscript{88} Holstein to Hatzfeldt, 3 April 1898, no. 648, 60-2, \textit{PH}, vol. 4, 68-70; Bülow to Hatzfeldt, 30 March 1898, Deutschland 148, secr., Bd. 1, PA-AA.
Chamberlain could meet these conditions at present, Bülow proposed a policy of wait-and-see. In the meantime more British consideration for German demands in the world would help immensely to win over a public opinion that was largely “anti-English” and currently blocked any possibility of an alliance.  

The official press policy of the government followed the general lines dictated by the policy of the free hand. In the middle of the alliance negotiations, for instance, the Kaiser wished to rein in the German press so that it would not celebrate Anglo-Russian friction over the British seizure of Weihaiwei. Bülow made moves for the “instruction of the press” in the way William II desired, specifically by having Hammann insert an official telegram in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* on 6 April that asserted Germany’s complete indifference about what power controlled Weihaiwei. The government continued to follow a policy of cautious reserve in the coming days. The situation changed fundamentally, however, when the Anglo-German alliance negotiations leaked to the public in early April because of a speech Balfour gave in Parliament touching on the question. Even more important for the question in regard to public opinion was a speech Joseph Chamberlain, a firm advocate of the alliance, made to the Liberal Union Association in Birmingham on 13 May 1898. The speech attacked Russian expansion in China and splendid isolation more generally, asserting that “we must not reject the idea of an alliance with those Powers whose interests most

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89 Bülow to Hatzfeldt, 3 April 1898, Deutschland 148, *secr.*, Bd. 1, PA-AA.  
90 Metternich to Bülow, 5 April 1898, China 20, no. 1, *secr.*, Bd. 44, PA-AA.  
91 Bülow to William II, 7 April 1898, China 20, no. 1, *secr.*, Bd. 44, PA-AA.  
92 *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 April 1898. This view was echoed in the official press as well. Cf. Reichsanzeiger, 22 April 1898, in Schulthess (1898): 98-9.  
93 Balfour officially broached the matter in a very general way on 5 April in the House of Commons, causing a discussion of the matter in German newspapers. Speech by Balfour, 5 April 1898, *Parliamentary Debates*, Commons, 4th ser., vol. 56 (1898), cols. 232-8.
nearly approximate our own [in the Far East].”\textsuperscript{94} Although Chamberlain specifically mentioned the United States as a friend in this policy, it was obvious that the other “interested power” was Germany. The speech caused a heated discussion of the idea for an alliance in the German press. Because the Reich Foreign Office had already politely rebuffed Chamberlain’s offer, the semi-official organs remained largely quiet about the matter; the papers representing the Left Liberals (e.g., the \textit{Vossische Zeitung}), the National Liberals, and the Conservatives (e.g., the \textit{Kreuzzeitung}, and the \textit{Post}) were cold to the idea of an alliance and almost seemed in some cases to celebrate Germany’s position between Russia and Britain.\textsuperscript{95} In its attempts to play the two powers off against one another for German gain, the government could have hardly hoped for a better response.

This policy continued over the course of 1898 and 1899 as Germany sought to capitalize on Britain’s conflict with France and Russia in the world in pursuit of the policy of the free hand. The first place this could be seen is in the negotiations that took place in the spring of 1898 between German and British diplomats on the subject of Portugal’s colonies, which developed directly out of the alliance negotiations. One of the major sources of Anglo-German friction in the world was in South Africa, where German businessmen had made inroads to the Boer republics through Delagoa Bay in the Portuguese colony of Mozambique. As relations between the authorities in London and the Boers deteriorated in the wake of the Jameson Raid, the British desired to close Delagoa Bay to foreign states in the event of a war. The Cape government had actually

\textsuperscript{94} \textit{The Times}, 14 May 1898.
\textsuperscript{95} Hale, 172; and Carroll, \textit{Germany}, 404.
sporadically even tried to acquire the region through purchase in the years from 1891 to 1897.

What made the problem even stickier was the massive annual deficit that the Portuguese government had racked up. This debt steadily rose in the second half of the nineteenth century, standing at 163 million pounds in 1898.96 In May of that year, the Portuguese government had to open negotiations with London for a new loan to fend off its creditors in France and Germany, and by June word of the negotiations had leaked to Berlin.97 To the Germans it seemed that Britain would use the new loan as a way to gain control of Delagoa Bay. For Bülow specifically the timing looked opportune to begin cashing in on the policy of the free hand. He sent Hatzfeldt to speak with Lord Salisbury about the subject on 14 June. The German ambassador was to demand participation in any loan to Portugal—and an equal share of her colonies if she had to default on the new loan.98 To begin with, Salisbury was disinclined to discuss the subject with the Germans. But as Hatzfeldt continued to press the matter in June and July, eventually Salisbury entered into negotiations. The result was a convention signed between the two powers on 30 August: Germany renounced any interest in Delagoa Bay in return for participation in the loan and—embodied in a secret clause of the convention—a joint partition of Portugal’s African colonies in the event of a default on the loan.99

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97 Salisbury to Gough, 14 June 1898, no. 66, *BD*, vol. 1, 48.
98 The loans were to be guaranteed by the customs revenues of the Portuguese colonies; a division of those customs revenues amounted to a partition of the Portuguese colonies into spheres that would go to the powers that made the loan in the event of a default, in this case Britain and Germany.
99 Anglo-German convention on Portugal’s colonies, 30 August 1898, no. 3872, *GP*, vol. 14, 347-55. Cf. enclosure in Balfour to Lascelles, 31 August 1898, no. 90, *BD*, vol. 1, 71-2. According to the convention, Germany was assigned northern Mozambique, which bordered on German East Africa, and most of Angola. Britain would acquire southern Mozambique (including Delagoa Bay) and sliver of territory in the middle of Angola.
As far as public opinion went, the convention was an early example of how difficult it was becoming to conduct the old, cabinet-style diplomacy. The abandonment of Delagoa Bay was in effect a complete reversal in the policy of the German government toward the Transvaal. It was almost certain to be unpopular with the vast majority of organs that made up the German press. If rumors about the agreement leaked to the press, it could conceivably do harm not only at home with public opinion, but also abroad in Russo-German relations.¹⁰⁰ To forestall such an occurrence Bülow wished to keep the agreement secret until Portugal actually defaulted on the proposed Anglo-German loan. Nevertheless, rumors surrounding the agreement leaked to the press when the Conservative *Pall Mall Gazette* in London ran a series of articles in early September celebrating the end of splendid isolation and the conclusion of what it believed was an outright “offensive and defensive alliance.”¹⁰¹ To squelch criticism of the government in advance, Hammann inserted a denial of any Anglo-German alliance in the *Kölnische Zeitung* on the day after the first article appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and further denials appeared in the following days.¹⁰² Republication in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* activated what Hammann and company later called the “snowball effect”¹⁰³: the other major national papers picked up the Foreign-Office hint, recounted the official denials, and effectively ended the buzz about an alliance.

¹⁰⁰ Bülow to Hatzfeldt, 22 June 1898, no. 3818, *GP*, vol. 14, 274; and memorandum by Holstein, 26 August 1898, no. 3868, *ibid.*, 342-4.
¹⁰¹ *Pall Mall Gazette*, 2 September 1898. See also the subsequent reports it made on this subject of 3, 6, and 7 September 1898.
¹⁰² *Kölnische Zeitung*, 3 and 6 September 1898.
Yet the rumors about some other kind of agreement continued in the following days, and the field of discussion gradually narrowed to South Africa. Official pointers in the *Kölnische Zeitung* alluded to the question of Portugal’s financial straits, and these reports excited great interest in nationalist circles. In addition, a British article sketching the agreement in broad outlines served to keep the subject simmering. It was the Pan-Germans and—in Hammann’s words—more vaguely the “Boers’ friends” who were most interested in the transaction that had taken place. The main concern was that the Foreign Office had sold the Boers down the river for hollow gains along the lines of Caprivi’s Helgoland-Zanzibar agreement. Holstein, who was away on vacation at the time, wrote Hammann with the suggestion that he continue working with Arthur von Huhn of the *Kölnische Zeitung* to dispel these fears. A good route was to emphasize that the Boers were obviously not an oppressed people if they were able to win a majority in their parliamentary elections, as had recently happened.

The animadversions and conjectures of the Boer sympathizers continued up to the end of the year, however, especially in the conservative *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*. The government initially tried to stay silent and allow the friendlier Conservative and National-Liberal organs (like the *Post*, the *National-Zeitung*, and the *Kreuzzeitung*) to do its dirty work. An 11 September article in the *Post* was typical: public opinion should remember that national interest would always trump romantic sympathy with the Boers,

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104 *Kölnische Zeitung*, 16 November 1898. It is clear from Hammann’s correspondence with Holstein at the time that the instigation for these articles came directly from Hammann and the Foreign Office. See Hammann to Holstein, 13 September 1898, Bd. N 2106 / 22, Nl.H, BArchL.
107 Holstein to Hammann, 9 September 1898, Bd. N 2106 / 22, Nl.H, BArchL.
but “a second Zanzibar-Helgoland treaty will never be concluded.” Nonetheless, the press persisted in questioning the details of the agreement Bülow had concluded with Britain. Further discussion in the British press only seemed to increase the curiosity in Germany about the current state of Anglo-German relations. “[I]n the event of fresh trouble between England and the Transvaal,” The Times crowed, “the Emperor William could certainly not dispatch a second Telegram to President Kruger, who in his differences with England has little or no sympathy in that quarter.” Because of a continued interest in the question, then, the government finally had to issue an official denial in December. The first clarification came through Hammann’s connections to Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau, but when rumors continued he finally released an official statement in the Reichsanzeiger and the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung that repudiated the supposedly true revelations in the Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger as mere speculation. But that was as far as the government could go. Until Portugal defaulted on the loan, Bülow had nothing concrete to offer public opinion in return for giving up southern Mozambique to the British; silence remained the only realistic solution. By the end of the episode, the government could only take heart in Britain’s assent not to publish the agreement, continue to deny that it was another Helgoland deal, and try

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108 Die Post, 11 September 1898.
109 The Times, 8 October 1898.
110 Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 31 December 1898. The Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger continued its interest in the agreement and eventually reported about a year later that Germany had given up Delagoa Bay to Britain in return for Portuguese possessions in Asia and Zambezi in Africa. Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger, 27 December 1899, in Schulthess (1899): 184-5. Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau and the Reichsanzeiger once again denied the revelations.
112 Die Post, 28 March 1899.
to put pressure on Portugal to strike a deal financially that would lead to an abandonment of her colonies.\textsuperscript{113}

What made this episode particularly interesting was that it coincided with perhaps the most dramatic incident in Anglo-French relations in the pre-war period, namely the crisis at Fashoda in the Sudan. The background to this standoff was the final defeat of the Mahdist forces at Omdurman on 2 September, which had solidified British control of the upper Nile.\textsuperscript{114} The British commander of the force sent into the Sudan, Sir Herbert Kitchener, continued south in the wake of the battle to seize control of the headwaters of the Nile.\textsuperscript{115} At Fashoda in late September 1898, he encountered a very small French force under Major Jean-Baptiste Marchand, who had been sent by his government to assert French claims to the Sudan.\textsuperscript{116} Kitchener promptly requested the French to withdraw from the territory, which he asserted was a recognized British sphere in Africa. The French cabinet, immersed in the throes of the Dreyfus controversy, lacked

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\textsuperscript{113} Bülow sent 10,000 marks for this purpose to the ambassador in Lisbon, Baron Tattenbach, which the envoy was supposed to use to bribe the local press to push for a disavowal of the colonies as a way of solving the problem of the government’s debt. See Bülow to Tattenbach, 21 March 1899, England 78, no. 1, secr., Bd. 12, PA-AA. The Portuguese government had asserted from the beginning that the colonies could not be given up because of public opinion (see memorandum by Bertie, 1 May 1898, no. 65, \textit{BD}, vol. 1, 44-8), and Bülow was therefore seeking to put pressure on the Portuguese statesmen from below. He was unaware that Lord Salisbury had effectively negated the Anglo-German agreement with a secret declaration that offered British guarantees for the territorial integrity of Portugal and her empire (see Anglo-Portuguese Secret Declaration, 14 October 1899, no. 118, \textit{BD}, ibid., 93-5).

\textsuperscript{114} Peter M. Holt, \textit{The Mahdist State in the Sudan: A Study of its Origins Development and Overthrow}, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), is the standard study of the Mahadia in the Sudan from the manifestation of Muhammad Ahmad (1844-1885) as Mahdi in 1881 to the final defeat of the movement by British forces in the Sudan in 1898. The Mahdi is a figure in the Islamic tradition prophesied to return at the end of times to redeem the world and restore a perfect conception of Islamic society.


\textsuperscript{116} Major Marchand (1863-1934) was originally commissioned to find the source of the Niger River, but eventually was directed to explore the course of the White Nile. After the French retreat at Fashoda he retired briefly, before serving again in the Boxer Rebellion in China and then later on the Western Front in World War I.
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the naval power to assert its claims in Africa and eventually ordered Major Marchand to stand down.

German policy in the midst of the crisis placed itself squarely on the side of the British against the French. This led to a certain amount of jitteriness in France about the rumored Anglo-German alliance of September.\textsuperscript{117} But to avoid encouraging the reports of a putative alliance, the Wilhelmstrasse restrained any commentary in the semi-official papers. The rest of the press, by and large, followed the lead of the government and supported Britain. Most striking of all, perhaps, was the commentary of the Conservative papers; largely Anglophobic until Fashoda,\textsuperscript{118} they now began to praise Salisbury’s firm stand on the matter. Schiemann’s weekly article in the \textit{Kreuzzeitung} on 9 November was typical: with all the hype about an alliance still in the air, he now proclaimed that Britain was “\textit{bündnisfähig},” a worthy potential ally.\textsuperscript{119}

In the wake of these events, Joseph Chamberlain gave two very significant speeches that related to the alliance question. The first of these, his Conservative Club speech delivered in Manchester on 16 November 1898, excited much interest in France, but provoked little commentary in Germany.\textsuperscript{120} The majority of the German press remained highly skeptical of British motives. Even the semi-official response of the

\textsuperscript{117} Monson to Salisbury, 8 September 1898, no. 187, \textit{BD}, vol. 1, 162. Sir Edward Monson, the British ambassador to Paris, having no information one way or the other, in effect denied it: the newspapers, he told the French, probably had mistaken a colonial agreement about issues in Africa for the conclusion of an alliance.
\textsuperscript{118} They were largely concerned about harming German relations with Russia. See Canis, \textit{Bismarck zur Weltpolitik}, 268-9, which cites much typical commentary at the time of the seizure of Kiaochow.
\textsuperscript{119} \textit{Kreuzzeitung}, 9 November 1898. This suggests that the thesis put forward in Friedrich Meinecke, \textit{Die Geschichte des deutsch-englischen Bündnisproblems 1890-1901} (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1927), is probably a little off. While Meinecke held that the alliance failed because of the longstanding Anglophobia of the Junkers (pp. 233-4, and 260-1), in actuality there was some sympathy for Britain among the opinion-makers. Meinecke’s argument was echoed by his student, Kehr. See Eckart Kehr, “Englandhaß und Weltpolitik,” in \textit{Primat der Innenpolitik}, 149-75.
\textsuperscript{120} \textit{The Times}, 17 November 1898.
*Kölnische Zeitung* exhibited weariness; the paper asserted that Britain had to be more amenable to German colonial expansion in order for a truly amicable relationship to develop between the two empires.\(^{121}\) But his second speech, which he gave in Wakefield on 8 December 1898, went even further in the direction of calming German apprehensions. Here Chamberlain maintained that he did not want a relationship in which Britain possessed all the advantages and Germany none of them. Indeed, cooperation should be based upon reciprocal efforts to protect the two powers’ mutual interests: “I would venture to say to some of our German friends . . . that it is idle to talk of an alliance in which the advantage is all on one side. We do not want them to pull our chestnuts out of the fire, and we are not going to pull out chestnuts for them.”\(^{122}\) The press in Germany received this second speech much more warmly than the first.\(^{123}\) The Reich Foreign Office could have hardly asked for more; certain words and phrases could not have been better written if Hammann, himself, had drafted the speech for Chamberlain.\(^{124}\)

In the wake of these efforts, Bülow decided to try to cash in on Chamberlain’s fine words to acquire a secure foot-hold in the Samoan Island group.\(^{125}\) The islands had been administered by a tripartite agreement between the United States, Britain, and Germany

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\(^{121}\) *Kölnische Zeitung*, 18 November 1898. Hammann’s confidant, Dr. Fischer, dispatched the statement from the Berlin office, giving it the air of an official communication from the Bülow and the Reich Foreign Office. Republication the next day in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* only confirmed its official nature. *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 19 November 1898.

\(^{122}\) Quoted in Garvin, vol. 3, 323.

\(^{123}\) The *Times*, 9 December 1898, gives a detailed summary of German newspaper opinion. Cf. Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism*, 570.

\(^{124}\) Chamberlain’s assertion that he did not want Britain to pull Germany’s chestnuts from the fire, just as Germany should not pull out Britain’s, could have come from the German diplomatic documents rather than from the mouth of a major British statesmen. The reference to pulling “chestnuts from the fire” was a formulaic rebuke to Salisbury’s government any time that Bülow or Holstein feared that the British were trying to get the better end of a deal and a major talking point of the policy of the free hand.

\(^{125}\) The most exhaustive treatment of this subject is still Paul Kennedy, *The Samoan Tangle: A Study in Anglo-German-American Relations, 1878-1900* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1974).
since the beginning of the 1880s. The strategic importance of the Samoan Islands was
debatable, but for Bülow German acquisitions in Samoa were still essential primarily for
their prestige value at home. In other words, because Bülow needed to maintain support
for the government’s domestic policies in the Reichstag, especially among its nationalist
members, it was necessary to have success with the Samoan question.126 Count Hatzfeldt
had approached Lord Salisbury about a final partition of the islands in the days
immediately following the conclusion of the Anglo-German Convention regarding
Portugal’s colonies. Salisbury, increasingly suspicious of Germany’s “blackmail”
schemes, was cold to the idea and refused to discuss it, as he had originally done with the
Portuguese colonies question.

A kingship crisis in the Samoan Islands brought the matter to the fore again in
early 1899. The American and British representatives on the island used all the
resources at their disposal to push their own candidate. By March public opinion in
Germany had become enflamed enough that Bülow had to take preventative measures to
keep things from getting out of control once again. In diplomatic terms, this meant that
the Reich Foreign Office cordially received Cecil Rhodes in March—the evil genius
behind the Jameson Raid, so far as the German press viewed the matter—and brokered a
deal with him to connect his Cape-to-Cairo telegraph and railroad lines in German East
Africa. In return, Berlin hoped that Rhodes would place pressure on Chamberlain to
settle the Samoan dispute in Germany’s favor.127

Bülow and Hammann worked through their connections to the Norddeutsche
Allgemeine Zeitung and the Kölnische Zeitung to dampen criticism of the government

126 Bülow to the Foreign Office, 29 March 1899, Südsee Inseln 5, Bd. 2, PA-AA.
over Samoa, and it was only in the Pan-German *Deutsche Zeitung*, the Bismarckian *Hamburger Nachrichten*, and the agrarian *Deutsche Tageszeitung* that bitter criticism of the government appeared. Bülow also staged an appearance before the Reichstag, announcing his intention to defend German treaty rights in Samoa without harming the other powers involved. The statement was well received in the Reichstag. Under Bülow’s orders, Hammann also worked in the following weeks to continue his attempts to keep anti-British commentary in the press from endangering the success of the planned partition. “Most importantly,” Hammann wrote in a very lengthy report to Bülow at the end of March,

> it comes down to avoiding pointless and harmful ranting against America and England and indignant expressions against our government in the influential press. [Bülow: “yes”] In the evening newspapers, the *Berliner Neueste Nachrichten*, the *National-Zeitung*, [and] the *Lokal-Anzeiger* are already expressing quiet [Bülow: “very good”] and reserved opinions. Today they have been joined by the *Kölner Zeitung*, the *Hannoverscher Courier*, the *Vossische Zeitung* and the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. The *Kölner Zeitung* article was outlined by me and was cabled today to London and New York. The memory of Kiaochow is once again recalled in the *Hannoverscher Courier*. [Bülow: “good”] Today’s morning edition of the *Hamburgischer Correspondent*, which has not yet appeared here, will contain a—hopefully—good article by Francke [Bülow: “yes”]; it should likewise refer to Kiaochow and to the new Chinese expedition as a justification for our lack of ships at Apia, creating a diversion. [Bülow: “good”] In addition, this last line will appear in the *Kölner Volkszeitung* and in reports about the outrages against Germans in Shantung that will appear in the meantime. The crazy uproar has been restricted until now to the *Deutsche Tageszeitung* and to the *Deutsche Zeitung*. The *Tägliche Rundschau* expresses itself today only in reports....

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128 “In light of this outrage,” the last of these papers declared, “we question whether the German government will now repudiate [desavouieren] its own representative in Samoa and continue to strengthen, with [its] ‘friendly’ negotiations, the English and the Americans in the view that one can take every liberty vis-à-vis Germany.” *Deutsche Tageszeitung*, 30 March 1899, Südsee Inseln 5, Bd. 2, PA-AA. The agrarian *Deutsche Tageszeitung* maintained a daily circulation of roughly 38,000. Wernecke, 319. The *Deutsche Zeitung* was edited from 1895 to 1912 by Friedrich Lange (1852-1918), a vociferous imperialist and commentator of the nationalist right. His chauvinism gave much grist to the mill for Germanophobes in Britain, where there was no attempt to distinguish between the radical ranting of the *Deutsche Zeitung* and articles that appeared in the more serious organs of the German press. On Lange, see “Lange, Friedrich,” in *BS*, vol. 2, 734.

Above all, in the further management of the press the inadequacy of our naval power might be given more importance when the difficulties of the situation in Samoa are properly assessed. [Bülow: “yes!”] 130

The move demonstrated how much the state secretary had begun to rely on his press expert to create a semblance of public support for his policies. Through his connections to the semi-official press and newspapers friendly to the government—the Center Kölnische Volkszeitung was really the only exception listed above—Hammann was working to build a bloc of public support for a policy of waiting that was widely unpopular in the remaining organs of German press.131

In the coming months, Bülow, the Kaiser and his agents in Berlin and London emphasized the potential criticisms the government would inevitably face from the nationalist right as reason for the British to come to an agreement over Samoa. The British ambassador to Berlin gave warnings to this effect. “German public opinion has been led to believe that German interests greatly exceed those of the other two powers,” he wrote Lord Salisbury at the end of March. “For these and other reasons . . . the news

130 Memorandum by Hammann, 31 March 1899, Südsee Inseln 5, Bd. 2, PA-AA. The Hannoverscher Courier and the Hamburgischer Correspondent were two regional National-Liberal newspapers with minor circulations. The Hamburgischer Correspondent, it will be remembered, was one of the papers Hammann had brought into his circle of trusted papers by this time because of his connections to its Berlin representative, Dr. Ernst Francke. See above, p. 101.

131 Hence, Oron J. Hale mistakenly wrote that Bülow gave free rein to the press, mainly because the papers outside the circle listed by Hammann gave vent to much blunt criticism of the government over its failure to move forward in the Samoan Islands. Hale, 192. Published in Cologne, the Kölnische Volkszeitung appeared in a region that was heavily concentrated with Catholics and became the most popular Center-party paper in Germany in the two decades before the First World War. The circulation of the Kölnische Volkszeitung demonstrated this fact: standing at about 18,000 copies in 1902, by 1914 its daily circulation had almost doubled to approximately 30,000 by 1912. The growing importance of the Cologne newspaper was the result of the leadership qualities of its owners and editors. It had originally been founded in 1860 by the Bachem family, which had longstanding ties in the Cologne publishing world that stretched back to 1818. By the Wilhelmine period, the newspaper had come under the control of Julius Bachem (1845-1928), who worked tirelessly with his longstanding editor and “alter ego,” Hermann Cardauns (1847-1926), to enhance the political reputation of the paper. John K. Zeender, “The German Center Party 1890-1906,” Transactions of the American Philosophical Society 66 (1976): 35-7; Anton Ritthaler, “Bachem, Julius,” in NdB, vol. 1, Aachen—Behaim (Berlin: Duncker & Humboldt, 1953), 493; and Wilmont Haacke, “Cardauns, Bernard Hermann,” in NdB, vol. 3, Bürklein—Ditmar (Berlin: Duncker & Humboldt, 1957), 138.
that the English have sided with the Americans against the Germans in Samoa will cause an outcry in the German press.”

Ultimately it was the deterioration of the situation in South Africa and the outbreak of the Boer War that forced Lord Salisbury’s hand. On 14 November 1899 the British gave up their claims in the Samoan Islands to Germany and the United States in return for the Tonga Islands, the Savage Islands, and minor islands in the Solomon group. Bülow had won the prestige victory he had desired to placate public opinion. To pull off a final coup at the expense of the British, Bülow arranged to have the agreement announced first in the German press, to prevent Salisbury from publicizing it first and portraying it as a success for his own government. To the Kaiser, Bülow appeared a magician. The journalists’ estimate of his diplomatic skill was just as great: “all the newspapers are loud in their praise of the diplomatic skill with which M. de Bülow has stuck to his point, in the face of all obstacles, and carried the day by securing to Germany the two islands in question,” Viscount Gough wrote from Berlin.

**Old Diplomacy against the New**

In spite of the initial success that Hammann and Bülow had in mobilizing public support for *Weltpolitik*, the policies they pursued were a double-edged sword of sorts. On the one hand, the Bülow-Hammann system—with its use of the semi-official press and its intimate connections to sympathetic journalists—restored a certain amount of

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132 Lascelles to Salisbury, 31 March 1899, no. 135, *BD*, vol. 1, 112. See also Lascelles to Salisbury, 26 May 1899, no. 141, ibid., 117-18; and Lascelles to Salisbury, 10 October 1899, no. 150, ibid., 126-7.

133 For the specific provisions of the agreement, see the outlines enclosed in Hatzfeldt to Salisbury, 27 October 1899, no. 4115, *GP*, vol. 14, 671-3, and Salisbury to Gough, 27 October 1899, no. 151, *BD*, vol. 1, 127-8.

134 Bülow’s marginalia, Hatzfeldt to Foreign Office, 1 November 1899, and Hatzfeldt to Bülow, 2 November 1899, Südsee Inseln 5, Bd. 6, PA-AA.

agency to the government so far as public relations were concerned. On the other hand, by simply recognizing the importance of public opinion and the need to cultivate it, the government had admitted that the old, cabinet-style of diplomacy was becoming increasingly outdated. So long as Hammann successfully employed his contacts to douse unexpected fires in the press, Bülow's position in the Kaiser's government remained secure. A major trend of Bülow's tenure in office, however, was that increasingly he would have to accommodate public opinion in order to maintain a secure position, even when the dictates of the old Bismarckian *Realpolitik* would have suggested more unpopular policies. This trend first became obvious in the period of the Boer War, when the policy of the government was directly at odds with public sentiment represented in the press and the Reichstag.

The main issue at stake between the Boers and the British related directly back to an ambiguous settlement reached in 1884 that had temporarily ended an earlier conflict over British annexations in South Africa. The arrangement had given domestic autonomy to the Boers, but stipulated that the two republics would be subject to British supervision in the foreign arena. For the Boers, the settlement was tantamount to independence; for the statesmen in London, it meant the Transvaal was now a part of the British Empire. The discovery of gold in the Transvaal in the late 1880s, the development of British economic interests because of this, and the controversy surrounding the Jameson Raid and the Kruger Telegram all contributed to a deterioration of the relations between the Boers and the authorities in England. By 1899, the immediate spark for a conflict related to the question of the restricted rights of the “*Uitlanders*”—Englishmen who had migrated to the Transvaal to make their fortune
in the gold mines. In March 1898, Alfred Milner, the high commissioner for Cape Colony, dramatically compared the Uitlanders to helots and pressed the British government to provoke a war by pushing Kruger to grant immigrants the same rights as the Boers.\textsuperscript{136} The Anglo-German treaty on the Portuguese colonies of 1898 closed off any idea that the Germans would aid the Boers. By pressing Kruger on the question of suffrage rights in 1899, the British were able to goad the Boers to issue an ultimatum in early October (just as the negotiations on the Samoan dispute were being finalized).

The outbreak of war placed Bülow and the Reich Foreign Office in an awkward position. The German press—across the political spectrum from the Social Democrats to the Conservatives, but especially on the nationalist right—sympathized with the Boers, but did so without pushing the government to intervene. The policy of the Foreign Office, however, was one of strict neutrality, with the agreement on the Samoan Islands acting as a kind of quid pro quo for German goodwill.\textsuperscript{137} Bülow carefully outlined his strategy in a press directive to Hammann issued on the eve of the war. The semi-official papers, he ordered, should employ “quiet, objective, and cool language.” They had to avoid coming out too decisively for the British, which would obviously alienate public opinion. But they also could not come down in favor of the Boers, especially since the other great powers had not committed themselves to an anti-British course.\textsuperscript{138} This followed the eventual attitude of the Kaiser, for any overly Anglophobic press

\textsuperscript{136}Alfred Milner, Viscount Milner (1854-1925), was the governor of Cape Colony and the high commissioner of South Africa in Chamberlain’s colonial secretariaship. He was a consistent advocate of reining in the Boers. After 1900, Milner also served as the civil administrator of the Orange River and Transvaal colonies in South Africa. Colin Newbury, “Milner, Alfred,” in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, vol. 38, Meyrick-Morande (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 302-9
\textsuperscript{137}William II had decided upon a policy of neutrality at least as early as August 1899. See Holstein to Hatzfeldt, 17 August 1899, Hatz., vol. 2, 1253.
\textsuperscript{138}Bülow to the Foreign Office, 20 September 1899, Afrika Generalia 13, Bd. 38, PA-AA.
commentary could conceivably ruin his plans for a supplementary naval bill in the Reichstag. The pages of the newspapers closest to Hammann (e.g., the Kölnische Zeitung, the Post, the Berliner Neueste Nachrichten, and the Kreuzzeitung) had pushed for Boer reform as the answer to the problem in accordance with the official policy advocated in the Foreign Office as the crisis had developed. To a large extent they had succeeded in bringing the more moderate organs of the German press along with them, as it was largely only the Pan-Germans who opposed British policy in South Africa.

Following the outbreak of hostilities in October 1899, the semi-official press continued to follow the government’s lead. Bülow reiterated for Hammann that he should cultivate a “cool and quiet” tone in the press in light of a recent British defeat at Ladysmith; only this would prevent the growth of bitterness in Britain and stifle French and Russian hopes to range Germany on the side of the Boers against her interests. The Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung reproduced British reports about the origins of the war without commentary. The Kölnische Zeitung almost seemed to sympathize with the British government against the Boers. The position of these semi-official organs was echoed in other papers close to Hammann, such as the Post, the Berliner Neueste Nachrichten, the National-Zeitung, and the Frankfurter Zeitung. Bülow and Hammann’s obvious intention was to initiate the “snowball effect” through the papers closest to the government, which might encourage the other organs of the press to walk

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139 William II’s marginalia, Tschirschky to the Foreign Office, 27 October 1899, England 78, Bd. 12, PA-AA.
141 E.g., Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 10 and 11 June 1899. In the first weeks of the war, it largely reproduced the reports of Reuter’s Agency without commentary. Hale, 195.
142 Kölnische Zeitung, 11 and 12 October 1899.
143 See Anderson, Background, 293-304. The Post and the Berliner Neueste Nachrichten eventually diverged from this position when they realized that antagonism with Britain might help win public support for a supplementary naval bill.
the delicate tightrope laid out by the chancellor following the settlement of the Samoan question. Otherwise, as Hammann wrote to his press representative in London early in the war, if public opinion got too excited, it would tend to do all the dirty work for Germany’s enemies, Russia and France. To a certain extent their efforts were successful, as papers outside the government orbit, such as Die Nation, a National-Liberal organ, echoed the official view by disparaging the irrational political sentimentality in Germany that tended to see the Boers in an overly romantic light. It was really only the Pan-German Alldeutsche Blätter that overtly criticized the government’s policy of neutrality.

As it turned out, the newspapers outside of the semi-official circle eventually shattered the government’s plans with an abrupt about-face that increasingly resembled the Pan-German view. The immediate issue was a gesture of German goodwill in the first few weeks of the war, centered on the visit of the Kaiser and Bülow to Britain from 20 to 28 November 1899. As far as Bülow viewed the situation, the visit was simply a way to continue the policy of the free hand, throwing the British a bone for their

145 Die Nation, 7 October 1899.
146 The critical articles that appeared in the weekly paper were voluminous during the first few months of the conflict. See Alldeutsche Blätter, “Kundegebungen zur Transvaalfrage,” 1 October 1899, no. 40, 332; Alldeutsche Blätter, “Zur Transvaalfrage,” 8 October 1899, no. 41, 339; Alldeutsche Blätter, “Das Deutsche Reich und der südafrikanische Krieg,” 22 October 1899, no. 43, 353-4; Alldeutsche Blätter, “Der Burenkrieg. Eine Mahnung an Deutschland!” 12 November 1899, no. 46, 383-4; and Alldeutsche Blätter, “Hülfe den Buren,” 3 December 1899, no. 49, 409-11. The Alldeutsche Blätter was a weekly paper with a moderate circulation of 8,000 that represented the Pan-German League after 1894. Its main purpose was twofold: to keep members apprised of business between the annual meetings of the League and to carry on a constant stream of criticism against the government whenever its policies did not mesh with the Pan-German tenets. The editor after 1894 was the business manager of the League, Dr. Adolf Lehr (1839-1901), who was able through a hodge-podge of finance measures to keep the publication afloat through subscriptions and advertising revenues that made the journal nearly self-sustaining. Lehr also sat in the Reichstag as a National Liberal, representing the tenth voting district of Saxony from 1898 to 1901. Mildred Wertheimer, The Pan-German League 1890-1914 (New York: Longmans, Green & Co, 1924), 116-20; Eley, German Right, 102, and 141; and “Lehr, Adolf,” in MdR, 384.
capitulation on the Samoa question, while hoping to win more concessions on specific issues of his world policy. For Chamberlain—who represented Britain during the visit in Lord Salisbury’s stead—\(^{147}\) the desire was for a more comprehensive agreement that would lead to a general understanding between Britain, Germany and the United States. Bülow and William II worked their hardest to maintain friendly relations, but without committing Germany to anything definite other than further collaboration on specific issues as they arose. \(^{148}\) The British press greeted the meetings positively, especially as they demonstrated that the Kaiser’s government could not be held responsible for the violent criticism of the continental press, which had been whipped into a frenzy of Anglophobia on account of events in South Africa. \(^{149}\) The visit, however, caused a great deal of head shaking in Germany, where it seemed as though the emperor was acting against “the majority of the German people,” as the Kölnische Volkszeitung—\(^{150}\) the populist voice of the Center party—put it. \(^{150}\) This disparaging view of the Kaiser’s visit found echoes across the political spectrum, in the ranks of the Left Liberals, the National Liberals, and the Conservatives. \(^{151}\) And the criticism, of course, was most strident in the organs of the Pan-Germans, the agrarians and the Bismarckian Hamburger Nachrichten. The best Hammann could do was to ask Baron Hermann von Eckardstein in London to encourage the view that Herbert von Bismarck was behind the critical words of the latter organ with the obvious intention of shattering any Anglo-German

\(^{147}\) Lord Salisbury’s wife died the very day that the imperial party arrived in England and he therefore excused himself from the meetings. Garvin, vol. 3, 500.

\(^{148}\) Langer, Diplomacy of Imperialism, 656-8.

\(^{149}\) Eckardstein to Holstein, 2 December 1899, no. 721, PH, vol. 4, 151.

\(^{150}\) Kölnische Volkszeitung, 27 October 1899.

\(^{151}\) Vossische Zeitung, 20 and 21 October 1899; Frankfurter Zeitung, 31 October 1899; Schwäbischer Merkur, 1 November 1899; Münchener Neueste Nachrichten, 7 November 1899; and Kreuzzeitung, 10 November 1899. The Schwäbischer Merkur was a regional National-Liberal paper from Stuttgart founded by the Elben family in 1785.
rapprochement.\textsuperscript{152} This was to become a familiar task for Hammann in the months to come, as Eckardstein was appointed First Secretary in the London Embassy on 21 December and became thereafter the official point-man for the Foreign-Office publicity work conducted there.\textsuperscript{153}

By December matters went from bad to worse. On 30 November Chamberlain had tried to push the question of the Anglo-German alliance forward again during a speech he delivered at Leicester. In essence, he proposed a league of peace based upon the supposed racial affinities of the two nations with the United States: “I can foresee many things which must be a cause of great anxiety to the statesmen of Europe,” he said, but in which our interests are essentially the same as Germany’s and in which the understanding of which I have spoken in the case of America might, if extended to Germany, do more perhaps than any combination of arms to preserve the peace of the world. [Cheers] But, as I have said, I do not rest in the case of nations upon alliances of interest alone. The world is not governed entirely by interest, or, in my opinion, particularly of interest. Sentiment is one of the greatest factors in all our affairs, and there is no reason why the sentiments of the people of the two countries should not be in accord. That may appear to you in the first instance a rather striking statement, for we have been accustomed for some time past to the abuse of the foreign press.... But even in regard to the rather unfortunate form which criticism in Germany and elsewhere has taken, I think we do wrong to pay too much attention to the foreign press.... It is not with German newspapers that we desire to have an understanding or alliance; it is with the German people; and I may point out to you that at bottom the character, the main character, of the Teutonic race differs very slightly indeed from the character of the Anglo-Saxon race. If the union between England and America is a powerful factor in the cause of peace, a new Triple Alliance between the

\textsuperscript{152} Hammann to Eckardstein, 28 October 1899, and Hammann to Eckardstein, 15 November 1899, in Eckardstein, vol. 2, 119.

\textsuperscript{153} “Eckardstein, Hermann Freiherr von,” BHdAD, vol. 1, 479-80. Eckardstein (1864-1933) began working in London on his own initiative and without an official appointment in 1898. He attained the title of embassy privy councilor before his appointment as first secretary in London at the end of December 1899. He continued to serve officially as the first secretary until 26 October 1902. Hammann’s papers unfortunately contain no record of the correspondence of these two men during the Boer War. In addition to his publicity work for Hammann, Eckardstein was also one of the most important figures behind the alliance negotiations of these years, which he nevertheless obfuscated as much as he helped. For the most recent treatment of this question, see Karl-Alexander Hampe, “Alles oder nichts—die deutsche-englische Annäherung um die Jahrhundertwende und die Rolle des Freiherr von Eckardstein,” Auswärtiger Dienst 57 (1996): 84-91.
Teutonic race and the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race will be a still more potent influence in the future of the world.\textsuperscript{154}

In light of the embarrassing Anglophobic commentary that the German press began to bandy about after the Windsor visit, Chamberlain’s speech put Bülow in an extremely embarrassing position. He had no intention of carrying through the new “Triple Alliance,” especially considering how unpopular it would be with the German public, despite Chamberlain’s arguments to the contrary.\textsuperscript{155}

To prevent the inevitable fire from breaking out, Bülow and Hammann immediately began a campaign in the press to play down the matter. The Kölnische Zeitung, representing the official view of the government, focused on the qualifications Chamberlain had made already in the speech about the use of the term “alliance,” which he had simultaneously defined both as something definite—“committed to paper”—and as something more nebulous that only “exists in the minds of statesmen.”\textsuperscript{156} In addition, Hammann probably also leaked a more explicit denial to the Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger. An inside source that the paper anonymously quoted denied explicitly that any alliance was forthcoming, while also remarking that Chamberlain had deliberately overstated the matter.\textsuperscript{157} Bülow was even more explicit in the Reichstag, where he touched vaguely on the matter in his speech announcing the Second Naval Bill. As justification for the supplementary naval law, he surveyed Germany’s relations with the other powers, asserting that


\textsuperscript{155} Chamberlain had met this latter objection in his speech by remarking that “It was not with German newspapers that we desire to have an understanding or alliance; it is with the German people.” The Times, 1 December 1899. For Bülow, of course, these were one and the same thing.

\textsuperscript{156} Kölnische Zeitung, 2 December 1899. The quotes come from the original speech in The Times, 1 December 1899.

\textsuperscript{157} Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger, 1 December 1899.
we are perfectly ready to live in peace and harmony with [England] on the basis of complete reciprocity and mutual respect. But precisely because our foreign situation is a favorable one now, we must utilize it to secure ourselves for the future. I hope, and we all hope, that this future might be a peaceful one. Whether this future will be a peaceful one—that nobody can tell you. In the realm of foreign policy, it is a peculiarity of our time that new sources of friction can arise every day.\textsuperscript{158}

It was a statement again of Bülow’s policy of the free hand, and of the views expressed at the time of the Windsor visit. Nevertheless, it was bound to cause some discomfort in Britain as a rebuff to Chamberlain’s advance.\textsuperscript{159} Bülow directed Eckardstein to work to calm the effects of the speech for Chamberlain,\textsuperscript{160} and he apparently was able to dampen the effects of the pronouncement both in the newspapers and in official circles.\textsuperscript{161}

But the truth of the matter is that a rabidly anti-British public opinion had necessitated a strong response in order to maintain some semblance of support for Bülow’s foreign policy.\textsuperscript{162} Indeed, the press commentary on the speech demonstrated this fact. The state secretary won the support of the anti-Semitic \textit{Staatsbürger-Zeitung}, for example, which asserted that he had demonstrated the need for a substantial increase in the size of the navy to ensure the protection of Germany’s “vital interests.”\textsuperscript{163} This sentiment was echoed in the National-Liberal papers. The \textit{Magdeburgische Zeitung}, for instance, received the speech as a “new indication that our Foreign Office is guarding against Germany’s rights and claims being encroached upon in the race of the

\textsuperscript{159} Garvin suggests that Chamberlain expected a nice public statement from Bülow as recompense for the speech at Leicester, but was sadly unhappy with what he eventually got. See Garvin, vol. 3, 512.
\textsuperscript{160} Holstein to Eckardstein, 16 December 1899, in Eckardstein, 126-7.
\textsuperscript{161} Eckardstein to Holstein, 21 December 1899, no. 723, PH, vol. 4, 154-5.
\textsuperscript{162} Anderson, \textit{Background}, 305-6.
\textsuperscript{163} \textit{Staatsbürger-Zeitung}, 12 December 1899.
nations.” The Left-Liberal papers could at least praise Bülow’s skill as a speaker, even if they were more ambivalent about the need for a new naval bill. August Stein, the Berlin representative of the Frankfurter Zeitung praised Bülow’s dexterity as a speaker in the Reichstag. The Vossische Zeitung asserted likewise that “Count Bülow is the most eloquent speaker among the statesmen of the day.”

The growing public estrangement with Britain can be seen from a closer examination of the initial reports that trickled in about the war in South Africa. Lasting from October 1899 to February of the following year, the first phase of the war was marked militarily by series of dramatic setbacks for the British. As the Boers enjoyed numerical superiority at the beginning of the war, they humiliated the British in nearly every engagement they fought early on, a development that culminated in the so-called “Black Week” of December, when the Boers defeated the British successively at Stormberg, Magersfontein, and Colenso. As the news of setbacks such as these trickled back to Europe, they were reported in the German press with a distinctive Anglophobic overtone. Ironically, almost all the reports of the initial battles fought in the war reported in Germany originated in London, since the British military authorities censored all news coming out of South Africa and there were no German correspondents on the ground who could report home by telegraph anyway. German or other European correspondents in London or on the continent gave the reports their Anglophobic distortion.

165 Frankfurter Zeitung, 12 December 1899.
166 Vossische Zeitung, 12 December 1899.
167 Thomas Pakenham, The Boer War (New York: Random House, 1993) is a fairly recent and highly readable account of the war in South Africa.
The best example of this slanted journalism at the beginning of the Boer War came from one source, the Cabel-Correspondenz, a company established in London by a shady journalist named Harry Kaulitz (alias Farlow). Kaulitz had a reputation for sensationalism going back for many years. He had reportedly been imprisoned for three years on the charge of lesè majesté by Bismarck, was expelled from Paris for his journalistic activities as the representative of the Baseler Nachrichten during the Dreyfus Affair, and later even tried to portray himself as a representative of the Frankfurter Zeitung, though the paper publicly renounced him. He had also asserted at the same time a five-year connection to the Berlin Post, though it later became clear that he had only written reports for it during a brief period, lasting from January to October 1890. The Berlin Post quickly disavowed him when its editors discovered how “worthless” his reports were and severed their connection to him. Just before the outbreak of the Boer War—in March 1899—Kaulitz had set up shop in London. He began to publish false reports as soon as the conflict broke out, portraying the British in a highly negative light. Many of these were completely fabricated reports of British atrocities where, for instance, it appeared that under British orders “Kaffirs throttled seventeen Boer women, and little eight-year-old girls were outraged by English soldiers

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168 There is a prodigious amount of material in the Foreign Office archives on Kaulitz and his work in London, as the Daily Mail, the Daily Express, the Berlin Post, and the Königsberger Hartungche Zeitung all exposed the fabrications of the Cabel-Correspondenz in early 1902. See the reports in the Post, 29, 31 January, and 1 February 1902; the Daily Express, 11 February 1902; the Daily Mail, 12, 13, and 14 February 1902, as well as the other materials contained in Deutschland 126, no. 2, Bd. 8, PA-AA. The revelations of the Post were fairly accurate, as they were apparently based on the materials that the Foreign Office had collected on Kaulitz and his activities.

169 Unsigned memorandum, 26 April 1902, enclosed in Metternich to Bülow, 30 April 1902, Deutschland 126, no. 2, Bd. 8, PA-AA; and Frankfurter Zeitung, 22 August 1890.

170 “Exposé des Chefredakteurs Dr. Kronsbeim für seinem Anwalt,” Deutschland 126, no. 2, Bd. 8, PA-AA.

171 Unsigned memorandum, 26 April 1902, enclosed in Metternich to Bülow, 30 April 1902, Deutschland 126, no. 2, Bd. 8, PA-AA.
and Kaffirs.” Many were invented—or nearly invented—reports that sympathized directly with the Boer cause and dressed up British defeats originally reported in the London press, while adding a South African dateline for authenticity. Nonetheless, they were reproduced from November 1899 to December 1900 in the pages of more respectable and popular newspapers such as the *Vossische Zeitung*, the *Berliner Tageblatt*, the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, the *Schwäbischer Merkur*, and the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, as well as in the hyper-patriotic papers where one could expect to find such sensationalism, as, for example, in the nationalist *Deutsche Zeitung*. Anglophobic sentiment was so widespread that even the Social Democrats looked forward to a British defeat—or at least to the downfall of the Conservative-Unionist government and the rise of a Liberal one with a genuine peace platform. Hence, it was only those papers like the *Kölnische Zeitung* that remained close to the government—depending on it for information—that continued to give voice to the official line of the Foreign Office: namely, that German policy should follow realistic interests rather than sentimental attachments to the Boer cause.

In the face of such hostile opinion at home, it was impossible for Bülow to follow anything other than a strictly neutral course in foreign policy. The British press made such a course possible, as it did not initially report on the rabidly anti-British sentiment...

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172 Report of 2 November 1900 quoted and translated in the *Daily Mail*, 12 February 1902, Deutschland 126, no. 2, Bd. 8, PA-AA. This sort of tendentious reporting was not restricted to the newspapers either. One author who was supposedly a British officer on the staff General Buller—a certain A.C. Rembe—penned a book recounting his experiences in South Africa that mirrored the worst reports of the *Cabel Correspondenz*. It was published in a collected volume that included another German observer’s similarly lurid reminiscences reproaching the British army’s inhumane treatment of Boer civilians in the conflict. See A.C. Rembe and Eugen von Enzberg, *Afrikanischer Totentanz* (Berlin: Fußingers Buchhandlung, 1900-1901).

173 Hale, 199-201.

174 *Vorwärts*, 16 December 1899.

175 *Kölnische Zeitung*, 12 October 1899.
that characterized German newspapers as a whole. The vast majority of British newspapers were content to republish the reports of the semi-official press as representing the official goodwill of the German nation and its leaders. The major exception to this rule was the reports of the Berlin correspondent of The Times, George Saunders. Though he recognized the friendliness of both official policy and the reports of the semi-official press, the rampant Anglophobia that generally characterized German public opinion seemed to him an overriding factor in the relations of the two countries. While he had tried to tread lightly in his first years in Berlin—in order to keep the official well of information from drying up at the Foreign Office—he now felt obliged by national interest to report the facts as he saw them. The Foreign Office, in turn, saw Saunders as a great impediment to the maintenance of good relations with Britain and sought to curb his reports—or, barring that, to remove him from Berlin. Hence, Holstein wrote to Hatzfeldt that Saunders’s reports suggested his policy had the support of the editors of The Times back in London. Bülow complained that he was portraying the reports of the opposition and the radical right as representing the German people more generally. The government placed articles in semi-official organs protesting the “lying

176 These included many influential Conservative papers in London, such as the Daily Telegraph, the Morning Post, and the Standard, as well as more popular papers like the Daily Mail (broadly conservative) and the Daily News (avowedly Liberal).


178 The History of The Times, vol. 3, The Twentieth Century Test, 1884-1912 (New York: Macmillan, 1947), 296-8, and 301-2. Although this is the official history of The Times, it remains one of the most scholarly accounts of British newspaper history and is a must-read for anybody interested in the history of the press in Europe.


reports of *The Times.*” ¹⁸¹ And the Foreign Office even appealed to British diplomacy to rein Saunders in.¹⁸² Yet it was all to no avail. The Boer War ultimately marked a dramatic turning point in Anglo-German relations, and *The Times* became from this point the most determined critic of German policy. This development was of decisive importance, as the readership of the paper encompassed the political and decision-making elite of Britain.

**The New Diplomacy Triumphant**

The Anglophobia exhibited throughout the German press in the early months of the Boer War nonetheless had its positive uses. Ever since the passage of the First Naval Bill, there had been a shared sense among the Kaiser and his closest advisors that a supplement was necessary to make the navy truly effective as an instrument of German policy. The Kaiser had been especially anxious to get the Reichstag to approve provisions for more battleships, remaining hopeful that this could be accomplished without irreparably damaging the prospects for a rapprochement with Britain.¹⁸³ He had therefore alluded to the need for continuing fleet construction in his speech christening the battleship *Karl der Grosse* in October 1899, hoping to build up public support for pushing a new naval bill through the Reichstag.¹⁸⁴

Bülow had been much more skeptical that Britain would not feel threatened by a program of fleet construction. For him, the proper course at the beginning of the Boer War was to antagonize Britain as little as possible, at least until the battleship fleet was

¹⁸¹ *Die Post*, 17 October 1899.
¹⁸² Memorandum by Eckardstein, January 1900, in Eckardstein, vol. 2, 184-5; and Holstein to Eckardstein, 3 March 1900, in ibid., 185.
completed. But he had also outlined a public-relations strategy for the Press Bureau as early as November 1898 in order to build a broader political consensus for the emperor’s fleet program. Without attacking Russia, Britain, or the United States, he wrote Hammann, the press ought to foreground two key ideas: (1) that the fleet was absolutely necessary as an instrument of foreign policy, as was demonstrated by the retreat of the French at Fashoda and the rapid defeat of Spain in the Spanish-American War; and (2) that national solidarity was absolutely necessary in foreign affairs until adequate naval power could be built up to defend Germany’s interests in the world.

Despite further demonstrations to alleviate concerns over the introduction of the Second Naval Bill in Britain, he calculated early on that the spread of Anglophobia in the press would help indirectly to ensure the prospects of the measure in the Reichstag.

The first step in this policy was the announcement of the Second Naval Bill in the Reichstag on 11 December 1899. “These times of political weakness and economic and political humility,” he told the Reichstag,

must not continue. [Lively applause]. We do not want to become again . . . the serfs of humankind. But we shall only continue to measure up if we understand there is no safety for us without military power, without a strong army and a strong navy. [“Very true!” on the right; disagreement on the left] The means, gentlemen, to conduct a struggle for existence in this world—without strong armaments on land and sea—has not yet been found for a nation of sixty million that lives in the middle of Europe and extends its economic connections on all sides. [“Very true!” on the right]. In the next century, the German nation will be either hammer or anvil.”

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185 Bülow to Holstein, 28 November 1899, no. 720, PH, vol. 4, 150. This seems to have been his attitude even before the Boer War, for he expressed basically the same idea to Oswald von Richthofen in July of 1899 as well. See Kennedy, Samoan Tangle, 191.
186 Bülow to the Foreign Office, 22 November 1898, Deutschland 137, secr., Bd. 2, PA-AA.
Here was an ominous announcement of a brave new Darwinian world, where only the strongest would survive and prosper. In order to meet the world to come, the government was asking the Reichstag to double the number of ships that would ultimately be built for the Kaiser's navy.

While the organs of big industry approved of further fleet building, the agrarians on the far right, the Center party, and the liberals were not convinced that a supplement was necessary, leaving the government short of the votes necessary to push the new measure through the Reichstag. Indeed, the Kaiser's veiled October announcement had completely flabbergasted the Left-Liberal press, which felt that the government was going back on its first-Naval-Bill promise not to request further increases in the near future. The agrarians, moreover, persistently complained about being ignored by the government, because industry was now being offered what they saw as a government handout. Nor did the government expect any help from the Social Democrats: Vorwärts criticized the social imperialism that seemed to be the main motivating factor behind the policy of naval construction. In this political climate the execution of William II's imperial command seemed likely to falter for lack of parliamentary support.

The solution came at the end of December, when news reached Berlin that the British navy had detained a German mail steamer, the Bundesrat, near Delagoa Bay on

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189 See Kehr, Schlachtflottenbau, 178.
190 Frankfurter Zeitung, 19 October 1899, and Vossische Zeitung, 19 October 1899. The satirical paper Simplicissimus published a cartoon on this occasion entitled “The Blissful Dream of a Naval Enthusiast,” which interpreted the law as an attempt at “splitting the opposition” to the government. The cartoon depicted Admiral Tirpitz cutting a politician in half with a battleship as his saw. Simplicissimus, 11 December 1899, no. 37.
191 Vorwärts, 12 December 1899.
28 December 1899. Bülow knew perfectly well the public outcry that would result from the search and seizure of this and other German ships, as the British tried to enforce a blockade of the Boer Republics. Tirpitz was even more straightforward: “Now we have the wind that we need to bring our ship to port; the naval bill will be accepted,” he reportedly told the emperor. Like the admiral, Bülow knew he could count on public sympathy for stronger military power to prevent further bullying of German commerce in the world. Hence Bülow immediately dispatched orders to the Press Bureau that the incident could be cited—carefully and objectively, but also firmly—in the press as evidence of the need for a new naval bill to protect German interests in the world.

One additional factor came to the fore in this new campaign for the supplementary naval bill. In April 1898, a new pressure group had been organized to enlighten the public with regard to the need for a navy, the Navy League. The Navy League was completely different from the other pressure groups of the radical right because it was much more populist in nature. This fact could be seen in both its membership and in the circulation of the organs that represented it. Die Flotte, which appeared monthly after the founding of the organization, had a circulation of somewhere between 270,000 and 280,000 in early 1900, completely dwarfing the subscriptions of comparable papers on the far right. The importance of the Navy League went far beyond its membership, however. Something like two hundred newspapers subscribed

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193 Bülow to Hammann, 31 December 1899, Deutschland 138, Bd. 12, PA-AA.
194 The standard works are Geoff Eley, “The German Navy League in German Politics 1890-1914” (Ph.D. diss., University of Sussex, 1974); and idem, “Reshaping the Right: Radical Nationalism and the German Navy League, 1898-1908,” The Historical Journal 21, no. 2 (June 1978): 327-54.
195 Eley, German Right, 102.
to its news service, the *Allgemeine Marine und Handels-Korrespondenz*, which meant that the League was able to propagate its message deeply and widely in German society.\(^{196}\) All told, the Navy League had a publicity apparatus that far outstripped the capabilities of any other pressure group. After December 1899 it put its propaganda apparatus to work on behalf of the Second Naval Bill.

It was the Boer War, though, that really gave the government the momentum it needed to get the Second Naval Bill through the Reichstag. For six months after the introduction of the measure in December 1899, the Reich Naval Office used the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* as its official mouthpiece, and the editors were engrossed again—as with the First Naval Bill—in defending and promoting the naval increases requested by the Kaiser. Elsewhere German newspaper opinion rapidly fell in line with the government. The Conservative *Kreuzzzeitung*, while remaining true to the official governmental policy of neutrality, viewed the *Bundesrat* affair as ample rationale for the further development of the navy.\(^{197}\) The major organs representing heavy industry, the *Post* and the *Berliner Neueste Nachrichten*, continued their calls for a larger navy, though they played down the anti-British connotations of the law, in part because German heavy industry had recently been implicated in supplying war materiel to the British army in South Africa. Even the Left-Liberal press began to feel that the

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\(^{196}\) *The Times*, 26 January 1901. After 1902, the Presidium of the Navy League ran the journal with revenues paid annually by members of all social classes as a way of educating the public in the new navalism that went alongside *Weltpolitik*. Because of its minimal subscription rate (relatively cheap at 50 Pfennige) was not enough to support the publication of the journal, *Die Flotte* became the most expensive part of the annual budget of the Navy League; this became even more of a burden by 1904, when the pressure group supplied nearly 1,300 copies to national and foreign newspapers, 600 bound editions to schools and libraries, and another 3,600 to hotels, coffee shops, railroad cars, and passenger steamers gratis. See Eley, *German Right*, 218, and Carroll, *Germany and the Great Powers*, 451.

\(^{197}\) *Kreuzzeitung*, 3 January 1900.
government ought to stand firm in its protection of German commercial interests, but without, of course, directly advocating naval increases.\footnote{198 Berliner Tageblatt, 3 and 4 January 1900; and Vossische Zeitung, 4 January 1900.}

Perhaps most significant in this sense was the attitude of the semi-official Kölnische Zeitung toward the matter. Immediately after the seizure of the Bundesrat, it complained that the resort to a might-makes-right philosophy was alienating even those circles in Germany that sympathized with Britain.\footnote{199 Kölnische Zeitung, 3 January 1900.} When that failed, it issued a statement in bold type reproving the British for not listening.\footnote{200 Kölnische Zeitung, 16 January 1900.} And by the end of the month, it began to advocate Tirpitz’s “risk theory” publicly:

Our navy does not need to be superior to every other major sea power; it is sufficient to make the navy so strong that its destruction becomes a difficult task for the enemy under any circumstances and must considerably weaken him, despite a partially achieved victory.\footnote{201 Kölnische Zeitung, 26 January 1900.}

Bülow, in fact, worked with the leaders to the right of the Social Democrats in a carefully staged interpellation about the Bundesrat affair on 10 January 1900. He coldly guaranteed the Reichstag that he had received full assurance that German commerce would not be treated so brazenly in the future. He talked of the “legitimate excitement of German public opinion” on account of the affair. The now-tired talking points (which the Foreign Office had been spreading to the public since Bülow’s appointment) about a relationship “on the basis of parity and mutual consideration” was received with roaring applause. And the desire of the radical right to open a general debate on the matter was quickly shelved by a majority vote, suggesting that most of the parties were satisfied with Bülow’s clarification on the matter.\footnote{202 Speech by Bülow, 19 January 1900, 10th Leg. Per., Session 1, SBVR, vol. 168, 3600-2.} Bülow had, in essence, performed the delicate
task of depriving the nationalist right and the agrarians of their Anglophobic leadership role in the Reichstag, while also giving further indirect impetus for the new Naval Bill.

Even before the interpellation, William II wrote to Hohenlohe with great satisfaction that the agitated state of public opinion suggested that the Second Naval Bill would emerge from the committee process in a form desirable to the government.\textsuperscript{203} The anti-British sentiment of newspaper opinion quickly bled through to the Reichstag debates on the supplementary law. Tirpitz himself made it clear that the fleet would aim to keep the North Sea open in the event of a war, a veiled challenge to the supremacy of British sea power there.\textsuperscript{204} The Social Democrats fretted about the latent Anglophobia behind the measure.\textsuperscript{205} Nevertheless, the bill ultimately passed the Reichstag on 12 June 1900, commanding a vote of 201 to 103.\textsuperscript{206} The new supplement doubled the size of the navy, providing for thirty-eight battleships to be constructed over the next twenty years up to 1920, when the final ship to be built under the bill would be commissioned.\textsuperscript{207}

Although Bülow calculated that the \textit{Bundesrat} affair would help smooth the passage of the Second Naval Bill, after February 1900 the Anglophobia prevalent in much of the German press began to ebb. The main impulse for this shift was the military development of the Boer War. After February, the first stage of the war, characterized for the British by disappointment stacked upon disappointment, gave way to a new

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\textsuperscript{203} William II to Hohenlohe, 10 January 1900, in Hohenlohe, 555-6.
\textsuperscript{204} Speeches by Tirpitz, 8 and 9 February 1900, 10\textsuperscript{th} Leg. Per., Session 1, \textit{SBVR}, vol. 169, 3955-6, and 4023-5. The veiled references to Britain as “the greatest naval power” continued up to the passage of the bill. For the final text of the law, see Anlage no. 909, “Entwurf eines Gesetzes betreffend die deutsche Flotte,” \textit{SBVR}, vol. 178, 5662-4.
\textsuperscript{205} Speech by Bebel, 10 February 1900, 10\textsuperscript{th} Leg. Per., Session 1, ibid., 4012-13.
\textsuperscript{206} Vote on the Naval Bill, 12 June 1900, 10\textsuperscript{th} Leg. Per., Session 1, ibid., vol. 171, 5839.
phase in which Britain gradually began to get the upper hand over the Boers. The British armies that had been bottled up at Kimberley to the west of the Orange Free State and at Ladysmith to the east were relieved on 15 and 28 February respectively. By the middle of May, the British took Bloemfontein and annexed the Orange Free State; by the end of the month, they had relieved Mafeking in the north, beginning the invasion of the Transvaal; and they finally took Johannesburg on 31 May and Praetoria in early June, formally annexing the Transvaal by September. In essence, it seemed to any outside observer that the war had been won by the autumn of 1900.

The turn of Britain’s fortunes—both privately in diplomatic circles and publicly in the press—advanced the question of intervention. Diplomatically the Russians had approached the Germans as early as January about an intervention of the powers; following the initial British victories at Ladysmith and Kimberley they proposed directly that Germany, Russia and France intercede on behalf of the Boers. Bülow received the proposals coldly. The German press picked up the subject of intervention at roughly the same time, and once again Bülow’s public-relations policy dovetailed neatly with his diplomatic maneuvering. The organs of the semi-official press (namely the Kölnische Zeitung, the Berliner Neueste Nachrichten, and the Berlin Post) pursued the government line on the matter from the end of January. It was, after all, an act of self-destruction to bring about Britain’s demise for the benefit of France and Russia, whose position vis-à-vis Germany could only be strengthened if a wedge were driven between

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209 He specifically asked for a French guarantee of Germany’s European possessions, which meant of course renunciation of any hope of recovering Alsace and Lorraine. Such a precondition was one that no responsible French statesman could accept. See Bülow to Radolin, 3 March 1900, no. 4474, ibid., 517-18.
Berlin and London. On 6 February Eckardstein reported that the articles being published in the semi-official press were having a positive effect in London. In addition, Hammann also forwarded to Eckardstein clippings from a French paper that was hostile to Britain, and Eckardstein did his best to get them reported in amenable Conservative organs like the Daily Mail, the Daily Telegraph, and the Morning Post.

By the summer it was only the agrarians, the Hamburger Nachrichten, the Pan-Germans, and nationalist organs like the Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung and the Deutsche Zeitung—put briefly, the radical right—that kept up the anti-British agitation and the tendentious reporting of the early months of the war. In the summer, moreover, the Boxer movement broke out in China, and events in the Far East overshadowed developments in South Africa. It was only after Paul Kruger was able to escape the British vise—landing in Europe for a tour of the European capitals to promote mediation—that Anglophobia once again became rampant in the press. Kruger intended to stop in Berlin as a part of his tour to meet with German statesmen. He made it as far as Cologne before the Foreign Office communicated its desire not to offend the British by

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210 Die Post, 14 and 27 January and 3 March 1900, Kölnische Zeitung, 23 January and 26 February 1900; Berliner Neueste Nachrichten, 26 January 1900. The government line was then picked up to a certain extent in the liberal press. See National-Zeitung, 5 February 1900; Vossische Zeitung, 6 February 1900; Schwäbischer Merkur, 6 and 8 February 1900. The Vossische Zeitung (14 March 1900) even went so far as to make excuses for the British refusal of William’s “humanitarian” offer of a “friendly mediation” between the Boer republics and Britain in March. See also William II to Victoria, [March 1900], no. 4484, GP, vol. 15, 526.

211 Eckardstein to the Foreign Office, 6 February 1900, England 78, secretiss., Bd. 3, PA-AA. The Kaiser later bragged to his uncle, “With superhuman efforts Bülow and I have slowly got the better of our Press, swamped as it was with articles, rubles and francs from both sides, to create anti British feelings which our neighbors harbor most themselves.” William II to Edward, the Prince of Wales, 23 February 1900, no. 4509, GP, vol. 15, 559-60.

212 Hammann to Eckardstein, 2 February 1900, in Eckardstein, vol. 2, 199-200; and Eckardstein to the Foreign Office, 6 February 1900, and Bülow to Eckardstein, 7 February 1900, England 78, secretiss., Bd. 3, PA-AA. The issue specifically went back to anti-English articles published in the French paper Éclair, which were made out to look like they originated with the Duke of Mecklenburg, the president of the Colonial Society. After an official denial, the Foreign Office wanted British papers to reveal what it believed was Franco-Russian intrigue to alienate Britain from Germany.

213 Anderson, Background, 323.
allowing the Kaiser to meet with him.\textsuperscript{214} The government issued a statement to the effect that it was unrealistic to entertain Kruger’s proposals when there was no hope of achieving them. It would have been a lesson in futility.

This did not stop the radical right from exploiting the issue, however. Demonstrations on behalf of Kruger were held in Cologne—as they had been held in Paris during Kruger’s visit there. Money was collected for the Boers, and the Pan-German press screeched for intervention, while praising “Ohm Krüger.”\textsuperscript{215} The rest of the press also criticized the government for denying Kruger a meeting; only a few National-Liberal papers sided with the state. Dr. Ernst Hasse, the leader of the Pan-German League and a Reichstag deputy from Saxony,\textsuperscript{216} also joined with Dr. Theodor Reismann-Grone, the editor of the \textit{Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung},\textsuperscript{217} to lead a delegation to meet with Kruger at The Hague.\textsuperscript{218} There they publicly disavowed Bülow’s policy, claiming to represent the nation against the Foreign Office.

The matter culminated in the Reichstag, where the nationalist opposition repeated its criticisms of the government on 10 and 12 December 1900 during the annual

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\item[Bülow to Tschirschky, 4 December 1900, no. 4506, \textit{GP}, vol. 15, 549-50.]
\item[\textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, “An Ohm Krüger,” 16 December 1900, no. 51, 501; and \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, “Aufruf für die Opfer des Burenkrieges!” 23 December 1900, no. 52, 513.]
\item[Ernst Hasse (1846-1908) represented the National Liberals in the twelfth voting district of Saxony from 1893 to 1903. Need more here. See “Hasse, Ernst,” in \textit{MdR}, 339.]
\item[Dr. Theodor Reismann-Grone (1863-1949) was an original founder of the Pan-German League from Essen. He owned a number of local papers that he used to finance the \textit{Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung} as an unofficial Pan-German organ and a paper that represented the interests and viewpoint of the heavy industrialists. It was technically a National-Liberal organ on the right wing of the party, but moved in a more and more conservative direction in the Wilhelmine period. Dr. Reismann-Grone, was a dedicated nationalist and a leader in the Pan-German League who had connections among representatives of heavy industry in Essen and elsewhere. He believed that Bismarck’s fall from power in 1890 had been a national disaster, and in the \textit{Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung} he was tireless in its efforts to criticize the change of course inaugurated under Caprivi. Because of its owner’s connections to the Pan-German League, the \textit{Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung} blended nationalist ideals with the economic-interest brand of reporting found in the \textit{Berlin Post} or the \textit{Berliner Neueste Nachrichten}. See Turk, 24.]
\item[\textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, “Präsident Krüger in Deutschland,” 9 December 1900, no. 50, 489-90; and \textit{Alldeutsche Blätter}, “Die Abordnung des Alldeutschen Verbandes beim Präsidenten Krüger,” 16 December 1900, no. 51, 503-5.]
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debates over the Foreign-Office budget. Hasse attacked Bülow for not receiving Kruger and for his neutrality policy in the Boer War more generally, before launching a full-scale assault on German diplomacy since 1890. Altogether, Hasse asserted, it seemed that the Foreign Office had lost touch with the nation. Bülow’s response was as scathing as it was elegant. He neglected to answer the question of why Kruger was snubbed and redirected attention to the government’s neutrality policy. Hasse, he began, could afford to indulge in political sentimentalism because he was not in a position of political responsibility. When it came to the feelings of the people more generally, Bülow went even further in delineating the government’s policy throughout the Boer War. “Public opinion is the powerful river that should drive the wheels of the national mill,” he conceded. “When this river is in danger of driving the wheels in the wrong direction, or even of wrecking them,” he elaborated,

it is the duty of a government that deserves the name to resist that river, paying no attention to the unpopularity that might arise. There are better garlands than the ones the Pan-German League has to hand out, namely the consciousness of being led solely and exclusively by genuine and enduring national interests. [“Bravo!”] … I can’t carry out foreign policy from the viewpoint of a strictly moral philosophy—that Prince Bismarck did not do either—and I also can’t do so from the viewpoint of the beer bench. [Laughter, and “Very good!” on the left]

With this masterful speech, Bülow utterly humiliated the Kruger-loving radical right in general—and Hasse and the Pan-Germans in particular—comparing them to men who had been drinking too much in a bar. Henceforth, the word “Pan-German” had the air of a political extremism about it, membership began to wane, and even the Colonial Society

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219 Speech by Hasse, 12 December 1900, 10th Leg. Per., Session 2, SBVR, vol. 179, 469-73.
220 Speech by Bülow, 12 December 1900, 10th Leg. Per., Session 2, ibid., 474-5. The Alldeutsche Blätter continued the struggle in its pages following the exchange, publishing the original speech by Hasse and articles critical of Bülow. Alldeutsche Blätter, “Graf Bülow über die Abweisung Krügers,” no. 51, 501-3; Alldeutsche Blätter, “Graf Bülow gegen Professor Hasse,” and “Rede des Reichstagsabgeordneten Prof. Dr. Hasse in der Reichstagssitzung vom 12. Dezember 1900,” 23 December 1900, no. 52, 513-19.
tried to distance itself from the Pan-Germans.\textsuperscript{221} When the \textit{Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung}—looking back on the affair in its Christmas issue—nonetheless argued that the Boer War had roused “the soul of the nation” as no other event since 1871, the Kaiser reflected the view of the Foreign Office and rationally minded Germans perfectly with a simple, but exasperated exclamation: “\textit{Ach!”}\textsuperscript{222}

Following the exchange between Bülow and Hasse, Hammann managed a campaign in the semi-official press that tended to pound the last nail home. Immediately following the debate, the \textit{Kölnische Zeitung} grumbled that the Pan-Germans were causing Germany to play the world’s fool.\textsuperscript{223} By January its portrayal of the event was even more graphic: “When Kruger ... did not abandon his belief in the useful effect of mass hypnosis,” it asserted autocratically, “he had to be told even more clearly that Kaiser William II manages German foreign policy, and he does not allow himself to be violated [\textit{vergewaltigen}] by the peasant’s wiliness and the turmoil of the masses.”\textsuperscript{224} By February of the next year, then, Bülow could confidently tell the Kaiser that the recent pro-Boer mania would quickly dissipate when it became obvious to the German people that Britain had made concessions in Africa, and that the Kaiser had managed a coolly calculated \textit{Realpolitik}.\textsuperscript{225}

Events initially seemed to bear out Bülow’s analysis. William II had visited Britain for a second time during the war in January to mourn the death of his

\textsuperscript{221} Chickering, 68.
\textsuperscript{222} William II’s marginalia, \textit{Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung}, 25 December 1900, Deutschland 126, no. 3, Bd. 4, PA-AA.
\textsuperscript{223} \textit{Kölnische Zeitung}, 14 December 1900.
\textsuperscript{224} \textit{Kölnische Zeitung}, 1 January 1901.
\textsuperscript{225} Lerman, 89.
grandmother, and his show of devotion had a very favorable reception in Britain.\textsuperscript{226} The German press also greeted the visit sympathetically for the moment, even though the\textit{Kreuzzeitung}, usually so close to the governmental point of view, criticized the Kaiser’s apparent disregard for the feelings of the people.\textsuperscript{227} Paul von Metternich, the future ambassador to London, averred, both in person to William II and by letter to Bülow, that Britain was primed for a rapprochement.\textsuperscript{228} The Kaiser, for his part, seemed to echo these thoughts in a conversation with the British ambassador: indeed, “at considerable length and with great eloquence,” he spoke “of the necessity of the Teutonic Nations holding together, in view of the probable, if not inevitable, conflict between them and the Slav nations.”\textsuperscript{229} The end result was another round of negotiations on the subject of an Anglo-German alliance.

The instigator in this last round of negotiations was Eckardstein, who assumed more duties in London during Ambassador Hatzfeldt’s incapacitation on account of illness in 1900 and early 1901.\textsuperscript{230} During a conversation with Lord Lansdowne—the new British foreign secretary and an avid supporter of rapprochement with Germany—on 18 March he proposed a defensive alliance aimed at the Franco-Russian combination.\textsuperscript{231}

\textsuperscript{227} \textit{Kreuzzeitung}, 8 February 1901.
\textsuperscript{228} Metternich to Bülow, 22 January 1901, no. 765, \textit{PH}, vol. 4, 195-6. Count Paul von Wolff-Metternich (1853-1934) served as the First Secretary in the London embassy from 1890 to 1895, was Consul-General in Cairo from 1895 to 1897, and represented Prussia in Hamburg from 1897 to 1900. When Hatzfeldt came down with an illness in 1900, Metternich served as the acting ambassador to London until 1901, when he was formally appointed to the post, which he held until 1912. During the war he was the ambassador at Constantinople from 1915 to 1916, where he reported back to the government about the Armenian genocide.
\textsuperscript{229} Lascelles to Salisbury, 28 February 1901, no. 322, \textit{BD}, vol. 2, 59.
\textsuperscript{230} See Hatzfeldt to Holstein, 26 May 1901, no. 774, and Holstein to Hatzfeldt, 27 May 1901, no. 775, \textit{PH}, vol. 4, 203-6.
\textsuperscript{231} Lansdowne to Lascelles, 18 March 1901, no. 77, \textit{BD}, vol. 2, 61. Henry Charles Keith Petty-Fitzmaurice, the fifth Marquess of Lansdowne (1845-1927), had started his career as a Liberal before leaving the party to join Salisbury’s government as a Unionist imperialist. He served as war secretary from 1895 to 1900, and
Eckardstein deceived both Lansdowne and the Foreign Office back in Berlin, by making out to Bülow that the démarche was a British initiative, and to Lansdowne that it was a German one. The negotiations ultimately spun out of control. The final proposal put forward by Hatzfeldt, who had returned to his official responsibilities for a brief time, proved too all-inclusive for British tastes. It requested an agreement that seemed to require British support on the issue of maintaining control of Alsace-Lorraine, without guaranteeing anything substantial in return. It also assumed that the British would join the Tripplice, something they were highly unwilling to do. Lord Salisbury finally squashed the whole affair late in May 1901 as something that was far too impracticable.

Anglo-German relations turned nasty again because of the final phase of guerilla warfare that the British had to deal with in South Africa from late 1900 until the signature of the Treaty of Vereeniging that finally ended the war in May 1902. To deal with Boer raids on the railroads and telegraph lines, the British army had resorted to extreme measures, destroying Boer farms and setting up concentration camps where something like 20,000 civilians died of disease. In the German and European press, the measures were portrayed in the worst possible light. Even the Social Democrats joined in the fray. But the sensational journalism was especially intensified when Chamberlain delivered a speech in Edinburgh on 25 October 1901. He asserted that the nations—France, Russia, and Germany—that judged Britain’s conduct most severely as
“barbarity” and “cruelty” had set an example “in Poland, in the Caucasus, in Algeria, in Tongking, in Bosnia, in the Franco-German war, [which] we have never even approached.”

French and Russian public opinion remained basically silent on the question. But public opinion in Germany had another outbreak of Anglophobia, for it seemed that Chamberlain had insulted the army and its conduct in the most sacrosanct of all her national struggles. Veterans’ associations, Pan-German local groups, university students and even the pastors held grass-roots protests against the slanders Chamberlain had supposedly hurled at the German army.

Newspaper opinion followed the lead of this popular storm. The Kreuzzeitung, for example, quoted an earlier speech of Chamberlain’s in which he had contradicted himself by calling a war with Kruger “immoral and senseless.” The Kölnische Volkszeitung took advantage of the situation to adopt a radically pro-Boer position that flew in the face of the anti-populist stance of the Kölnische Zeitung. By repeating the worst atrocity stories circulating in the press, it gained circulation at the expense of the semi-official Kölnische Zeitung, which had remained loyal to the government.

The liberal humor magazine Simplicissimus, on the other hand, took the matter to the extreme by depicting the king in the most lurid colors. A cartoon entitled “Nightmare” portrayed a buck naked Edward VII walking in a field littered with the corpses of women and children and muttering, “Thank God! When

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235 Speech by Chamberlain, 25 October 1901, quoted in its entirety in The Times, 26 October 1901.
236 Hale, 242-3.
238 Kölnische Volkszeitung, 18, 19, and 22 November 1901.
I wake up, Chamberlain will stand in front of my bed and give me his word of honor that the Germans were even wickeder in 1870.”

The Kölnische Zeitung was the only paper that placed itself in opposition to popular sentiments. Back in the Foreign Office, Bülow felt an increasing amount of pressure to give some sort of satisfaction to the apparent mood of the nation. The British had already received fair warning that if Bülow were interpellated in the Reichstag about Chamberlain’s slur to the German army, he would feel compelled to come to its defense. Hammann, Holstein, Oswald von Richthofen, the new state secretary in the Foreign Office, and Dr. Franz Fischer, the representative of the Kölnische Zeitung in Berlin, all advised Bülow against making the speech. Hammann, in particular, pestered Bülow continually about criticizing not Chamberlain, but the Anglophobia that characterized the press at this time. On the very day of Chamberlain’s speech he had advised Bülow “to let slip a sharp word against the poisonous effect of our humorous papers with their . . . despicable caricatures, especially of the English king.” In the days leading up to Bülow’s response, he continued to doubt the wisdom of affiliating the government with the Anglophobia of the press. But in early 1902 the Berliner Tageblatt accused Bülow of being too obliging to the British, which made him feel that he had to

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240 Simplicissimus, 19 November 1901, no. 35. A few weeks earlier, Simplicissimus had portrayed the king as a Giant stomping on Boer civilians in a concentration camp. As he crushed the innocent Boers with his feet, Edward VII looked down and nonchalantly remarked, “The blood is squirting up onto the crown; this bunch is making my crown all messy.” Simplicissimus, 29 October 1901, no. 32.

241 Lansdowne to Buchanan, 26 November 1901, no. 236, BD, vol. 1, 263.

242 Diary entry by Holstein, 11 January 1902, no. 792, PH, vol. 4, 220; diary entry by Holstein, 14 January 1902, no. 794, ibid., 223; and Holstein to Ida von Stülpnagel, end of November 1902, Friedrich von Holstein, Lebensbekenntnis in Briefen an eine Frau, ed. Helmuth Rogge (Berlin: Ullstein, 1932), 214. Richthofen (1847-1906) was director of the colonial division of the Foreign Office from 1896 to 1897. He served as state undersecretary of the Foreign Office under Bülow from 1897 to 1900. When Bülow became chancellor in that year, Richthofen was promoted to state secretary, a position he held until 1906.

243 Hammann, Vorgeschichte, 93.

244 Memorandum by Hammann, 25 November 1901, England 78, Bd. 16, PA-AA.
adopt a sharper tone in the Reichstag than he had heretofore. Hammann once again advised against employing too strong a language in any condemnation of Chamberlain. “In parliament it might even make a good impression,” he conceded, “but I cannot help but worry that abroad and in a section of the press it will be said: this sharp tone is posthumous and a capitulation to exaggerated popular feelings.” Bülow ignored the advice of his press chief and bowed to public opinion. It was to become a familiar story for the rest of his years in office.

On 8 January 1902, during a debate over the Foreign-Office budget in the Reichstag, the speech by Chamberlain once again came up. Bülow had arranged the matter in advance with the Conservative Reichstag deputy, Count Udo zu Stolberg-Wernigerode, who raised the matter in the course of the debate. The chancellor now did his best to place the government in the camp of the nationalist opposition against Chamberlain’s remarks:

The German army ... stands much too high—and its armor is too polished—to be concerned with twisted pronouncements. [“Bravo!”] What Frederick the Great once said when he was told that somebody had attacked him and the Prussian army still holds good for such talk: “Leave the man be,” the great king said, “and do not get excited; he bites on granite.” [Laughter. “Very good!”]

All across the German political system the parties received the speech with the greatest approval.

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245 See, for instance, Bülow to Hammann, 5 January 1902, Bd. N 2106 / 7, NLH, BArchL. Hammann identified Arthur Levysohn, the editor of the Berliner Tageblatt, as the source of the article in response to the query about the matter Bülow made in this letter.

246 Memorandum by Hammann, 5 January 1902, Bd. N 2106 / 7, NLH, BArchL.

247 Stolberg to Bülow, 31 December 1901, and Memorandum by Conrad, 31 December 1901, Bd. R 43 / 14, Rk, BArchL. Count Udo zu Stolberg-Wernigerode (1840-1910) was a Conservative in the Reichstag representing the tenth voting district of Königsberg from 1877 to 1881 and from 1884 to 1893. He was elected to sit in the Reichstag for the sixth voting district of Gumbinnen in 1895 and continued in that seat until his death in 1910. He first became vice president of the Reichstag in 1901 and then its president in 1907. He remained president of the Reichstag until his death in 1910. “Zu Stolberg-Wernigerode, Udo,” in MdR, 474-5.

248 Speech by Bülow, 8 January 1902, 10th Leg., Per., Session 2, SBVR, vol. 182, 3208-9.
Yet, in Britain the public reaction could not have been worse, as Metternich reported repeatedly to Bülow.249 The Times was astounded by what seemed a gross and uncalled-for insult; Bülow had apparently surrendered at last to the Britain-hating current of popular sentiment Germany. In response, The Times ran a two-part series, “The Literature of German Anglophobia.” The series detailed the slanders hurled against the royal family by the cartoon papers and listed the pamphlets that had criticized British policy in the war. Even more than this, though, it suggested that Germany’s “Boeritis” was fundamental in explaining the popular support for the navy:

What may be in the mind of the German Government in hastening the formidable naval armaments of the empire we do not profess to know, but a perusal of the popular literature of the day can leave no doubt as to what is in the mind of the German people—namely that they have set their heart upon possessing a weapon with which they know that alone they can hope to gratify their hatred of Great Britain.

In addition, there were even wider ramifications of the anti-British campaign. Germany, The Times asserted, had been from the beginning of the war the lie-producing “workshop” for the rest of the continent. In comparison with the rest of Europe—the pro-Boer mania had been widely fashionable—Germany’s fever seemed to have a higher grade. Heavy of heart, The Times concluded “that no other great civilized community has adopted the Boer cause with such passion ... of blind, unreasoning and unaccountable hatred for the British nation as the German people have done.” 250

But if this anti-German stance had been an exception in Britain for the greater part of the Boer War, now the rest of the British press—finally following the example of

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250 The Times, 13 and 14 January 1902.
The Times—began to take greater notice of German Anglophobia, too. Conservative papers (e.g., the Daily Telegraph, the Pall Mall Gazette) joined with their Liberal counterparts (e.g., the Westminster Gazette, the Daily News, the radical Manchester Guardian) to jump to Chamberlain’s defense. What was most significant, however, was the shift in the attitude of the popular dailies, specifically the Daily Mail and the Daily Express. Both papers exposed the fabrications behind the Boer Mania in Germany with a series of articles published in early February. Henceforth, they joined The Times in repeatedly criticizing German diplomacy and Bülow’s policies. If all this were not bad enough, the reaction of statesmen began to mirror the opinions of the press, for German hostility seemed a matter of course, while pro-Russian sentiment was on the rise.

When the last contingents of the Boer guerilla fighters surrendered in May of 1902 and the Treaty of Vereeniging was finally signed on the last day of the month, a fundamental rupture had opened in Anglo-German relations. Bülow had been appointed in 1897 as state secretary of the Foreign Office in order to oversee Germany’s transition to a world power economically and militarily. The departure was fundamental for both the public-relations and the foreign policy of the Kaiserreich. For the latter subject, it signaled a partial solution to the public-opinion problem that had arisen in the years of the New Course. Bülow’s skills as a speaker and attunement to the public relations of the government meant that by the end of the 1890s, the Foreign Office was able to cultivate a

\[251\] Hale, 251-2.
\[252\] See Daily Express, 11 February 1902, and Daily Mail, 12, 13, and 14 February 1902, in Deutschland 126, no. 2, Bd. 8, PA-AA.
\[253\] Memorandum by Lichnowsky, 17 February 1902, no. 5079, GP, vol. 17, 205.
larger consensus for its policies than at any time since Bismarck’s retirement. In practice, this meant that Hammann became ever more important in the years of *Weltpolitik* at the turn of the century. In the seven years that followed Bülow’s appointment as chancellor in 1900, the collaboration with Hammann only grew and deepened as the two worked together to streamline relations with newspapers and the Reichstag.

Simultaneously, though, the new system that was elaborated from 1897 on contained the seeds of its 1909 demise. Increasingly as Bülow sought prestigious victories in the world that would be popular with the nation—in far-flung and largely unimportant regions such as Samoa, the Far East, and Africa—he also recognized tacitly that it was impossible to conduct a policy that did not have at least some modicum of support in the broader public. Coupled with the new naval construction that seemed more and more menacing after 1900, and the widespread Anglophobia that Bülow had embraced in early 1902, the new turn had a tendency to cause frictions with the British, whose isolation increasingly seemed less splendid as the new century dawned. In the years after 1902, the suspicion of Germany in British official and newspaper circles only increased, leading ultimately to a series of diplomatic setbacks after 1902. These problems became the center of Bülow and Hammann’s attention in the early 1900s and will be treated in more detail in the next chapter.
Chapter 3: The Isolation of Germany, 1900-1906

Bei dem Einfluss, den die öffentliche Meinung der verschiedenen Länder auf die internationale Politik ausübt, darf man die Gegenwehr gegen deutsch-feindliche Pressintriguen als ein Stück Landesverteidigung betrachten.
Bernhard von Bülow, 15 November 1905

The Journalists at Algeciras

Algeciras sits across the bay from Gibraltar on the choke-point that formed a vital bastion for British power at the mouth of the Mediterranean throughout the long history of the Empire. It was in this insignificant Spanish town that the Algeciras Conference convened on 16 January 1906 to solve the Moroccan question that had nearly embroiled Germany in a war against France and England. The spot could not compare in prestige to its famous neighbor across the inlet. It was a dusty, unpopulated place, manifestly unsuited to host a meeting of the European great powers. Nevertheless, one hundred and fifty delegates, bureaucrats, and newspapermen descended on the town as a kind of dignified mob. They all cramped themselves into the only two hotels, the journalists invading one, the diplomats the other. Those newspapermen who had followed the delegates to the middle of nowhere were at least sixty-five in number—a major presence that had never before been seen on such scale at an international conference. Though their diplomatic colleagues still outnumbered them, the image of the two hotels containing the two groups of men was a tribute to the new importance of public opinion as a factor in the very old game of power

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1 Bülow to William II, 15 November 1905, Deutschland 126a, secr., Bd. 1, PA-AA. William II in the margins: “je unzweifelhaft.”
politics. It was also a kind of death-knell for the old diplomacy, as the conference by its very nature could no longer be conducted in the manner of the early nineteenth century.

This development had become increasingly solidified in the period preceding the Algeciras Conference. In order to deal with the changes associated with the emergence of the New Diplomacy, the Press Bureau grew into an office of increasing complexity and importance in the conduct of foreign policy after 1900. In the years between 1900 and 1906, the Bülow-Hammann system reached the height of its power, as it became ever more important for Bülow to cultivate a public consensus to support his diplomacy. Thus, the staff of the Press Bureau grew significantly in the years surrounding the first Morocco Crisis. Moreover, not only did it win new privileges that increased its power as the central publicity bureau in the Reich government, but also Hammann himself came to have greater influence on the making of policy. All told, after 1902 Bülow came to rely most heavily on his press chief, for increasingly he felt compelled to take public opinion into account while making policy.

Yet at the same time, Germany’s foreign position radically degenerated in these years. Because of German public opinion about the Boer War, and because Bülow had essentially affiliated himself with the “Boeritis” at the end of that conflict, a new feeling of mistrust in Britain for Germany arose after 1902. The bid to build a large battleship navy that could challenge British supremacy on the seas complemented this development. Altogether, a new situation was created that seemed to have a fundamental illogic. The pursuit of further prestige victories in foreign policy could only

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2 For a complete list of the newspapermen and diplomats in attendance, see André Tardieu, *La conference d’Algesiras: Histoire diplomatique de la crise marocaine 15 Janvier-7 Avril 1906*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1909), 502-4. According to Tardieu (1876-1945), the foreign-affairs editor of *Le Temps* in the years before the war, the contingents in both the diplomatic and the press corps consisted entirely of men.
hasten the deterioration of Germany’s international position vis-à-vis France, Russia, and Britain. But ignoring public opinion did not seem an option to Bülow either. Thus, while the chancellor initially followed his main advisor, Friedrich von Holstein, in attempting to shatter the Anglo-French Entente with confrontational diplomacy, by the end of the crisis he retreated once again in the face of public opinion.

**The Rise of the Bülow-Hammann System**

The chancellorship of Bernhard von Bülow and the troubles associated with the Boer War had effected a major turning point in the public-opinion policy of the Reich government. In part, this change reflected Bülow’s personality, which was hypersensitive to his public image, as well as his desire to use all means at his disposal to remain on good terms with the Kaiser, the ultimate source of all his political power.

When he became chancellor in late 1900, the importance of his public image doubtless grew in proportion to the powers he exercised as the responsible officer of the Reich executive. In this sense, Bülow fretted daily about his own personal portrayal in the press. On numerous occasions, he stressed the solidity of his relationship to the Kaiser.³ He ordered Hammann to promote articles that depicted him as hardworking. He worried about such inconsequential matters as articles criticizing his use of a police guard for his personal protection.⁴ He even liked to have articles published about such trifling topics as the clothing he wore while on vacation.⁵

Nevertheless, the shift was less superficial as well. Hammann himself was promoted to the rank of a privy councilor to an embassy (*Geheimer Legationsrat*) on 18 [Bülow to Hammann, 4, 6, and 22 June 1902, and 5 and 27 October 1902, Bd. N 2106 / 7, Nl.H, BArchL.]

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³ Bülow to Hammann, 19 July 1902, Bd. N 2106 / 7, Nl.H, BArchL.
December 1897, just after Bülow became state secretary. His apparent success in managing the public-relations of the Foreign Office also redounded to the benefit of his aide Ernst Esternaux, who was promoted from clerk to assistant in December 1899, attaining at the time the rank of a vice consul in the diplomatic service (Vizekonsul), and subsequently, in May 1902, that of a full consul (Konsul). In material terms the most important example of the growing influence and importance of the Press Bureau could be seen, however, with the granting of a second assistant to Hammann on 18 April 1902, a Berlin journalist by the name of Friedrich Heilbron. The new aide had a career path similar to Hammann’s. He studied philosophy, philology, and political science at universities in Berlin and Kiel, and from 1899 until his appointment in the Foreign Office had worked as the Berlin representative of the National-Liberal Hamburgischer Correspondent, a paper noted for its connections to the Press Bureau. After his appointment in 1902, Heilbron rapidly advanced in both office and rank, until ultimately he became the chief of the press section of the Foreign Office and the Reich Chancellery in the early years of the Weimar Republic.

6 “Hammann, Otto,” BHdAD, vol. 2, 189-90. The position of Geheimer Legationsrat, or privy councilor to an embassy, meant that Hammann was equal in rank to a diplomat serving in that position at an embassy abroad. He had earlier been Wirklicher Legationsrat, or acting privy councilor to an embassy, which meant that he was, again, equal in rank to a diplomat serving in that position in the field from 1894 to his promotion in 1897. The rankings were indicative of status in the Political Division of the Foreign Office and years of service under one’s belt. They were generic rankings, however, not indicative at all of the real function Hammann performed in the Foreign Office as the resident “press expert” in Berlin. By way of example, another privy councilor of the same rank might serve a completely different function as the resident advisor on France, or economic affairs, for example. For a fuller explanation of the—imponderable—nature of the offices and titles in the German Foreign Office before World War I, see BHdAD, xxxvi-xxxix.

7 “Esternaux, Ernst,” BHdAD, vol. 1, 529.

8 “Heilbron, Friedrich,” BHdAD, vol. 2, 232-3. Friedrich Heilbron (1872-1954) went through a rapid advance in the service alongside Esternaux and Hammann, attaining the rank of vice consul in December 1904, that of embassy councilor (Legationsrat) in June 1907 in the wake of the first Morocco Crisis, and finally that of an acting privy councilor to an embassy (Wirklicher Legationsrat) in 1915 during the war. He helped Bethmann Hollweg with his memoirs, served as press chief after 1920, and finished off his service as
Bülow further increased the importance of the press section and its chief in January 1901, when he ordered that all communications to the press representing the imperial government had to be approved first by the Foreign Office. These orders gained further weight when Bülow explicitly demanded in the following months that all the offices of the Reich government submit their communications with the press to Hammann for approval before release. This meant in effect that the Prussian Literary Bureau would finally become subordinate to the press section of the Foreign Office. Bülow also asserted a strict division between the Reich and Prussia when he asserted that the Prussian state government had to look after its own domestic interests in the organs it controlled. More importantly, Hammann had to be kept fully informed of policy in order to be able to coordinate public relations effectively. Hence Bülow also required the embassies to submit their communications about policy and public relations to Hammann for review, greatly enhancing the press expert’s authority and importance. Additionally during Bülow’s chancellorship, Hammann attained the privilege of direct communication with the chancellor. Holstein later called him consul general (Generalkonsul) in Zurich, from 1926 until his final retirement in 1930. Heilbron’s personal papers are held in the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, though unfortunately they consist of only two files of material dating from 1907 to 1934.

9 Memorandum by Bülow, 16 January 1901, Bd. R 43 / 1679, Rk., BArchL.
10 Memorandum by Bülow, 15 May 1901, Bd. R 43 / 1565, Rk., BArchL.
11 Bülow to Hammann, 29 September 1902, and 2 October 1902, Bd. N 2106 / 7, Nl.H., BArchL. That is, Prussia, as one of the many state governments that made up the Reich, would have to represent itself in Prussian domestic politics rather than relying on Hammann for the job. This order came into effect even though many of the higher statesmen in the Prussian service held analogous positions in the Reich government and could rely on his help for imperial domestic politics.
12 This privilege is mentioned by Hammann in a later memorandum he wrote once Bülow had left office. See memorandum by Hammann, 14 January 1910, Bd. N 2106 / 63, Nl.H., BArchL. To a certain extent Hammann was already exerting this power even before 1901, as his relations with Eckardstein in the London embassy demonstrate.
This importance could be seen concretely in the advice he began
to give about important personnel and policy matters. Hammann’s significance as far
as policy went continued to grow in the subsequent years of Bülow’s chancellorship.

This was especially important since Hammann and Bülow were apt to place more
importance on accounting for public opinion in the conduct of foreign policy. Hammann
had viewed his mission from the beginning as a necessary modernization of the publicity
apparatus of the imperial government. Yet in his earliest years in office, many of the
bureaucrats in the Foreign Office, the Reich Chancellery, and the Prussian Ministry of
State had been unwilling to subscribe to this move. Generally, the representatives of the
old guard asserted that diplomacy at the fin de siècle was still in the mode of the early
nineteenth century—namely, a continuation of high-cabinet policy, what I have labeled
above the “Old Diplomacy.” Holstein was the best representative of this point of view.
Generally in his years in office he advocated that foreign policy should be restricted to
machinations and maneuvers outside of critical eye of the public, the parties, and the
papers. “Foreign policy, like photography,” he said significantly at one point, “cannot
endure any daylight in [its] development.”

In opposition to this kind of stance, Hammann recognized that the old approach
to foreign policy was outmoded in a world where the common man was literate, had
access to a cheap source of news, and had the ability to vote. “In former times,” he
commented just before the war,

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13 That is, he could communicate with the chancellor directly instead of through the medium of the state
secretary of the Foreign Office. The term is an allusion to the bureaucratic right of being subject only to the
emperor alone. See Heilbron, 96.
14 Bülow to Hammann, 2, 3 and 5 October 1902, Bd. N 2106 / 7 Nl.H. BArchL.
15 Hammann, Kurs, 56.
16 Holstein to Bülow, 21 November 1903, no. 817, PH, vol. 4, 249.
it would have been sufficient to establish the official press service through the regular diplomatic channels, i.e., a few readers, potentates, ministers and ambassadors. In order to gain influence upon the powers that make public opinion, the present time—with the growing dependence of governments on parliaments and popular sentiments—requires a much more careful processing and observation of everything that comprises public opinion and also therefore a larger, uniformly constructed apparatus.\(^{17}\)

The press chief thus strove to articulate an approach to public opinion after 1900 that would address the concerns of the masses, at least insofar as they were represented by the best measurement available, namely newspapers and political parties, while simultaneously meeting the exigencies of national interest that were fundamental to a statesman like Holstein.

In this endeavor, the daily routine of the Press Bureau from the mid-1890s on was consumed with monitoring newspapers and interacting with journalists on behalf of the Reich government. Hammann and his assistants continued to fulfill many of the tasks that the Press Bureau had taken over by 1897. Like his predecessors, the new chancellor abhorred it when newspapers attacked the government or its policies,\(^{18}\) and he often charged Hammann with investigating attacks.\(^{19}\) Additionally, the Press Bureau published announcements and news of an official nature.\(^{20}\) Finally, it continued to work both to deny and encourage rumors, depending on which course benefited the Foreign Office most.\(^{21}\)

Even more than this, however, Hammann’s duties and responsibilities became much more elaborate after 1900. The most important task by the time of Bülow’s

\(^{17}\) Memorandum by Hammann, March 1914, Bd. N 2106 / 25, NL.H, BArchL.
\(^{18}\) Nevertheless, Bülow maintained falsely that he held no ill will toward those journalists who attacked him. Bülow to Hammann, 18 April 1902, and 21 March 1903, Bd. N 2106 / 7, NL.H, BArchL.
\(^{19}\) Bülow to Hammann, 27 September 1902, and 4 July 1903, Bd. N 2106 / 7, NL.H, BArchL.
\(^{20}\) Bülow to Hammann, 22 June 1902, Bd. N 2106 / 7, NL.H, BArchL.
\(^{21}\) Bülow to Hammann, 18 September 1902, Bd. N 2106 / 7, NL.H, BArchL.
chancellorship became the daily cultivation of contacts with friendly journalists and of a good press for the government in general. The grind started at an early hour of the morning when Privy Councilor Esternaux arrived and began the work for the day.\textsuperscript{22} Initially this was restricted to carefully clipping articles from different newspapers and pasting them individually onto larger sheets of paper. When Hammann came in a little later in the morning, these clippings were ready to be processed along with the cuttings sent from abroad by the embassies. Hammann or his other two assistants, Friedrich Heilbron, and later Kurt Riezler, highlighted the most important passages in these articles, sorted them, and finally circulated them to the Kaiser, the chancellor, the state secretary, or other members of the Foreign Office and Reich Chancellery when deemed necessary.

The avowed task Bülow set before Hammann at the beginning of this new stage of their collaboration was to encourage—slowly but surely—as many newspapers as possible to begin supporting the government, without drawing attention to the fact of what was happening.\textsuperscript{23} Bülow could look after things in the Reichstag, he told Hammann on one occasion in 1902, “while beyond that I will leave the equally necessary [and] constant cultivation [\textit{Bearbeitung}] of our press and our journalists to you.”\textsuperscript{24} Hence, Bülow issued instructions to Hammann and his assistants that the press chief was likely to find alongside the daily clippings on his desk when he arrived in the morning. The letters began to come on a regular basis after January 1902 and arrived

\textsuperscript{22} The best source for this is actually still Hale, 68-9, which is largely based upon an interview he conducted with Friedrich Heilbron after the war. Much of the information he conveys is simply nonexistent in the documents or the accounts of Press Bureau published after the war.
\textsuperscript{23} Bülow to Hammann, 1 January 1902, Bd. N 2106 / 7, Nl.H., BArchL.
\textsuperscript{24} Bülow to Hammann, 24 July 1902, Bd. N 2106 / 7, Nl.H., BArchL.
more frequently as the collaboration deepened, reaching a peak of frequency at the time of the first Morocco Crisis.\textsuperscript{25} In addition to the daily written instructions he received from Bülow, Hammann held a daily meeting late in the morning with the chancellor around 11:00 am or noon to discuss the most pressing matters of the day. Together, the written instructions and the orders Hammann received in the morning conference guided the subsequent work of the Press Bureau during the day. These duties mainly included interviews with individual journalists intended to communicate the position of the government to the public on the issues of the moment.

Valentine Williams, a Berlin representative for \textit{The Times}, left a vivid description of the experience of the average journalist who called on Hammann and his assistants during these daily meetings.\textsuperscript{26} By Williams’s account, an attendant at the entrance of the Foreign-Office building would shuffle journalists into one of three waiting rooms, which collectively served as a kind of ante-chamber to Hammann’s office. From these rooms, the journalists proceeded to a meeting with Hammann or one of his assistants. In the meeting “a concise statement is given verbally in approximately the same words to all callers,” and questions could be asked freely and were “answered—or not answered—according to the instructions previously issued to the Press Bureau.”\textsuperscript{27}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{25} See Bde. N 2106 / 7-14, NL. H, BArchL.
\textsuperscript{27} Williams, 320-21. Valentine Williams (1883-1946) was the Berlin representative of Reuter’s Agency from 1904 to 1909, when he took over as the Paris correspondent of the \textit{Daily Mail}. He later fought in World War I and became a minor novelist after the war. \textit{The Times}, 21 November 1946.
\end{flushright}
Thus, these interviews lacked the character of the press conferences that would be held later in the century after World War I.\textsuperscript{28} They were instead small-scale, intimate meetings restricted to interaction between Hammann and the journalists who called upon the Foreign Office to obtain information. As such, they reflected Hammann’s belief that a successful public-relations officer had to cultivate a “trusting relationship” with the most important representatives of the press.\textsuperscript{29} And further they were a useful device to bring a subtle influence to bear on the reporting of news. In return for the gift of privileged information, Hammann was often able to get across the government’s view on any given matter. Simultaneously, he set the parameters for the discussion of its policies. Lastly, he was able to give hints about the position that the government desired the journalist and his paper to take.

Some journalists enjoyed a much greater amount of trust from the government than others. Their access derived from the expectation that they would communicate the position of the chancellor and his advisors in a way that would be amenable to the government and its policies.\textsuperscript{30} In return, these journalists were rewarded with the most privileged information that was held back from other less-trusted representatives of the press. Hammann’s later assistant, Kurt Riezler, described after the First World War how they would often “get some information about secret matters—inside dope not to be published.” They belonged, he continued,

\begin{quote}
\text{to a kind of aristocracy of the press; they were persons of judgment and discretion and considerable experience, knowledge and education…. They understood hints or allusions, [and] could be trusted with secrets or half}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{28} Riezler, “Political Decisions,” 16.
\textsuperscript{29} Hammann, Kurs, 86.
secrets… They even could be trusted to be indiscreet in the right way and at the right time.\textsuperscript{31}

Although their influence on policy-making was slim in many cases,\textsuperscript{32} they were active in their cooperation with the government and their advice was sometimes requested with particular matters of policy and public relations.\textsuperscript{33} A number of these favored journalists formed Hammann’s circle of trusted confidants: Dr. Franz Fischer and Arthur von Huhn, both of the Kölnische Zeitung; August Stein of the Frankfurter Zeitung;\textsuperscript{34} Dr. Ernst Francke, an editor for the Münchener Neueste Nachrichten; Pastor Heinrich Engel of the Reichsbote;\textsuperscript{35} Theodor Schiemann, a foreign-affairs leader-writer for the Kreuzzeitung;

\textsuperscript{31} Riezler, “Political Decisions,” 14.
\textsuperscript{32} The correspondence files of these men in the Hammann Papers at the Bundesarchiv, Berlin–Lichterfelde, is depressingly thin—restricted mainly to dealings related to Hammann’s 1909 perjury trial—or completely nonexistent. See, for example, Bde. N 2106 / 19 and 41, NLH, BArchL, which contain a depressingly sparse correspondence from Dr. Ernst Francke and Eugen Zimmermann respectively. Presumably the reason for this is that most of their collaborative work would have been conducted orally in the daily interviews, leaving no written record of what had transpired.
\textsuperscript{33} For examples of this active cooperation in formulating policy see Riezler, “Political Decisions,” 14-16.
\textsuperscript{34} August Stein (1851-1920) was the Berlin representative of the paper after 1891. Because of his intimate connection to Hammann, his reports from Berlin took on an official character and were the best indicator of the political import of the Frankfurter Zeitung. A collection of some of his reports was published after the war, though it is a fairly small selection of his writings. See August Stein, Es war alles ganz anders. Aus der Werkstätte eines politischen Journalisten 1891-1914 (Frankfurt am Main: Frankfurter Societäts-Druckerei, 1922). The connection to Stein and Huhn with the Foreign Office dated back to the years before Hammann came into office. See Friedrich Heilbron, “Hammann, Otto,” Deutsches biographisches Jahrbuch 10 (1931): 99; E. Zechlin, “Otto Hammann,” Vossische Zeitung, 23 January 1926; and Stolberg-Wernigerode, “Hammann, Otto,” 590.
\textsuperscript{35} After 1873 Pastor Heinrich Engel (1834-1911) was the editor of the Reichsbote. The paper gained its importance from Engel, for he was the one member of Hammann’s intimate circle that represented the conservative right until Gerhard Kropatschek succeeded him after his death in 1911. See “Engel, Heinrich” in BS, vol. 1, 291. This connection had an important effect outside of Germany. Though sometimes dismissed as excessively chauvinistic and insignificant by commentators within Germany, people abroad often cited the Reichsbote as representative of true German public opinion. The first secretary to the London embassy at the time of the first Morocco Crisis, for example, complained of this problem to Bülow in 1905: “For us Germans it seems comical that someone takes an article of the Reichsbote seriously. But there is not a person here who knows how to differentiate between the [conservative] Reichsbote and the [liberal] Frankfurter Zeitung.” Bernstorff to Bülow, 8 September 1905, Deutschland 131, no. 4, secr., Bd. 5, PA-AA. Nevertheless, Hammann mentions that Engel was not representative of the far right, but rather fought “bravely against [its] extreme methods.” Hammann, Kurs, 87. In any event, the Reichsbote was a paper that had a relatively modest circulation, averaging only 11,000 to 13,000 copies daily before the war.
Eugen Zimmermann of the Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger; Emil Fitger of the Weser-Zeitung; and Dr. Heinrich Mantler, director of Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau. During Bülow’s chancellorship, outside observers saw a report from any of these sources—especially from the Frankfurter Zeitung or the Kölnische Zeitung—as an indirect statement of the position of the Foreign Office on any given subject.

This network of close relationships formed the crux of what I have dubbed the “Bülow-Hammann system” of public relations. The government’s journalists were willing to tow the line to keep the well of privileged information from drying up; while good behavior for those journals outside the system might eventually prove successful in gaining a more privileged status. Moreover, any articles that indicated a too-independent attitude on the part of these men or their journals might occasion a drought at the wellspring of official information. In fact, it was often enough just to threaten the revocation of the privileges granted by the chancellor and his press director. But Hammann and his advisors also tried to maintain a semblance of freedom, even in those journals that were directly affiliated with the government, such as the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung. The obvious purpose behind all this was to manipulate the press in much more subtle ways than the methods of government coercion or outright bribery used by Bismarck.

36 Besides being the chief editor of the Weser-Zeitung, Emil Fitger (1848-1917) also had a reputation as an economic commentator. On Fitger, see “Fitger, Emil,” in BS, vol. 1, 330.
37 Groth, 221.
38 Much later, in 1912, Bethmann Hollweg was able, for example, to maintain the dependency of the Kölnische Zeitung by threatening a break with the paper and its staff. See Szögyény to Aehrenthal, 3 January 1912, no. 3185, Ö-UA, vol. 3, 742; Szögyény to Aehrenthal, 11 January 1912, no. 3213, ibid., 765-6; and Szögyény to Aehrenthal, 19 January 1912, no. 3232, ibid., 781.
39 Bülow to Posadowsky-Wehner, 10 November 1906, Bl. 37-8, Bd. R43 / 1565, Rk., BArchL.
40 Brunhuber, 84-5. Outright bribery is often reputed to have been a key feature of Bismarck’s press policy, which employed the notorious Guelph fund—the fortune seized from the Hanoverian royal family during the
In addition to his duties for cultivating a good press in the Bülow years, Hammann also gained importance in another realm as well, collaborating with the chancellor in the development and preparation of speeches for the Reichstag. The partnership may have very well begun with Bülow’s first major speech in the Reichstag in December 1897, but it certainly became more of a regular task for the press expert during Bülow’s chancellorship. Although Bülow liked to write his own speeches, he was obsessed with the way he appeared to the public, and especially how his speeches came off. Hammann helped to refine the initial drafts of speeches that were written by Bülow, coached the delivery of them beforehand, and personally observed the debates of the Reichstag for his own future reference. The influential Social Democrat, Philip Scheidemann, described this process wittily in his memoirs:

[August Stein] judged the Prince [Bülow] very harshly—he was undoubtedly a clever, highly educated man, but a slacker; his principal object was to increase his personal reputation; he was, moreover, a wonderful actor; certain speeches of his he rehearsed in front of a mirror. One special speech that Hammann, P.C., wrote for him he had to deliver in Hammann’s presence; he had to repeat it three times,

wars of unification—to influence the reporting of newspapers after 1869. The amount employed for this purpose by the Foreign Office and the Reich Chancellor’s Office was more than 700,000 marks annually. On Bismarck’s press policy, see Irene Fischer-Frauendienst, *Bismarcks Pressepoltik, Studien zur Publizistik* (Münster: C. J. Fahle, 1963). Bribery remained nonetheless a widely accepted method of influencing the press in many European countries before the First World War. In the years just before the war, Russian statesmen, for instance, paid French newspapermen to write stories that would influence French opinion to maintain the Franco-Russian alliance. What makes this case particularly interesting is that the Russian government was paying the French journalists off with money received after 1905 in the form of loans from French banks that had been originally intended to help Russia develop economically and militarily. This coercion was done not only with the approval of the French government, but also at the insistence of the French government, and the total funneled into France for this purpose is estimated to have been about 350,000 francs annually. See G.M. Thomson, *The Twelve Days: 24 July to 4 August 1914* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1964), 32–3. Bribery could, however, go the other way, too. Valentine Williams, for example, left a witty—and very amusing—discussion of the most successful methods to employ in bribing government officials that he had supposedly learned from his father. See Valentine Williams, *World of Action* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1938), 46–7.

41 See above, p. 122-3.
42 Bülow to Hammann, 4 February 1902, Bd. N 2106 / 7, Nl.H, BArchL.
43 Bülow to Hammann, 10 December 1904, Bd. N 2106 / 9, Nl.H, BArchL.
as the performance did not meet with the Privy Councilor’s approval. Hammann, Stein said, had told him all about it. Stein described the scene in the following amusing way. The Prince had to recite the speech, and Hammann instructed him in the way he should say it—“More slowly; now rather faster. Pause for a word. Faster, faster still! Now bang your fist down upon the table!”—Bülow could not get rid of the fear that, after his fainting fit in the Reichstag, he would be looked upon as a sick man; he always tried to remove the impression; he was especially fastidious in the choice of his clothes.44

Moreover, Bülow worried about the reportage of both the content and delivery of his speeches—specifically about the way that he had spoken, as well as whether it appeared that he had had to read a speech or could recite it from memory.45 Finally, Bülow sought wide distribution of the text of his speeches in the daily newspapers and in book form while he was still in office. He even forwarded his speeches abroad to cultivate his public image outside of Germany. In 1905, for example, he sent a copy of his speeches to an Englishman through a representative in London, hoping to correct some errors that he believed had been printed in British newspapers.46

Altogether, then, the Press Bureau became an office of increasing complexity and importance after 1900. It developed its daily routine and increased its personnel after that date. It also solidified its functions within the Foreign Office and the Chancellery as the main body within the Reich government for communicating with the press, for investigating the sources of press rumors, for cultivating good press and denying information, and for helping prepare Bülow’s parliamentary speeches. Thereby

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44 Philip Scheidemann, Memoirs of a Social Democrat, trans. J.E. Mitchell, vol. 2 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1929), 421. Scheidemann (1865-1939) sat in the Reichstag as a Social Democrat representing the third voting district of Düsseldorf from 1903 to 1918. He later represented various different voting districts in the years after the war until emigrating to Denmark in 1933 to escape the Nazis. “Scheidemann, Philipp,” in MdR, 448.
45 Bülow to Hammann, 4 July 1903 and 18 January 1904, Bd. N 2106 / 7, Nl.H, BArchL.
46 So much so that he even sent his speeches abroad to cultivate his public image outside of Germany. In 1905, for example, he sent a copy of his speeches to an Englishman through a representative hoping that they might correct some errors he believed had been printed in British newspapers. See Armstrong to Bernstorff, 11 December 1905, Bd. N 2106 / 3, Nl.H, BArchL.
Hammann solidified the press section as the central location of the public-relations activities of all the Reich offices and largely put an end to the bureaucratic anarchy that had dogged the government in the 1890s. This development turned out to be of great significance in the following years as the Press Bureau effectively helped to hide the growing number of failures in Bülow’s foreign policy after 1902.

**The End of Anglo-German Collaboration, 1902-1903**

The most obvious of those failures related directly back to the thoroughly developed antagonism with Britain. Bismarck, of course, had contrived during his last diplomatic maneuvering after 1887 to affiliate Britain more closely with Germany indirectly, through the Mediterranean Agreements with his Triple-Alliance partners, Italy and Austria-Hungary. But in the standard British way, there was no direct connection between the two countries; only a vague idea of friendship existed between them. This was consistent with the long-standing tradition of cooperation that lasted at least to the Boer War, diminishing in its returns thereafter. France, in contrast, had been a major rival to Britain in the years before the Boer War, mostly because of the competition of those two powers over imperial expansion. Their rivalry had nearly erupted into open conflict over the Sudan during the Fashoda Crisis in 1898. French statesmen finally backed down, but not without first learning that the British Empire was prepared to fight over its interests in that part of the world and would brook no French encroachment there. Though not obvious in this particular encounter, a subtle shift in British policy afterward, from friendship with Germany to closer affiliation with France, can be seen as the major trend of the period up to April 1904.
German press policy after early 1902 attempted to counteract the growing antagonism toward Britain by encouraging a more conciliatory attitude. The most immediate source of concern was a number of unsigned articles that appeared in the *National Review* late in 1901 and early in 1902, arguing that Britain, facing increasing German hostility because of the Boer War, should cultivate better relations with Russia. These articles raised the specter of Anglo-Russian cooperation, causing great alarm in the London embassy and in the Foreign Office back in Berlin. Bülow wrote to William II at about the same time that the bad press Britain had gotten in Germany from 1899 to 1902 had encouraged suspicion there on account of the Second Naval Bill. What was more, the hubbub over his “Biting-on-Granite” exchange with Chamberlain in January 1902 had only made things worse. Hence by late March, Bülow was asking Hammann to check further newspaper attacks on Chamberlain and Cecil Rhodes, the two architects of British South-African policy. In addition, the government encouraged Waldensee to give a laudatory speech in London on the merits of the British army to help

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49 Bülow to William II, 30 October 1901, England 78, secretiss., Bd. 5, PA-AA.

50 See above, pp. 171-4.

51 Bülow to Hammann, 28 March 1902, Bd. N 2106 / 7, NLH, BAchL. Cecil Rhodes (1853-1902) had died only two days before, which was why Bülow was worried about the bad press. See *The Times*, 27 March 1908. Rhodes was a British businessman, diamond magnate, and political leader in South Africa. He served as the Prime Minister of Cape Colony from 1890 to 1896 and founded the British colony of Rhodesia in the 1890s. Altogether he was the most important Cape politician who had pushed for a policy in South Africa that ultimately had as its goal the outbreak of hostilities between Boers and the British. Sheila Marks and Stanley Trapido, “Rhodes, Cecil John,” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 46, *Randolph-Rippingille* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 592-603.
calm the press war in June. Bülow was already calling it a matter of “the highest importance” that the semi-official press reported the speech sympathetically in order to increase its probable effect on British newspaper opinion. Simultaneously in the summer of 1902, Bülow, Hammann, and the Foreign Office all began a concerted attempt to placate Britain. The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, trying to counter further Anglophobic attacks, wrote of British aid in delivering Germans captured in Boer War back home; Hammann worked with Fischer in the *Kölnische Zeitung* and Stein in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* to ensure a conciliatory tone toward Britain; the new state secretary, Oswald von Richthofen, officially denounced the press abuse of the British army in the Prussian *Landtag*; and lastly Bülow directed the diplomats in the London embassy “to counteract the agitation [Hetze] of The Times as much as possible.”

Despite these efforts, Fashoda pointed in the direction of a new relationship between Britain and France. This fact could be seen concretely in Anglo-German relations immediately following the Boer War. *The Times*, announcing the conclusion of the war, voiced an increasingly mainstream opinion when it regretted that the German press is, according to its wont, the most acrimonious and ungenerous in its comments. It is a disappointment for the Germans that we have come out of the struggle stronger and more respected than when we entered upon it.

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52 The speech was full of the greatest praise for the British army: “We German soldiers all know very well how difficult and arduous the task was that the British army has had to accomplish in South Africa[,] we know also that the officers and men of your army have accomplished their task with the utmost devotion to their country, with bravery and with humanity.” Metternich to the Foreign Office, 22 June 1902, no. 5086, *GP*, vol. 7, 212-13.
53 Bülow to Hammann, 23 June 1902, Bd. N 2106 / 7, Nl.H, BArchL.
54 *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 4 July 1902.
57 *The Times*, 3 June 1902.
This view toward Germany had become increasingly typical by the summer of 1902, which could be seen especially in a minor episode that dominated British print in fall of 1902. In August a delegation of Boer generals visited the continent. The reception of the generals by the government in France had gone unnoticed in Britain, and their landing in Southampton on 17 August had even met with sympathy there. Yet their trek through Germany in October garnered a great deal of interest and condemnation in the British press. The German government endeavored—through its connections to the Pan-Germans and Boer sympathizers—to contain further demonstrations on the right that would exacerbate the chilliness of Anglo-German relations. Eckardstein also communicated to the Foreign Office a warning from the editor of The Times, Charles Frederic Moberly Bell, that the Kaiser should refrain from receiving the Boer generals before his planned November visit to Britain. Suspicion of Germany, Moberly Bell cautioned, was not restricted just to the lower classes, but could even be found among the “elderly opulent City men.”

Hence the Kaiser and the government very quickly found a reason to deny an official audience, while also barring any members of the military and the diplomatic service from meeting with Boer generals when they came to Berlin. The official

58 Schulthess (1902): 230.
59 The main connection in this instance was Count Hermann von Arnim-Muskau (1839-1919). He had been a diplomat in Bismarck’s years in office, before getting himself elected to the Reichstag as the representative of the 10th voting district of Liegnitz in 1887. He continued to hold the seat for the Free Conservatives until January 1907. See “Arnim-Muskau, Hermann Graf von,” in BS, vol. 1, 38, and “von Arnim-Muskau, Hermann Traugott, Graf,” in MdR, 256.
explanation given in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* on 8 October 1902 emphasized the Boers’ supposed unwillingness to meet the Kaiser’s demands for a visit:

> On 18 September the Kaiser let the Boer generals know that he was ready to receive them provided that they would refrain from any anti-English agitation and had themselves announced by the English embassy. General DeWet accepted these conditions in the name of his colleagues. On 6 October 1902 it was reported from The Hague that the Boer generals had since then changed their minds. They expressed hesitation at requesting an audience; they wanted to be summoned. The affair was accordingly settled in a negative sense and dispatched with.63

A number of newspapers criticized the government for its stance, especially on the far right and left. The government once again had to issue a further defense of its position in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, where it repeated in great detail its reasons for declining the interview.64 Nevertheless, the Boer generals did finally arrive in Berlin on 17 October and a large crowd welcomed them at the railway station. The opposition, especially of the radical right, made it clear that hatred of British policy and Boer hero-worship among the nationalists would make cooperation with Britain very difficult in the future.

This became especially obvious during the Venezuela affair, which broke onto the scene after the Boer generals’ visit to Europe. Both the British and the Germans had economic interests in Venezuela that they feared had been neglected by the government there.65 On the German side, this shared apprehension about the climate for big

63 *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 8 October 1902. Holstein restates the calculation behind the statement and all his work to prevent a rupture with Britain over the affair in diary entry by Holstein, 7 November 1902, no. 811, *PH*, vol. 4, 243-5.
64 *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 16 October 1902.
65 The British complaints are laid out in great detail in memorandum by Lansdowne, 22 October 1902, no. 173, *BD*, vol. 1, 154-6. These complaints mainly dealt with the search and seizure of British ships by the Venezuelan coast guard (under suspicion of smuggling), debts not paid to British railway companies in Venezuela, the seizure and destruction of British property there, and the destruction of one ship. On the German side the question was mainly related to claims for damage sustained in the Venezuelan civil war of 1898 and some kind of insurance of better protection for German investments in Venezuela for the future.
business in Venezuela seemed to offer a good occasion for cooperation and an improvement in Anglo-German relations. As a way of pressuring the Venezuelan government to look after their economic interests, both Britain and Germany collaborated in recalling their representatives and in conducting a joint naval blockade to ensure the collection of the debts owed to both countries. This collaboration lasted from the second week of December, when both powers’ diplomatic representatives departed from Caracas, to the middle of February 1903, when the British abandoned the scheme because of public opinion at home and American pressure abroad.66

The initial diplomatic maneuvering did not provoke an outcry in the British press, but the onset of the blockade radicalized the situation in the view of the American press.67 The British press took up the issue in turn, and the Liberal and Unionist press in London especially criticized the policy of cooperation with Germany.68 Ironically, the Liberals even agreed with the stance of The Times that cooperation with Germany could only harm Britain by estranging the United States.69 Yet condemnation was also fairly widespread in British Conservative circles. The Daily Mail, for example, detailed the follies of “Six Years of German Policy.”70 Rudyard Kipling even published a poem in The Times that recounted the story of “rowers” who had returned home victorious from the

Bülow to William II, 1 September 1902, no. 5107, GP, vol. 17, 244-6; and Lansdowne to Buchanan, 11 November 1902, no. 174, BD, vol. 1, 156-7.
66 American opposition is the decisive factor in A.J.P. Taylor’s brief account of the affair. Taylor, Mastery, 410. Nevertheless, public opinion also played a crucial part in the liquidation of the demarche in both Britain and Germany, as the subsequent account here shows.
68 Anderson, Background, 342.
69 The Times, 16 December 1902.
70 Daily Mail, 17 December 1902.
war in South Africa, only to find that they had been betrayed by cooperation with the
German enemy over Venezuela:

In sight of peace—from the Narrow Seas,
O’er half the world to run—
With a cheated crew, to league anew,
With the Goth and shameless Hun!71

Altogether, it was fairly obvious that British public opinion posed an insurmountable
roadblock to future Anglo-German collaboration in the world. By February, Metternich
went so far as to warn Berlin of the possible fall of the Cabinet because it had been so
discredited by the affair.72

The German Foreign Office recognized early on the crucial role played by public
opinion. The Kaiser bragged during his visit to London in November, for example, that
only he was viewed in British official circles with favor, while his responsible statesmen
had lost all credibility.73 “The Venezuela affair demonstrates that the resentment of the
German people, which arose here during the Boer War, is presently still stronger than
the reason and concrete interests of the English,” Metternich wrote in a similar vein to
Bülow at the time.

The blindness that overcame our public opinion during the Boer War has
migrated across the Channel. . . . I myself think it is a sickness caught from
Germany. We have gone into recovery, while the fever—and the raging madness
that accompanies it—has only now been reached here.74

The present task of the government was, then, to prevent another onset of the
Anglophobe “fever” in Germany.

73 Diary entry by Holstein, 13 November 1902, no. 813, PH, vol. 4, 246-7.
74 In Bülow’s account public opinion in Britain is the main factor behind the failure of the collaboration in
The organs read by the intellectual and political elite in Germany were not provoked by the animadversions of the London newspapers. Only on the far right and extreme left did the press seriously challenge German policy. The attacks came mostly in the Reichstag during debates on budgetary matters in early 1903, when both the nationalist right and the Social Democrats criticized the government. The Foreign Office had worried from the outset that its policy would be condemned in the Reichstag. After all, it could lead to an embarrassing interpretation of the government’s stance on the Monroe Doctrine: Bülow either would risk a definitive break with the United States, or would offend public opinion at home by disavowing future imperialist expansion in Latin America.  

The Social Democrats reproached the government for protecting the rights of industrial magnates like Krupp in Venezuela to the detriment of Germany’s relations with other world powers like the United States. It was fairly easy for Bülow to dismiss these charges in the Reichstag, for, as the chancellor emphasized, a major goal of the collaboration had been to improve Germany’s relationship with Britain at the level of both diplomacy and public opinion.

Yet the radical right also criticized the government in the Reichstag. The agrarians felt that Bülow had capitulated again to foreign powers without getting

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76 Speech by Bebel, 22 January 1903, 10th Leg. Per., Session 2, *SBVR*, vol. 186, 7467-89; and speech by Vollmar, 21 January 1903, 10th Leg. Per., Session 2, ibid., 7413-23. Bebel claimed that Krupp and the Diskontogesellschaft had pushed the government forward in order to protect their railroad investments in Venezuela. There is a selection of clippings on the Krupp concern and letter from Vollmar to Bülow in the Hammann papers that relates to this matter. Otherwise, the Hammann Papers contain nothing of interest on the Venezuela affair. See Vollmar to Bülow, 22 January 1903, Bd. N 2106 / 8, NLH, BArchL; *Münchener Post*, 2 December 1902, and 2 and 11 January 1903, Bd. N 2106 / 8, NLH, BArchL; and uncited clipping, 1 January 1903, Bl. 55a, Bd. N 2106 / 8, NLH, BArchL.
77 Speech by Bülow, 20 January 1903, 10th Leg. Per., Session 2, *SBVR*, vol. 186, 7429-32.
anything in return.\textsuperscript{78} The anti-Semites reiterated this sentiment and complained further that the Foreign Office continued to make policy without regarding the will of the people.\textsuperscript{79} Ernst Hasse, representing the Pan-German League, even complained that Germany watched world events stupidly, while France and Russia had exploited the Boer War to continue their expansion in the Mediterranean and Asia respectively.\textsuperscript{80} But the criticisms of Bülow’s policy that came from the nationalist right—the diametric opposite of the Social Democrats’ complaints—were less easy to answer. In his defense, Bülow had emphasized the old line of conducting foreign policy in accordance with national interests rather than emotions and sentiments.\textsuperscript{81} But the nationalist right only wanted a policy that followed their own populist vision of what the German people expected of its leaders and prestigious victories in the world. The predicament was and would continue to be an altogether too familiar scenario.

\textbf{The End of Britain’s Splendid Isolation}

The perception in Britain and Germany of an irrevocable Anglo-German antagonism made it difficult to see how the statesmen of the two countries could continue to work closely together. The first expression of this feeling of isolation in British circles could be found in the creation of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. The immediate spark for the new agreement was a grass-roots upheaval in China known to contemporaries as the “Boxer Rebellion.” Breaking out in 1900, the Boxer movement

\textsuperscript{78} Speech by Roesicke, 6 February 1903, 10\textsuperscript{th} Leg. Per., Session 2, ibid., vol. 187, 7719-24.
\textsuperscript{79} Speech by Liebermann von Sonnenberg, 22 January 1903, 10\textsuperscript{th} Leg. Per., Session 2, ibid., vol. 186, 7458-63.
\textsuperscript{80} Speech by Hasse, 22 January 1903, 10\textsuperscript{th} Leg. Per., Session 2, ibid., 7491-6.
\textsuperscript{81} Speech by Bülow, 20 January 1903, 10\textsuperscript{th} Leg. Per., Session 2, ibid., 7429-32: “I know quite well, gentlemen, that respected organs of German public opinion—and I myself have contributed to this—have mentioned again and again the old wisdom that politics, and especially foreign policy, should be made with reason and not with emotions.”
targeted those powers that had been despoiling the country since the middle of the 1890s. At its height, a Boxer army had threatened Chinese Christians and the majority of foreigners in Peking, killed the German minister there, and pressured the Chinese government to declare war on the western powers. The great powers in turn formed an international coalition that quickly defeated the Boxers, allowing for continued penetration of the country by foreign powers, especially Russia.

The immediate upshot of the Boxer movement was that Britain had tried to enlist German help in containing Russian ambitions in the Far East. In what seemed a dramatic embrace of the American “Open-Door” policy announced in 1899, Germany and Britain signed the so-called Yangtze Agreement in October 1900, affirming their own desire to maintain the open door in China. The British interpreted the agreement as German approval for Britain’s policy of checking the Russian influence in China. It thus caused great shock in Britain when Bülow announced on 15 March 1901 that the agreement did not extend to Manchuria.

Faced with yet a further example of Bülow’s apparent unreliability, the British turned to the Japanese to check Russian expansion into China. On 16 October 1901 the Japanese ambassador to London, Baron Hayashi Tadasu, began formal discussions of an understanding to coordinate British and Japanese policy in the Far East. The

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82 English draft of the Yangtze Agreement, enclosed in Salisbury to Lascelles, 15 October 1900, no. 17, BD, vol. 2, 15-16. This draft was eventually accepted in both Berlin and London the following day. See also the English and German drafts of the Yangtze Agreement, enclosed in Hatzfeldt to Hohenlohe, 17 October 1900, no. 4744, GP, vol. 16, 248-50.
83 Speech by Bülow, 15 March 1901, 10th Leg. Per., Session 2, SBVR, vol. 180, 1868-72. Bülow seems to have hoped to play Britain off against Russia to Germany’s benefit in the matter. See Bülow to Eckardstein, 15 January 1901, England 73, Bd. 3, PA-AA.
84 Lansdowne to Whitehead, 16 October 1901, no. 105, BD, vol. 2, 96-8. The discussions, which had really begun on 31 July 1901, had only been conducted informally up to that date. See Lansdowne to Whitehead, 31 July 1901, no. 102, ibid., 90-1.
negotiations went through numerous drafts over the next three months, including discussion of whether Germany would be invited to adhere to the agreement, and whether it would later be published. Ultimately the agreement called for each power to come to the other’s aid if it were attacked by two non-signatory powers and for strict neutrality if one of the powers had to fight a war with only one power. In addition, Britain and Japan agreed to the maintenance of the status quo in Korea and China. The agreement was obviously aimed at Russia more than any other power. But a secondary impulse was doubtless also based upon a concern about Germany’s unreliability as a friendly power in the world.

Still, Britain seemed a long way from reconciliation with France and Russia. Part of the reason why Bülow had felt so comfortable in adopting the policy of the free hand, after all, was the assumption widely held in the German Foreign Office that Britain would never be able to get along with France and Russia. When Ambassador Metternich, for instance, reported his overall view of the situation from London following the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese agreement, he tended to see the move as a positive development; it precluded any question of an Anglo-Russian rapprochement.

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85 Lansdowne to Whitehead, 16 October 1901, no. 105, and Lansdowne to MacDonald, 7 January 1902, no. 120, ibid., 97 and 110. The Germans were not invited to join in the agreement, though they were notified about it on 6 February 1902—before it was communicated to the press. Lascelles to Lansdowne, 7 February 1902, no. 128, ibid., 122-3.
86 Lansdowne to MacDonald, 22 November 1901, no. 111, and 7 January 1902, no. 120, ibid., 100 and 108. It was ultimately released to the newspapers on 12 February 1902. Lansdowne to Currie, 12 February 1902, no. 129, ibid., 123.
87 Anglo-Japanese Agreement, 30 January 1902, no. 125, ibid., 114-20. The various drafts and amendments are included alongside the final text of the document here.
88 Scott to Lansdowne, 12 February 1902, no.130, ibid., 123-4.
for the time being.\textsuperscript{89} In France, moreover, public opinion during the Boer War had been just as Anglophobic as in Germany, and it remained hostile after the event.\textsuperscript{90}

In spite of the continued tense relations between France and Britain, a new sentiment was developing in France alongside the old hostility: the desire to come to some sort of accommodation with Britain. The idea centered on a colonial bargain between the two powers, a mutual agreement that would swap French rights in Egypt for complete control of Morocco. French interest in Morocco was simultaneously geopolitical and economic. The French empire in Africa completely surrounded Morocco geographically, which meant that any unrest could easily spread across the border to Algeria, threatening France’s hold on that colony. In addition, traditional balance-of-power concerns in the Mediterranean and the advancement of French economic interests in Morocco also contributed to the French desire to claim the region.\textsuperscript{91}

The primary architect of this policy was Théophile Delcassé, the French foreign minister from 1898 to 1905.\textsuperscript{92} Having gained his political spurs as a journalist for revanchiste papers like \textit{La Petite République}, \textit{La République Française}, and \textit{Le Paris}, Delcassé was a pure French patriot who wished nothing less for his country than a return to the greatness of the years before the Franco-Prussian War.\textsuperscript{93} Like many of his

\textsuperscript{89} Metternich to Bülow, 21 February 1902, no. 799, \textit{PH}, vol. 4, 799. He still called the agreement an “unmixed blessing,” because it could lead to Anglo-Japanese cooperation against Germany in the Far East as well.
\textsuperscript{91} Langer, \textit{Diplomacy of Imperialism}, 736.
\textsuperscript{92} Théophile Delcassé (1852-1923) was French colonial minister from 1894 to 1895, and then French foreign minister from 1898 to 1905.
contemporaries, he remained wary of Britain at the turn of the century. But in spite of the latent hostility that had come to the surface in the Fashoda Crisis of 1898, elites in the government and the press had begun to think by the early 1900s of a swap between the two powers—a *quid pro quo* that would leave Egypt to England, but would ensure Morocco for France. During the Boer War, such a deal was discussed within the French government. Delcassé was initially skeptical of the idea, but he discussed it with his advisors in Paris and the diplomats in London. Gradually brought around to the idea, he made up his mind by early 1903 to pursue the barter.

The biggest stumbling block in Delcassé’s policy was the Madrid Convention of 3 July 1880. This agreement had been negotiated by a conference of the great powers as a way of maintaining Morocco’s independence and sovereignty against the wave of annexations that had characterized the first phase of the scramble for African colonies in the 1880s. The ultimate purpose behind the treaty—in reality, a British initiative—was to prevent a foreign power from gobbling up Morocco and threatening British control of Gibraltar. As such, the Madrid Convention outlined the rights of foreign representatives in Tangier and granted most-favored nation status to all the signatories. These included, among others, the United States, Germany, Austria, Spain, France, Britain, and

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94 Monson to Salisbury, 14 August 1899, no. 259, *BD*, vol. 1, 212. Partially this related to a more general distrust of Salisbury in French diplomatic circles. Paul Cambon, the French ambassador in London, was typical in his view of the situation: “*Avec des hommes comme Lord Salisbury et avec les Anglais en general,*” he wrote to Delcassé at about this time, “*il importe de ne jamais sortir de la stricte vérité.*” Cambon to Delcassé, 1 February 1899, in Paul Cambon, *Correspondance 1870-1924*, vol. 2, 1898-1911 (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1940), 23.


96 Paul Cambon to Henri Cambon, 3 February 1903, in Cambon, vol. 2, 89.

Italy. Legally speaking, because the multilateral treaty protected the rights of these states, any revisions of the balance of power in Morocco would require their consent.

Ironically, Delcassé had begun to lay the diplomatic groundwork for the bargain with some of these powers even before he became convinced the swap of territory with Britain was good policy. He made separate agreements with the most important European states that had interests in Morocco—Italy and Spain—separately from Britain, depriving her of any international support on the issue. For Italy, Delcassé promised Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in an exchange of notes at the end of December 1900. He further solidified the deal with another exchange of notes in June 1902, in which Italy promised to remain neutral if France were attacked or “provoked” into declaring war. This amounted to a disavowal of Italy’s obligations to the Triple Alliance—which Italy had renewed only two days before signing the exchange of notes that repudiated it. The possibility of new colonies was too good a bargain to pass up for Italian statesmen.

On the other hand, Spain, a far weaker power, required a bit more finagling. The French entered into discussion with Spain on the subject by early 1901. Spain, Delcassé offered sweetly, was to get a large portion of northern Morocco to include the capital city, Fez, and the coast across from Gibraltar on the Mediterranean—really quite a good bargain considering Spain’s relative unimportance as a force in Europe or the wider world. Spanish leaders seemed to have a bit more respect for international

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99. Barrère to Delcassé with enclosures, 10 January 1901, no. 17, ibid., vol. 1, 20-3.
100. Barrère to Delcassé, 29 June 1902, no. 313, and Barrère to Delcassé with enclosures, 10 July 1902, no. 329, ibid., vol. 2, 375, and 390-5.
101. Bülow to Wedel, 28 June 1902, Deutschland 128, no. 1, secr., Bd. 19, PA-AA.
agreements, though. They were afraid of Britain’s reaction to an agreement negotiated and signed behind her back. They ultimately demanded that France must first have Britain disavow an 1880 treaty guaranteeing Moroccan independence, before they, too, would join in a partition of Morocco.103 The French negotiators involved became nervous over the same issue.104 Hence, Delcassé had to gain the agreement of the British before the deal with Spain could be closed. The Spanish ultimately accepted the treaty on 3 October 1904, but only after Delcassé had already made his barter with Britain; as a result, the territory granted to Spain was greatly diminished in the final terms of the agreement.105

Public opinion in France and Britain seemed to encourage some the extension of the arrangement to British Isles. On the French side of the Channel, the animosity manifested toward Britain in the Boer War had begun to abate, as the Paris correspondent of The Times noted on the occasion of Chamberlain’s visit to South Africa at the beginning of 1903.106 Serious papers in France, most notably the Temps and the Journal des Débats, had argued for an understanding with Britain since at least 1900.107 This shift of attitudes in France paralleled developments in Britain. The Times, assessing the situation Europe in April 1903, noted that the “dignity and calm of France have had an admirable foil in the restlessness of the German Foreign Office, and the effect, not only here, but in Europe, has been enhanced by the contrast.”108

104 Paul Cambon to Henri Cambon, [10 January 1903], in ibid., 67-8.
106 The Times, 17 January 1903.
108 The Times, 15 April 1903.
In the summer of 1902, the British and the French began informal discussions on Morocco. By this time, Delcassé had seriously begun to think of bringing Britain into the Moroccan project because of Spanish reservations to British abstention. By December, Delcassé got word from Cairo that Chamberlain desired a rapprochement with France; and by the beginning of 1903 this desire found expression in a remark that Lansdowne made to Paul Cambon in London that France, Britain, Spain, and Italy should settle the Moroccan question while excluding Germany if that was at all possible. The French recognized that the main impetus for the move on the British side was the feeling of international isolation that had developed during the Boer War. In the spirit of friendship, King Edward VII visited Paris in May 1903. Although his visit initially was greeted with catcalls from the crowds of “Vivent les Boers!” and the like, the king himself was determined to bring about a reconciliation and gradually began to win over the Parisian masses. When the president of France, Emile Loubet, returned the visit the following June accompanied by Delcassé, the improved atmosphere was obvious. The reciprocal visits provided a further impulse for an understanding between the two powers.

The negotiations nevertheless dragged on until the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War in February 1904. This conflict tended to increase the urgency of the

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111 Paul Cambon to Delcassé, 31 December 1902, no. 552, ibid., 686-9. King Edward VII echoed these sentiments a few weeks later. See Cambon to Delcassé, 29 January 1903, no. 49, ibid., vol. 3, 65-8. Paul Cambon (1843-1924) was the French ambassador in Madrid from 1886 to 1891, in Constantinople from 1891 to 1898, and in London from 1898 to 1920.
112 Paul Cambon to Delcassé, 13 March 1903, no. 137, ibid., 183-5.
matter on the French side. The end result was a colonial bargain that became the foundation of the Anglo-French Entente Cordiale, which representatives of Britain and France signed on 8 April 1904. The agreement was not an out-and-out alliance, but rather a simple settlement of economic and colonial issues in the world. The most important of these differences were, of course, those settled in the swap of Morocco for Egypt, though minor disputes in Siam and Southeast Asia, Newfoundland, Madagascar, and the New Hebrides were also smoothed over by the treaty. Perhaps the most important article of the treaty was Article IX, which promised mutual “diplomatic support, in order to obtain the execution of the clauses of the present Declaration regarding Egypt and Morocco.”

Bülow and his advisors in the Foreign Office knew of the negotiations and had a fairly complete picture of the broad outlines of the agreement even before its publication. Yet it had been a cardinal rule in Berlin before 1904 that the British would never come to terms with the French. Therefore, the conclusion of the Entente and its announcement came as something of a shock in the German Foreign Office. The Kaiser worried that Britain, now no longer having to fear imperial competition from France, would henceforth show little consideration for Germany. Holstein got especially worked up at the news of the agreement. When the first rumors of Anglo-French negotiations over Morocco had reached Berlin in the autumn of 1902, he had been of the opinion that no British government would dare to present in Parliament a treaty that conceded Morocco

115 Paul Cambon to Henri Cambon, 16 April 1904, in Cambon, vol. 2, 134.
Holstein had apparently believed it was too fantastic to believe that the French and the British would ever be able to reconcile their differences. Yet, with the conclusion of the Entente, Holstein became particularly pessimistic about the situation. “I am not at all happy politically. Our perverse attitude during the Boer War has now borne fruit in an alliance between England and France,” he complained privately in April 1904.

Not only I, but other members of the Political Division of the Foreign Office, were exerting all our efforts three years ago to persuade Bülow to oppose the excessive hostility to England and especially to criticize the disgusting pictures in the humorous magazines. But the good Bülow prefers to swim with the current rather than against it. Now we are reaping the harvest.\(^{119}\)

Holstein had repeatedly placed his hopes since 1890 on a defensive alliance with Britain, and now those plans were definitively shattered.\(^{120}\) He wished to make it clear that Germany should be consulted when such comprehensive settlements were made in the world.

Perhaps—following the lead of France—Germany should assert her supposed economic rights in Egypt to try to bring about her own comprehensive settlement of issues in the world.\(^{121}\) He also felt that Bülow ought to pursue a similar policy against

\(^{118}\) Memorandum by Holstein, 1 October 1902, no. 807, PH, vol. 4, 238-40. The original copy of this is in the Bülow papers in Koblenz. The rumor suggested that the French had requested a free hand in Morocco and that they were offering compensation in Indochina and Egypt. The report had two sources: Walter B. Harris, the Morocco correspondent of The Times, and Mehedi el Menebhi, the Moroccan minister of war. See also Bernard Karl Dehmelt, “Bülow’s Moroccan Policy, 1902-1905” (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1963), 6-7.

\(^{119}\) Holstein to Ida von Stülpnagel, 10 April 1904, in Friedrich von Holstein, Lebensbekenntnis in Briefen an eine Frau, ed. Helmuth Rogge (Berlin: Ullstein, 1932), 231. His official correspondence was equally pessimistic about the change that was happening in the spring of 1904. See memorandum by Holstein, 3 March 1904, Deutschland 128, no. 1, secr., Bd. 21, PA-AA; and memorandum by Holstein, 12 May 1904, Deutschland 128, no. 1, secr., Bd. 23, PA-AA.

\(^{120}\) The standard work on Holstein’s British policy is Peter Winzen, “Die Englandpolitik Friedrich von Holsteins 1895-1901” (Ph.D. diss., University of Cologne, 1975).

\(^{121}\) Memorandum by Holstein, 19 April 1904, no. 6443, GP, vol. 20, 123. Bülow particularly favored this formula. See Bülow to Richthofen, 19 April 1904, no. 6444, ibid., 124.
France in Morocco. There one could focus on Germany’s trading rights, even if the real motive was to preserve her prestige in the world. Because Bülow would push for the open door and make it clear that he was amenable to Spain’s acquisition of Tangier—two goals desired in London—the British diplomatic support promised in Article IX of the Anglo-French treaty would be blocked by a legalistic interpretation of the Madrid Convention. Bülow accepted Holstein’s arguments. These initial ideas later developed by early 1905 into a hard-and-fast policy of vigorously asserting German rights in Morocco. By that time it seemed that if Germany applied enough pressure over Morocco, then the Anglo-French understanding would break apart on its own accord, for the two powers were sure to abandon each other to protect their own interests. The tactic Holstein advocated was to give greater support to the sultan of Morocco to help him preserve his independence. It is not entirely clear how far Holstein wished to push France and Britain in the crisis. But he had been in direct communication since the early 1890s with General Alfred von Schlieffen, the chief of the general staff, and it seems he fully appreciated how propitious the timing was with the current military situation for a showdown.

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122 Memorandum by Holstein, 3 June 1904, Marokko 4, secr., Bd. 8, PA-AA.
123 Hammann to Holstein, 1 July 1904, no. 832, PH, vol. 4, 264.
124 Bülow to Kühlmann, 16 February 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 51, PA-AA.
125 Rich, Holstein, vol. 2, 697-9. He undoubtedly knew of Schlieffen’s famous double knock-out strategy, which the general had just put the finishing touches on before the crisis. Although the documentary evidence is scanty about Schlieffen’s interaction with Holstein during the first Morocco Crisis, he probably also recognized the strength of Germany’s position vis-à-vis Russia, which had been weakened by the Russo-Japanese War. Count Alfred von Schlieffen (1833-1913) was a veteran of the wars with Austria and France, had been appointed to the general staff in 1884, and finally took over as chief of the general staff from 1891 to 1906. Schlieffen developed the basic blueprint for the operational plan used in the invasion of France at the beginning of the war in the midst of the first Morocco Crisis. See Gerhard Ritter, The Schlieffen Plan: Critique of a Myth (New York: Praeger, 1958). There has recently been some doubt as to how much the memorandum that Schlieffen drew up in 1905 actually influenced the operational plan put into work by his successor at the general staff, Helmuth von Moltke (1848-1916). For the recent literature on the subject, see Terence Zuber, Inventing the Schlieffen Plan: German War Planning, 1871-1914 (Oxford: Oxford University
The Reaction to the Entente and the Russo-Japanese War

Hammann and the press section began to make a more concerted effort in the years leading up to the first Morocco Crisis to cultivate British public opinion as a way of checking just the sort of development that the Entente represented. Following Eckardstein’s retirement into private life in October 1902, Bülow appointed Count Johann von Bernstorff as the first secretary in the London embassy. Bernstorff subsequently took over for Eckardstein as the government’s representative with the British press. He was a particularly apt choice. Having recently served as the Foreign-Office press representative in Munich, Bernstorff had gained the esteem both of the journalists he interacted with and of Bülow, who had a special interest in discovering and utilizing diplomats who could get along well with journalists. Hammann immediately began to employ Bernstorff to promote better relations with the London press, to counter the articles of the most rabidly Germanophobic papers like The Times, the Daily Mail, and the National Review. He developed close relationships with journalists and attempted to bring the Bülow-Hammann system across the Channel. Like in Germany, the focus was on subtle methods of cultivation. “In London,” Bernstorff wrote, expressing this point of view, “one can accomplish something [in the press] only with


Mohr to Bernstorff, 1 November 1902, in Johann von Bernstorff, Memoirs of Count Bernstorff, trans. Eric Sutton (New York: Random House, 1936), 70. Dr. Martin Mohr (1867-1927) was the editor of the Münchener Allgemeine Zeitung at the time and later directed the press relations of the government in Poland during the First World War. See “Mohr, Martin,” in BS, vol. 2, 867-8

Hammann, Vorgeschichte, 113-14. The Press Bureau was particularly concerned about the anti-German stance of the National Review. See Bernstorff to Wolf, 2 January [1904], folder 23, Wolf-Mowshowitch Papers, YIVO-NY.
of ‘window-dressing,’ not with money.”129 Bernstorff subsequently developed a good working relationship with Valentine Chirol, the foreign editor of The Times, despite that the paper remained unsympathetic to German policy.130 He was able to win over the Empire Review as an organ to make Germany’s case against the National Review.131 But by far the most important contact he made was Lucien Wolf, the foreign editor of the Daily Graphic from 1890 to 1909, whom Bernstorff encouraged to write articles friendly to Germany.132 By the end of 1903, he reported making significant inroads with Wolf:

My business with the world of the journalists is so extensive that soon I will have to restrict it if I want to have enough time to carry on other things . . . Lucien Wolf was very pleased with his reception in Berlin. I am extraordinarily thankful

129 Bernstorff to Hammann, 6 November 1903, Bd. N 2106 / 3, NL.H, BArchL. This was an axiom of German press policy in Britain before the First World War. In the wake of the signature of the Anglo-French agreement, for example, various London newspapers accused the German embassy of bribing the Daily Telegraph. Holstein’s cynical response to this was that the Foreign Office did not have enough money at its disposal for bribery in London, a fact which Bülow also lamented. Memorandum by Holstein (together with Bülow’s marginalia), 9 March 1904, England 73, Bd. 9, PA-AA. This basic viewpoint was later echoed as late as the July Crisis of 1914: “In England,” the ambassador to Vienna remarked, “nothing can be done with money; one must attempt to produce an effect there with objective discussion.” Tschirschky to Bethmann Hollweg, 22 July 1914, no. 128, DD, vol. 1, 148. Following his later transfer to Cairo, where took up the position of consul general in May 1906, Bernstorff echoed his own feeling that bribery was an ineffective way of winning power over the press. See Bernstorff to Hammann, 2 June 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 3, NL.H, BArchL.

130 Bernstorff, 74.

131 Following the publication of the Anglo-French agreement, Bernstorff was able to get Charles Bruce to publish an article sympathetic to Germany in June 1904 that utilized Foreign-Office talking points throughout. Charles Bruce, “The Political Relations of Great Britain with France and Germany,” Empire Review 7, no. 41 (1904): 385-99; and Metternich to Bülow, 27 May 1904, England 73, Bd. 9, PA-AA. Similarly, J.L. Bashford asserted in the July issue that the Kaiser “has not created his navy as an aggressive weapon of war, but for the purpose of defending Germany’s possessions and interests.” J.L. Bashford, “The Truth about the German Navy,” Empire Review 7, no. 42 (1904): 521. This was a rare instance where German bribery was successful in Britain, for the Reich Foreign Office secretly agreed to purchase 1,000 copies of the Empire Review for each issue published after 1903. Kennedy, Antagonism, 257.

132 Lucien Wolf (1857-1930) became a journalist in his late teens writing for the Jewish World and the Public Leader from the middle of the 1870s. From 1890 to 1909 he was the foreign editor of the Daily Graphic. He wrote numerous articles on international politics that appeared in the weekly Graphic and the Fortnightly Review under the pseudonym “Diplomaticus.” From 1907 to 1914, he wrote a regular column in the weekly Graphic entitled “The Foreign Office Bag.” These are available in Wolf’s papers held at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York: folders 221-3, Wolf-Mowshowitch Papers, YIVO-NY. Bernstorff, as first secretary in London, initially contacted him in early 1903 to cultivate a good press in Britain. Bernstorff to Wolf, 13 May 1903, folder 23, Wolf-Mowshowitch Papers, YIVO-NY. After Bernstorff’s transfer to Egypt in 1906, the two succeeding first secretaries in London—from 1906 to 1908, Baron Wilhelm von Stumm (1869-1935), and from 1908 to 1914, Baron Richard von Kühllmann (1873-1948)—continued the collaboration with Wolf. Wolf to Kühllmann, 4 March 1909, folder 32e, Wolf-Mowshowitch Papers, YIVO-NY. On the eve of the war, Wolf was moonlighting as a commentator for two of the more influential liberal papers in London, the Westminster Gazette and the Daily Chronicle.
to you—just as he is—for your great friendship in this matter. You remark aptly
that Wolf becomes more and more Germanophile in the *Daily Graphic*.  

Even though Wolf initially declined to write pro-German articles with regard to Morocco, he still sympathized with the German position and was a possible channel in the future to help propagate the view of the Foreign Office. Subsequently, by the time of the signature of the Anglo-French agreement on Morocco, Bernstorff had built up a network of connections that would help him to coordinate the press policy of the London embassy with Hammann’s policies back home.

The news of the Anglo-French agreement appeared on 9 April 1904, the day after it officially went into effect. In Germany, the more serious organs of the press praised the agreement either as something that was conducive of peace or as an arrangement that would tend to divide the Franco-Russian bloc. On the extreme right, however, the government faced relentless criticism as a result of its apparently failed policies. The cry raised by the Pan-Germans was loudest. The *Alldeutsche Blätter* complained, for instance, that the government would do nothing, for Bülow had made it clear that Morocco was not worth a war with France.  

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133 Bernstorff to Hammann, 15 December 1903, Bd. N 2106 / 3, NLH, BArchL. The response is Hammann to Bernstorff, undated, in Bernstorff, 83. Cf. Bernstorff to Wolf, 15 December 1903, folder 23, Wolf-Mowshowitch Papers, YIVO-NY, which praises Wolf’s recent work and claims that “the Emperor reads the Daily Graphic every morning” and often gave orders based upon what he read there.

134 Bernstorff to Bülow, 14 May 1904, England 73, Bd. 8, PA-AA.

135 *Le Temps* in Paris first communicated the news of the accord that day. See Radolin to the Foreign Office, 9 April 1904, no. 6373, GP, vol. 20, 11-12.

136 See, for example, *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 9 April 1904, and *Berliner Tageblatt*, 17 April 1904. Schiemann, writing in the *Kreuzzeitung*, went even further when he noted gleefully that it appeared France had abandoned her ally, Russia. *Kreuzzeitung*, 12 April 1904, in Schiemann, *Dgp* 4 (1905): 120. The French ambassador in Berlin attributed this positive attitude to the official pointer given in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*. Bihourd to Delcassé, 12 April 1904, no. 14, *DDF*, ser. 2, vol. 5, 16-17.

similarly wrote with great bitterness that Britain was treating Germany like a second-rate
topower.138

To check this kind of criticism, Bülow wrote a memorandum for Holstein,
Hammann, and the Press Bureau. In it, the chancellor instructed Hammann to see to it
that the German press discussed the matter “without either irritation or jealousy, as a
new manifestation of the peaceful reconciliation of issues in the world.”139 Hammann
had already been trying to prepare the ground for such a policy with his contacts in the
world of journalism.140 He now planted the official line in the Kölnische Zeitung as a
way of broadcasting it to the rest of the press. If German trade were treated equitably in
Morocco, the Foreign-Office pointer asserted, then the agreement could only be viewed
positively.141 In response to the criticisms of the right specifically about his overly
cautious policy, Bülow was even more adamant:

> Again and again it must be indicated that the ultra-chauvinists, who now desire a
> piece of Morocco and generally want to annex territory everywhere, have made
> possible the reconciliation between England and France with their systematic
> baiting and their fanatically ignorant enthusiasm for the Boers. With what lack of
> understanding was I attacked when I warned about abandoning ourselves to the
> panicky politics of sentiment! In a time when the press and public opinion play
> so great a role as today, now one, now the other, finally the entire country itself,
> bears the responsibility for these excesses.142

In this vein, the Kölnische Zeitung wrote an extensive article which argued that the
Anglo-French rapprochement was the logical result of the Anglophobia cultivated on the

138 Tägliche Rundschau, 17 April 1904.
139 Memorandum by Bülow, 9 April 1904, Frankreich 116, Bd. 13, PA-AA.
140 Hammann’s marginalia, memorandum by Bülow, 9 April 1904, Frankreich 116, Bd. 13, PA-AA.
141 Kölnische Zeitung, 9 April 1904.
142 Bülow to Hammann, 20 April 1904, in Hammann, Bilder, 42. I was unable to find a copy of this letter in
the Hammann Papers. It may have been sent back to Bülow for perusal before publication, having been lost
somewhere in the process (Hammann corresponded regularly with Bülow about his publications after his
retirement). For the few other cases this happens again below, I have included a similar note in the
reference.
right during the Boer War. Bülow laid out the official line more thoroughly in a speech to the Reichstag on 12 April 1904. As a power that genuinely sought the maintenance of the peace, he declared, Germany had no desire to see a “tense relationship” between France and Britain. The agreement, he averred, gave no reason for fear that German interests would be ignored or injured in Morocco.

Bülow’s move was more than just an attempt to put a good face on a bad situation. This policy sustained the fragile hope that Germany might sign a similar accord with Britain. After all, the British government was trying its hardest to put the brakes on anti-German rhetoric in its press and hoped to conclude a colonial agreement with Germany at some time in the future. In the summer of 1904 Bülow tried to work directly toward this goal, by arranging for King Edward VII to visit Kiel and the German navy to hold a review at Plymouth. As with many efforts of German diplomacy before the war, the maneuver backfired. The attention of the British press focused during the

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143 Kölnische Zeitung, 22 April 1904.
144 Speech by Bülow, 12 April 1904, 11th Leg. Per., Session 1, SBVR, vol. 199, 2022-4. Bülow’s remarks were apparently not prepared ahead of time, because an outline for the second half of the speech dealing with the war in the Far East is in the Hammann papers, but does not reference the Morocco agreement. This would seem to indicate that Bülow’s main concern at this time was the war in the Far East and the possibilities it opened up for Germany’s relations with Russia. See Bülow’s outline for the speech dated 12 April 1904, Bl. 19-25, together with Hammann’s corrections with the same date, Bl. 17-18, Bd. N 2106 / 9, NL.H, BArchL. His remarks were echoed two days later. See speech by Bülow, 14 April 1904, 11th Leg. Per., Session 1, SBVR, vol. 199, 2069-74.
145 This was especially the hope of State Secretary Richthofen. See Dehmelt, 103-14.
146 Bernstorff to Bülow, 16 April 1904, England 78, Bd. 21, PA-AA.
147 An account of the meeting is given in memorandum by Bülow, 26 June 1904, England 78, secretiss., Bd. 7, PA-AA.
visit to Plymouth not on the goodwill and friendship of Germany and her navy, but rather on the threat that it posed to British security.\footnote{See the footnotes on memorandum by Richthofen, [4 July 1904], no. 6, 422, \textit{GP}, vol. 19, 194-5.}

Moreover, in the midst of the visit, Holstein had a brief falling out with the chancellor that was significant both for its impact on the development of Moroccan policy and for its demonstration of the growing importance of Hammann in the Foreign Office. At the time, Holstein was on an extended leave of absence because of a cataract operation on 23 June. It seemed he would be able to return to a regular work routine with only a few weeks’ recuperation.\footnote{Holstein to Ida von Stülpnagel, 22 June 1904, in Holstein, \textit{Lebensbekenntnis}, 233-4.} Two days after the operation, Holstein wrote a letter to Bülow complaining about State Secretary Richthofen, his immediate superior in the Foreign Office. Holstein was concerned that Richthofen had accompanied the chancellor and the Kaiser to the regatta at Kiel where Edward VII appeared, despite the decision by Bülow, Hammann, and Holstein beforehand that the state secretary should not be in attendance. Since his appointment in 1900, Richthofen had consistently shown little regard for the traditional operation of his office and was lackadaisical in the performance of routine duties, Holstein felt. A change of personnel or at least of Richthofen’s personal style in office was needed.\footnote{Holstein to Bülow, 25 June 1904, no. 828, \textit{PH}, vol. 4, 260-3. Hammann relates a somewhat different story in his memoirs. Holstein caused the quarrel with Richthofen, Hammann argued, because he had made changes to draft for the Kaiser’s toast at Kiel without consulting the state secretary, with whom he had not wanted to discuss the changes he and Hammann had worked out independently. Holstein then was looking for a cause of dispute, which he found in Richthofen’s attendance at Kiel and the announcement of that fact in the \textit{Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger}. Hammann, \textit{Vorgeschichte}, 127-9.} Bülow casually brushed aside the criticisms by remarking that a change in the leadership of the Foreign Office would encourage changes in its lower ranks as well, which Holstein interpreted as a threat to
his position. Bülow, though angry and hurt by the affair, informed Holstein through Hammann that he would accept his resignation, and neither side budged in the matter over the coming weeks. Privately, Holstein complained of the inordinate influence Richthofen and Hammann had attained in the Foreign Office under Bülow. It was clear that in the early years of his chancellorship, Bülow had become extremely dependent on his press chief. Nevertheless, when Holstein’s friend, Prince Hugo von Radolin—the ambassador in Paris from 1900 to 1910—intervened with the Kaiser directly, Bülow ultimately decided to compromise. He claimed that Holstein had completely misunderstood his earlier remarks, and the old privy councilor returned to his work in the middle of October.

The upshot of these events was important for Bülow’s Morocco policy as well, for Holstein was the primary advocate of a strong policy there. Even after the Anglo-French Entente was an accomplished fact, Bülow remained optimistic about Germany’s overall situation in the world. After all, he wrote his ambassador in Spain, time was not on France’s side since the Russo-Japanese War virtually assured the long-expected Anglo-

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151 Bülow to Holstein, 29 June 1904, no. 829, *PH*, vol. 4, 263.
152 Holstein to Bülow, 1 July 1904, no. 830, ibid., 263.
153 Hammann to Holstein, 1 July 1904, no. 832, ibid., 264; Holstein to Hammann, 6 and 11 July 1904, Bd. N 2106 / 22, NL.H, BAchL; Bülow to Hammann, 9 July 1904, Bd. N 2106 / 9, NL.H, BAchL; and Bülow to Hammann, 13 July 1904, in Hammann, *Bilder*, 34. I was unable to find the copy of the latter letter in the Hammann Papers.
154 Holstein to Pourtalès, 29 August 1904, no. 851, *PH*, vol. 4, 273: “When Bülow became Reich chancellor, he planned to conduct foreign policy with me, and how is it today? In all matters Richthofen and Hammann are his most trusted advisors, and I sit in the corner; it is a big thing when I am brought in as the third, fourth, or fifth [advisor]. I am too old for such a secondary role.”
155 Prince Hugo von Radolin (1841-1917) was the German ambassador in both Constantinople from 1892 to 1895 and St. Petersburg from 1895 to 1900, before he moved on to his post in Paris.
156 Bülow to Holstein, 17 September and 17 October 1904, nos. 856 and 861, ibid., 277 and 280.
Russian conflict.\textsuperscript{157} He had bombarded Holstein with questions in January that indicated his belief that a war in the Far East would detach Russia from the alliance with France, while the maintenance of peace would be to Germany’s distinct disadvantage. In addition, “from the viewpoint of our internal politics and to counteract the general dissatisfaction in Germany, it would of course be a good thing if ‘somewhere far away’ the nations came to blows.”\textsuperscript{158} Bülow doubtless wished to use the war in the Far East alongside the logic of Anglo-Russian relations generally to try to drive a wedge between France and Russia after the Entente had finally been concluded. Germany would be the big winner because she would be waiting with both open arms and a new alliance for the Tsar.

In the interval of Holstein’s absence from his official position, then, the policy of the Foreign Office focused greater attention on the chancellor’s pet project: a reconciliation with Russia, which seemed especially promising by the summer of 1904. In the immediate background was the deterioration of Russo-Japanese relations over their competing policies in the Far East. Even though the Japanese position had become relatively stronger with the formation of the Anglo-Japanese alliance in 1902, the Japanese continued to desire a peaceful solution to their conflict with Russia in the Far East. Their main concern was to protect their position in Korea from Russian encroachment.\textsuperscript{159} In the years immediately preceding the outbreak of hostilities, Japan and Russia unsuccessfully tried to negotiate a division of Korea and Manchuria into separate spheres of influence. But the dismissal in 1903 of the Russian finance minister,

\textsuperscript{157} Bülow to Radowitz, 22 May 1904, Marokko 4, secr., Bd. 8, PA-AA.  
\textsuperscript{158} Bülow to Holstein, 16 January 1904, no. 818, \textit{PH}, vol. 4, 249-50.  
\textsuperscript{159} Lansdowne to MacDonald, 3 July 1903, no. 237, \textit{BD}, vol. 3, 207.
Count Sergey Witte, and the reorganization of the Russian provinces of Kwantung and Amur into a single Far Eastern viceroyalty under Vice Admiral Alexeyev, signaled the victory of the imperialist party over the peace party in the Tsar’s government.160 Because the massive new viceroyalty surrounded much of Manchuria and northern Korea, it was a signal to the Japanese that Russia was moving in the direction of a forward policy in the region.161 As a last resort, Japan conducted a preemptive strike against Russia on 8 February of 1904, when Japanese torpedo boats destroyed the entire Russian Far Eastern squadron at Port Arthur. The next day Japanese soldiers marched into Korea and the Liaotung peninsula; over the course of the next year they pushed the poorly led and disaffected Russian army out of Manchuria. With the destruction of the Baltic fleet in May 1905 during a battle against the Japanese navy in the Tsushima Strait, all hope of a Russian victory was shattered. The Tsar had to sue for peace.

While the major synthetic treatments on the origins of World War I pay little attention to the subject,162 the Russo-Japanese War is crucial for understanding this period in European diplomacy. For starters, it was the preoccupation of most European newspapers at the time, garnering the lion’s share of attention in their pages, where sympathy for Japan predominated. In Britain, the organs of both the influential Liberal

162 See, for example, Eugene N. Anderson, The First Moroccan Crisis 1904-1906 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930). This was the standard treatment in the period between the two wars and is a classic example of how students of international politics before the First World War have largely ignored the European consequences of the Russo-Japanese War. This phenomenon is not limited to older works but has continued in the more modern treatments of diplomacy before the war. See, for instance, the standard works in the Making of the 20th Century series: Berghahn, Germany and the Approach of War in 1914, which focuses most of its attentions on the naval armaments question and domestic politics; John F. Keiger, France and the Origins of the First World War (New York: St. Martin’s, 1983), which unfortunately only mentions the war once, on page 20; and Zara S. Steiner, Britain and the Origins of the First World War (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1977), which does not do much better, with two citations on pages 30 and 85.
and Conservative press supported the Japanese side wholeheartedly, to the point that none of the major papers even looked with askance on Japan’s role in initiating hostilities. In France, *Le Temps*, which represented middle-class Republicans and had close connections to the French government, demanded strict neutrality. But the organs of the left were so anti-Russian that the Bavarian minister in Paris felt it was only the financial connection between France and Russia that was keeping the alliance of 1894 intact. In Germany, a broad section of the press also supported Japan; it seemed sympathy for Russia was restricted only to government circles.

More fundamentally, the war was a constant source of strain and worry for British and the French decision makers—and, significantly, an opportunity for their German counterparts. William II supported the Tsar, asserting with his usual passion that the “Russians are defending the interests and also the preponderance of the white race against the increasing arrogance of the yellow race.” Even pessimistic Holstein found something useful in the conflict: it would prevent France and Russia from falling upon Germany in the immediate future. Most significantly, Bülow hinted at the positive impact on Germany’s position in the world. Publicly he denied any desire to drive a wedge between France and Russia; privately he hoped to profit from the war. In typical fashion, Bülow played one side against the other: he sought to capitalize as much as possible from the conflict, shipping off to the Russians, for instance, anti-Japanese

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163 *Le Temps*, 10 February 1904. Besides being the main Republican paper for the middle classes in Paris, *Le Temps* was regarded at home and abroad as the semi-official organ of the Quai d’Orsay. Its daily circulation on the eve of the war was approximately 45,000. Bellanger, 296.
166 William II’s marginalia, Arco to Bülow, 11 August 1904, no. 6047, *GP*, vol. 19, 211-12.
articles in German dailies, while simultaneously sending the anti-Russian ones to London.169

British statesmen worked tirelessly to keep the conflagration from spreading. Yet, the Germans, for their part, seemed to be doing their best to support the Russians against Britain’s Japanese allies.170 The Hamburg-America Steamship Company (HAPAG), for instance, was supplying coal to the Russian fleet under the general direction of its president, Albert Ballin, and with the secret approval of the Foreign Office.171 This unofficial support inflamed the London newspapers, and Bülow and his press division took note of it.172 The cooperation of German statesmen with Russia in the Far East seemed to point in this direction as well. The Times reported on 16 October 1904, for example, that Bülow was cooperating with Russian decision-makers in a treaty regarding Tibet, which appeared directed mostly against British interests.173 Bülow denied this report, and had an official statement drawn up regarding the matter that was

170 The Times even feared that an understanding had been concluded between Russia and Germany: “In all that concerns the Far East the relations between St. Petersburg and Berlin have been rapidly growing much closer and more intimate than those between St. Petersburg and Paris.” The end result, The Times speculated, was that an extensive “Far-Eastern understanding” had developed between Russia and Germany—a return to the intimacy of the Bismarckian years. The Times, 14 September 1904. Albert Ballin (1857-1918) came from a middle-class family in Hamburg. Early in his career Ballin had taken over his father’s Hamburg emigration agency. In 1886 he was hired by HAPAG, and after 1899 he served as the general director of the company. He eventually gained the trust of both William II and the Foreign Office. Because of his connections in the business and newspaper world of London, the Foreign Office often used Ballin for unofficial diplomatic missions in the decade before the war. For more on Ballin, see Lamar Cecil, Albert Ballin: Business and Politics in Imperial Germany 1888-1918 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1967).
171 Memorandum by Klehmet, 14 September 1904, no. 6077, GP, vol. 19, 247-8; and memorandum by Ballin, 29 September 1904, no. 6082, ibid., 253-5.
172 Bülow to Romberg, 4 October 1904, no. 6084, ibid., 57-9.
173 The Times, 16 October 1904. Cf. Metternich to the Foreign Office, 20 October 1904, no. 6349, GP, vol. 19, 652, which suggested that The Times was directly inciting anti-German sentiments in September and October. A meticulous and detailed defense of The Times’ report and its conduct in late 1904 can be found in History of The Times, vol. 3, 395-401.
His denials did little to soothe British opinion.

More fundamental, though, was the question of Germany’s role in the Russo-Japanese War, which many of the conservative London dailies were viewing more and more in the manner of a conspiracy against the British Empire. The zenith of Anglo-Russian tensions in the Dogger Bank episode brought about a similar escalation of the friction with Germany. On 21 October 1904, the Russian Baltic Fleet, which had deployed to the Pacific after the disaster at Port Arthur, accidentally fired on British fishing boats on route to face the Japanese navy. The incident seemed likely to lead to just the sort of escalation that London and Paris had feared since the beginning of the war. A report from the Paris correspondent of The Times—possibly emanating from the Russian correspondent of the Echo de Paris—insinuated that Germany was behind the incident: “According to well-authenticated information,” The Times reported, “the Russian authorities were bombarded with warnings from Germany as to the danger that awaited the Baltic Fleet on its passage through the North Sea.” This report supported earlier rumors that some kind of an alliance had been concluded between Germany and Russia; German statesmen now seemed to be openly pitting Russia against Britain, despite denials of this previously. Official press policy, however, did not express the secret satisfaction harbored on the Wilhelmstrasse for the expectation of a war between

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175 Ironically, these were actually the only shots the squadron ever fired during its half-year trip from the Baltic Sea to Port Arthur, where it was ultimately destroyed by the Japanese fleet. Orlando Figes, A People’s Tragedy: The Russian Revolution 1891-1924 (New York: Penguin, 1996), 169-70.
176 Kölnische Zeitung, 27 October and 2 November 1904. The Echo de Paris, edited by André Mévil, represented conservative academic and military circles in Paris. It had a daily circulation of 135,000 and was the most important defender of Delcassé’s Morocco policy. Bellanger, 296.
177 The Times, 29 October 1904.
Russia and Britain because of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. In order to diminish any suspicion of Germany in the British press, Bülow instructed Hammann to attempt to minimize the celebration of the Dogger Bank incident in German papers.179

But in spite of Bülow and Hammann’s efforts to the contrary, the polemics in the conservative British press that had been ongoing since the summer now reached a crescendo. Articles in the Army and Navy Gazette, Vanity Fair, and the Sun clamored for a preventive strike against the German navy in the Baltic, even going as far as to advocate a preemptive attack along the lines of what had been done to the Danish fleet in 1807.180 “If the German Fleet were destroyed, the peace of Europe would last for two generations,” Vanity Fair explained. After all, “the German navy is absolutely useless except for purposes of aggression against England.”181 Despite assurances to the contrary that the alarmist reports of Vanity Fair and its ilk were false—both by the German ambassador in London and the British ambassador in Berlin182—officials and newspapers in Germany expressed alarm at Britain’s intentions. Bernstorff gave voice to this point of view in a letter to Lucien Wolf. “The facts are,” he lamented, “that the

179 Bülow to Hammann, 24 October 1904, Bd. N 2106 / 9, NL.H, BArchL.
180 Report of Coerper, 18 November 1904, England 78, secretiss., Bd. 7, PA-AA. The Army and Navy Gazette article is quoted at length in Schulthess (1904): 235-6. The reference is to the British attack on Copenhagen in 1807 at the height of the Napoleon’s power in Europe. At that time, the British Admiralty feared that the French would seize the Danish fleet and use it in the naval war against Britain. To forestall this development, the British tried to compel the Danes to accept an alliance and hand over their fleet to British control. Because the Danes refused the ultimatum, the British decided to attack Copenhagen with marines and a fleet. At the conclusion of the attack they had either destroyed or confiscated all the ships that comprised the Danish navy. On the episode, see Paul W. Schroeder, The Transformation of European Politics, 1763-1848 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 327-8. Because of the Anglo-German naval competition, the Germans often feared a similar preemptive attack on their navy, which would destroy it before it could become a threat to British naval mastery. On the concern about a British preemptive strike against the German navy, see Jonathan Steinberg, “The Copenhagen Complex,” Journal of Contemporary History 1, no. 3 (1966): 23-46.
181 Vanity Fair, 17 November 1904, England 78, secretiss., Bd. 7, PA-AA.
article of the Army and Navy Gazette was [viewed] in Berlin corridors to be semi-official.” Bülow even went so far as to encourage this sentiment by having Hammann circulate the article from the Army and Navy Gazette as a way of proving yet again to the German public the necessity of the navy.

Nevertheless, these accusations were symptomatic of deeply held suspicions about Russo-German cooperation that had a considerable basis in fact. Going back to his days in St. Petersburg in the 1880s, Bülow had reportedly felt that Germany should work more closely with Russia than with Britain. In the aftermath of the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, for example, Holstein wrote his cousin that Bülow was still suspicious of Britain. In pursuit of better relations with Russia, Bülow had instructed Hammann to curb anti-Russian articles like the one that had appeared in August Scherl’s Tag immediately after the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War: otherwise German public opinion would repeat the “same idiocies” committed against Britain during the Boer War, making it seem Germany had been rubbing her hands at the prospect of a Russian defeat.

By the end of the summer of 1904, it had become obvious to Bülow that his policy of restraint in search of an Anglo-German colonial agreement was failing. He therefore became a convert to the Kaiser’s personal policy of seeking a rapprochement with Russia. From October to November William II quietly entreated the Tsar to sign a defensive alliance with Germany. His main argument for the measure was that the coal German

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183 Bernstorff to Wolf, 13 January 1905, folder 23, Wolf-Mowshowitch Papers, YIVO-NY.
184 Bülow to Hammann, 18 November 1904, Bd. N 2106 / 9, Nl.H, BArchL.
185 Bülow to Eulenburg, 8 February 1892, no. 583, EK, vol. 2, 758-65.
186 Holstein to Ida von Stülpnagel, [end of November 1902], in Holstein, Lebensbekenntnis, 214.
businessmen were supplying to the Russian fleet for the war with Japan made an alliance absolutely necessary to counter British suspicions of Germany. The Russians dragged out the issue, seeking the maximum gain from the Kaiser’s policy. William’s dreams of an alliance with his cousin were finally shattered when Russian statesmen announced on 23 November that they would have to consult France about the matter, in effect making it a dead issue. The Kaiser recognized that his policy had failed utterly; forgetting himself, he called it melodramatically “the first failure that I have [ever] personally experienced.” It now appeared that Germany must attempt something new to maintain a secure position in Europe.

**German Diplomacy Triumphant: The Tangier Landing**

Even liberal newspapers in England, like the *Daily News* and the *Westminster Gazette*, had received the news of the Entente as a positive development in Britain’s foreign relations. “For three years public opinion had as little friendship for France, as [it now has] for Germany,” concluded the German ambassador. “This misunderstanding could therefore also work itself out.” This assumption had guided Bülow’s policy through the summer, including the press policy of moderation he had outlined for Hammann in April. In pursuit of the policy, he had repeatedly tried to moderate fresh outbursts in Germany of Anglophobia and resentment about the Moroccan situation. As late as October 1904, following the outbreak of riots in Casablanca, he told Hammann to avoid making an official statement on the obvious confusion in Morocco. Any attention to the matter might possibly bring up in the press the question of intervention, which

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188 William II to Bülow, 23 November 1904, no. 6126, *GP*, vol. 19, 316.
190 Metternich to Bülow, 9 April 1904, Frankreich 116, Bd. 13, PA-AA.
Bülow wanted desperately to avoid. Furthermore, while the Foreign Office was trying its hardest to conclude a defensive alliance with Russia in December 1904, he had repeatedly made it clear he did not want to alienate Britain in the process. He had even drafted instructions for Hammann to help the press understand the difference between the “benevolent neutrality” Germany was offering in the Russo-Japanese War and the alternative of “absolute neutrality,” which was not on the table because it would offend Britain.

By the end of 1904, Bülow had nevertheless given up the idea that his wait-and-see policy was going to result in better relations with Britain. It had become clear that the Entente had failed to alienate Russia from France. This meant that a German rapprochement with Russia was out of the question. In addition, the leading figures in the Foreign Office felt it was highly unlikely that Britain would forgive Germany her navy so quickly. This became especially obvious in early 1905. At the beginning of February, The Times published a statement emanating from Arthur Lee, the First Lord of the British Admiralty, indicating that the British henceforward would focus their attention on the German threat in the North Sea. “If war should unhappily be declared,” Lee announced, “under existing conditions the British Navy would get its blow in first, before the other side had time even to read in the papers that war had been declared.”

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191 Bülow to Hammann, 21 October 1904, Marokko 2, Bd. 10, PA-AA.
192 Bülow to Hammann, 10 December 1904, Bd. N 2106 / 9, Nl.H, BArchL. Germany’s “benevolent neutrality” referred to a general policy of remaining aloof from the war. This contrasted sharply from “absolute neutrality,” which would imply an explicit statement that Germany would stay out of the war in all circumstances.
194 The Times, 4 February 1905.
major press debate resulted, as papers on both sides of the channel took up the issue of Germany’s navy and its effect on her relations with Britain. Bernstorff tried his best to counteract anti-German sentiment in Britain, but he was unable to get the German side of the issue expressed.

Something of an electric effect coursed through official circles. Bülow himself had cited the navy as reason for his unwillingness to conclude the alliance with Britain—or any other power—back in 1899. Now he told Tirpitz in an evening conference attended by Richthofen on 10 February that he would agree to any naval budget the admiral proposed. William II was also skeptical about the likelihood of improving relations with the British. He greeted the 4 February article in The Times as a less-than-veiled threat, and pushed the British ambassador to disavow the statement. By April he lamented theatrically that the British would not make an accommodation with Germany, “because we are too much alike and will be stronger than the French.” Increasingly, the original course Holstein had proposed immediately after the conclusion of the Entente seemed the only solution to Germany’s growing isolation. Bülow gradually became a convert. On 12 December 1904, the Kölnische Zeitung hinted that French action in Morocco lacked the mandate of the European powers. When the chancellor’s representative in Morocco suggested that he should offer moral support to

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195 Hale, Diplomatic Revolution, 72-4.
196 Bernstorff to Hammann, 28 February 1905, Bd. N 2106 / 3, NLH, BArchL.
199 William II to Tirpitz, 4 February 1905, in ibid., 14.
200 William II’s marginalia, Metternich to Bülow, 9 April 1905, Frankreich 116, Bd. 13, PA-AA.
201 Bihourd to Delcassé, 10 January 1905, no. 17, DDF, ser. 2, vol. 6, 17-18.
the sultan against any encroachments by the French in early January, he endorsed the move in a qualified way. 202

The French, meanwhile, had been steadily preparing to assert themselves in Morocco. They formulated their doctrine of “peaceful penetration,” which basically consisted of securing economic preponderance before taking direct political control of the country. Delcassé had gotten the sultan to accept a French loan to cover all his outstanding debts, which suggested that he had recognized French “preponderance” in Morocco. 203 A lag of some time occurred thereafter until the Chamber of Deputies finally approved the agreement with Britain in November 1904. 204 Following this endorsement, however, Delcassé began to move forward with the plan of gradual penetration of Morocco. On 25 January 1905 French representatives arrived at Fez and began to pressure the sultan to accept a protectorate. The stage was set for a showdown between Germany and France.

The chaos and instability for foreign investments that had gradually heightened with the growing French presence in Morocco gave the Germans the public justification they needed to move forward with Holstein’s policy. Bülow tried to get American cooperation for the maintenance of the “open door” in Morocco, to no avail. 205 On 15 March the chancellor hinted in the Reichstag that he had plans to protect Germany’s economic interests in Morocco. 206 Bülow and Holstein calculated that worries in London about financial interests in Morocco would encourage the British government to

203 Delcassé to Taillandier, 17 June 1904, no. 228, DDF, ser. 2, vol. 5, 268.

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abandon their new French friends. Moreover, it seemed highly probable that various newspapers in Britain would push for a peaceful policy. Baron Richard von Kühlmann reported from Tangier, for instance, that Valentine Chirol and Walter B. Harris of *The Times* thought Delcassé had made a mistake in not consulting Germany about Morocco.²⁰⁷ Bernstorff went even further in attempting to cultivate his relations with those Liberal organs like the *Daily Chronicle* that might likewise be inclined to understand Germany’s concerns about her economic interests in Morocco.²⁰⁸ Altogether, it seemed that a working consensus in the German decision-making establishment believed that British statesmen would abandon France in Morocco because they had assured their position in Egypt and did not want to face recriminations in the press.²⁰⁹ Hence Berlin decided to send the Kaiser to intervene directly in Morocco during his upcoming Mediterranean cruise. *The Times*, the *Standard*, and the *Kölnerische Zeitung* all published the news of the upcoming visit on 19 March.²¹⁰ Bülow inserted an article in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* the next day that neither confirmed nor

²⁰⁷ Kühlmann to Bülow, 19 March 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 55, PA-AA. Richard von Kühlmann (1873-1948) entered the German diplomatic service in 1899 and served in a number of different embassies before being appointed as first secretary to the London embassy in 1908, a position he held until the outbreak of the war. In 1917 he became the state secretary in Berlin. He negotiated the 1918 Treaty of Brest-Litovsk for Germany, but eventually left the diplomatic service in the summer of 1918 after quarreling with the leadership in the army. “Kühlmann, Richard von,” BHdAD, vol. 2, 683-4.

²⁰⁸ Bülow to Metternich, 22 March 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 55, PA-AA; and Bernstorff to Hammann, 25 March 1905, Bd. N 2106 / 3, NL.H, BArchL. The *Daily Chronicle* had been a fairly consistent advocate of good relations with Germany since the conclusion of the *entente cordiale*; it even went so far as to say at the time of the King Edward VII’s visit to Kiel in the summer of 1904 that an agreement directed against Germany would be pointless. See Hale, *Diplomatic Revolution*, 49.

²⁰⁹ Memorandum by Holstein, 3 June 1904, Marokko 4, secr., Bd. 8, PA-AA; Bülow to Radolin, 21 July 1904, Marokko 4, secr., Bd. 9, PA-AA; and memorandum by Kühlmann, 1 October 1904, no. 6386, GP, vol. 20, 31-33.

²¹⁰ *The Times* got the story first because Kühlmann leaked it to Walter Harris in Tangier. See *The Times*, 19 March 1905. Theodor Wolff, the correspondent for the liberal *Berliner Tageblatt* in Paris at the time, claimed that initiative for the visit was in Tangier with Kühlmann and Hornung, the local representative of the *Kölnerische Zeitung*. Theodor Wolff, *Das Vorspiel* (Munich: Verlag für Kulturpolitik München, 1925), 156. In actuality, it was the brainchild of Bülow and his advisors in Berlin. Dehmelt, 238-48. Hammann claimed after the war that it was Holstein who was ultimately behind the visit. Otto Hammann, *The World Policy of Germany*, trans. Maude A. Huttman (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927), 149.
denied the visit, but instead encouraged the sultan to protect his independence.211 Beyond this, the only real preparation in public relations the Foreign Office made for the visit was to curb the most flagrant articles in the press, such as the story in the Hamburger Nachrichten asserting Germany had no “noteworthy interests in Morocco.”212

On 31 March the Kaiser landed at Tangier and proceeded through town amid great tumult. In his excitement, he went further than Bülow had originally desired in his various extemporaneous speeches. He told the French representative in Tangier, for example, that he would deal with the sultan as an independent ruler; simultaneously he offered the sultan much greater support against France than the policy-makers in Berlin had envisioned.213 All told, the event marked the beginning of the most serious diplomatic crisis in Europe since Bismarck’s dismissal. Initially, Bülow and his Press Bureau were careful not to provoke Britain or the more bellicose elements in the German press. After the announcement of the visit, Bülow had instructed his ambassadors in the

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211 Bülow to William II, 20 March 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 55, PA-AA. The text of the article in the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung is enclosed with the letter here. These sentiments were echoed later in the week. See Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 26 March 1905.
212 Memorandum by Holstein, 26 March 1905, Deutschland 126, no. 3, Bd. 7, PA-AA.
213 Schoen to the Foreign Office, 31 March 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 57, PA-AA; and Chérissey to Delcassé, 31 March 1905, no. 210, DDF, ser. 2, vol. 6, 265-6. See also Chérissey to Delcassé, 31 March 1905, no. 211, and Bon to Thomson, 31 March 1905, no. 212, ibid., 266-9. The newspaper accounts of the visit all differed markedly from one another because the Kaiser’s remarks had not been written out in advance for him to deliver in a formal way. For other descriptions of the visit, see Wilhelm von Schoen, Erlebtes. Beiträge zur politischen Geschichte der neuesten Zeit (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1921), 19-22; White to Lansdowne, 1, 2, and 6 April 1905, nos. 71-2, and 74, BD, vol. 3, 62-4; Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 4 April 1905; Theodor Schiemann, “Eine Fahrt ins Mittelmeer mit Kaiser Wilhelm,” Deutsche Monatsschrift für das gesamte Leben der Gegenwart 8 (June 1905): 303-11; memorandum by Schwabach, 2 April 1918, in Paul von Schwabach, Aus meinen Akten (Berlin: Carl Flemming und C.T. Wiskott A.G., 1927), 335-8; and Walter B. Harris, “The Morocco Crisis,” Blackwood’s Magazine 178 (August 1905): 299-300.
field to play “the sphinx,” treating the matter with a great deal of circumspection and reserve.\textsuperscript{214}

Yet precisely because the government refused to discuss the visit officially before 31 March, the European press had free reign to surmise that a crisis was brewing. A war of words ensued in the French, British and German press.\textsuperscript{215} \textit{Le Temps}, a close supporter of the French Foreign Ministry,\textsuperscript{216} wrote a number of articles late in March, asserting that Germany should not complain since she had been informed of the envisioned changes in Morocco.\textsuperscript{217} In response, the \textit{Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung} declared Germany’s intention of protecting her economic interests. The German case seemed strong, for even André Tardieu, the French journalist behind many of the articles in \textit{Le Temps}, admitted privately to Ambassador Radolin in Paris that he could not understand Delcassé’s failure to communicate the agreement officially to Germany.\textsuperscript{218} In Britain, on the other hand, most of the London papers saw German complaints for what they were and dismissed them as such. Indeed, the British press began to take up the old anti-German line, supporting French statesmen even more strongly than the Parisian newspapers. The London press held this position until June, when its tone became somewhat quieter. Hence, the widely held view in German diplomatic circles that Britain

\textsuperscript{214} Memorandum by Bülow, 24 March 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 55, PA-AA; and Münz, 64.
\textsuperscript{215} For an overview of the views of the German press, see Schulthess (1905): 67-9.
\textsuperscript{216} The newspaper lacked the official character of an organ like the \textit{Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung} in Germany, but was still closely affiliated with the government and supported its foreign policy in a way somewhat more comparable to what \textit{The Times} did for the British Foreign Office. See M.B. Hayne, \textit{The French Foreign Office and the Origins of the First World War 1898-1914} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 45.
\textsuperscript{217} \textit{Le Temps}, 21, 22, 26, 27, and 29 March 1905.
\textsuperscript{218} Radolin to Holstein, 25 March 1905, in footnote to Radolin to Foreign Office, 21 March 1905, no. 6567, \textit{GP}, vol. 20, 266. Nevertheless, Tardieu was firm in making the opposite case in the pages of \textit{Le Temps}. In addition, \textit{Le Figaro} also asserted that Delcassé had communicated the contents of the Morocco agreement to Radolin. Bülow specifically gave orders to refute this charge by having Holstein draft an article for the \textit{Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung}. \textit{Le Figaro}, 24 March 1905; and Bülow’s marginalia, Flotow to Foreign Office, 24 March 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 55, PA-AA.
would abandon its newfound friend was entirely mistaken. “The possibility of such a
notion,” The Times declared in its editorial on 31 March, “shows profound ignorance
alike of our diplomatic history and the present temper of our nation.”

After the Tangier landing, Hammann and the Press Bureau sought to strengthen
the legal basis for a German intervention by making its case in the semi-official organs of
the German press. The case was strong on paper. The Madrid Conference of 1880 had
ensured Moroccan independence by the collective assent of the powers. Bülow now had
the Press Bureau focus its publicity on arguing that Germany ought to deal directly with
the sultan in Morocco in pursuit of the “open door.” The calculation that lay behind all
of this was that French public opinion would turn against Delcassé and his Moroccan
policy, if it came down to a question of choosing between a war and a diplomatic
defeat. Hammann followed this line of reasoning closely in his relations with the
press. With the approval of Bülow, he inserted an article in the Norddeutsche
Allgemeine Zeitung on 2 April that complained about how Delcassé had neglected—and
how he still showed little inclination—to negotiate with Germany over Morocco.

Yet there was still confusion in the Foreign Office about the presentation of the
government’s case to the public. Holstein almost immediately complained to the
chancellor that Hammann was leading the public astray by his focus on direct relations
with the sultan as a way of answering France’s shabby treatment of German interests.

Taking a cue from the methods of the Old Diplomacy, he felt the right solution was to call

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219 The Times, 31 March 1905.
220 Bülow to Tattenbach, 29 March 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 56, PA-AA.
221 Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 2 April 1905; and memorandum by Hammann, 7 April 1905, no. 6607,
GP, vol. 20, 309, which was written after the fact in defense of Hammann’s press policy over Morocco.
Bülow’s letters to Hammann unfortunately contain nothing of relevance to German press policy regarding
Morocco in late March and early April 1905.
a conference of the powers that had signed the original 1880 treaty. Hammann parried the attack by asserting that the public would not understand the sudden change of course if the government followed Holstein’s advice. “Until now the prevailing principle in the cultivation of the press was that we would not go through Paris, but directly to Fez,” Hammann wrote on 3 April.

That was clear and worked well. Now the prevailing view advanced is that we will go neither through Paris nor Fez, but through a conference [of the powers]. The suggested programmatic refusal of every special arrangement with regard to the Moroccan affair is hardly reconcilable with the pronouncements of His Majesty and of the Reich chancellor that we deal directly with the sultan. If this new idea is thrown out to public opinion in the semi-official organs without the most careful preparation in the remaining press, then a muddle is as probable a result in public opinion as a clarification of things. . . . If we commit our policy to a conference in the semi-official press, then we will also have to see this through diplomatically. Otherwise a fiasco will get chalked up to the personal account of the Reich chancellor. [Bülow in the margins: “Very true”]

Holstein continued to make the case for a conference in the following days. Two days after the initial exchange, he again complained to Bülow that nothing of his conference idea had reached the press because Hammann was out of his element when it came to such matters of high cabinet policy: the talents of the press chief, he said, were more in domestic politics and police matters. Again on 7 April he criticized Hammann for his lack of understanding when it came to the conference idea and his continued emphasis in the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung on the French failure to communicate the treaty officially to Berlin. If Germany thereby lost the leading position in a

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222 Memorandum by Holstein, 3 April 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 57, PA-AA. Holstein had been complaining about the mismanagement of press relations since the last week or so of March. On 24 March, for example, he grumbled to Bülow that even newspaper like the liberal Frankfurter Zeitung—which was one of the primary organs of the Bülow-Hammann system and therefore should know to follow the lead of the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung—unfortunately were worried about embarrassing France. Memorandum by Holstein, 24 March 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 55, PA-AA.

223 Memorandum by Hammann, 3 April 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 57, PA-AA.

224 Memorandum by Holstein, 4 April 1905, no. 6601, GP, vol. 20, 304-5.

225 Holstein to Bülow, 5 April 1905, no. 882, PH, vol. 4, 297.
conference, there could be only one conclusion: “It is the result of the inadequate leadership of our press.”

Hammann finally brought an end to the row when he pointed out that he had had Bülow’s advance approval for the articles he inserted into the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung on 2 and 5 April, while much of the rest of the press—including the Kölnische Zeitung—had been lately discussing the conference idea anyway. Bülow initially followed Hammann’s line more closely than Holstein’s, though he was somewhat ambivalent at the time and ultimately came to embrace the conference plan against his press chief. Privately Holstein raged over the affair and became embittered toward Hammann. This event proved to be the primary catalyst for the break in their friendship. Hereafter, Holstein attempted to prevent all personal contact between himself and Hammann, and for all intents and purposes the two men became bitter enemies.

227 Kölnische Zeitung, 4 April 1905. This was republished in the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung on 5 April 1905.
229 Hammann tells a somewhat different story in his memoirs than what I have sketched from the official documentary record of the affair. According to Hammann, Holstein argued in the first days of April that it was necessary to turn up the heat even higher on Delcassé. By a threat of war against France in the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, Holstein supposedly wanted to strengthen Germany’s position vis-à-vis the sultan and possibly topple Delcassé’s already floundering policy in Morocco. In this scenario, the carrot Holstein wanted to offer along with this stick was the possibility of an international conference to solve the issue. The only peaceful solution to the crisis, he wished the press to argue, would come in the form of an international conference. Hammann on the other hand, was worried about an overly bellicose attitude in the press. While such antics might help the chancellor in getting another naval law passed, jingoism in the semi-official press might give the wrong impression about German intentions. In these organs, Hammann argued in his memoirs, “saber-rattling would only do harm.” Hammann, Vorgeschichte, 136. The case is one of the rare instances in Hammann’s memoirs where it seems the press expert may have offered a tendentious retelling of events, for there is nothing aside from a general knowledge of Holstein’s character that would suggest his account followed the actual course of events. Hammann’s portrayal is in: Kurs, 68-71; Vorgeschichte, 136-7; Bilder; 35-6; and World Policy, 151-2. Cf. also Carroll, Germany and the Great Powers, 516, which largely follows Hammann’s version of the episode. Holstein continued to work independently of Hammann in the coming weeks to try to get his view of the treaty—as a collective
Nevertheless, the initial reports of many German newspapers and the continued quiet tone they exhibited toward the affair, as well as the government’s firm insistence that Delcassé had not consulted Berlin about the matter when he should have, began to have a definite impact in France—both in the press, and in government circles. The one major exception was the *Berliner Tageblatt*. In late March and early April, Bülow and Hammann worked to counter what they considered the unpatriotic behavior of the newspaper’s Paris correspondent, Theodor Wolff, who had approved of the Tangier landing back in March only on the condition that it would lead to a friendly agreement with France.\(^{230}\) By the middle of April these efforts were apparently successful. Dr. Arthur Levysohn, the chief editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, affirmed that the paper was supportive of the Reich Foreign Office and its diplomacy.\(^{231}\)

Meanwhile, in France Delcassé’s enemies characterized him as reckless. His less incisive critics viewed the matter as one of bumbling and neglect. Almost all recognized that in the least he had failed to account for German interests adequately.\(^{232}\) Bülow tried to play on this newspaper criticism of Delcassé. He granted an interview with a French journalist, Marcel Hutin, which appeared on 4 April in the *Echo de Paris*, a conservative agreement among the powers—published in the *Kölnische Zeitung*, while also playing down the idea that Germany and France could settle the matter bilaterally.

\(^{230}\) *Berliner Tageblatt*, 24, 29, and 31 March 1905. Bülow spread the idea abroad that there was an international conspiracy to propagate the French view in the European press at this time, of which Wolff’s reports were presumably a part. Bülow to Kühlmann, 24 March 1905, no. 6572, *GP*, vol. 20, 270-1. Robert de Billy, Delcassé’s press chief in Paris, nevertheless continued to work with Wolff to arrange a démarche with Bülow in early April. See footnote on Bülow to Radolin, 5 April 1905, no. 6602, ibid., 305. The reports of the *Berliner Tageblatt* in these days was partially behind the rift between Hammann and Holstein, for its reports appear to have been one of the sources of concern for Holstein in his criticism of the Press Bureau and its handling of the Tangier landing. See memorandum by Hammann, 3 April 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 57, PA-AA.

\(^{231}\) Levysohn to Mühlberg, 11 April 1905, Deutschland 126, no. 2, Bd. 11, PA-AA.

\(^{232}\) See the detailed account of the state of French public opinion in March and April 1905 in Carroll, *French Public Opinion*, 208-9.
paper representing the intellectual and military elite in France. Despite that organ’s general policy of support for the French Foreign Ministry, it recapitulated many of the talking points of the Reich Foreign Office verbatim, concluding that “the situation does not yet present an immediate danger, but it is nevertheless serious, and it is not the time to take things ‘as a joke.’” Bülow otherwise maintained the stance of the sphinx for the moment. Delcassé sent Jules Hedeman, the representative of Le Matin in London, to Hammann. He wanted the press chief to get him an interview with Bülow to discuss the tense situation, but Hammann rebuffed these overtures with the approval of the chancellor (who complained that Delcassé should have known better than to conduct diplomacy through such channels). The situation was intensified by German refusal to enter into direct bilateral talks with France on the issue. And, adding to the conundrum, Bülow’s diplomats remained “wooden-faced.” For most of May, there was a lull in press comment, despite the feverish French efforts to get the Germans to enter into talks with them on Morocco.

British newspapers and statesmen offered almost enough support to Delcassé to make up for the lack of it in his own country. On 4 April 1905, for example, The Times endorsed emphatically the position of French statesmen—of which Le Temps had been the main voice—concluding that “the French Government has so strong a case that it can well afford to leave it as it stands to the judgment of the world.” Bernstorff repeatedly

233 Echo de Paris, 4 April 1905, Bd. N 2106 / 6, NLH, BAchL. Bülow was particularly happy about these concluding remarks, for he wrote in the margins, “Good. That is what I said.”
236 The Times, 4 April 1904, 9. This article was undoubtedly a disappointment for Bülow, as only the day before Kühlmann had reported that Walter Harris would support the German view of the crisis in The Times. Kühlmann to the Foreign Office, 3 April 1905, Deutschland 128, no. 1, secr., Bd. 24, PA-AA.
complained about the difficulty of influencing the British press at all during this time. He tried, for example, to activate his most effective channel in Lucien Wolf of the *Daily Graphic*. But Wolf, who freely admitted he was “far from being enamoured of the Anglo-French agreement,” nevertheless felt compelled to give his “humble disapproval” of the Tangier landing because it had become obvious the move was a direct attack on the Entente.²³⁷ Bernstorff wrote Hammann that he was disappointed he could not bring Wolf and the *Graphic* into line with German policy. Yet the British press was nearly uniform in its condemnation of Bülow’s roughneck diplomacy, and “this time the paper does not want to swim against the current.”²³⁸ Neither Bernstorff nor Ambassador Metternich could do anything to check the anti-German tendencies of many newspapers. “With respect to the cultivation of the press unfortunately there is little that can be done in such confusing times,” Bernstorff complained at length to Bülow.

When one has talked to the journalists, one can find his ideas repeated in the next day’s front-page news. But such influence lasts only twenty-four hours. Then everything goes back to the old current of opinion, and those few beneficial leading articles are flooded over by the stream [of bad ones]. The journalists have just as little inclination as the statesmen to be attacked by the Germanophobe gang. We Germans have the duty to acknowledge even more thankfully when here or there can be found a person who has the courage to admit feelings friendly to Germany.²³⁹

The Anglo-German antagonism, it appeared, was here to stay.

The pro-French sentiment of the British public was mirrored at the official level.

Here, more and more, British statesmen were inclined to offer the French almost

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²³⁷ Wolf to Bernstorff, 5 April 1905, folder 23, Wolf-Mowshowitch Papers, YIVO-NY. Cf. Bernstorff to Wolf, 6 April 1905, and Wolf to Bernstorff, 7 April 1905, folder 23, Wolf-Mowshowitch Papers, YIVO-NY. Excerpts from these letters were later reprinted in the *Daily Chronicle*, 10 July 1915, and in Bernstorff, 80-82.

²³⁸ Bernstorff to Hammann, 6 April 1905, Bd. N 2106 / 3, NL.H, BArchL. A copy of Wolf’s letter to Bernstorff of 5 April 1905 was attached to this originally, though there is no extant copy of it now in the Hamann Papers.

²³⁹ Bernstorff to Bülow, 22 April 1905, England 78, secretiss., Bd. 7, PA-AA.
unconditional support. Delcassé found encouragement to push ahead with his policy, despite the dwindling support at home. By the end of April he felt certain that he could count on military aid from Britain, while the German threat of war was only a bluff.²⁴⁰ By the middle of May, Paul Cambon reported that Lord Lansdowne had offered to act together with France in the event of an unwarranted attack by Germany.²⁴¹ By 31 May 1905 the British foreign secretary even sent a letter to the French emphasizing his support in the matter and his desire to cooperate diplomatically as much as possible in backing Delcassé in Morocco.²⁴² A fundamental rift was growing between the French and the German position; Bülow and Holstein decided to make another bold move to counter it. Through the councilor of legation at Paris they focused the blame on Delcassé and his policy.²⁴³ Shortly thereafter, news that the sultan had rejected French proposals for reform on June 1 and requested a conference of the powers seemed to confirm the basic failure of Delcassé’s policy.²⁴⁴ The pressure reached a high enough pitch in the government and the Chamber of Deputies that Delcassé was finally forced to resign on 6 June.²⁴⁵ Bülow’s policy seemed to have been a stunning success.

**German Diplomacy Defeated: The Algeciras Conference**

The triumph, however, was ephemeral. At the beginning of May, Chancellor Bülow began to want to place more pressure on Delcassé to accept Holstein’s idea for a

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²⁴¹ Cambon to Delcassé, 18 May 1905, no. 443, *DDF*, ser. 2, vol. 6, 520–3. Lansdowne does not mention giving any guarantee of this kind in his own account of the meeting. See Lansdowne to Bertie, 17 May 1905, no. 94, *BD*, vol. 3, 76.
²⁴² Lansdowne to Cambon, 25 May 1905, no. 95, *BD*, vol. 3, 77.
²⁴³ Memoranda by Miquel, 30 and 31 May 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 67, PA-AA.
²⁴⁵ Andrew, 297–8.
conference of the powers, to which he had finally given his assent around 19 April. In reality, Bülow was actually trying to bring about Delcassé’s fall as a way of ending his longstanding anti-German policy. Most in the Foreign Office now expected that France would accede to the sultan’s request for a conference, which would eventually vindicate Bülow’s Morocco policy. But the Kaiser’s view was that Germany had won a significant victory. He had been jittery about the Tangier landing, worrying incessantly that Germany’s position might actually bring about a war—something he definitely did not want. William II, in characteristic fashion, asserted that all the German demands had been met. In his exultation he gave Bülow the title of prince, a symbol of the ostensible victory and the peaceful conclusion of the crisis. He also made his feelings known to the French, who subsequently began under the direction of the prime minister, Maurice Rouvier, to adopt a firmer stance.

The question from the end of April 1905 had become, then, what kind of pressure would ultimately force the French to agree to a conference? In pursuit of that goal, Bülow had ordered the Press Bureau to try to screw up the pressure by encouraging the German press to attack Delcassé for so blatantly ignoring German economic interests at the end of April. At the end of May, he ordered Radolin make it clear to the French

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246 Bülow to William II, 19 April 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 66, PA-AA.
248 Though the Kaiser for once demonstrated his abilities to make rational decisions as a statesman, his hesitancy also was partially out of fear for his own personal safety. A few days before the Tangier landing Walter B. Harris, the correspondent of The Times in Morocco, was nearly murdered. William II to Bülow, 28 March 1905, and Bülow to Tattenbach, 29 March 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 56, PA-AA.
249 Bülow later claimed that he had not been granted the title for the victory in the crisis. The significance of the date that it was granted, 6 June, was not missed by the French, nor was it intended to be. Cf. Bülow, Denkwürdigkeiten, vol. 2, 274.
250 Maurice Rouvier (1842-1911) was French finance minister after 1902, serving additionally as premier and foreign minister from 1905 to 1906.
251 Memorandum by Bülow, 20 April 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 66, PA-AA.
that he would not be able to withstand the pressure from German public opinion if Delcassé retained the portfolio for foreign affairs. Nevertheless, when it became clear that his policy of pressuring the French would be successful in early June, he ordered the Press Bureau to curtail further discussion of Delcassé and his resignation.

But Bülow was not the only person in the Foreign Office who had ideas about using public opinion as an excuse to force French capitulation. Holstein had been extremely unhappy with the way Hammann had run the press campaign in support of Bülow’s Morocco policy ever since the beginning of the crisis. He had even worked behind the scenes to undermine Hammann’s control of the semi-official press, specifically the Kölnische Zeitung. Holstein had some success in these endeavors, as he was able to force the owner of the paper, Josef Neven-Du Mont, to adopt his view of the situation about how to proceed in Morocco. Though the chancellor eventually supported Holstein’s position on the issue of the conference, it seems that the conflict between the two privy councilors was never truly resolved. Bülow, moreover, increasingly sided with Hammann against Holstein. Thus, when an article in Le Temps at the end of April supposedly threw Bülow’s “authority into question,” Hammann and the chancellor suspected that Holstein was the source of the attack.

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252 Bülow to Radolin, 30 May 1905, no. 6669, GP, vol. 20, 388-9. He made similar remarks in a circular note he sent to Vienna, Rome, and Saint Petersburg at about the same time. See Bülow to Alvensleben, Monts, and Wedel, 1 June 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 68, PA-AA.

253 Bülow’s marginalia, Flotow to the Foreign Office, 5 June 1905, Marokko 4, Bd. 68a, AA-PA. Cf. Bülow to the Foreign Office, 9 July 1905, Deutschland 122, no. 13, Bd. 9, PA-AA.

254 Neven-Du Mont to Holstein, 19 April 1905, no. 884, and Holstein to Neven-Du Mont, 20 April 1905, no. 885, PH, vol. 4, 299-305. Holstein was able to accomplish this by breaking off relations with Arthur von Huhn, the editor of the paper and one of Hammann’s closest associates. Holstein to Neven-Du Mont, 21 April 1905, quoted at length in footnote 1 on Neven-Du Mont to Holstein, 19 April 1905, no. 884, ibid., 301. Neven-Du Mont (1857-1915) helped to direct the operations of the paper from 1895 until his death. See “Neven-Du Mont, Josef,” in BS, vol. 2, 918.

255 Bülow to Hammann, 30 April 1905, Bd. N 2106 / 10, NL.H, BAarchL.
Following the resignation of Delcassé, Holstein continued to pursue an independent policy through one of his last remaining contacts with the press, Theodor Schiemann, the respected op-ed writer for the Kreuzzeitung. On 7 June—probably to pressure the French to agree to the conference idea—Schiemann insinuated that France was merely a puppet state doing London’s dirty work, suggesting that Germany would have to attack Britain in retaliation if things continued.256 Elaborating on this theme, Schiemann voiced on 14 June what Bülow later dubbed Holstein’s “Hostage Theory”:

Delcassé deluded himself in thinking that an Anglo-German war would menace only Germany. If such a war should break out, it would be against France that we would wage the campaign, because we would attribute the origin of the conflict to her. On this point there is no difference of opinion in Germany.257 Germany would, in other words, hold France hostage in a war with Britain. Hammann clearly believed by this time that Holstein was actively risking a war with France to pursue his policy in Morocco.258 Bülow, who had never intended to go to war over the issue,259 probably agreed with this assessment.260 There is considerable indirect evidence, moreover, that Holstein was behind the articles because of his close—but carefully hidden—relationship with Alfred von Schlieffen.261 This came at precisely the

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256 Kreuzzeitung, 7 June 1905, in Schiemann, DgP 5 (1906): 158-65. Schiemann had already intimated once that a war was highly possible in April. Kreuzzeitung, 26 April 1905, in Schiemann, DgP 5 (1906): 105-12.
257 Kreuzzeitung, 14 June 1905, in Schiemann, DgP 5 (1906): 166-74. The Kölnische Volkszeitung (one of the main organs of the Center party!) completed the circle: two days after Schiemann’s second article appeared, it asserted that Germany should hold France “hostage” to ensure the future good behavior of her statesmen. Kölnische Volkszeitung, 16 June 1905. The paper had learned to use jingoism as a way of competing more effectively with the Kölnische Zeitung since the Boer War.
258 Hammann, Vorgeschichte, 140; and Hammann, World Policy, 156-7. It is a very real possibility that Schiemann had discussed the article(s) with Holstein ahead of time. He was one of the few contacts Holstein had maintained after Hammann fully took over the public relations apparatus of the Foreign Office. What is more, though Holstein had claimed in April he would have nothing to do with the press any more, he still met with Schiemann in July to discuss Russo-German relations with him. Holstein to Bülow, 22 July 1905, no. 6205, GP, vol. 19, 439-40. Cf. Eckardstein, vol. 2, 174.
same time that the latter was putting the finishing touches on his famous operational
plan for invading Belgium. In any event, from the early summer of 1905, Holstein knew
that Hammann suspected him of war-mongering.

The French press reacted badly to the bellicose ruminations of Schiemann in the
Kreuzzeitung. His articles seemed especially ill-timed because Radolin, the ambassador
in Paris, had recently written Bülow recommending he curtail this kind of chauvinism in
order to allow the French government to adopt a more conciliatory tone toward
Germany.262 What was even worse, the French ambassador in Berlin, after comparing
the language of Schiemann’s 14 June article with one that appeared simultaneously in
the Kölnische Zeitung, concluded that the views expressed in it were probably
represented the intentions of the Reich Foreign Office.263 In the second half of June,
French newspapers were thus alive with discussions about the German intentions and
the meaning of Schiemann’s ominous threats. Papers across the spectrum decried
German bullying—ranging from the respectable Temps, to the nationalist Patrie, to even
the socialist Humanité.264

Schiemann, however, was almost alone in his belligerent ranting. The Kölnische
Zeitung, representing the government point of view, declared that the conflict
surrounding Delcassé’s resignation developed directly out of the animadversions of the
French press about his policy; Bülow would stick to the course he had set before 6

262 Radolin to the Foreign Office, 3 June 1905, nos. 6678-80, GP, vol. 20, 400-3. He learned this from Jean
Dupuy, the owner of the moderate Petit Parisien, who had close connections to Rouvier. Radolin had been
meeting with Dupuy since at least the end of May to cultivate good press in France. See Radolin to
June.\textsuperscript{265} The liberal \textit{Berliner Tageblatt} and the nationalist \textit{Hamburger Nachrichten} doubted that France would cover Britain in a war.\textsuperscript{266} The \textit{National-Zeitung}, the organ of the National Liberals, asserted that Morocco was not grounds for a war, echoing the viewpoint of the Free-Conservative \textit{Post}.\textsuperscript{267} For once, the organ of the Social Democrats, \textit{Vorwärts}, even seemed to swim closer to the mainstream of opinion (though still presenting its own socialist twist on events): the proletariat would resist the drive to war with all its might.

This problem would dog German publicity policy for the remainder of the crisis: public opinion simply did not seem to support a war over Morocco. Indeed, a special article in \textit{Le Figaro} underlined how calm Berlin was at the same time that observers in Paris apprehended a war on the horizon.\textsuperscript{268} Hammann later expressed this problem eloquently in his memoirs: “To the vast majority of the German people, Morocco was like Hecuba,” he wrote, “and the general enthusiasm essential for a possible war had hardly been aroused by the questions of national prestige that arose from Delcassé ignoring German economic rights [in Morocco].”\textsuperscript{269} Bülow always desired to have the approval of the public; the episode had made clear that he currently lacked a consensus for his Morocco policy. He therefore moved to put a stop to the trouble that Schiemann had caused. The chancellor and his subordinate in the Foreign Office, State Undersecretary Otto von Mühlbeg, put pressure on Schiemann to moderate his tone when it came to the

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\textsuperscript{265} Kölnische Zeitung, 7 June 1905.  \\
\textsuperscript{266} Berliner Tageblatt, 24 June 1905; and Hamburger Nachrichten, 19 June 1905.  \\
\textsuperscript{267} National-Zeitung, 24 June 1904; and Post, 16, 23, and 26 June 1904.  \\
\textsuperscript{268} Le Figaro, 25 June 1905.  \\
\textsuperscript{269} Hammann, \textit{Vorgeschichte}, 136. This is probably an allusion to the famous speech given by Hamlet where he observes that an actor playing Hecuba was crying very convincingly about something that was essentially unimportant when compared to the murder of his father. See \textit{Hamlet}, 2.2.505-62.
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question of war with France. By the end of June, Schiemann began to qualify the meaning of the original two articles as a way of extracting himself from the embarrassing situation he now found himself in.

In the midst of the press discussion surrounding the Schiemann-Holstein “Hostage Theory,” Rouvier—now directing French foreign policy—began to adopt a stance that seemed eerily reminiscent of Delcassé’s Morocco policy. On the same day Schiemann published his explosive article in the *Kreuzzeitung*, Rouvier sent a note through Radolin to Berlin that made it clear he would not capitulate to Germany over Morocco. Before he would agree to attend a conference of the great powers, he would have to know what subjects would be discussed and what solutions Germany wanted to put on the table. Bülow wanted the opposite formula: France should agree to a conference first and only then could there be a discussion of the questions at issue.

When the French finally did agree to a conference on 8 July 1905, however, they were motivated by confidence in their position, more than just the need for a further capitulation to Germany. Delcassé had, after all, ensured the support of all the interested parties—Britain, Spain, and Italy—before the conclusion of the Entente. French statesmen, moreover, could count on the full support of their beleaguered ally,

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270 Bülow, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, vol. 2, 81. Otto von Mühlberg was a privy councilor in the Political Division of the Foreign Office from 1885 to 1900. He subsequently served as state undersecretary from 1900 to 1907, and then as the government’s representative in the Vatican from 1907 to 1908.


Russia. Thus, they were secure in their belief that they would not be forced to retreat over Morocco.  

As the matter stood with France after 8 July 1905, the main questions of dispute centered on where the conference would be held, how the police on the frontier in Morocco would be organized, and how much of an economic role Germany would be allowed to play in the country.  

In September, the German Foreign Office sent a diplomat to Paris to negotiate these questions as a preliminary to the eventual conference.  

These issues, however, were not so easily settled. The talks dragged on long enough that the French press became impatient; some newspapers began again to question Germany’s intentions and motives. Radolin made a special trip from the embassy to speak with French statesmen about the matter. In the meeting he protested “the scandalous language of the semi-official Parisian papers,” arguing that such antics only served to hinder the ongoing negotiations about the conference.  

Through these and other efforts, the German diplomats in Paris were able to silence much of this newspaper criticism, allowing negotiations to proceed apace.  

Bülow and his collaborators in the Press Bureau now made a concerted attempt to effect a dramatic change in French newspaper opinion. The two papers that had been most amenable to German influence throughout the crisis had been the Temps, a highly respected organ of the Paris press, and the Petit Parisien, a moderate paper. Indeed, relations with these two organs were so good at this time that some people in

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274 Keiger, 22.
276 Bülow to Radolin, 4 September 1905, no. 6799, *GP*, vol. 20, 557.
277 Bülow to the Foreign Office, 19 September 1905, no. 6812, ibid., 572-3.
government, business, and newspaper circles were throwing around the idea of purchasing one of the two papers through a Franco-German business consortium. This would encourage a Franco-German rapprochement and provide a venue for “polemics against anti-German publications in the French or English press.”279 In early October, Bülow granted special interviews to both papers as an ostensible reward for their support of German policy since March.280 The first of these, conducted by Lucien Vrily, appeared in the *Petit Parisien* on 4 October.281 But by far the more important of the two was the lengthy interview Bülow granted to André Tardieu, the foreign editor of the *Temps*, which appeared in that paper on 5 October. Here Bülow recapitulated his government’s criticisms of French policy in Morocco. He also reiterated the need for an international gathering to discuss the Moroccan question. “I think,” he elaborated, “that the conference, far from dividing us, ought to contribute to a rapprochement between us.” But to bring this about, it was necessary for French public opinion to abandon the old policy of isolating Germany. Finally, he denied that he was trying to drive a wedge between France and Britain or to woo Russia away from her French ally. “A double system of alliances, both pacific, assures equilibrium in Europe,” he concluded.

On those alliances we can and must superimpose friendships. You are friends with Italy—nothing is better. We are friends of Russia—it is perfect. But we must

279 Memorandum by Bülow, 2 November 1905, Deutschland 126a, secr., Bd. 1, PA-AA. One of the leading German figures in this was Leopold Sonnemann, the owner of the Frankfurter Zeitung—one of the most salient papers utilized in the Bülow-Hammann system because of the press chief’s intimate relationship with its Berlin correspondent, August Stein. Sonnemann (1831-1909) had founded the newspaper in 1856 and served for a brief spell for the Deutsche Volkspartei in the Reichstag, representing the Sixth Voting District of Wiesbaden from 1871 to 1877, and again from 1878 to 1884. “Sonnemann, Leopold,” in BS, vol. 2, 1115; and “Sonnemann, Leopold,” in MdR, 468.

280 The arrangements for these interviews were somewhat elaborate. See Radolin to the Foreign Office, 29 September 1905, no. 6833, and Bülow to the Foreign Office, 30 September 1905, no. 6834, GP, vol. 20, 594-5; note du directeur du cabinet du president du conseil, [early October 1905], no. 18, DDF, ser. 2, vol. 8, 21-2; Friedrich Rosen, *Aus einem diplomatischen Wanderleben*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Transmare Verlag, 1931), 175-6, and 208.

not give to the Franco-Italian rapprochement an anti-German character or to the
Russo-German rapprochement an anti-French character. 282

Like other German attempts to influence foreign newspapers before the war, this
publicity stunt largely failed to assuage foreign opinion.

Meanwhile, August witnessed a renewed hostility toward Germany in the British
press. The spark for this was the announcement of British fleet maneuvers in the Baltic
in the middle of the month and a series of anti-British articles that appeared in the organ
of the agrarians, the *Deutsche Tageszeitung*, and in the *Reichsbote*, a conservative
clerical journal.283 The conservative newspapers in Britain picked up the challenge and
the anti-German rhetoric found in those dailies reached unprecedented levels of
hostility. They, moreover, turned opinion more and more in the direction of France—
and increasingly even to Russia. On 11 October 1905, for instance, *The Times* stated that
it now welcomed a “great improvement” in Britain’s relations with Russia.284

The French press was further excited by another incident relating to the Morocco
question, which largely canceled out Bülow’s efforts with the *Temps* and the *Petit
Parisien*. This was the result of insinuations in several French newspapers in early
October that alluded to the close relationship that had developed between Britain and
France at the expense of Germany. The most important articles in this campaign
appeared in the *Matin* as a series on the fall of Delcassé and German Moroccan policy.285
The author of the series, Stéphane Lauzanne, argued that a circle of German diplomats—
including Radolin in Paris and Hammann in Berlin—had planned to use Morocco as a

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282 *Temps*, 3 October 1905. Bülow conducted a further interview with the Berlin representative of the
283 Hale, *Publicity and Diplomacy*, 274.
284 *The Times*, 11 October 1905, 8.
ploy to cause the fall of Delcassé. The leading article, which appeared on 7 October, professed to give a true account of the meeting of the council of ministers on 6 June 1905 when Delcassé had resigned. He had urged the rejection of the conference proposal, it reported, because

> England, in effect, made it known to the government of the Republic verbally that if France were attacked, she was ready to mobilize her navy in order to seize the Kiel Canal and deploy 100,000 men in Schleswig-Holstein.286

The *Echo de Paris* published a similar series of articles in October that supported the revelations of the *Matin*. The campaign reached its peak on 13 October when the *Figaro* confirmed that Britain had indeed offered armed support in case of a war with Germany.287

In Britain, there was some concern especially in Liberal circles about the effect these supposed revelations would have abroad. A denial was issued through Reuter’s Agency to the effect that Britain had never made any such offer to France. Bülow allowed the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* to publish this news on 15 October.288 The hope on the face of things was that this action would help prevent a discussion of the matter in the German press, and Berlin seemed to agree.289 Bernstorff also continued to cultivate the pro-German press in Britain through Sidney Whitman in London, while also monitoring the publications of influential Liberals there.290 Yet Bülow, while wishing to avoid an outbreak of newspaper hysterics, wanted the German press to

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286 *Le Matin*, 7 October 1905.
287 *Le Figaro*, 13 October 1905. The article was written by Alexandre Ular.
288 Lascelles to Lansdowne, 16 October 1905, no. 103, *BD*, vol. 3, 85-6. A translation of the 15 October article in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* is included as an enclosure here.
290 Bernstorff to Hammann, 23 October 1905, Bd. N 2106 / 55, NL.H, BArchL; and Esternaux to Bernstorff, 23 October 1905, in Bernstorff, 85. Sidney Whitman (1848-1925) had been an associate of Bismarck’s and was most famous for reporting the Armenian massacres in the Ottoman Empire for the *New York Herald* in 1896. He also reported from Russia in the Revolution of 1905. *The Times*, 2 November 1925.
receive the articles seriously, even if they were probably not true.\textsuperscript{291} They could prove a useful tool in getting the next naval bill passed and might also help to shift the blame for the crisis from Germany to France and Britain in case of a war. After all, revelations of this nature in the press would “embarrass our enemies in England and be useful for our naval proposals.”\textsuperscript{292} The inflamed situation only got worse. By November there was not a single French newspaper that viewed Germany’s policy in a positive light.\textsuperscript{293} In response, Bülow and his press chief drew up plans for complete restructuring of press policy abroad that would later be a central focal point of Hammann’s work in the Foreign Office after 1909.\textsuperscript{294}

For the present, the diplomatic situation seemed to mirror the troubles Bülow faced in the foreign press that called for a radical reframing of press policy. The hope for a Russo-German alliance had flickered again briefly after a meeting between the Tsar and Kaiser at Björkö in the Baltic at the end of July.\textsuperscript{295} At the time, the Kaiser had gotten the Tsar to agree to an altered version of the treaty that had been drafted the previous fall by exuding great personal charm during the reunion of the two monarchs on their yachts in the Baltic on 24 July. Although Bülow initially received the news of the Björkö Treaty favorably, he soon came to oppose William II’s modifications.\textsuperscript{296}

\textsuperscript{292} Bülow to the Foreign Office, 10 October 1905, no. 6874, ibid., 664.
\textsuperscript{293} Flotow to Bülow, 23 November 1905, no. 6901, ibid., vol. 21, 15-17. Holstein felt that Delcassé’s revelations about British military support in a war made for more discussions about recovering Alsace-Lorraine than there had been in a long time. Holstein to Brandt, 14 November 1905, no. 915, \textit{PH}, vol. 4, 388-9.
\textsuperscript{294} Bülow to William II, 15 November 1905, Deutschland 126a, \textit{secr.}, Bd. 1, PA-AA. For a more detailed discussion of the planned restructuring, see below, pp. 336-9.
\textsuperscript{295} On this issue, see the extended discussion in Vogel, 223-8.
\textsuperscript{296} The modifications included the following: the alliance should be restricted to Europe, rather than the extra-European world where Germany might become involved in an Anglo-Russian war in the Far East; and it was not to take effect until after the conclusion of the peace treaty ending the Russo-Japanese War in the
until October, Russia and Germany conducted half-hearted negotiations on the issue. Each time the document signed by the two emperors seemed on the verge of ratification in Moscow, Nicholas II’s advisors pushed for further concessions on the Morocco issue in Berlin. The Franco-German press war in October helped speed the downfall of the agreement, because French statesmen adamantly refused to be a party to it.

By November, Bülow turned back to a hard-line position on Morocco, seeking greater concessions from France again when the conference at Algeciras finally opened in January 1906. Moderate public opinion in Germany, meanwhile, was still very non-committal about supporting Bülow’s Morocco policy. At the end of the year, for example, the liberal *Berliner Tageblatt* ran a series of articles that was deeply critical of German policy. Looking back on the denouement of the crisis, Theodor Wolff, the Paris correspondent of the paper, hit the nail directly on the head in his analysis of events. “[I]t is difficult to say,” he wrote, “who caused more confusion: the English and French jingoies, or the German officials.”

By the end of December, Bülow made further moves to strengthen his domestic press policy. He ordered Hammann to adopt a tougher line toward France in his cultivation of the press. On 30 December he received a rather
long—and compelling—report of a conversation the Kaiser had had in Potsdam with the London financier Alfred Beit, who was highly connected in the world of finance, politics, and journalism. The conversation seemed to confirm the reports of October about the assurances Delcassé had received from the British, as well as the resolve of the French to go to war if necessary over Morocco.

The recent reports of the chargé d’affaires and the military attaché in Paris validated many of the Kaiser’s fears, Bülow felt, for French military circles had adopted a bellicose stance toward German policy. “I believe it is essential,” he wrote to Hammann, “to make this fact clear before the eyes of the German public, which embraces a far too excessive optimism about both social democracy and the international situation because of the thirty-five year period of peace.” Bülow even developed the ideas for a long article in the Kölnische Zeitung about the new belligerent stance of the French nation—a direct reflection of its officers’ views of the situation—which he hoped would give the necessary lead to public opinion going into the conference. This move simultaneously reflected the larger policy of the Foreign Office, for it seemed preferable to fight a war than to allow the French to emerge with everything from the conference, leaving Germany publicly humiliated.

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300 Bülow to Hammann, December 1905, in Hammann, Bilder, 43. I was unable to find a copy of the letter or the enclosed draft of the article cited below in the Hammann Papers.
301 Draft of an article, enclosed in Bülow to Hammann, December 1905, in ibid., 43-5; and Kölnische Zeitung, 30 December 1905.
In Britain, moreover, there seemed some reason to hope for better relations, because a new Liberal government had come to power in early December, and it was by no means certain that it would continue to follow Lansdowne’s foreign policy. Hammann and Bülow continued to work Bernstorff’s connections in London with the press. Bernstorff forwarded reports in the Liberal London press back to Berlin, which helped support the initial German feeling of optimism regarding the regime change in Britain. He also cultivated British journalists like Sidney Whitman, who tried to neutralize anti-German sentiment by writing articles that were favorable to Bülow and his policies. What was more, Bülow and Hammann worked back home to check the more egregious caricatures of Britain in German newspapers, as for example a report that appeared in a very minor illustrated paper that had gotten the attention of the London *Daily Mirror*. Ambassador Metternich—in order to help effect a successful conclusion to the Moroccan gambit—hosted a gathering of officials to help improve British sentiments toward Germany’s Moroccan policy.

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303 Holstein argued that Bülow’s anti-British prejudices would spoil any hope of improving Anglo-German relations because the chancellor was focusing too much on the “childish idea” of moving closer to France at the expense of Britain, which had as little hope achievement as his earlier notion of going “with Russia against England.” Holstein to Brandt, 23 December 1905, no. 917, *PH*, vol. 4, 340-1.
304 See Bernstorff to Hammann, 4 November 1905, and *Daily Chronicle*, 4 November 1905, Bd. N 2106 / 10, Nl.H, BArchL.
305 Bernstorff to Hammann, 15 December 1905, Bd. N 2106 / 10, Nl.H, BArchL. In pursuit of the same goal, Bernstorff shortly thereafter forwarded Lucien Wolf a clipping from the *Berliner Tageblatt* about a recent meeting held in Berlin advocating better relations with Britain that was “attended by all classes of society.” Bernstorff to Wolf, 23 December 1905, folder 23, Wolf-Mowshowitch Papers, YIVO-NY. The French were particularly apprehensive about Lucien Wolf at this time, for it seemed he could hardly hide his hostility to France. Geoffray to Rouvier, 9 November 1905, no. 117, *DDF*, ser. 2, vol. 8, 160.
306 *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 22 November 1905, and Bülow’s marginalia, memorandum by Hammann, 23 November 1905, Deutschland 126, no. 2, Bd. 11, PA-AA. For once, Bülow thought that intimidation was the best way to get the publisher to be more careful in its future articles.
Nevertheless—to Bülow’s great exasperation—William II made an abrupt about-face as he pondered the world situation sitting around the Christmas tree on New Year’s Eve. He shied away from a war with France and Britain, because the artillery was being updated in the army at that moment, and because many Islamic rulers in North Africa and the Middle East were not yet committed enough to Germany. Bülow thus ordered Bülow to come up with a peaceful resolution to the crisis, whatever the cost. Bülow accepted the imperial command and now made moves behind the scenes to retreat as gracefully as possible from the utter mess that the Moroccan gambit had finally become. German policy at the Algeciras Conference henceforth became one of making concessions to France, while attempting to portray what occurred there as a diplomatic victory and not the complete capitulation that it actually was.

Newspaper opinion in all foreign countries was now overwhelmingly skeptical of German policy. The press outside of Germany wasted little space in trying to prove its suspicions. In Britain it was generally understood that the first Morocco Crisis had been all about breaking up the Entente. In France, the daily papers went further and tried repeatedly to deny the German case. The papers with the greatest influence in governing circles—the Temps, the Journal des Débats, the Aurore—rigidly supported the French position and consistently pushed for a strong stance against Germany. At this point the Press Bureau took on greater importance for Bülow, because he hoped to use it to extricate himself from the Moroccan failure without suffering any consequences. “Now it

310 Carroll, French Opinion, 219.
all depends on me coming out of the Moroccan matter looking good,” he told Hammann, just as the conference was convening at Algeciras.311

Intense press coverage of the conference made this task extremely difficult. This was, after all, the first general meeting of representatives of the great powers since the emergence of modern mass journalism in the 1880s and 1890s. Because it was clear both to the public and to the decision-makers involved that failure could possibly lead to war, public interest in the conference was high. French papers sent upwards of twenty reporters to Algeciras. They were skillfully choreographed by Hammann’s counterpart in the French government, Robert de Billy, who remained in attendance throughout the entire conference.312 The English-speaking world was represented by ten correspondents who were more independent of government influence, but on the whole hostile toward Germany. Representatives of the German press, on the other hand, numbered only three men, though they were rated by one observer as the few respectable journalists among a mob of parasites.313 Because the boring news of what actually transpired daily at Algeciras did not measure up to the sensationalism that now sold papers, the international press corps at the conference resorted to lies as a way of piquing interest in their reports following the first week of meetings. Nearly all the news that appeared in foreign papers was hostile toward Bülow’s policy. Stories from Agence Havas, the French news agency, and Reuter’s in Britain monopolized reporting on the conference in

311 Bülow to Hammann, 17 January 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 11, NL.H, BArchL.
312 Holstein to Radolin, 10 February 1906, no. 6994, GP, vol. 21, 152-4. Holstein’s report can perhaps be taken with a grain of salt, for undoubtedly the efforts of de Billy must have seemed skillful in comparison to Hammann’s own—the press chief was now becoming a bitter enemy to the old privy counselor by this time.
313 Tardieu, 503-4; and Monts to Bülow, 12 April 1906, no. 7147, GP, vol. 21, 346. Tardieu’s list appears to be somewhat incomplete; it neglects to list the names of the minor correspondents at the conference. All told, somewhere between fifty and seventy journalists covered the proceedings in Algeciras.
the European press and consistently found hidden motives behind the German calls for freedom of trade and the rights of all the great powers in Morocco. Italy, ostensibly a loyal ally of Germany, was a salient example. “In most cases Italian newspapers portray the present condition of the discussions in Algeciras,” Monts complained in Rome, “from the vantage point of the Agence Havas and of the contingent of French journalists stationed there”\textsuperscript{314} Even worse for Hammann and Bülow, Germany also relied very heavily on the reports of Havas and Reuter’s because Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau was not up to the job and the German contingent in Algeciras was simply too small. These problems only seemed to underline the importance of making Wolff’s truly independent of foreign sources.

The central issue at the conference—the question of who would control the police in Morocco—was the biggest sticking point in Bülow’s policy of retreat. To begin with, Bülow hoped to win some concession from France to present to the public as a victory for his foreign policy. On 24 February 1906, the radical French newspaper \textit{Siècle} suggested that the solution to the problem was to have the sultan run the police, while providing for some sort of international control to represent the interests of the European powers collectively.\textsuperscript{315} Bülow immediately latched onto this idea and began to advocate it as a solution.\textsuperscript{316} Almost instantly there arose a firestorm of opposition to the plan in French governing circles and in the public. The French delegate at Algeciras, Paul Révoil, told

\textsuperscript{314} Monts to Bülow, 25 February 1906, Deutschland 126a, secr., Bd. 1, PA-AA. The lack of support Germany received from the Italian press mirrored the flagging loyalty of the government in Rome, which openly deserted Bülow even before the conference convened. Monts to Bülow, 6 January 1906, no. 6928, \textit{GP}, vol. 21, 56-8. This monopolization of news reporting in Europe held for the smaller powers—like Portugal—as well. See, for instance, Kemnitz to Bülow, 10 March 1906, Deutschland 126a, secr., Bd. 1, PA-AA.

\textsuperscript{315} \textit{Le Siècle}, 24 January 1906.

\textsuperscript{316} Bülow to Sternberg, 27 January 1906, no. 6968, \textit{GP}, vol. 21, 123-5.
his German colleague, Joseph Maria von Radowitz, that any such notion was off the
table; the sultan simply lacked the authority to oversee the police to the satisfaction of
the French.\footnote{Radowitz to the Foreign Office, 3 February 1906, no. 6980, ibid., 136-7. Joseph Maria von Radowitz (1839-1912) served as German minister to Athens from 1874 to 1882, and as ambassador at Constantinople from 1882 to 1892 and at Madrid from 18982 to 1908. “Radowitz, Joseph Maria von,” BS, vol. 2, 1008. Paul Révoil was the French governor-general of Algeria from 1901 to 1903 before representing France at the Algeciras conference.} The influential papers in Paris followed the lead of the government and
rejected the proposal in no uncertain terms.\footnote{Le Matin, 9 February 1906; and Le Temps, 9 February 1906.} The denunciations of the idea in France
were so fierce that Bülow resorted to a thinly veiled threat. It appeared, he remarked,
that a press campaign was being directed against Germany originating in Algeciras with
the reports of the French press corps; by allowing it to continue, Rouvier was accepting
the responsibility for any possible result.\footnote{Bülow to Radolin, 10 February 1906, no. 6993, GP, vol. 21, 152.}

Press policy back in Germany was initially directed at pushing the German view
of the police issue in the domestic press. This was especially important because from the
very beginning of the conference there were rumors that Germany would offer extensive
concessions to France regarding Morocco.\footnote{Berliner Tageblatt, 16 January 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 55, NLH, BArchL. Bülow scribbled angrily in the
margins of this clipping, “Lüge!”} Initially Bülow and Hammann sought to
counter such damaging reports by emphasizing that German interests could not be
ignored in Morocco: Germany could not be treated as a minor power, and any power that
did not recognize this would have “to reckon with the full weight of the Kaiserreich’s
instruments of power.”\footnote{Kölnische Zeitung, 13 January 1906.} Bernstorff also worked his connection with Lucien Wolf in
Britain to get at least one voice to speak there against the anti-German chorus. Wolf
obliged this time around, writing in the \textit{Pall Mall Gazette} that “it is difficult to deny that

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317 Radowitz to the Foreign Office, 3 February 1906, no. 6980, ibid., 136-7. Joseph Maria von Radowitz (1839-1912) served as German minister to Athens from 1874 to 1882, and as ambassador at Constantinople from 1882 to 1892 and at Madrid from 18982 to 1908. “Radowitz, Joseph Maria von,” BS, vol. 2, 1008. Paul Révoil was the French governor-general of Algeria from 1901 to 1903 before representing France at the Algeciras conference.
318 Le Matin, 9 February 1906; and Le Temps, 9 February 1906.
319 Bülow to Radolin, 10 February 1906, no. 6993, GP, vol. 21, 152.
320 Berliner Tageblatt, 16 January 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 55, NLH, BArchL. Bülow scribbled angrily in the
margins of this clipping, “Lüge!”
321 Kölnische Zeitung, 13 January 1906.
there is a good deal of foundation for the German grievance.”322  With regard to the campaign conducted against German policy in the *Temps* (and directed by its representative in Algeciras, André Tardieu), Hammann and the Press Bureau worked mainly through the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* and the *Kölnische Zeitung* to respond to the constant stream of criticisms of German policy in Morocco.323  At home, on the other hand, the press was relatively silent about the conference. It was mostly content to publish without comment the semi-official pronouncements made in those two papers, the reports of Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau, and the news that was much more abundant from other non-German sources.

Nevertheless, Bülow constantly solicited Hammann’s advice in these weeks, especially when it came to understanding what would and would not be acceptable to public opinion. The most important instance of this came when the Austrian delegate in Algeciras made a compromise proposal on the police question. Under the suggested solution, the sultan would retain nominal command of the police, but French and Spanish officers would do the actual leading of the contingents in the port cities.324  Would the plan, he asked Hammann, be an acceptable solution that would allow the government to give the necessary lead to the press?325  Initially, Bülow rejected the proposal, preferring one that was not so obviously a cover for France to attain its

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322 *Pall Mall Gazette*, 6 March 1906; and Bernstorff to Wolf, 7 March 1906, folder 23, Wolf-Mowshowitch Papers, YIVO-NY. For a lengthy critique of Wolf’s article, see note by Mr. Tyrell on German Policy, 1906, *BD*, vol. 3, 347-9.

323 The campaign was so intense that it continued into the next year, when Tardieu’s account of the Algeciras conference appeared in print. Hammann wrote two detailed critiques of the work using sources in the Foreign-Office archives: [Otto Hammann], “Um Algeciras,” *Grenzboten* 66 (March 1907): 1-11, Bd. N 2106 / 43, and *Kölnische Zeitung*, 30 March 1907, Bd. N 2106 / 55, NL.H, BArchL. The responses to Hammann’s articles are in *Le Temps*, 1 and 20 April 1907, Bd. N 2106 / 55, NL.H, BArchL.


325 Bülow to Hammann, 27 February 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 11, NL.H, BArchL.
privileged position—namely, for the old plan of trying to maintain international, rather than Franco-Spanish, control of the police.\textsuperscript{326}

Yet, by this time, it had become clear that France would not budge, while Germany was completely isolated from the majority of the powers present at the conference (excepting Morocco and Austria-Hungary). Public opinion, moreover, just seemed too indifferent to justify a war over Morocco:

It is of the utmost importance that we seize the right moment for an acceptable compromise. A humiliation for us cannot come to pass. The collapse of the conference would be a diplomatic defeat for us, whatever twist it were given. Not public opinion, not parliament, not the princes, and not even the army will hear anything about a war because of Morocco.\textsuperscript{327}

Bülow struck the note in early March for the publicity campaign Hammann would lead to exculpate his policy before the nation and the world. First of all, the public ought to recognize that Germany had scored “undeniable successes (retreat of Delcassé, convening of the conference).” Further, Germany only wanted to maintain the open door and economic equality in Morocco. “If we obtain such guarantees,” he concluded, “then an agreement on the question of the police, just as on the question of the bank, will be possible.”\textsuperscript{328} Bülow elaborated possible excuses for his failed policy in the coming days. Because there had been no real suggestions, but rather only exorbitant demands, he had elected not to compromise. “After the conclusion of the agreement,” he explained to Hammann in another press directive, “the impression must be awakened that I had in

\textsuperscript{326} Bülow to Radowitz, 28 February 1906, no. 7046, \textit{GP}, vol. 21, 224-5.
\textsuperscript{327} Bülow to Holstein, [22 February 1906], no. 936, \textit{PH}, vol. 4, 358.
\textsuperscript{328} Bülow to Hammann, 4 March 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 11, Nl.H, BArchL.
mind a set goal—indeed exactly the one attained—but one which could not be immediately divulged.\textsuperscript{329}

Hammann, continuing his use of the \textit{Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung} to answer the attacks of \textit{Le Temps}, was finally instructed to attempt to bring as many papers as possible into the camp of the government, ensuring that they touched upon the government's talking points.\textsuperscript{330} An attempt was even made to draw the \textit{Berliner Tageblatt} into the camp of the government by pointing out the seriousness of the international situation to its foreign editor.\textsuperscript{331} It was clear that Bülow intended to liquidate the Morocco affair and conduct a full-scale diplomatic retreat. The chancellor wanted only to ensure that he could save face with German public opinion. He arranged a conference with Hammann and August Stein of the \textit{Frankfurter Zeitung} to discuss the likelihood of success in the endeavor. Put bluntly, he wanted to know whether it would be better to withdraw the German contingent at the conference over the unresolved issues, or whether it was possible to make a capitulation seem a victory through manipulation of the German press.\textsuperscript{332} Hammann and Stein thought the latter could be achieved; Bülow dropped German reservations about the police question, allowing for the peaceful settlement of the crisis by the beginning of April 1906, nearly one year after it had begun.

The retreat in Morocco was portrayed in the semi-official press—exactly along the lines Bülow and Hammann had worked out over the course of March—as a diplomatic triumph for Germany. Both the \textit{Kölnische Zeitung} and the \textit{Norddeutsche Allgemeine

\textsuperscript{329} Bülow to Hammann, [11 March 1906], Bl. 28, Bd. N 2106 / 11, Nl.H., BArchL.
\textsuperscript{330} Bülow to Hammann, 24 March 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 11, Nl.H, BArchL.
\textsuperscript{331} Memorandum by Loebell, 27 March 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 11, Nl.H, BArchL.
\textsuperscript{332} Rosen, vol. 1, 257-8.
Zeitung pointed out that Bülow had achieved his aims for the conference: the rule of the “open door” had been maintained, German economic interests had been defended in Morocco, Germany had proved she could not be ignored in the world, and the principle of international control had been recognized at Algeciras. Many of the remaining newspapers representing the middle and the government-supporting right remained silent or approved of the settlement that had been reached in Morocco. It was, as always, only the nationalist right and the socialist left that had anything negative to say about German policy when the final settlement was announced in early April.

The Press Bureau, then, had served a vital function in extracting the chancellor from the mess that the methods of the Old Diplomacy had gotten him into over Morocco. In the years after 1900, Bülow had worked with Hammann to develop a centralized and coordinated policy for the public relations of the Foreign Office, and the two had put the system to good use during the 1905-1906 diplomatic crisis. Because he seemed overly sensitive about the way he appeared in public opinion, increasingly it was said that Bülow had come to rely too heavily on his press secretary. This feeling was brought into high relief during the first Morocco Crisis. The initial development of the crisis had been centered on a hard-line policy Holstein had developed to try to break the ring that encircled Germany. He had pushed for the idea of a conference even when it led to rumors of war, believing ultimately that the British would abandon the French and thereby dissolve the Entente. Instead, as in the Boer War, Bülow once again gave the nod to public opinion, which had not really supported the demarche in Morocco from the

333 Kölnische Zeitung, 29 March and 3 April 1906; and Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 3 April 1906.
very beginning of the crisis. Hammann encouraged the chancellor in this policy by asserting that he could do the repair work necessary in the press world to make the diplomatic defeat seem a victory. In the immediate aftermath of the Algeciras Conference, he had largely won over the middle of the political spectrum to support the chancellor, but in the months that followed, as will be shown below, that consensus faded into thin air.
Chapter 4: The End of the Bülow-Hammann System, 1906-1914

Germany has received one slap in the face after another during recent years in the sphere of foreign policy and yet Prince Bülow has until quite lately figured in the German Press as an unrivalled master in the art of diplomacy.

Count de Salis, 27 October 1908 1

Bülow's Fainting Fit in the Reichstag

On 5 April 1906, Prince von Bülow appeared before the Reichstag to explain away Germany’s defeat at Algeciras as a diplomatic victory. The talking points for the speech accorded perfectly with the defense he had been pushing on German newspapers since the decision for capitulation had been made earlier in the year. Until his appearance before the Reichstag, that campaign had run comparatively smoothly. Yet, the pressure Bülow had been under in the weeks leading up to the speech had been overwhelming because of the threat that the public would see through the campaign to deceive it about the failed policy in Morocco. In early 1906 the British press, for example, began to question the strength of the relationship between William II and Bülow and the latter’s ability to steer the ship of state.2 By April these rumors had spread to France and Russia, causing Bülow to complain to his press expert that things had gotten quite out of control.3 Even worse, some of the minor organs representing the Left Liberals and the agrarians had exploited these rumors, while the two most influential Center-party papers ultimately brought them into the mainstream

1 Salis to Grey, 27 October 1908, no. 103, BD, vol. 6, 163.

2 Standard, 24 February 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 6, NL.H, BArchL; and The Times, 6 January 1906, Deutschland 122, no. 13, Bd. 10, PA-AA. This contrasted starkly with the view just before the first Morocco Crisis had begun, when one foreign paper had reported the Kaiser’s confidence in his chancellor, who was, it remarked, “sitting securely in the saddle.” Neues Wiener Tageblatt, 5 March 1905, Bd. N 2106 / 6, NL.H, BArchL.

3 Bülow to Hammann, 1 April 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 12, NL.H., BArchL.
political press for discussion. The situation was potentially perilous for the chancellor if he wanted to maintain his position with the Kaiser.

Ordinarily, Bülow’s abilities as a public speaker were unrivalled. On this day, however, the chancellor felt quite out of sorts because of the threat to his position within the government. He was suffering from a cold at the time as well, although the effects of his sickness were not immediately apparent to observers in the Reichstag gallery. The chancellor rose to the speaker’s podium and began to give what was perhaps the most important speech of his political career. He began by mentioning all the belligerent talk that had spilled into the public realm over the course of the last year. “How did it come to this?” he asked. “Were the vital interests of the German people threatened so much that the leadership of our foreign policy could consider raising the question of the use of force?” No, he responded for the audience. Germany had neither political interests nor political aspirations in Morocco. On the other hand, she did have economic interests in Morocco that were protected by the 1880 Madrid Convention. That was the original question at issue. Over the course of the crisis, Germany had not wished a slice of Morocco for herself; she had not wanted to step on the toes of France and Spain, whose interests there were historically grounded; and she had not wanted to cause friction with Britain. “What we did want,” he announced,

was to make it clear that the German Empire would not be treated as a *quantité négligeable* [“Very good!” on the right, in the middle and among the National

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4 *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, 7 March 1906, *Berliner Börsen Zeitung*, 7 March 1906, *Ostpreußische Zeitung*, 11 March 1906, *Kölische Volkszeitung*, 14 March 1906, and *Germania*, 22 April 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 6, NL.H., BArchL. The *Berliner Börsen-Courier* was a Left-Liberal newspaper with a very small circulation that was nevertheless influential in financial circles. The *Berliner Börsen Zeitung* was a National-Liberal financial paper with a higher circulation of 13,500. *Germania* was founded early 1871 as the main national organ of the Center party. With an average circulation of between 12,000 and 14,000 before the war, the paper’s readership was primarily restricted to the higher echelons of the party leadership, rather than the broad masses of Catholics in Germany. Wernecke, 318 and 320.
Liberals], that the basis of an international treaty cannot be removed without the
agreement of the signatory powers [“Very true!”], that the door should be held
open freely to foreign competition in such an important, independent economic
zone, which is positioned on two routes of world commerce.

The best way to attain this goal, Bülow elaborated, was to call for a conference.
Nevertheless, it would have demonstrated “a lack of judgment” to allow the conference to
shatter because of a deadlock on the relatively minor issues of the police and bank
questions. In the end, the Algeciras Conference “produced a solution that is satisfactory
for Germany and France alike, and advantageous for all civilized lands.”

Immediately after the chancellor concluded his short speech, the Social
Democratic leader August Bebel took the floor to interpellate the chancellor and deliver
one of his customary attacks on German foreign policy. In the middle of Bebel’s
diatribe, to the great astonishment of those in attendance, Bülow’s “face changed color,”
a contemporary observer reported, a “yellow froth appeared on his lips and he
collapsed.” Some of those present at the time feared he was dead; later others asserted
he had suffered a heart attack. But what was most important was the statement Bülow’s
body had made when his mouth had sought to hold back. Where the public face put on
German policy had been all rosy with no hint of the real defeat suffered at Algeciras, his
physical collapse dramatically unmasked the truth of a failed Moroccan policy.

The incident illustrated the potentially precarious situation Bülow found himself
in after the Algeciras Conference. Because it was obvious to any critical observer that the
chancellor had retreated over Morocco, the main threat was that the victory he claimed

5 Speech by Bülow, 5 April 1906, 11th Leg. Per., Session 2, SBVR, vol. 216, 2622-3. Just the day before, Bülow
had contemplated making only a very brief statement. See Bülow to Hammann, 4 April 1906, Bd. N 2106 /
12, NLH, BArchL.
7 Münz, 169.
in the crisis would eventually be unmasked for the defeat it really was. It became crucial, in other words, that Bülow continued to cultivate the myth of a successful foreign policy through the Press Bureau. Just as Bülow had relied heavily on the advice and expertise of his press expert to extricate him from the Moroccan mess during the 1905-1906 diplomatic crisis, he subsequently depended heavily on Hammann in the last three years of his chancellorship. Domestically this meant that Hammann helped to strengthen Bülow's hold on office by helping build a patriotic majority in the Reichstag elections of 1907, the so-called “Bülow-Bloc.” Furthermore, he worked to stifle the oppositionist campaign in these years that attempted to criticize members of the Kaiser's circle and his personal rule. Hammann also worked side by side with Bülow to portray German intervention in the Bosnian Crisis of 1908-1909 as a definitive victory. Finally, in the domestic political crises of these years, the chancellor relied on the Press Bureau to help solidify his position in the press and in the Reichstag, so that he was able to remain in office despite losing the confidence of the Kaiser.

Yet by the summer of 1909, when Bülow resigned because of his inability to maintain the parliamentary coalition he had built up in 1907, the Bülow-Hammann system went into a stage of precipitous decline. Though the new chancellor was resolved to retain Hammann in the Press Bureau, the state secretaries of the Foreign Office from 1909 to 1914 generally whittled away at the power and privileges he had won in the Bülow years. They placed all the blame for the failures of the preceding period on his shoulders, gradually marginalizing him in the Foreign Office. In this period, a variety of plans were developed to limit his powers, reassign him to a diplomatic post abroad, or replace him with somebody who was more amenable to the pet projects and personalities
of the figures directing German foreign policy. Ultimately the Bülow-Hammann system ended conclusively after the outbreak of war, as more modern methods of influencing public opinion were invented to win over the nation.

**Hammann’s Power at its Zenith**

The entire episode of the fainting fit—and of Bülow’s heavy reliance on his press chief during the first Morocco Crisis more generally—served to strengthen Hammann’s position after the spring of 1906. This was apparent almost from the moment the chancellor began his recovery. “When I woke up,” Bülow wrote in his memoirs,

> I found myself outside of the meeting chamber in the office designated for the Reich chancellor…. I heard clearly how my esteemed colleagues, the ministers, were talking about who my successor would be…. Privy Councilor Hammann was the only one who had not lost his head…. Hammann led the ministers, deputies, and journalists out of my room and telephoned my wife and my excellent doctor and friend, Privy Councilor [Rudolf] von Renvers.

It was, Bülow admitted, a favor he would not soon forget. Undoubtedly, Hammann’s waxing star was due partially to his ability to seize control of the situation in the midst of the fainting fit, when nobody else seemed capable of the role.

In a larger sense, though, the campaign to cultivate public approval for Bülow’s obviously failed policy in Morocco greatly increased Hammann’s power and influence in the Foreign Office. Contemporary observers noted the development. “About B[ernard] B[üelow] I could write volumes,” the recently appointed state secretary, Heinrich von Tschirschky, wrote at the close of the Algeciras Conference. “He is unfortunately not a statesman—and certainly not the ‘leader.’ B[ielow’s] dependence on the press is

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unbelievable. Hammann is the actual ‘leader.’ Holstein must be dismissed.”

While this appraisal was certainly influenced by a degree of personal animosity toward the chancellor, there is no doubt that it contained more than a kernel of truth. The press increasingly was becoming the yardstick by which Bülow measured his success as the chief foreign-policy maker in Germany. Success in this field, even if fabricated, demonstrated the continuing importance of his position as the medium between a quasi-autocratic Kaiser and the democratically elected legislative body Bülow was expected to control, the Reichstag.

The first clear indication of Hammann’s increasing influence in the Foreign Office can be seen in Bülow’s December 1905 decision to augment the personnel of the Press Bureau. The move was intended to give the press chief more help in his efforts to cultivate the necessary consensus in the foreign and the domestic press for Bülow’s Morocco policy and to spin it as a victory for Germany. Hence, he ordered Hammann to make it a priority to add one or possibly two new assistants to the Press Bureau. The appointment was finally made in October of the next year, when Hammann and Bülow hired a young classicist and philologist, Dr. Kurt Riezler, as a third assistant to work alongside the press chief, and his two other assistants, Esternaux and Heilbron. Riezler

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9 Tschirschky to Monts, 28 March 1906, in Anton Monts, Erinnerungen und Gedanken des Botschafters Anton Graf Monts (Berlin: Verlag für Kulturpolitik, 1932), 441. Heinrich von Tschirschky und Bögendorff (1858-1916) originally joined the German diplomatic service in the middle of the 1880s. Tschirschky served in a number of minor posts and frequently represented the Foreign Office on the Kaiser’s various trips before his appointment as state secretary in 1906. A year later he was transferred to Vienna, where he was ambassador until his death in 1916.

10 Bülow to Hammann, 16 December 1905, Bd. N 2106 / 10, Nl.H, BArchL.

11 Kurt Riezler (1882-1955) is, of course, better known for his role as Bethmann Hollweg’s close confidant in the July Crisis of 1914. Little has been published directly on Riezler’s life, though information can be found in Karl Dietrich Erdmann’s introduction to Kurt Riezler, Tagebücher, Aufsätze, Dokumente, ed. Karl Dietrich Erdmann (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972), 19-159; Wayne C. Thompson, In the Eye of
had initially gained Hammann's attention over the course of his half-year collaboration with the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* in early 1906, when he had written a series of articles on events in Russia relating to the workings of the Duma and the party system that had developed there after the Revolution of 1905.\(^{12}\) Hammann especially admired Riezler’s knowledge of history and culture, and his natural gifts as a writer. These talents found expression immediately after Riezler’s appointment. One of his earliest articles in the Press Bureau, “The Reichstag and the Press,” dismissed the far left and right as idealists in foreign policy. It even served as a defense of Bülow’s foreign policy in the Reichstag on 14 November 1906, when the chancellor made his first appearance before the diet after the fainting incident.\(^{13}\)

An even clearer sign of Hammann’s growing power in the Foreign Office can be seen in the episode surrounding the resignation of Holstein after the Algeciras Conference. As noted above, Holstein and Hammann had been at odds from the very beginning of the first Morocco Crisis. At that time, Holstein had criticized the public-relations policy of the Press Bureau for following a line independent of the conference policy he was pushing on Bülow. The conflict that had led to the break between the two privy councilors festered over the course of the year, as Holstein continued to feel that

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*The Storm: Kurt Riezler and the Crises of Modern Germany* (Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1980); and “Riezler, Kurt,” in *NdB*, vol. 21, 618-19.


\(^{13}\) Kurt Riezler, "Der Reichstag und die Presse," *Die Grenzboten* 65 (November 1906): 497-501; and speech by Bülow, 14 November 1906, 11\(^{st}\) Leg. Per., Session 2, *SBVR*, vol. 218, 3623-33. The Reichstag had not been in session since May, so this was really the first occasion in six months to attack Bülow and his foreign policy since Algeciras. By December Hammann already had put Riezler to work drafting the chancellor’s speeches in the Reichstag. See Bl. 68-71, Bd. N 2106 / 12, NL.H, BArchL, which is a draft of a Reichstag speech Bülow delivered on 4 December 1906 that was written by Riezler and edited by Bülow. Cf. speech by Bülow, 4 December 1906, 11\(^{st}\) Leg. Per., Session 2, *SBVR*, vol. 218, 4124-5.
Hammann was becoming too independent because of Bülow’s increasing reliance on him.

The situation reached a peak at the end of 1905 when Holstein had finally had enough of what he viewed as an overly Anglophobic policy being conducted in the press section. One example of this was a series of cartoons that had appeared in the *Lüstige Blätter* and had predictably aroused the ire of the London press, though Holstein felt Hammann could have easily used his connections with the police to put a stop to the problem before it had started. What was more, Holstein believed the stenographic report of Bülow’s 6 December 1905 speech had contained what appeared to be an anti-British reference because a sentence had been omitted from the published record. Since the Press Bureau oversaw the publication of the official report of the chancellor’s speeches in the Reichstag, Holstein continued, it could have easily issued a correction to keep the British press from getting up at arms over Bülow’s comments, but it neglected to do so. The situation seemed especially intolerable because only recently Bülow had granted Hammann the privilege to view every top-secret document coming in from the embassies abroad as soon as they were received. Holstein concluded by tendering his resignation, asserting that he could not continue to work so long as this administrative order remained in effect, because he feared it had threatened the security of the Kaiserreich.  

Although Holstein never sent the draft of this letter to Bülow, he did submit his resignation at this time, calculating that the chancellor would not accept it. Bülow lived up to this expectation, something that allowed Holstein to use the issue to get himself

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14 Holstein to Bülow, January 1906, no. 919, *PH*, vol. 4, 342-5. This letter was apparently never sent to Bülow, though Holstein did eventually submit his resignation at this time.
appointed as the director of the Political Division of the Foreign Office. Henceforth, it appeared, Hammann—to his great displeasure—would be subordinate to Holstein’s greater authority in German decision-making.¹⁵

Yet Bülow continued to place more trust in his press chief than in Holstein or any of his other foreign-policy advisors. On 12 March 1906, for instance, the chancellor called a meeting with State Secretary Tschirschky, State Undersecretary Otto von Mühlberg, Holstein, and Hammann to discuss strategies to save face at Algeciras. When Bülow said he was prepared to make any concessions necessary to prevent the failure of the conference, his press chief—the lowest-ranking of the Foreign-Office officials in attendance—was alone in his support for chancellor’s retreat on Morocco. What resulted was a clear statement of Bülow’s anxiety to win over public opinion, even when it resulted in real or perceived failures in diplomatic circles abroad:

Privy Councilor Hammann offered the opinion that the surrender could surely be doctored up. The St[ate] S[ecretary] responded to this that he could not determine the attitude of public opinion and the press, but that the cabinets [of the great powers] would obviously not be deceived about our surrender, if we really surrendered.

Meanwhile, the Reich chancellor made the order for the surrender and dictated the main points to State Undersecretary Mühlberg.¹⁶

In other words, it appeared Hammann had maintained his position, in spite of Holstein’s official promotion at the beginning of the year.

A further complication in the matter resulted from the fact that the European press increasingly portrayed Holstein in early 1906 as the puppet-master who was directing German Moroccan policy behind the curtains of Wilhelmstrasse 76. The Neue

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¹⁵ Bülow to Holstein, 7 and 11 January 1906, nos. 920 and 922, and Holstein to Radolin, 14 January 1906, no. 924, ibid., 345 and 347-8; Holstein to Ida von Stülpnagel, 20 January 1906, in Holstein, Lebensbekenntnis, 244-5; and Tschirschky to Hammann, 22 January 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 38, Nl.H.

Freie Presse, a Vienna paper with connections to the Foreign Office, wrote on 24 February 1906, for example, that Holstein could be described as “the evil element in the whole Morocco question.” Holstein’s sudden emergence on a public stage was a complete shock for the old privy councilor. He had rejected earlier offers of the state secretaryship because he had preferred to remain outside the public eye, something he could not do if he had to defend German policy in the Reichstag. Yet now he found himself being made the scapegoat for the failures of German policy, and he blamed Hammann specifically for the rumors that seemed now to circulate freely about him. In reality, Bülow was as much to blame as Hammann. Yet Holstein later averred repeatedly that Hammann was the mysterious force behind the campaign, perhaps alongside his longtime collaborators, Stein and Huhn. Together they kept up a full-scale propaganda campaign against Holstein in the press.

Speculation in diplomatic and newspaper circles centered on the question of whether Holstein would resign or not. By the end of the Algeciras Conference, he began to consider this as a real possibility, especially as his relationship with State Secretary Tschirschky was obviously strained at the time. The state secretary resolved privately

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17 Neue Freie Presse, 24 February [1906], Bd. N 2106 / 23, Nl.H, BArchL. There are a number of other clippings in Hammann’s papers for early 1906 that point indirectly to such a campaign. They all came after it was clear that Germany was going to face a diplomatic defeat over Morocco, when Bülow was undoubtedly looking for a scapegoat to take the blame for the failures of his policies. See “Autour de la Conférence. Le rôle de M. de Holstein,” 4 February [1906], Bl. 1; Le Figaro, 25 February 1906; New York Herald, 11 March 1906; L’Éclair, 18 March 1906; and Hamburger Nachrichten, 20 March 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 23, Nl.H, BArchL.

18 See, for instance, Holstein to Hohenlohe, 19 October 1900, in Hohenlohe, 594-5.

19 Maximilian Harden, the editor of Die Zukunft, wrote an “obituary” for Holstein’s career in June 1906, for example, and Bülow supplied him all the information for the article. Neue Freie Presse, 3 June 1906; and Harden to Holstein, 7 May 1907, no. 1027, PH, vol. 4, 423.

20 Holstein to David, [April 1906], no. 967, ibid., 375-6; Lascelles to Grey, 5 April 1906, no. 398, BD, vol. 3, 332-3; and Bihourd to Bourgeois, 7 April 1906, no. 627, DDF, ser. 2, vol. 9, 816-17.
that Holstein would have to go,\textsuperscript{21} making it clear in his personal relations with Holstein that the wide latitude he had enjoyed since 1890 would not be tolerated under the new regime.\textsuperscript{22} On 3 April Holstein submitted his resignation to Bülow, who had made it seem in his correspondence that he wanted to try to smooth things over one last time.\textsuperscript{23} Yet he simultaneously betrayed Holstein by effectively giving the orders for accepting the resignation through his bitter enemy, Hammann—one of the few Foreign-Office officials the chancellor was allowed to see following the fainting fit.\textsuperscript{24} With the approval of the Kaiser, Holstein’s resignation was made final in the middle of the month. Holstein’s attempt to challenge Hammann’s personal position with the chancellor and his power within the Foreign Office had faltered; the press chief’s position was seemingly as strong as it had ever been since his appointment approximately twelve years earlier.

Despite that Bülow and Hammann survived the first Morocco Crisis, the chancellor’s position at the helm of the ship of state was far from secure after Algeciras. Three factors continually threatened to erode his stature with the Kaiser from the summer of 1906 until the fall of 1909. First, the diplomatic situation grew worse for Germany as Britain strengthened her connections to France and, by extension, Russia. Second, the German public might come to realize how the constellation of power in Europe was shifting so dramatically against Germany. Third, Holstein might seek revenge on his perceived enemies as a way of discrediting the Kaiser and the Foreign Office in the same way Bismarck had. These problems plagued the chancellor during his last three years in office. While Bülow and Hammann were able to maintain their

\textsuperscript{21} Tschirschky to Monts, 28 March 1906, in Monts, 441.
\textsuperscript{22} Holstein to Bülow, 31 March 1906, no. 950, \textit{PH}, vol. 4, 366-7.
\textsuperscript{23} Holstein to Bülow, 3 April 1906, nos. 952-3, ibid., 407-8.
\textsuperscript{24} Hammann to Tschirschky, 6 April [1906], no. 955, ibid., 408-9; and Hammann, \textit{Bilder}, 38.
position through the continued use of the public-relations system they had elaborated
after 1900, its effectiveness waned in the face of these combined pressures.

The first threat came as a direct result of Holstein’s resignation. In the months
after his retirement, Holstein made it readily apparent that he blamed both his old ally,
Philipp zu Eulenburg, as well as Hammann for the acceptance of his resignation by
Bülow and the Kaiser.25 Simultaneously, he turned to Bismarckian tactics, trying to work
his last remaining connection in the newspaper world, Theodor Schiemann. When he
heard news that Eulenburg might expose his machinations of the 1890s with the
voluminous archive of correspondence he kept,26 Holstein appeared ready to reply in
kind: “Of course I was indescribably astonished that someone like Philipp Eulenburg,
who has so much mud sticking on him [and] whom one can choose to attack from every
side, should resort to threatening.”27 Holstein soon found another outlet for his criticisms in an unlikely source:
Maximilian Harden, the editor of the Zukunft. Harden had formerly supported
Bismarck’s press campaign in the 1890s28 and was a vociferous critic of the Kaiser’s
personal rule and the circle of unofficial advisors who encouraged it. In the summer of
1906, the two became acquainted after an exchange in the Zukunft, in which Harden

25 Holstein to Monts, 22 April 1906, in Monts, 358-60; and Holstein to Radolin, 23 April 1906, no. 966, PH,
vol. 4, 374-5. Hammann had spread the rumor that Holstein was aiming at a war with France since 1905,
Holstein asserted, while Eulenburg had informed the Kaiser of the rumor. State Secretary Tschirschky had
supposedly been an unwitting tool for these two men.
26 Schiemann to Holstein, 25 [April 1906], no. 968, ibid., 376.
27 Holstein to Schiemann, 28 April 1906, no. 972, ibid., 378. Cf. Holstein to Eulenburg, 1 May 1906, no. 973,
ibid., 378.
28 See above, p. 53.
portrayed Holstein as the architect of German policy from 1890 to 1906, while Holstein politely defended himself in the first article he ever had signed publicly. The following this, as Harden later wrote, the two men met or wrote one another at least once a week up to the time of the old privy councilor’s death. The most important subject they collaborated on was Harden’s campaign against William II’s personal rule and the baleful influence of Eulenburg. In the fall of 1906, Harden began the campaign with two attacks on Eulenburg. The first of these called Eulenburg out directly for the apparent encouragement he gave to the Kaiser’s delusions of grandeur as an absolute monarch. The second was an obscure threat to expose Eulenburg’s circle for questionable behavior of which William II was totally ignorant, an allusion to the rumored homosexual activities of Eulenburg and his closest friends. 

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30 Maximilian Harden, Köpfe (Berlin: E. Reiss, 1911), 129. Many of these letters—which bear out Harden’s assertion about the nature of his relationship with Holstein—have been published in Helmuth Rogge, ed., Harden und Holstein. Politisch-publizistisches Zusammenspiel zweier Außenseiter des Wilhelminischen Reichs (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1959).
31 Holstein’s preeminent biographer attributes the campaign Harden began against Eulenburg in the fall of 1906 to Harden’s own initiative and his fear that Eulenburg was pushing the Kaiser in the direction of personal rule again. Rich, vol. 2, 767-9. Hammann also doubted that Holstein was responsible for the campaign. Hammann, Bilder, 19. Nevertheless, Holstein surely encouraged Harden’s attacks on Eulenburg and provided him information that corroborated evidence gleaned from other sources.
33 Only a select few would have even understood the reference he made on this occasion: ‘November 1906. Night. Open country in the Uker region . The Harp Player: ‘Have you read it?’ The Sweetie Pie: ‘On Friday.’ The Harp Player: ‘Do you think more is coming?’ The Sweetie Pie: ‘We have to reckon with the possibility; he appears to be informed, and if he knows about the letters that talk of Sweetheart ....’ The Harp Player: ‘Unthinkable! But they are publishing it everywhere. They want to get their hands around our throats.’ The Sweetie Pie: ‘A pack of witches. Be done! Be done!’ The Harp Player: ‘If only he does not hear of it!’” In the little dialogue, Eulenburg was obviously the Harp Player, since he was a well-known composer of Nordic ballads. Kuno von Moltke (1847-1923), the Commandant of Berlin, who was later charged as a homosexual alongside Eulenburg, was the Sweetie Pie (a reference to his nickname derived from his sweet tooth). The Kaiser was the Sweetheart, a direct reference to the Kaiser’s nickname, “Liebchen,” which the two men had given him behind his back. Maximilian Harden, “Dies Irae,” Die Zukunft 57 (October-December 1906): 287-302, especially 291. Hammann later wrote that it caused a mixture of whispers, fearful rumors, and Schadenfreude in elite society, according to the context in which it was received. Hammann, Um den Kaiser, 16.
Kaiser, the highest echelons of the military, the members of the diplomatic service, and even Bülow himself had connections to Eulenburg and his intimates—and because homosexuality was still a social taboo and punishable under Paragraph 175 of the criminal code in Germany—the campaign threatened to discredit both William II and the foreign policy conducted in his name.

Nevertheless, following Bülow's fainting fit in the Reichstag, the most immediate threat the chancellor faced was that William II might come to doubt his health and subsequent fitness for staying in office. In the Foreign Office, for instance, the chancellor's position was temporarily weakened, while State Secretary Tschirschky took a more active role in formulating policy than any of his predecessors had with the exception of Bülow himself. By August Tschirschky himself was writing of the chancellor's political impotence,\(^\text{34}\) and by the autumn, the two clashed over Bülow's strategy for defending the government's foreign policy in the Reichstag.\(^\text{35}\) Moreover, Bülow feared that Eulenburg was encouraging the emperor's anxiety. The Kaiser had, after all, visited Eulenburg privately at his castle in October 1906.\(^\text{36}\) The trip gave rise to rumors of a secret court camarilla aiming at the fall of the chancellor and the rise of one of Eulenburg's intimates. One rumor circulated that either a general or someone more versed in domestic politics would replace Bülow.\(^\text{37}\)

\(^\text{34}\) Tschirschky to Monts, 5 August 1906, in Monts, 444.
\(^\text{35}\) Bülow to Hammann, 25 August, 17 September and 5 October 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 12, NL.H, BArchL.
\(^\text{36}\) The meeting was the immediate cause of the first article by Harden criticizing Eulenburg's influence on the Kaiser. Holstein later even came to believe that Bülow—and secretly behind him, Hammann—had tried to maneuver him into revealing information to Harden that would do even more damage to Eulenburg's reputation. Holstein to Ida von Stülpnagel, 25 November 1907, in Holstein, Lebensbekenntnis, 297-9.
\(^\text{37}\) Neue Gesellschaftliche Korrespondenz, 7 November 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 6, NL.H, BArchL.
In any event, Eulenburg certainly wrote Bülow at the time, informing him about William II’s apparent fears: “I gained the impression that his current hobby-horse is a need for energy…. It is also characteristic that he describes every move that does not correspond to his wishes as a lack of energy and is fixated currently on your sickness.” 38

This problem was particularly acute with regard to Bülow’s management of parliamentary affairs and his relations with the predominant party in the Reichstag, the Catholic Center party. The party had been blacklisted as un-German in Bismarck’s times, but ever since the passage of the 1893 Army Bill, the Center had basically been a government-supporting faction in the Reichstag for anything relating to the foreign, military and colonial policies of the Reich. Bülow had made a name for himself as a man who could work with the Center party. 39 He had been able to push the most important legislation of his early career through the Reichstag—including further army bills in 1899 and 1905, the naval bills of 1898 and 1900, and the tariff law of 1902—mainly because of the support of Center delegates in the diet. 40

At the same time, the Center was a confessional party. As Bismarck had noted in 1890, “there are not two souls in the Center party, but rather seven schools of thought that represent all the colors of the political rainbow: from the reactionary right all the way up to the most radical left.” 41 By the time of the first Morocco Crisis, the party ranks split over colonial policy in Africa. From late 1905, the Foreign Office faced criticism

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38 Bülow, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, vol. 2, 261.
39 Diary entry by Holstein, 17 February 1907, no. 1010, *PH*, vol. 4, 409.
40 On this subject, see Zeender, 75-99.
from Matthias Erzberger, an up-and-coming leader of party radicals in the Reichstag.\footnote{Matthias Erzberger (1875-1921) represented various voting districts in Württemberg from 1903 to 1921. He also served as finance minister from January 1919 to June 1920. “Erzberger, Matthias,” in \textit{MdR}, 305-6.} He criticized the government specifically on account of native uprisings in German Southwest Africa, the inefficient administration of the colony, the brutality of the military in suppressing the indigenous revolts, and the granting of contracts to companies that abused their monopolies to charge excessive rates for their services. As a result of the campaign, even the National Liberals—generally among the most supportive of the parties when it came to Bülow’s \textit{Weltpolitik}—expressed reservations about the way German Southwest Africa was being administered.\footnote{Speech by Bassermann, 26 March 1906, 11th Leg. Per., Session 2, \textit{SBVR}, vol. 216, 2301-2.} In this atmosphere, the party helped to reject an appropriation for a railroad in the colony and a bill that would have created an independent Reich Colonial Office on 26 May 1906.\footnote{Votes of 26 May 1906, 11th Leg. Per., Session 2, \textit{ibid.}, vol. 217, 3560-2.}

The Kaiser, Eulenburg reported, “fumed about the activity of the African Railroad very severely.” Simultaneously, William II seemed to blame the government’s inability to pressure its Center critics on “your [Bülow’s] sickness, from which you have not yet completely recovered.”\footnote{Bülow, \textit{Denkwürdigkeiten}, vol. 2, 261.} Bülow himself acknowledged that the failure in May 1906 of the legislation the Kaiser desired was due to his leave of absence. Yet he had also assumed the Kaiser would see the difference between the second reading of the bill, which was successfully managed in March before Bülow’s leave of absence, and the third, which fell apart without him, as evidence that the chancellor was still a potent force in the Reichstag.\footnote{Bülow to Hammann, 27 May 1906, Bd. N 2106 / 12, Nl.H, BArchL; and Bülow to the Foreign Office, 29 May 1906, Deutschland 122, no. 2, secr., Bd. 1, PA-AA.} Bülow also assumed the Kaiser had seen the press clippings Hammann
and the Press Bureau put together that emphasized this view of the situation. But as it became evermore apparent late in 1906 that his position was not as secure with the Kaiser as he had first assumed, Bülow settled on a policy of direct antagonism with the Center as a way of shoring up his position. On 13 December 1906, he unexpectedly dissolved the Reichstag after delegates of the Center party helped to defeat the colonial budget by a very slim margin.

This culminated in the first Reichstag elections since 1893 where imperialist and foreign-policy issues were at the center of the campaigning. From the very beginning the government saw the need for a nationalist crusade. Hammann’s role in the campaign was conceived mainly in managing the press where possible to aid in the campaign. He was, for instance, to use any articles that could be found abroad to stir up the idea in Germany that the British, the French and the Russians—all of our enemies in the world—wanted to see the combined victory of the Social Democrats and the Center party, whose oppositional stance in the Reichstag would spell the end of Germany’s status as a great power. Perhaps more important was the assistance the chancellor

47 Bülow to Hammann, 30 May 1906, Deutschland 122, no. 2, secr., Bd. 1, PA-AA.
48 Lerman, 163-6. This seems the most reasonable explanation for the decision to dissolve the Reichstag, since the absence of a solid bloc of fifteen Conservative deputies had ensured defeat, and they would have brought the measure through to victory if Bülow had made it more clear that they should have been present for the vote. See Holstein to Ida von Stülpnagel, 16 December 1906, in Holstein, Lebensbekenntnis, 270; and diary entry by Holstein, 17 February 1907, no. 1010, PH, vol. 4, 409-10. Cf. Margaret Lavinia Anderson, Practicing Democracy: Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), 9, which views the election the opposite way as an example of the government taking “its case to the people.”
49 Speech by Bülow, 13 December 1906, 11th Leg. Per., Session 2, SBVR, vol. 218, 4381.
50 The standard works on the subject are George D. Crothers, The German Elections of 1907 (New York: AMS Press, 1968), and Dieter Fricke, “Der deutsche Imperialismus und die Reichstagswahlen von 1907,” Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft 9, (1961): 538-76. There had been Reichstag elections in 1898 and 1903, but the campaigns for them had largely neglected foreign-policy issues. See Sperber, Kaiser’s Voters, 223-40.
51 Posadowsky-Wehner to Bülow, 14 December 1906, Bd. R 43 / 1794, Rk., BArchL.
52 Bülow to Hammann, undated [December 1906], Bd. N 2106 / 12, Nl.H, BArchL.
recruited outside of government circles. He relied on the nationalist pressure groups like the Pan-German League, the various veterans’ associations, and especially the Navy League—whose leaders recognized they could benefit from cooperation with the government, even though the controversies in Southwest Africa could not directly demonstrate the need for further naval appropriations. The Navy League headquarters, directed by Major General August Keim, Hammann’s collaborator in the 1893 campaign, was a particularly important ally of the government in the election campaign.53 It was, for instance, a hub for the distribution of electoral publications.54 Further, Keim acted as a mediator between the liberal and conservative parties, working out compromise solutions between the Conservatives, Free Conservatives, National Liberals, and Left Liberals to ensure the election of patriotic candidates rather than the victory of Social Democrats or Center candidates. Bülow sought a union of the middle-class parties, especially the National Liberals and the Left Liberals, with the right.55

The election was held on 25 January 1907 in an atmosphere of intense public interest and high voter turnout.56 By the evening, it began to appear that the state-supporting parties had won many seats in the first round of ballots at the expense of the Social Democrats.57 In celebration, Bülow went outside the Reich Chancellery early in

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53 For more on Keim’s activities see the materials collected by the government in Bd. R 43 / 1807, Rk., BArchL, as well as the historical accounts in Crothers, 113-17, and Eley, German Right, 254-60.
54 The chancellor even appropriated 30,000 marks to support Keim’s activities. Crothers, 113.
55 Bülow to Hammann, 5 January 1907, Bd. N 2106 / 13, NL.H, BArchL.
56 Almost eighty-five percent of eligible voters cast their votes, a jump of roughly nine percent as compared with the previous Reichstag election in 1903. Walter Tormin, Geschichte der deutschen Parteien seit 1848 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1968), 284-5. See also see Tables 2 and 3 in Appendix 1.
57 The Center party had held its own in the first round of the elections. In order to prevent a permanent rupture with the party, Hammann advised Bülow to pressure Rome to check cooperation with the Social Democrats in the second round of ballots, and the chancellor ultimately took this advice. See memorandum by Hammann, 29 January 1907, and Bülow to Hammann, [January 1907], Bd. N 2106 / 13, NL.H, BArchL.
the morning on 26 January to deliver an extemporaneous victory speech to a huge crowd that had gathered on the Wilhelmstrasse to congratulate the government on its victory.

My great predecessor in office, whom we all highly revere [Bravo!], said nearly forty years ago: “If we place the German people in the saddle, they will surely be able to ride.” [Constant rejoicing and supportive shouts.] I hope and believe that the German people have shown today that they can still ride. [Lively applause.] And if everyone does his obligation in the final balloting, then the whole world will recognize that the German people sits firmly in the saddle and will ride down everything that stands in the way of their welfare and greatness.58

When the final round of ballots came in, the Center party had actually picked up five seats in the Reichstag, but the massive losses of the Social Democrats (some thirty-eight seats altogether) shattered the decisive position it had occupied in the diet from 1890 until the dissolution in 1906. By contrast, the Kartell parties all gained seats (at the expense of the Social Democrats). But the key component of the so-called Bülow Bloc that emerged from the election was the Left-Liberal caucus, which had grown to forty-nine seats and now seemed poised to help the government on “national” issues.59 The elections, then, accomplished Bülow’s apparent aim in dissolving the Reichstag. He told Hammann after the final results were in that he felt more secure in office than ever.60 In light of the troubles surrounding the Kaiser’s supposed personal rule, the chancellor’s sickness, and the defeat Germany suffered over Morocco, it must have seemed to observers that Bülow could walk even between the raindrops without getting wet.

58 Speech by Bülow, 26 January 1907, in Schulthess (1907): 15. The Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung elaborated these talking points almost verbatim in the editions that appeared the following morning. See Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 26 January 1907.
59 Bülow recognized this from the beginning as he told Hammann that the crown speech to open the Reichstag had to be both national and progressive in tone. Bülow to Hammann, 29 January 1907, Bd. N 2106 / 13, NL.H., BArchL.
60 Bülow to Hammann, [January 1907], Bd. N 2106 / 13, NL.H., BArchL.
Germany’s Encirclement and the Daily Telegraph Affair

Yet this success was ephemeral at best. Already in early 1906, any hope that the new Liberal regime in Britain might revert to a policy of friendship toward Germany was dashed by the repeated pronouncements of Sir Edward Grey, the new foreign secretary.61 He made it clear, both to France and to Germany, that there would be no substantial change in British foreign policy despite the change of government. He even went so far as to allow conversations between the general staffs of both France and Britain by the end of January 1906. Disingenuously, he asserted that there was no need to notify the Cabinet about the matter. The discussions were, after all, only hypothetical—a consultation about what both military establishments might do in the event of a war with Germany—and therefore not a matter of official foreign policy.62 Grey wanted to walk a delicate line between making an unequivocal statement of support for France, on the one hand, and simply holding out the possibility, on the other hand, of helping her if events proved that course to be necessary.63 Winston Churchill got to the true nature of the move later in his memoirs:

This was a step of profound significance and of far-reaching reactions. Henceforward the relations of the two Staffs became increasingly intimate and confidential. The minds of our military men were definitely turned into a particular channel.... However explicitly the two Governments might agree and affirm to each other that no national or political engagement was involved in these technical discussions, the fact remained that they constituted an exceedingly potent tie.64

61 Sir Edward Grey (1862-1933) entered Parliament in 1886 and served as Lord Rosebery’s parliamentary undersecretary, representing the Foreign Office in the House of Commons from 1892 to 1895. After his appointment as foreign secretary in the new Liberal cabinet that was formed at the end of 1905, Grey continued to direct the Foreign Office until the end of 1916. On Grey, see Keith Robbins, Sir Edward Grey: A Biography of Lord Grey of Fallodon (London: Cassell, 1971).
Grey made his real feelings even more obvious to the Germans. In early January 1906, Metternich asked Grey about the probable attitude of public opinion in the event of a Franco-German war. The new foreign secretary responded that “the English people would not tolerate it if France were embroiled in a war with Germany, and that, should a war occur, any English government, whether Conservative or Liberal, would be pushed to give France aid.” In a sense, then, Grey had gone as near to committing Britain to the side of France in a war with Germany, as he could without actually making the promise, or informing the cabinet and the larger public about it.

Grey complemented this move by doing his predecessors one better: he extended the Entente to embrace Russia in the months following Algeciras. Here again, a decisive departure was reached in the middle of the first Morocco Crisis, when Russia had repeatedly rejected alliance proposals from Germany despite the setbacks associated with the Russo-Japanese War. “The door is being kept open by us for a rapprochement with Russia; there is at least a prospect that when Russia is re-established we shall find ourselves on good terms with her,” Grey wrote in a February 1906 memorandum. “An entente between Russia, France and ourselves would be absolutely secure. If it is necessary to check Germany it could then be done.”

To bring about this result, Grey sent Arthur Nicolson to Russia in late April 1906 to discuss a settlement of Britain’s competing claims with Russia in the neighborhood of Persia and India.

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65 Metternich to Bülow, 3 January 1906, no. 6923, GP, vol. 21, 47-8.
66 Memorandum by Grey, 20 February 1906, no. 299, BD, vol. 3, 266-8. Sir Charles Hardinge (1858-1944), the permanent under-secretary of state in 1906, was quick to point out in the margins the horrifying alternative to not concluding an Entente with Russia: “If France is left in the lurch an agreement or alliance between France, Germany and Russia in the near future is certain.”
The negotiations progressed slowly over the next year. The Russo-Japanese agreement on Manchuria, which was concluded at the end of July 1907, tended to remove the last dangerous vestiges of an Anglo-Russian conflict developing out of the situation in the Far East. The other major obstacle to better relations—the question of opening the Turkish Straits to Russian warships—was raised at the end of the negotiations by the new Russian foreign minister, Alexander Izvolsky. As a way of assuaging Russian sentiment without actually granting any concession, Grey dangled a promise for the future:

I have no doubt whatever that, if as a result of the present negotiations, the British and the Russian Governments remained on good terms in Asia, the effect on British public opinion and on any British Government with regard to other questions, including this, would be very great.

In the final document signed on 31 August 1907, the two states eliminated the most troublesome issues that had divided them previously. The convention divided Persia into three regions: a southern sphere guarding the mouth of the Persian Gulf went to Britain; a northern sphere bordering on the region the Caucasus in the west and Afghanistan in the east went to Russia; and the region between them that was to remain neutral. Finally, Tibet became a neutral buffer zone between the Tsar’s imperial possessions in Asia and British territory in India.

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67 Izvolsky (1856-1918) represented Russia in Copenhagen from 1903 to 1906, when he became Russian foreign minister. He served in that position until 1910.
68 Memorandum by Grey, 27 April 1907, as an enclosure in Grey to Nicolson, 1 May 1907, no. 268, BD, vol. 4, 290-1. The best and most recent study of the Straits question just on the eve of the First World War is Ronald Bobroff, Roads to Glory: Late Imperial Russia and the Turkish Straits (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006).
69 Anglo-Russian Convention Relating to Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet, 31 August 1907, in Appendix 1, BD, vol. 4, 618-20. There was also an unspoken agreement that Germany should be kept out of Persia altogether. See, for instance, Campbell’s marginalia, O’Conor to Grey, 17 April 1907, no. 410, ibid., 453-4.
The circle of Germany’s diplomatic isolation was now complete. Yet this fact was not immediately obvious. Bülow and Hammann had worked to downplay the widening of the Entente even before its final conclusion. Alluding to the negotiations nearing conclusion, Bülow referred in April 1907, for example, to Germany’s position in Persia in a speech before the Reichstag:

Without ulterior political motives we demand in Persia economic freedom of movement alone. Relying on guarantees that have been given to us spontaneously by both sides, we look forward to the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian negotiations on Persia without alarm. The same quiet and watchful stance holds for what Russia and England, as Asiatic powers, have arranged or will arrange about inland border questions in Asia, whether they are a matter of Tibet or Afghanistan.  

Bülow also conducted personal diplomacy with the press in the summer of 1907 to get across an optimistic view of the situation, granting, for example, an interview to the British journalist J.L. Bashford that was published in the Liberal *Westminster Gazette*. After Nicolson and Izvolsky had settled the final terms of the agreement at the end of August, Bülow immediately drafted instructions for the press along the lines of the policy he had publicly announced in April. “It is important that the agreement is discussed by our press quietly and impartially,” he instructed the Press Bureau, “and not built up into an Anglo-Russian alliance or represented needlessly as an insult to German interests, if, as I assume, it corresponds to what was told to us by the Russians and the English.”

The agreement was not announced to the public until a little more than a fortnight later, after its ratification on 23 September 1907. By and large, the British press viewed the convention along the lines of Bülow’s interpretation for the German

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71 Westminster Gazette, 16 August 1907.
72 Bülow’s marginalia, Miquel to Foreign Office, 31 August 1907, England 83, Bd. 17, PA-AA.
public. Even *The Times* viewed the accord as an agreement affecting Asia only—not something that impinged upon relations among the great powers in Europe.\(^7^4\) The relative calm of the British press on the matter helped to check the outbreak of a press war between the two countries. Much of the mainstream German press initially followed the pointers given by the government about the Anglo-Russian rapprochement. The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* fully admitted that the Foreign Office had been informed all along about the negotiations between Britain and Russia.\(^7^5\) The *Kölnische Zeitung* put forward, moreover, the now-stale byline that had been officially sanctioned during the first Morocco Crisis: Germany’s interests in Persia were purely economic and all that was desired there was freedom of competition for her trade and industry.\(^7^6\)

It was only on the left and the right that real criticism of the new developments could be seen in Germany. Representing this point of view, the agrarian *Deutsche Tageszeitung* and the liberal *Berliner Tageblatt* viewed the Anglo-Russian rapprochement as a further diplomatic defeat for Germany.\(^7^7\) To stem the growth of this kind of criticism of Bülow’s policies, the government worked hard during the Kaiser’s visit to London from 10 to 18 November 1907 to get across an optimistic view of the state of Anglo-German relations.\(^7^8\) Bülow, for his part, ultimately elected to pass on joining William during the trip because of rumors in official and press circles that his unpopularity in Britain might cause yet another outbreak of German-baiting in the

\(^{74}\) *The Times*, 26 September 1907.  
\(^{75}\) *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 29 September 1907.  
\(^{76}\) *Kölnische Zeitung*, 27 September 1907.  
\(^{78}\) Schoen, 55.
conservative London press, especially The Times. Bülow’s proxy for the trip, the new state secretary, Wilhelm von Schoen, did his part by meeting with a journalist from Reuter’s Agency during the trip. The Kaiser also courted the press in an official reception held in the London embassy.

At about this time, there was an air of hostility in the traditionally anti-German journals that were discussing Germany’s stance toward Britain during the Boer War. The Times chronicled all the mistakes of Bülow’s diplomacy during the war, while the rabidly Germanophobe National Review asserted Germany had tried to form a league of the continental powers to intervene in the war on behalf of the Boers. To stymie this kind of criticism of Bülow’s diplomacy, the Kaiser continued the chancellor’s own policy of pro-actively seeking conciliation in the press by granting interviews to sympathetic journalists and friends of Germany. In this vein, he granted an interview to J.L. Bashford for the January 1908 issue of Strand Magazine:

I cannot comprehend the ill feeling against me in England. I have acted loyally to England. An offer was made to Germany simultaneously from two powerful sides to take advantage of the situation and to interfere in British policy, and I refused point-blank. I instantly telegraphed the nature of the offer to my uncle.

There is some room to doubt that the Press Bureau ever even knew about the interview until long after the fact. Nevertheless, the interview was certainly in line with the

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79 Metternich to the Foreign Office, 10 October 1907, no. 8168, GP, vol. 24, 15; Grey to Lascelles, 18 September and 10 October 1907, nos. 48 and 53, Hardinge to Lascelles, 2 October 1902, no. 50, BD, vol. 6, 81-2, and 84-6; and Bülow to Hammann, 21 October 1907, in Hammann, Bilder, 49. I was unable to find the copy of this letter in the Hammann Papers.
80 Wilhelm von Schoen (1851-1933) had represented Germany in Copenhagen and St. Petersburg in the early 1900s, before replacing Tschirschky as state secretary in 1907. He held that position until 1910 and also often served as the Foreign-Office representative on the Kaiser’s trips.
82 Strand Magazine, 1 January 1908, 22, England 78, no. 2, secr., Bd. 5, PA-AA.
83 Memorandum by Heilbron, 4 June 1910, England 78, no. 2, secr., Bd. 5, PA-AA.
chancellor’s larger desire to cultivate a good press in Britain, and there is some evidence that suggests Hammann used his connections with the Vossische Zeitung to circulate excerpts of the interview for positive press coverage in German liberal circles.\(^8^4\)

Nonetheless, the necessity of maintaining public support for Bülow’s policies seemed more and more urgent by this point in time. A major source of concern was that the Eulenburg sex scandals dramatically escalated by the summer of 1907.\(^8^5\) The initial salvo Harden had let loose in Die Zukunft in late 1906 had been intended to force Eulenburg to withdraw from the Berlin political scene. Harden specifically believed that Eulenburg had been responsible as a kind of puppet-master for the diplomatic defeat suffered at Algeciras.\(^8^6\) When Eulenburg returned to Berlin in early 1907, Die Zukunft attacked him and his circle more and more explicitly for their reputed homosexuality. The result was a series of libel proceedings between Harden and Kuno von Moltke—whom Die Zukunft accused of being Eulenburg’s lover. A first trial acquitted Harden, but a subsequent trial found him guilty.\(^8^7\) In the midst of the proceedings, Eulenburg testified that he had never broken the law by engaging in homosexual acts. On the other hand, a separate trial on 21 April 1908 that Harden staged with a friend in Munich seemed to point toward Eulenburg’s guilt.\(^8^8\) Ultimately Eulenburg himself was brought

\(^8^4\) Vossische Zeitung [typescript draft], 9 January 1908, Bl. 2-4, N 2106 / 52, NL.H, BArchL.
\(^8^5\) I have space to give only a very thumbnail sketch here. For fuller treatments, see Harry F. Young, Maximilian Harden, Censor Germaniae: The Critic in Opposition from Bismarck to the Rise of Nazism (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1959), 82-125; Rogge, Holstein und Harden, 1-73; and especially, Peter Jungblut, Famose Kerle. Eulenburg—Eine wilhelminische Affäre (Hamburg: Männerschwarmskript, 2003).
\(^8^7\) The first trial that acquitted Harden took place from 23 to 29 October 1907, effectively ruling that Moltke was a homosexual because of the testimony of his estranged ex-wife. The second trial, which began on 19 December 1907 and ended on 3 January 1908, overturned the initial ruling by determining that Harden had libeled Moltke.
\(^8^8\) This third trial, lasting only one day, was rigged by Harden and an associate of his, Anton Städele. Harden had had Städele print an article that accused Harden of accepting money from Eulenburg to keep quiet about his sexual life. Harden then sued Städele for libel. The trial was held in Munich away from Prussia, where
up on charges of perjury. Evidence was presented that he had engaged in sexual
relations in the 1880s with a fisherman who worked on his estate. Eulenburg’s physical
collapse during both trials indefinitely postponed a final verdict, while seemingly
vindicating Harden before the public.89 The result of the episode was that public opinion
learned many lurid details about the putative seedy side of William II’s intimate circle
and the corruption of his personal rule, without having the catharsis that a final
judgment in the trial would have provided.

These matters hit very close to home for Bülow and his press chief. The
chancellor suspected that Holstein was the source of the attacks. Hammann, who met
with the Berlin police officer charged with investigating homosexual acts, Hans von
Tresckow, voiced this concern, remarking that Bülow thought Holstein arranged the
campaign “out of hate for Eulenburg.”90 The press chief therefore asked the police to
keep the government informed of the investigation. What was even worse, in the fall of
1907 Bülow himself was implicated in a trumped-up charge of homosexuality as well.
Because the rumors were in the form of a journalistic exposé, Hammann investigated the
source of the story for Bülow.91 The chancellor eventually brought a libel proceeding
against the man behind the accusation, Adolf Brand, who was an advocate of homosexual
emancipation and was punished with an eighteen-month jail sentence for fabricating the

Harden feared the courts would sympathize with Eulenburg. In the course of the proceedings, two witnesses
testified to having had sexual relations with Eulenburg, in effect discrediting the decision of the second trial.
The court found Städele guilty of libel, and he had to pay a small fine. Harden himself covered the fine in
return for the service Städele had done him.
89 The first trial (29 June–17 July 1908) ended with Eulenburg collapsing in the court room after two weeks
of proceedings; the second lasted one day (7 July 1909) and ended exactly the same way.
90 Hans von Tresckow, Von Fürsten und anderen Sterblichen. Erinnerungen eines Kriminalkomissars
(Berlin: F. Fontane, 1922), 183.
91 Hammann to Bülow, 26 September 1907, Bd. N 2106 / 13, Nl.H, BArchL.
charges. In private, Bülow was quite rattled by the charges, asserting a physical aversion to homosexuals.\footnote{Bülow to Loebell, 27 September 1907, Bd. N 2106 / 13, NL.H, BArchL.} In reality, the bigger threat was that the avalanche of interest in the scandals might undermine his position with the Kaiser, especially if the Bülow Bloc fell apart. Already in August of 1907 this seemed a distinct possibility, for there were rumors—causing great concern for the chancellor—that the Bloc was beginning to crumble.\footnote{Bülow to Hammann, 28 August 1907, in Hammann, Bilder. I was unable to find the copy of this letter in the Hammann Papers.} Hence it became ever more critical that the fiction of optimism in the foreign realm be maintained to shore up Bülow’s crumbling domestic position.

Yet Anglo-German relations remained agitated on account of further indiscretions in The Times in early 1908. On 14 November 1907, the German government released the draft of a new supplementary naval bill that would reduce the life of battleships by five years—from twenty-five to twenty years—and replace obsolete battleships with new ones of the Dreadnought class, which had recently been developed in Britain under the direction of Admiral John Fisher, the First Sea Lord from 1904 to 1910.\footnote{Nordeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 14 November 1907, in Schulthess (1907): 157-60. John Arbuthnot Fisher, first Baron Fisher (1841-1920) was first sea lord from 1904 to 1910, and again from 1914 to 1915. On Lord Fisher, see Paul G. Halpern, “Fisher, John Arbuthnot,” in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, vol. 19, Fane-Flatman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 675-702.} A supplementary law that the Reichstag had approved in 1906 had been intended primarily to follow the British lead in battleship construction. The current draft, on the other hand, was a virtual announcement of a new naval-arms race, and the organs of the conservative press in London appeared willing to use the German threat as a way of pushing new naval construction on an ambivalent Liberal cabinet.\footnote{See, for example, the letter by Lord Esher published in the Daily Telegraph, 6 February 1908, which reached the conclusion that “There is not a man in Germany from the Emperor downwards who would not welcome the fall of Sir John Fisher.” The British government was divided at the time between the more...}
As a part of the Kaiser’s personal diplomacy to convince the British of his goodwill, he wrote a letter in February 1908 to Lord Tweedmouth, the First Lord of Admiralty from 1905 to 1908, to explain the new supplemental navy law in a way that made it seem less threatening to Britain. He stated specifically that it was intended only to protect German commerce and had never been aimed at Britain. Though the letter was not intended for public consumption, *The Times* obtained a copy and published it on 6 March 1908 in the midst of a parliamentary debate on naval increases that was threatening to break up the British Cabinet. The revelation, which took the form of a letter to the editor by Colonel Charles Repington, decried the apparently brazen attempt of a foreign monarch to influence the man responsible for British naval

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97 William II to Tweedmouth, 16 February 1908, no. 8181, *GP*, vol. 24, 32-35.

98 Repington (1858-1925) had served in the army from the late 1870s until the Boer War, when he had to resign his commission because of a personal scandal involving an affair with a lady of high society. Thenceforth, Repington became a regular commentator on military affairs for the liberal *Westminster Gazette* and *The Times* in the first decade of the 1900s, before editing the general staff quarterly, *Army Review*, from 1911 to 1918. He finished his career writing for the conservative *Morning Post* and the conservative *Daily Telegraph* after the war. On Repington, see A. J. A. Morris, “Repington, Charles A Court,” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 46, Randolph-Rippingille (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 495-7.
estimates in the interests of his own country. While the commentary on the episode in Britain was generally guarded both in Parliament and in the press, in Germany the disclosure caused a minor uproar that led to public support across the political spectrum. Bülow considered publishing the letter to clear up the rumors that surrounded it. But ultimately he concluded that the publication should occur in London rather than Berlin, and the British government assuaged public concerns by addressing the issue in Parliament so that publication was unnecessary. In Germany, moreover, many newspapers denounced The Times with Bülow’s explicit approval. Theodor Schiemann asserted in the Kreuzzeitung, for instance, that the episode was comprehensible only in light of “the longstanding hatred of The Times,” especially since it was a fact that William’s behavior was perfectly consistent with the actions of his grandfather, Prince Albert. In all probability, the article was directly inspired by the government through the Bülow-Hammann system, for Bülow expressed his approval of Schiemann’s arguments the very day they appeared in print. When the matter dropped without an outbreak of Anglophobia in Germany or articles warning of the German menace in Britain, it seemed that once again the chancellor and his Press Bureau had put a positive spin on a potentially explosive situation.

99 The Times, 6 March 1908. Repington later admitted in another letter to the editor that he had written the original letter to ramp up a revision of the naval estimates by bringing public pressure to bear on the Radicals in the Cabinet. The Times, 12 March 1908.
100 Bülow to William II, 6 March 1908, no. 8187, and Schoen to Metternich, 6 March 1908, no. 8188, GP, vol. 24, 39-40. Asquith saw no reason for publication, however. He maintained in the House of Commons that it was a private letter that had absolutely nothing to do with the preparation of the naval budget. Speech by Asquith, 6 March 1908, Parliamentary Debates, Commons, 4th ser., vol. 185 (1908), cols. 1067-8. The letter apparently remained unpublished until after the war.
102 Bülow to Hammann, 11 March 1908, Bd. N 2106 / 14, Nl.H, BArchL.
Nevertheless, the diplomatic situation had deteriorated to such an extent that the ability to keep the truth hidden from the public was beyond even the subtle power of the Press Bureau. A clear demonstration of this fact came in the summer of 1908. At that time, the true nature of the Triple Entente was unmasked before the German public as a result of a newspaper debate on the meaning of the meeting between King Edward VII and Tsar Nicholas II at Reval in June 1908.\textsuperscript{103} Up to the Reval visit, Bülow and Hammann had successfully portrayed the entente between Britain and Russia as an agreement that affected only the Middle East and not Europe. Because Admiral Fisher accompanied the king, and because Edward VII unexpectedly made Nicholas II an admiral in the British Navy in the midst of the ceremonies, the visit seemed to signify that there was much more to the Anglo-Russian rapprochement than had been believed previously.

The meeting suggested that the Entente Cordiale had been widened into a diplomatic and military coalition directed against Germany. This was the view in the French, British and Russian press, where the visit was built up as an outward manifestation of a unified desire on the part of all three powers to collaborate in checking German aggression and settling European problems in the future.\textsuperscript{104} In Germany, on the other hand, the visit caused a kind of hysteria. A typical view was that the rapprochement between Britain and Russia was significant in Europe, as well as in

\textsuperscript{103} A lengthy description of the visit and its diplomatic importance in solidifying the Triple Entente is: memorandum by Hardinge, 12 June 1908, no. 195, \textit{BD}, vol. 5, 237-45.

Asia. The Center-party organ, *Germania*, even saw in the visit between Edward and Nicholas an outward manifestation of the rise of a new “Triple Alliance” of Britain, France, and Russia aimed against Germany. The culmination of these polemics in the press came on 14 June 1908, when the liberal *Dortmunder Zeitung* published an account of a conversation William II had in Döberitz with some officers in the army on 29 May: “It now seems that we have certainly been encircled intentionally,” he was reported to have said. “We will understand how to respond to that. The German has never fought better than when he needed to defend himself on every side. They should come against us now. We are ready.” The report was given a wide press in Germany as it was reprinted in the *Berliner Tageblatt* on the following day and discussed generally in the press. All told, in Germany it seemed that the situation was such that Germany was on the precipice—that war was imminent.

The press policy of the government was calculated to diffuse the tension in German newspapers while also putting a positive spin on the situation. Hammann worked through August Stein in the liberal *Frankfurter Zeitung* and the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* to paint a rosy view of the situation. Most important, however, was the official reaction to the Döberitz revelations. “The conversation was only

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105 See, for example, *Deutsche Tageszeitung*, 11 June 1908, and *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 17 June 1908.
106 *Germania*, 11 June 1908.
concerned with official and military activities,” the government responded officially on 19 June.

It did not refer to the political questions of the day, and there was also no talk in it of “encirclement” or “isolation.” The Kaiser did indeed give expression of his belief that the army—true to the spirit of Frederick the Great—will continue to measure up to its duties. Certainly we do not want to close our eyes to possible dangers.\footnote{Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 19 June 1908. Cf. Schulthess (1908): 110-11. The Kaiser denied that he had ever said anything that even halfway resembled what had been reported in the press. William II’s marginalia, Bülow to Metternich, 16 June 1908, no. 8813, GP, vol. 25, 463.}

In spite of these official attempts to calm the situation, things remained tense; it now seemed clear that Britain had even joined with her greatest potential foe in the world, Russia, to thwart Germany.

Even in the middle of the Reval affair, the chancellor had seemed at times to worry more about his own image than how the Kaiser’s words in Döberitz were being presented (or misrepresented) in the press.\footnote{Immediately after the storm appeared, Bülow had sought out Hammann’s advice about whether it should be reported in the press that he had declined an invitation to have dinner with the Kaiser or not. Bülow to Hammann, 17 June 1908, Bd. N 2106 / 14, N.L.H., BArchL. His concern with such trivial matters is all the more shocking considering that he later acknowledged that the Reval visit was the “central event” of 1908. Bülow, Denkwürdigkeiten, vol. 2, 316.} Despite his apparent lack of concern for politics at the time of the Reval meeting, Bülow’s main focus in the summer of 1908 was on the Reich finance reform that he wanted to push through the Reichstag to ensure funding in the future for further battleship construction.\footnote{Bülow to Hammann, 14 June 1908, Bd. N 2106 / 14, N.L.H., BArchL. The standard work on this question is: Peter-Christian Witt, Die Finanzpolitik des deutschen Reiches von 1903-1913. Eine Studie zur Innenpolitik des Wilhelminischen Deutschland (Lübeck and Hamburg: Matthiesen, 1970). Bülow later expressed his desire to use the hysteria that had been caused by the Reval episode to whip up support for the unpopular finance reform. See Bülow to Schlözer, 25 June 1908, no. 8820, GP, vol. 25, 474-9.} The heightened state of agitation in public opinion following the Reval episode remained tense through the fall of 1908.
The powder-keg was ultimately lit by the publication of an interview with the Kaiser conducted by an unnamed “unimpeachable authority,” which appeared in the Daily Telegraph on 28 October 1908. The source of the article was Colonel Edward Stuart-Wortley, a self-professed admirer of the Kaiser.114 In the wake of his official visit to Britain at the end of 1907, William II had taken an unofficial three-week vacation at Stuart-Wortley’s mansion on his estate at Highcliffe Castle in Hampshire. During the trip, William II continued his attempt to cultivate a good press in Britain by engaging in various political conversations with his British host and other friends. These conversations later became the seed of the famous Daily Telegraph interview published almost a year later. In the course of the visit, Stuart-Wortley had attempted to arrange a meeting between the Kaiser and the famous British journalist W.T. Stead, ostensibly to cultivate a more positive image for the Kaiser in the London press.115 While William II refused the interview, he did go into elaborate detail in his talks with Stuart-Wortley about his longstanding friendship for Britain, the contrasting hostility of German public opinion, and his specific attempts to draw up military plans for Queen Victoria during the Boer War.116 These ideas were elaborated in another series of conversations that


115 W. T. Stead (1849-1912), who edited the Pall Mall Gazette from 1883 to 1890, is widely regarded as the founder of the “new journalism” in Britain, which focused on sensational stories that would capture the attention of the public, new layouts that included more exciting headlines, new methods of communicating stories like the editorial paragraph and personal interviews. On Stead, see Joseph O. Baylen, “Stead, William Thomas,” in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, vol. 52, Spruce-Strakosch (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 331-3.

116 Stuart-Wortley to his wife, 1 December 1907, no. 1, in Peter Winzen, Das Kaiserreich am Abgrund: Die Daily-Telegraph-Affäre und das Hale-Interview von 1908; Darstellung und Dokumentation (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002), 94-6.
Stuart-Wortley had with William II at the annual German army maneuvers held between 7 and 10 September 1908 at Saarbrücken.

Stuart-Wortley’s idea was to take these conversations and draw them up into “an interview” nominally conducted by a fictional correspondent for a prominent British newspaper. In practice, this meant that the general gist of the conversations was dictated to J.B. Firth, a journalist from the conservative *Daily Telegraph*. Stuart-Wortley’s avowed intention was to try to calm the atmosphere of antagonism by delivering to the British public a sincere and well-meaning statement of the Kaiser’s goodwill toward Britain.117 In this, both the “interview” and the publication of it were perfectly in line with the publicity policy Bülow and Hammann had been utilizing since the first Morocco Crisis to cultivate public opinion in Britain through personal interviews with sympathetic journalists. In order to ensure the article would meet these needs, the Kaiser obtained a copy of it before publication, so that the chancellor could proofread it and make any necessary corrections. Further, he asked Bülow himself to look to the draft personally since he desired that the matter should be taken care of as discreetly as possible.118 The chancellor nevertheless passed the manuscript on to Berlin, where it was to be looked over for its historical accuracy. Privy Councilor Reinhold Klehmet, an expert on Asian and Vatican affairs, was the man with the longest experience in the Foreign Office after Hosltein’s retirement. The job fell to him to read over the interview and suggest corrections. Because he considered the article a “secret imperial matter,”

117 Stuart-Wortley to William II, 23 September 1908, no. 5, in Winzen, ibid., 100-2.
118 Jenisch to Bülow, 30 September 1908, England 78, no. 2, *secretiss.*, Bd. 1, PA-AA. Bülow assuredly knew that this was the expressed command of the Kaiser, for he highlighted the following passage in the margins: “H[is] M[ajesty] ... asks that Stuart-Wortley’s offer be handled as discreetly as possible and that nobody else aside from you is trusted with it.”
Klehmet did not pass the draft on to Hammann or anybody else in the Foreign Office before he sent it back to the chancellor.119 The draft itself suggested slight changes in the wording of three passages, without considering the question of whether it was politically advisable to print the article.120 William then sent the manuscript with corrections to Stuart-Wortley, who assured the Kaiser that the Daily Telegraph would “take up the subject in a very strong line.”121

The final version of the interview published on 28 October 1908 was full of allusions to the friendly feelings of the Kaiser. “I have said time after time that I am a friend of England,” William II was reported to have said, “and your Press—or at least a considerable section of it—bids the people of England refuse my proffered hand and insinuates that the other holds a dagger.” He maintained further that these feelings were contrary to the opinions of the German people:

My task is not the easiest. The prevailing sentiment among large sections of the middle and lower classes of my own people is not friendly to England. I am, therefore, so to speak, in a minority in my own land, but it is a minority of the best elements, just as it is in England with respect to Germany.122

The second half of the interview turned to the question of Germany’s attitude during the Boer War, when the Kaiser had supposedly maintained a friendly stance toward Britain that contrasted with the views of a majority of his countrymen. William II fully admitted

119 Hammann, Um den Kaiser, 67. Cf., Schoen, 97-8, and Bülow to the Foreign Office, 2 October 1908, England 78, no. 2, secretiss., Bd. 1, PA-AA. Though Hammann did not see the draft, it had nothing as yet to do with the erosion of his power in the Foreign Office. It seems merely that William II, Bülow, and Klehmet made a series of disconnected blunders that kept the Press Bureau from seeing the draft of the interview before publication.
120 Jenisch to William II, 15 October 1908, no. 11, in Winzen, Kaiserreich am Abgrund, 109-12.
121 Stuart-Wortley to William II, 22 October 1908, England 78, no. 2, secretiss., Bd. 1, PA-AA. The emphasis is Bülow’s.
122 This was one of the three passages that Klehmet had revised. The original draft had said: “The prevailing sentiment amongst my own people is not friendly to England. I am in a minority in my own land.” Stemrich to Bülow, 5 October 1908, no. 8251, GP, vol. 24, 169-74, especially 171, which includes the revised manuscript as an enclosure.
the hostility of German press and “private opinion” at the time of the war, but he also pointed out the strenuous efforts made by “official Germany” to remain friendly to Britain in the face of such public pressure. He also noted the hostile stance adopted by Britain’s current friends, Russia and France:

When the struggle was at its height, the German Government was invited by the Governments of France and Russia to join with them in calling upon England to put an end to the war. The moment had come they said, not only to save the Boer Republics, but also to humiliate England to the dust. . . . I said that so far from Germany joining in any concerted European action to put pressure upon England and bring about her downfall, Germany would always keep aloof from politics that could bring into complications with a Sea Power like England.

The Kaiser had gone even a step farther. During the “Black Week” of December 1899, when the Boers’ initial dramatic victories against British forces had created a sense of pessimism about the Boer War in Britain, William II had written his grandmother Queen Victoria with the plan for a military campaign in South Africa. It was “a matter of curious coincidence,” he elaborated, “that the plan which I formulated ran very much along the same lines as that which was actually adopted by Lord Roberts and carried by him into successful operation.” The Kaiser concluded the interview by asserting the peaceful intentions even of Germany’s naval construction, which was not aimed at Britain, but was instead intended solely for the protection of Germany’s imperial possessions and commerce.123

The article set off an alarm bell in Berlin. Heinrich Mantler, Hammann’s associate and the director of Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau, sent a telegraph to the Foreign Office requesting instructions about whether to republish the interview or not.124

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123 *Daily Telegraph*, 28 October 1908.
immediate response was a simple no.\textsuperscript{125} The problem was, of course, that independent translations of the interview had already appeared in the afternoon and the evening on the same day that the original article had appeared in the \textit{Daily Telegraph}\.\textsuperscript{126} In response to this problem, Hammann suggested a delicate course. The government should allow the report to appear through Wolff's Telegraph Bureau. But in order that the release should not be misinterpreted as a semi-official admission that Berlin had approved of the publication in advance, a statement should also be made simultaneously in the \textit{Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung} asserting that the \textit{Daily Telegraph} was responsible for the contents of the article.\textsuperscript{127} By the afternoon, Bülow finally gave his approval for releasing the article through Mantler at Wolff's, even though it was too late to send out the semi-official hint through the \textit{Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung} that same evening.\textsuperscript{128}

The appearance of the article through the Wolff's release caused a shockwave throughout the German press.\textsuperscript{129} Hammann and Bülow were able to win the support of the semi-official organs and of those papers that had a longstanding sympathy with the government in the short term.\textsuperscript{130} But the situation deteriorated rapidly, fed by two

\textsuperscript{125} Memorandum by Schoen, [October 1909], England 78, no. 2, secr., Bd. 5, PA-AA.
\textsuperscript{126} It had appeared, for example, in Ullstein's \textit{Berliner Zeitung am Mittag} in the afternoon, and in Scherl's daily paper, \textit{Der Tag}, in the evening. \textit{Der Tag}, 28 October 1908, no. 16, Winzen, \textit{Kaiserreich am Abgrund}, 117-23.
\textsuperscript{129} For a more detailed examination of German press reactions to the \textit{Daily Telegraph} Affair, see Hellmut Teschner, “Die Daily-Telegraph-Affäre vom November 1908 in der Beurteilung der öffentlichen Meinung” (Ph.D. diss., Breslau, 1931).
\textsuperscript{130} \textit{Kölnische Zeitung}, 30 October and 1 November 1908; and \textit{Kreuzzzeitung}, 4 November 1908, in Schiemann, \textit{DgP} 8 (1909): 334-42. The government also received support from liberal papers like the \textit{National-Zeitung}, the \textit{Frankfurter Zeitung}, the \textit{Vossische Zeitung} and the \textit{Magdeburgische Zeitung}. See
crucial mistakes. In the first place, Bülow and Hammann released a statement in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* that freed William II of all culpability in the matter, since he had cleared the article with the Foreign Office ahead of time.\(^{131}\) Hence, while sympathetic papers in Germany—like the nationalist *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten*—had originally suspected that the indiscretion was the Kaiser’s work alone, it now became clear that either the Foreign Office or the chancellor was equally responsible for the mistake.\(^{132}\) In the second place, the German translation of the original article from the *Daily Telegraph* released by Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau varied somewhat from the English original. The crucial passage related to the military plans the Kaiser had supposedly drawn up for Queen Victoria:

\[\text{Original English text:}] \text{And, as a matter of curious coincidence, let me add that the plan which I formulated ran very much along the same lines as that which was actually adopted by Lord Roberts.}^{133}\]

\[\text{Translated German text:}] \text{Als merkwürdiges Zusammentreffen lassen Sie mich hinzufügen, daß der von mir aufgestellte Plan demjenigen sehr nahe kam,}\]

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Carroll, *Germany and the Great Powers*, 594-7. Schiemann’s support was by this time quite generous, for he saw Hammann’s wide-ranging influence and his attempts to manage a press policy that was always trying “to smooth over what was rough” as something that had been fundamentally harmful for many years. Diary entry by Schiemann, 4 November 1908, no. 43, in Winzen, *Kaiserreich am Abgrund*, 168.

\(^{131}\) *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 31 October 1908. The published version of the article varies considerably in wording from the drafts originally drawn up by Hammann and corrected by Bülow. See “Entwurf für die amtliche Erklärung,” dictated by Bülow, [30 October 1908], no. 26, and “Von Otto Hammann überarbeiter Entwurf,” [30 October 1908], no. 27, in Winzen, *Kaiserreich am Abgrund*, 140-2. The government released a similarly worded announcement in the official *Reichsanzeiger* the same day. *Reichsanzeiger*, 31 October 1908, in footnotes on Bülow to William II, 30 October 1908, no. 8257, *GP*, vol. 25, 182.

\(^{132}\) Findlay to Grey, 10 November 1908, no. 132, *BD*, vol. 6, 209-10. The result was like an electric shock, according to Findlay: “The effect of the publication of the interview was nothing, however, to that of the explanatory communiqué in the [*Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*]. The news was posted up in the streets in Dresden on Saturday October 31\(^{st}\), and spread like wild-fire in spite of the fact that on the following (Sunday) morning hardly any papers appear. I cannot exaggerate the rage and shame caused by Prince Bülow’s announcement.”

\(^{133}\) *Daily Telegraph*, 28 October 1908.
welcher wirklich von Lord Roberts angenommen und glücklich von ihm durchgeführt wurde.\textsuperscript{134}

What the different text implied was that the Kaiser had drawn up a general plan for the defeat of the Boers that was ultimately implemented, rather than just simply offering ideas for one.

The outcry against the government and the Kaiser followed three lines of criticism.\textsuperscript{135} The first was adopted by the newspapers representing liberal Germany, which highly disapproved of the Kaiser’s personal regime. In the coming weeks, the \textit{Berliner Tageblatt} took the lead in calling for the creation of a truly parliamentary system of government, where constitutional limitations would finally be placed on William II’s personal power.\textsuperscript{136} The liberal \textit{Berliner Börsen-Courier} also asserted that Bülow should rein in the Kaiser. Even the more sympathetic National-Liberal organs—like the \textit{Magdeburgische Zeitung} and the \textit{National-Zeitung}—began to express reservations about the government’s actions and to call outright for the chancellor’s resignation.\textsuperscript{137} The second stance was that adopted in traditional conservative circles where the views of the \textit{Kreuzzeitung} were typical: “We cannot allow the matter to become a question of power between parliament and crown. It is not the parliamentarians who give expression to the wishes of the people, but the leaders of a

\textsuperscript{134} Report by Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau, 29 October 1908, \textit{Schulthess} (1908): 154: “As a noteworthy coincidence, let me add that the plan drawn up by me came very near to the one that was actually accepted by Lord Roberts and was fortunately carried out by him.” In some reports, this translation was also cut down so that William II became the author of the plan: “\textit{der von mir aufgestellte Plan wurde wirklich von Lord Roberts angenommen und glücklich von ihm durchgeführt}.”

\textsuperscript{135} Much of the press criticism portrayed here was restated during the debates in the Reichstag on the \textit{Daily Telegraph Affair}. See the debates for 10 and 11 November, 12\textsuperscript{th} Leg. Per., Session 1, \textit{SBVR}, vol. 233, 5373-5405, and 5407-37.

\textsuperscript{136} \textit{Berliner Tageblatt}, 18 November 1908; and Goschen to Grey, 20 November 1908, no. 138, \textit{BD}, vol. 6, 220. In this vein, Hammann had inspired a sympathetic article explaining away the chancellor’s role in the publication of the interview early in the month, in order to get Bülow off the hook for his slip-up. \textit{Berliner Tageblatt}, 2 November 1908, in Winzen, \textit{Kaiserreich am Abgrund}, 147-8.

\textsuperscript{137} Salis to Grey, 30 October and 3 November 1908, nos. 125 and 128, \textit{BD}, vol. 6, 201-2, and 203-4.
monarchically sympathetic people’s party.”138 What the situation called for, in other words, was a conservative leadership that could assert itself in the name of the monarchy, as had been the case in Bismarckian times. The final line of criticism, representing the national opposition on the right, echoed this call,139 while finding fault specifically with the Kaiser’s reputed work in drawing up the war plans for the British in South Africa.140

After the initial three days, the debate to the left of the Conservatives became centered constitutionally on the problem of how much Bülow—or someone else in his position—could be held to account for the actions of the Kaiser. Bülow was careful to make all the necessary preparations in advance. He had submitted his resignation to William II, and it was turned down despite that the chancellor had not bothered to read the article as he had been asked.141 On 3 November 1908, he asked Hammann to draft a speech that was very crisp, powerful, and serious, without being too humble or betraying any guilt.142 Bülow also had his subordinates get into touch with sympathetic deputies in the Reichstag to try to plan as much as possible the questions in advance.143

138 Kreuzzeitung, 6 November 1908. This was echoed in the comments of the Konservative Korrespondenz, 6 November 1908, no. 45, in Winzen, Kaiserreich am Abgrund, 172-3.
139 Eley, German Right, 289.
140 Comments of this sort were to be found throughout the papers of the far right on 29 and 30 October. A synopsis of the views of the Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung, the agrarian Deutsche Tageszeitung, and the Hannoverscher Courier can be found in the Tägliche Rundschau, 29 and 30 October 1908. Clippings of these articles were sent to the Kaiser by Bülow. See Bülow to William II, 30 October 1908, no. 8257, GP, vol. 25, 179.
141 Bülow to William II, 30 October 1908, no. 8257, ibid., 181.
142 Bülow to Hammann, 3 November 1908, Bd. N 2106 / 14, Nl.H, BArchL. The draft of the speech was printed after the war in Theodor Eschenburg, Das Kaiserreich am Scheideweg: Bassermann, Bülow, und der Block: Nach unveröffentlichten Papieren aus dem Nachlass Ernst Bassermanns (Berlin: Verlag für Kulturpolitik, 1929), 289-94. Bülow ultimately ended up dropping the outline about midway through his speech on 10 November, especially those sections of it that had defended William II’s actions more firmly.
143 E.g., Bassermann to his wife, 3 November 1908, no. 37, in Winzen, Kaiserreich am Abgrund, 159.
Bülow appeared before the Reichstag on 10 November to answer an interpellation on the matter put to him by the National Liberals, the Left Liberals, and the Social Democrats. Bülow, “looking worn and ill,” as one foreign observer put it, “dropped all his habitual floridity of style and spoke quietly, directly, and to the point.” He began by addressing the most harmful passages relating to the attitude adopted by the people and the Kaiser during the Boer War. With regard to the putative war plans drawn up by William II for Queen Victoria, Bülow assured the assembled crowd that the exchange was limited to “a few purely academic ideas,” mere “aphorisms” that were “without practical significance for the course of operations or for the outcome of the war.” He also denied that the German government had ever acted in a way that had been in any way duplicitous; Bülow had informed the Boers at the beginning of the war that they would have to fight alone and could expect no help from Germany. Further, the passage about the hostility of the majority of the German people was too strong, for “the German people desires peaceful and friendly relations with England on the basis of mutual respect, [lively applause on all sides] and I find that the speakers of all the parties have expressed themselves in the same sense today. [‘Very true!’]” Bülow concluded the speech by mentioning his attempt to resign, which he asserted was neither a hard nor inevitable decision. What was ultimately the hardest decision in his political life, the chancellor asserted,

was the one to remain in office in accordance with the desire of the Kaiser; I only decided to do this because I considered it an obligation of my political responsibility to continue serving the country and His Majesty the Kaiser precisely during these difficult times. [Lively applause]

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144 Goschen to Grey, 12 November 1908, no. 134, BD, vol. 6, 212.
The closest thing to a promise for reform that Bülow made in the speech was that the Kaiser would be more careful in the future about the statements he made publicly and privately. “Were that not the case,” he had declaimed amidst cheering on the right, “then neither I nor one of my successors could assume responsibility [for his statements].”  

Despite his less than characteristic performance, and despite that he had hardly answered the criticisms of the public about the Kaiser’s apparent personal rule, it seemed that Bülow had weathered yet another storm without getting too drenched.

This fact became apparent in the wake of his Reichstag defense. Bülow was able to win an official and a public consensus for maintaining his position against the will of the emperor, who was rapidly losing faith in his chancellor despite the fine phrases in the imperial diet. In this regard, Bülow won the unanimous support of the Prussian Ministry of State the day after his speech: “In light of the unanimity, with which all the parties have expressed their disapproval of the ‘Personal Rule,’ it was impossible to stand aloof from the criticism of His Majesty the Kaiser, as has been the practice before now.”  

He reported this fact to Hammann immediately, asking that the press present the details to the public. “We can only pull through,” he told his press chief, “if we move through the press cleverly and cautiously.” Bülow was also able, in like manner, to win the support of the Bundesrat for taking up a position against the Kaiser’s personal rule during a meeting with the Bundesrat Committee for Foreign Affairs on 12 November.

Moreover, he began to intimate that William II would have to take the blame for his
numerous indiscretions—Bülow listed seven altogether including the recent letter to
Lord Tweedmouth—which meant the chancellor intended to begin to shift blame away
from the Foreign Office and on to the person of the emperor.149 By the middle of
November, then, it appeared that Bülow had a consensus of public support behind him,
and he subsequently moved to rein in William II during a personal interview on the
seventeenth of the month in Potsdam. The following day, a release in the Norddeutsche
Allgemeine Zeitung confirmed that he would bow to the pressure of the public, the press,
the parliament, and his chancellor for better behavior. “His Majesty the Kaiser received
the explanations and declarations of the Reich Chancellor with great seriousness,” the
semi-official organ reported, “and announced His wishes along those lines: unperturbed
by what He considered as unjustified and exaggerated public criticism, He perceived His
highest duty as ensuring the political stability of the Reich through the preservation of
[His] constitutional responsibilities.”150 On the face of things it seemed that Bülow had
survived yet one more ordeal with a new, perverted form of Marschall’s Flucht nach
Öffentlichkeit, sacrificing the reputation of the Kaiser to maintain his own position.

**The Bosnian Crisis**

The embarrassing spectacle occasioned by the Daily Telegraph interview seemed
all the worse because of the detrimental shift that had occurred in Germany’s
international position. The formation of the Triple Entente had changed the nature of
the alliance system. While in Bismarck’s times the system had consisted of a number of

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149 Bülow to Jenisch, 12 November 1908, no. 67, in ibid., 235-6.
150 Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 17 November 1908. The announcement was also issued in the
Reichsanzeiger the same day, and the draft for the article with Hammann’s and Bülow’s corrections is:
Reichsanzeiger, 17 November 1908, no. 75, in Winzen, Kaiserreich am Abgrund, 246-8.
defensive agreements intended to thwart any act of unilateral aggression, by 1907 Europe had been divided into two power blocs diametrically opposed to one another. What was more, this development had resulted in large measure from the death of Bismarckian methods and the increasing importance of public opinion in German decision-making, which helped in large measure, to determine how the different diplomatic blocs had sorted themselves out. This process continued in the last years of Bülow’s tenure as chancellor.

The immediate threat was that one power, by threatening to defect to the other side, might blackmail its partner(s) into accepting—and even supporting—an act of unilateral aggression that would not have been tolerated earlier. This problem first became apparent to contemporary observers as a result of renewed troubles in the Balkans. Ever since 1897, the competition between Austria-Hungary and Russia in the Near East had been put on hold because of the agreement they signed that year to preserve the status quo in that region. The two powers had cooperated over the decade that followed to preserve the peace in the Balkans. Russia’s fixation on the Far East after 1895 had helped to maintain the prevailing situation, as her energies were mostly focused on the conflict with Japan over Manchuria.

Yet Russia’s defeat in the war with Japan, and the troubled domestic situation that resulted from it, encouraged Russian statesmen to focus their attention once again on the Near East. Alexander Izvolsky, the Russian foreign minister who supervised the conclusion of the Entente with Britain, desired to put that agreement to good use in opening up the Dardanelles and the Bosporus to passage of Russian warships from the Black Sea squadron. Austria’s Near Eastern policy became more active at the same time
because of the appointment of a new foreign-policy leadership in 1906. Count Alois von Aehrenthal had become Habsburg foreign minister, continuing to serve in that position until 1912. Count Aehrenthal’s primary aim was to restore the prestige of the monarchy through an active Balkan policy. More explicitly, he wanted to end Serbian dreams of gaining control of the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which the Habsburgs had long administered, but had never outright annexed (in accordance with the terms agreed upon by the 1878 Congress of Berlin).

The plans of the two men came together shortly after the conclusion of the Triple Entente. During a trip to Vienna at the end of September 1907, Izvolsky informed Aehrenthal of his desire to open the Turkish Straits to Russian warships in peacetime. Aehrenthal asked to be informed ahead of time, something he would also do if he were to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this way the two questions became linked with one another. On 2 July 1908 Izvolsky demonstrated this fact when he invited Aehrenthal to hold a discussion on the possible terms of an agreement in which the Turkish Straits would be opened to the Russian Black Sea fleet in return for an Austrian annexation of the two Balkan provinces.

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152 Count Alois Lexa von Aehrenthal (1854-1912) served in the Habsburg diplomatic service from the late 1870s in various different posts before becoming foreign minister in 1906. He held the position until his death in 1912. Besides Aehrenthal, the other important new figure was, of course, Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf, who became the chief of the general staff in 1906. Conrad’s contribution was in his desire for a war against Serbia or Italy while Russia was still fairly weak because of the fateful events of 1905. On his official work after 1906, see his published papers and correspondence: Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf, *Aus meiner Dienstzeit 1906-1918*, 3 vols. (Vienna: Rikola Verlag, 1923).
155 Aide mémoire of the Russian Foreign Ministry, 19 June 1908, no. 9, Ó-UA, vol. 1, 9-11. The date follows the Julian calendar.
In early July 1908, however, the situation in the Balkans changed dramatically. At that time the so-called Young Turk revolution in the Ottoman Empire broke out, when a group of reform-minded officers rebelled against the absolutism of Sultan Abdul Hamid. The Young Turks desired the revival of Ottoman power and the establishment of a constitutional system of government as a check on the sultan’s despotism. The sultan went far to meet their demands when he revived an earlier constitution of 1876 and appointed a group of liberal officials to oversee a new period of reform. The European powers were completely surprised by the revolution. Bülow, for instance, worried that the rebellion would mark a new period of instability in the Ottoman Empire. But for Aehrenthal, especially, the rebellion of the Young Turks seemed a dramatic call to action. He now determined to come to an agreement with Izvolsky on the principle of essentially trading Bosnia and Herzegovina for the Straits. He put the question before the Council of Ministers on 19 August 1908 to gain official approval for the demarche he envisioned. On 27 August he officially accepted Izvolsky’s 2 July offer to negotiate the trade. Finally, he met directly with Izvolsky on 16 September at Buchlau, Moravia, to settle the matter. The two men agreed that Russia would allow the direct annexation of

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156 “I would consider it useful,” Bülow instructed Hammann, “if in the press the idea was circulated—in a way, of course, that is not offensive to the self-esteem of the Turks or of Islam—that disorder would be the end of freedom and probably also the end of Turkey.” Bülow to the Foreign Office, 4 August 1908, Türkei 201, Bd. 2, PA-AA. Aside from this, Bülow’s press policy with regard to the Young Turk revolution was largely one intended to demonstrate Germany’s goodwill toward the new regime. On 7 August, for example, the Kölnische Zeitung asserted that the constitution would improve the domestic situation in Turkey dramatically. Kölnische Zeitung, 7 August 1908. See also, Bülow, Denkwürdigkeiten, vol. 2, 330-1, and Lehmann, 99.


Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria, so long as she did not stand in the way of the opening of the Straits to the Russian fleet.159

Before Izvolsky was able to gain the other powers’ assent for the informal agreement, Aehrenthal announced the formal annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina on 6 October 1908. The result sent an electric shock in all the capitals of Europe. Sir Edward Grey’s consternation was typical of British Liberals’ hopes for reform of the Ottoman Empire: the move was “a cruel blow,” he later wrote, “to the budding hopes of better things in Turkey.”160 German diplomats, too, found Aehrenthal’s actions excessive. Writing from Constantinople, Marschall judged the move as a major transformation in European international politics: “The violation of the Berlin agreement by a European great power,” he wrote, “upsets the basis of political order in the Balkans.”161 Privately even Bülow was taken aback by Aehrenthal’s dramatic announcement, despite that State Secretary Schoen had been informed about the annexation in advance.162 But it was Izvolsky who was most adamant in denouncing the annexation in no uncertain terms. He now claimed publicly that the two powers had agreed to submit the dispute over the Straits and Bosnia-Herzegovina to a conference, which should have been a precondition of revising the settlement arranged at Berlin in 1878.

Both France and Britain supported Izvolsky’s demands for a conference. Initially Bülow desired to give Aehrenthal the impression that Germany was supporting him, but

159 Memorandum by Aehrenthal, 16 September 1908, no. 79, ibid., 86-92.
161 Marschall to the Foreign Office, 4 October 1908, no. 8980, GP, vol. 26, 99,
162 Schoen to Bülow, 5 September 1908, no. 8927, ibid., 26-9. Aehrenthal even claimed that Schoen felt he had been astonished by the modesty of Austria’s claims against Turkey in the matter. Protocol of the Austro-Hungarian Council of Ministers, 10 September 1908, no. 75, Ö-UA, vol. 1, 79.
without actually encouraging a hard-line stance on the matter.\textsuperscript{163} This dictated a continuation of the cautious press policy he had followed with regard to Germany’s position between the Entente powers after the first Morocco Crisis. He sent instructions to Hammann and the Press Bureau to emphasize Germany’s loyalty to Austria-Hungary, “without superlatives, without attacks on the other powers, and without talking about Austria forcing our hand.”\textsuperscript{164} Moreover, for a Turkish audience, the press should emphasize that support for Austria did not indicate Germany was trying to insert herself into Balkan questions. She would try to localize any conflict there in the Bismarckian tradition. Hence, it was really history, a sense of what was right, and national interest that dictated support for Germany’s ally in the crisis.\textsuperscript{165} The semi-official press picked up these talking points in subsequent days, hesitating to support the annexation fully, especially the way in which Aehrenthal had accomplished it.\textsuperscript{166}

At the time, however, Bülow’s political position was severely threatened because of the \textit{Daily Telegraph} Affair. In the midst of the domestic crisis, it became apparent that the reserved support Bülow had expressed on Austria’s account did not seem to go far enough for many papers of the middle and the left. This was especially clear in light of the reports of Left-Liberal and Center-party papers that had appeared in October. Downplaying Aehrenthal’s role in bringing about the crisis, newspapers of this stripe asserted that the annexation was only a formal acknowledgement of the true state of

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\textsuperscript{163} Bülow’s marginalia, memorandum by Stemrich, 23 September 1908, no. 8952, \textit{GP}, vol. 26, 72.
\textsuperscript{164} Bülow to the Foreign Office, 6 October 1908, Türkei 131, Bd. 21, PA-AA: “\textit{ohne von Österreich als einer carte forcée für uns zu sprechen}.”
\textsuperscript{165} Bülow to the Foreign Office, 7 October 1908, Türkei 131, Bd. 22, PA-AA.
\textsuperscript{166} \textit{Kölnerische Zeitung}, 7 October 1908; \textit{Frankfurter Zeitung}, 11 October 1908; and \textit{Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung}, 11 October 1908.
\end{flushright}
affairs in Bosnia-Herzegovina.167 “If there is now hardly a doubt that the occupied provinces should remain permanently subject to Austro-Hungarian administration,” the Center paper Germania announced, representing this strain of thought, “then there can be just as little doubt that the external condition for the occupation and administration of the occupied region cannot remain for all times a temporary arrangement.”168 This tenor of support for Austria was echoed also in the National-Liberal press. The National-Zeitung, for example, asserted that a Bismarckian (i.e., limited) interpretation of Germany’s obligations under the Dual Alliance was no longer tenable after Morocco and the subsequent solidification of the Entente.169 Because the liberal parties were pivotal in the maintenance of the Bülow Bloc in the Reichstag, it was difficult for the chancellor to ignore their opinions on the Bosnian Crisis. Moreover, there was always the threat that the Center party—seeking revenge for the 1906 dissolution—might try to woo the Bloc parties away from the government. Because the Center and the liberal parties agreed about taking a firmer stand on Bosnia even though the chancellor had desired to hold back, the threat was real that the Center might finally split the Bloc as it had wished to do since the Election of 1907. Lastly, the nationalist right continued to harp about Germany’s diplomatic defeat at Algeciras and her continued weak policy in the face of France in Morocco.170

Public opinion was especially important considering that the chancellor’s continuation in office now had to be based on maintaining the parliamentary coalition

167 Kölnische Volkszeitung, 6 October 1908; Vossische Zeitung, 6 and 7 October 1908; Germania, 7 October 1908.
168 Germania, 8 October 1908.
169 National-Zeitung, 2 November 1908.
170 See, for example, Alldeutsche Blätter, 14 November 1908.
that had supported him against the Kaiser in the *Daily Telegraph* Affair. In short, Bülow could hardly afford to look weak again in the field of foreign policy.\(^{171}\) What was needed, it seemed, was a stronger statement of support for Austria-Hungary to ensure that the public understood the Foreign Office would not lose the last remaining friend Germany seemed to have in Europe. Bülow therefore adopted a much tougher stance on the Bosnian Crisis by early November, believing that Russia was unwilling to risk a war over the issue.\(^{172}\) This stance corresponded more closely with opinion in military circles. More importantly, if Bülow were successful in getting Russia to back down on the issue of the annexation, he could claim an indisputable diplomatic victory, which he had needed since Algeciras to restore the slowly eroding public confidence in his foreign policy. On 30 October 1908, Bülow made the new stance of unreserved support for Austria-Hungary clear in a note to Aehrenthal:

> In general, I trust your judgment; in this special case, moreover, I will say for my part that you can judge Serbian affairs—and everything relating to them—better than I can from afar. I will consider the decision you finally arrive at as the one that is required by the situation.\(^{173}\)

This stance was reflected in the semi-official press, where the *Kölnische Zeitung* echoed the views Bülow had expressed in his letter to Aehrenthal:

> The German Reich has absolutely no reason to meddle in the controversy that is still pending between Serbia and Austria-Hungary and leaves it to the Austro-

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\(^{171}\) On the other major foreign-policy issue of the day, the Casablanca incident in Morocco, Bülow also took a firmer stance following the *Daily Telegraph* Affair to blunt any criticism of his foreign policy. Bülow to Radolin, 30 October 1908, no. 8384, *GP*, vol. 24, 354-6. This episode related to the arrest, by the French military police at Casablanca, of three Germans who had deserted from the Foreign Legion in Morocco. Many newspapers (especially on the nationalist right) complained from late September to early November 1908 of the weak policy of the government in asserting German rights in Morocco. Carroll, *Germany and the Great Powers*, 586-8.

\(^{172}\) Bülow to Tschirschky, 30 November 1908, no. 9292, *GP*, vol. 26, 513-14; Szögyény to Aehrenthal, 30 November 1908, no. 678, *Ö-UA*, vol. 1, 530; Bülow’s marginalia, Pourtalès to the Foreign Office, 11 December 1908, no. 9147, *GP*, vol. 26, 319-20; and Bülow to Tschirschky, 12 December 1908, no. 9295, ibid., 516-18.

\(^{173}\) Bülow to Aehrenthal, 30 October 1908, no. 9079, ibid., 227.
Hungarian government to conduct its policies in a way that corresponds with its interests.\textsuperscript{174}

Despite the attempt to deflect the attention of the public from the domestic crisis, the chancellor and his press expert were completely consumed by the \textit{Daily Telegraph} Affair in early November.

It was only at the end of month that the focus returned to Bosnia-Herzegovina and the annexation crisis. In the interval, the nationalist press had gotten into an uproar over the question of the \textit{carte blanche} Germany was apparently giving her ally in the Balkans. Though it would have been logical for the radical right to support the government’s decision to get behind the Habsburgs fully, in actual fact it seemed to adopt a policy of opposition for its own sake. The leader in the anti-governmental campaign was Bismarck’s former organ, the \textit{Hamburger Nachrichten}, whose polemics the government had been working to restrain since the previous spring.\textsuperscript{175} The paper laid out for the public the logic of the old man’s defensive alliance system as a connection that should tie Austria to German policy—and not vice versa.\textsuperscript{176} The campaign was picked up by the agrarian \textit{Deutsche Tageszeitung}. The paper complained at the end of November, for example, that Germany had been “taken in tow” by Austria, that “the German press swims only in the wake of often tendentious news from Vienna,” and that it was thus no wonder when the peoples of the Near East could not differentiate between German and

\textsuperscript{174} \textit{Köl nische Zeitung}, 17 November 1908.
\textsuperscript{175} Götzen to Bülow, 28 April 1908, Deutschland 126, no. 3, Bd. 9, PA-AA.
\textsuperscript{176} \textit{Hamburger Nachrichten}, 17 October 1908. This campaign was a part of a larger attack on the government that the paper was conducting about the same time about a need for reform in the Foreign Office to prevent a repeat of the \textit{Daily Telegraph} Affair. \textit{See Hamburger Nachrichten}, 12 November 1908, and the reports of the Prussian legation in Hamburg of 14 and 21 November 1908, Deutschland 126, no. 3, Bd. 9, PA-AA.
Austrian influence there.177 Similar sentiments were also expressed in the nationalist Tägliche Rundschau and the Pan-German Alldeutsche Blätter.178 All told, the criticisms of the right alarmed Bülow, who feared that the campaign might offend Aehrenthal and his associates in Vienna and Budapest.

It was no wonder, then, that the chancellor moved to stem the flood of nationalist and oppositional criticism before it got out of hand. Even before the appearance of the Kaiser’s Daily Telegraph interview, Bülow had directed Hammann to stanch the criticisms of the nationalists; otherwise, the result could very possibly be a press war with Austria-Hungary that would alienate Germany’s ally and strengthen the position of their enemies.179 In fulfillment of this directive, Hammann moved to curtail as far as possible any nationalist criticism of Germany’s support for Austria. He met with the Berlin correspondent of the Hamburger Nachrichten to tone down its criticism of Bülow’s policies,180 but his efforts were mostly fruitless.181 In contrast, the efforts of the Press Bureau to moderate the attacks of the Center-party Kölnische Volkszeitung were somewhat more successful. Hans Eisele, the representative of the paper in Berlin, agreed to tone down his criticism of the government and its Austrian policy.182 This achievement gained significance in light of that paper’s longstanding policy of opposition to Bülow’s foreign policy going back to the Boer War. Hammann also worked with his connections in Austria to try to keep news of her domestic troubles from reaching the

177 Deutsche Tageszeitung, 29 November 1908.
178 Carroll, Germany and the Great Powers, 605.
179 Memorandum by Bülow, 28 October 1908, no. 9077, GP, vol. 26, 222-3.
180 Memorandum by Esternaux, 15 November 1910, Deutschland 126, no. 3, Bd. 10, PA-AA.
181 The Hamburger Nachrichten continued its campaign in the years that followed. See, for instance, Hamburger Nachrichten, 6 November 1910, Deutschland 126, no. 3, Bd. 10, PA-AA.
pages of the German press.\textsuperscript{183} In addition, the Foreign Office moved to gain greater control over the reports coming from Constantinople by securing the retention of an able and sympathetic representative of the \textit{Frankfurter Zeitung} there.\textsuperscript{184} Finally, Hammann contacted a representative of the Berlin \textit{Post}, Carl René, who drew up an article specifically to address the criticisms of the \textit{Deutsche Tageszeitung}.\textsuperscript{185}

Meanwhile, the Bosnian Crisis turned on three major questions. First, would Austria agree to Izvolsky’s proposal for a conference to settle her outstanding points of disagreement with Russia? Second, would Aehrenthal agree to any concessions to Serbia to make up for the annexation? Finally, would the Habsburgs compensate Turkey monetarily for the permanent loss of the provinces? While Russia, France, and Britain all desired that Aehrenthal make significant concessions on these issues, the Habsburg foreign minister remained unmoved. What was more, far from restraining his Austrian colleague, Bülow actually pushed him to take an even firmer stance in the face of Russia.

The chancellor told the Austrian ambassador in Berlin—“as a true friend and a loyal ally”—that he thought it was high time to demonstrate that the Habsburg monarchy should be taken seriously on the international scene. On the other hand, a retreat could only have the opposite effect: “A change of direction from the road taken till now would be, in the Prince’s opinion, a momentous blunder that could not be corrected very easily.”\textsuperscript{186} In like manner, the military leadership in Berlin effectively converted the Dual Alliance from a defensive to an offensive agreement. The chief of the German general

\textsuperscript{183} Hammann to Brockdorff-Rantzau, 29 November 1908, Österreich 92, no. 4, Bd. 5, PA-AA.
\textsuperscript{184} Schoen to Marschall, 31 December 1908, and Marschall to Schoen, 2 January 1909, Deutschland 126a, secr., Bd. 2, PA-AA.
\textsuperscript{185} Loebell to Hammann, 28 October 1908, N 2106 / 29, Nl.H., BArchL.
\textsuperscript{186} Szögyény to Aehrenthal, 16 December 1908, no. 752, Ó-UA, vol. 1, 606-11, especially 607.
staff, Helmuth von Moltke, assured his Austrian counterpart, Conrad von Hötzendorf, that if Russia mobilized on account of a war between Serbia and Austria, Germany would do likewise.\textsuperscript{187}

Bülow’s press policy in late 1908 and early 1909 mirrored these diplomatic maneuvers. When a Viennese newspaper questioned Germany’s loyalty to Austria in late 1908, for example, Bülow and Hammann were quick to meet the charge by asserting in the semi-official press that it was for the Habsburgs alone to determine what needed to be done in the Balkans.\textsuperscript{188} It was, in fact, a public statement of the blank check that Bülow had privately given Aehrenthal back in October. Beyond making these public pronouncements of unconditional support for Austria, Bülow also tried to alienate support for Russia in France. The background for this was an apparent improvement in Franco-German relations at the beginning of the year as the two countries signed an agreement on Morocco that seemed to ease the recent tension that had arisen with the Casablanca incident of the previous fall.\textsuperscript{189} The semi-official press was prone on this account to praise the reserved stance of the government and public opinion in France during the Bosnian Crisis.\textsuperscript{190} In order to encourage more of this sort of sentiment in the French press, the chancellor used the usual methods of the Bülow-Hammann system. Here, for example, Bülow worked his connections with the \textit{Temps} to get an article published that argued a great war would not be in the interests of France because she

\textsuperscript{187} Moltke to Conrad, 21 January 1909, in Conrad, vol. 1, 379. Unlike the military officers, however, Bülow did not wish to bring about a war on the issue. Helmuth von Moltke (1848-1916) took over as chief of the general staff for Schlieffen in 1906 and held the position up through the Battle of the Marne in 1914. On Moltke, see Annika Mombauer, \textit{Helmuth von Moltke and the Origins of the First World War} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
\textsuperscript{188} \textit{Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung}, 3 January 1909.
\textsuperscript{189} Taylor, \textit{Mastery}, 454-5.
would have to shoulder a greater financial and military burden than her potential allies would have to.\textsuperscript{191} He went even further, actually giving a sum of nearly 100,000 marks to an agent in Paris to subvent similar articles in the crisis.\textsuperscript{192}

Bülow’s public and private policy of firmness during the crisis eventually resulted in the first unequivocal diplomatic triumph for Germany since the defeat at Algeciras. In January 1909, Aehrenthal made a major concession: he agreed to reimburse Turkey in return for recognition of the annexation.\textsuperscript{193} The Habsburg foreign minister subsequently demanded that Serbia recognize the annexation as well, drop any claims for a similar compensation, and follow a peaceful policy vis-à-vis the Dual Monarchy. He also informed his German ally that if these demands were not met by March, then Austria-Hungary would go to war with Serbia to settle the issue once and for all.\textsuperscript{194} The French were reluctant to fight a war for Serbia’s sake once the Turks had agreed to the annexation. The British also made it clear that they were willing to offer only diplomatic support; they “could not press things to the point of war.”\textsuperscript{195}

Izvolsky put all the cards in Bülow’s hands when he asked for German cooperation to seek a peaceful exit to the crisis. The solution Bülow offered was an unconditional surrender to Austria—a mediation of the dispute by ultimatum. He informed Izvolsky on 21 March 1909 that Austria intended to request that the great powers nullify the article of the Treaty of Berlin signed in 1878 that had provided for Habsburg occupation of the provinces, which would amount to recognition of the

\textsuperscript{191} Bülow, \textit{Denkwürdigkeiten}, vol. 2, 409-10.
\textsuperscript{192} Ibid., vol. 1, 241.
\textsuperscript{193} Pallavicini to Aehrenthal, 9 and 12 January 1909, nos. 865 and 880, and Aehrenthal to Pallavicini, 13 January 1909, no. 885, \textit{Ö-UA}, vol. 1, 721-2, 732-3, and 740.
\textsuperscript{194} Aehrenthal to Bülow, 20 February 1909, no. 9386, \textit{GP}, vol. 26, 610-16.
\textsuperscript{195} Grey to Nicolson, 27 February 1909, no. 621, \textit{BD}, vol. 5, 637.
annexation. Whether Russia would agree to this had to be known unequivocally. Bülow expected, in other words, an unambiguous answer, either “yes or no.” Further, Russia had to give up all support to Serbia and pressure her to accept the annexation without further quibbling. Behind these demands was the veiled threat of war. “[W]e would have to consider an evasive, hedging or vague answer as a rejection,” Bülow warned. “We would then withdraw and allow things to take their course; the responsibility for all subsequent events would ultimately fall to Herr Izvolsky.”

To force the issue, Bülow appeared before the Reichstag on 29 March 1909 to speak on the Bosnian Crisis. Beginning with the question of his loyalty to Austria, Bülow read from various state documents dating to the earliest days of the crisis that established his full support of Austrian policy since the previous October. An opposite line of criticism emanating from the nationalist right—viz., that Bülow had been too supportive of the Habsburg monarchy when Bismarck would not have been—was met at greater length. Bülow first quoted an 1888 speech by the Iron Chancellor in which he had warned that Austria might offer her hand to another power if Germany were unreliable. The radical right was suffering, it seemed, another attack of Hammann’s “misunderstood Bismarck.” It would obviously be foolish to leave an ally in the lurch, in spite of all Germany’s military strength. But suggestions of Bülow’s “vassalage” to his

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196 Bülow to Pourtalès, 21 March 1909, no. 9460, GP, vol. 26, 693-5. This letter is also published in Hammann, Bilder, 155-6.
197 Bülow asserted that he, and not Hammann, had invented the phrase in a Reichstag speech he had given in 1906: “After all, to dogmatize about Prince Bismarck has turned, I might for once say openly, into not only a mania, but also a calamity. We are burdened by the misunderstood Bismarck. [‘Very true!’ in the middle] In this our German inclination to reduce everything to a system appears very clearly. . . . In other words: Prince Bismarck is now put forward as a system, while simultaneously it is forgotten that every age requires different methods.” Speech by Bülow, 14 November 1906, 11th Leg. Per., Session 2, SBVR, vol. 218, 3623-33, especially 3629. Cf. Bülow, Denkwürdigkeiten, vol. 2, 444. Hammann later used the term as the central theme of his book on German foreign relations after Bismarck: Otto Hammann, Der mißverstandene Bismarck. Zwanzig Jahre deutscher Weltpolitik (Berlin: Reimar Hobbing, 1921).
Habsburg ally could not be further from the truth. “There is no conflict here,” Bülow declaimed eloquently, “for precedence between the two queens in the Nibelungenlied; but in our relations with Austria-Hungary we do not intend to rule out the Nibelungen oath [lively applause], which we want to safeguard on both sides [further applause].” In short, a diplomatic defeat for Austria-Hungary would be bad for Germany, especially as it was clear the annexation was no “cynical land-grab,” but the last step in a policy officially sanctioned for thirty years by the concert of the great powers.  

Russia thereupon abandoned the Serbs, forcing them to submit to all of Aehrenthal’s demands. The result of all these maneuvers was a diplomatic triumph that seemed to make up for some of the prestige the Kaiserreich had lost at Algeciras. The Austro-Hungarian press largely attributed the success to German loyalty, even in individual organs that had been heretofore skeptical of the Dual Alliance. While Bülow and Hammann were not able to gain the support of every organ of the nationalist right for backing Austria, the sign of life the chancellor conveyed with his staunch support won him some converts. Nationalist papers like the Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung and the Berliner Neueste Nachrichten, for example, celebrated what seemed for once a diplomatic triumph. The chorus was joined by broad consensus of mainstream support politically. The Center Kölnische Volkszeitung abandoned its policy of opposition to Bülow, proclaiming that the powers once again were ready to listen to

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200 See the sketch of press opinion in the Habsburg Empire at the end of March in Schulthess (1909): 420-1.

201 The Hamburger Nachrichten, for instance, continued to oppose the policy of unreserved support for Austria-Hungary. Hamburger Nachrichten, 30 March 1909.

Germany’s voice in the world. The liberal Vossische Zeitung echoed the chancellor’s talk of the Nibelungen oath when it asserted that only the German proclamation of loyalty had preserved the European peace. Schiemann, writing in the Conservative and semi-official Kreuzzeitung, declared a complete victory for Austro-German policy. In the end, the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung expressed the government’s complete confidence of public support for its policies. Instead crowing about the victory to emphasize the mailed fist behind the capitulation—the foreign press had reported rumors of a German mobilization—the semi-official paper denied Bülow had needed to exert any “pressure” to force Russia to abandon Serbia. All told, it seemed both that the chancellor’s position was solidified with the public and that he had finally begun the process of rebuilding Germany’s lost prestige.

The End of the Bülow-Hammann System

Yet, from the Daily Telegraph Affair until the resolution of the Bosnian Crisis at the end of March 1909—and probably in many ways after that—the chancellor’s relations with William II had been severely strained. From November 1908 until his resignation the following year, Bülow depended on the Bülow Bloc in the Reichstag to remain in office. What made this task especially difficult, however, was the precarious nature of the parliamentary coalition. During the Daily Telegraph Affair, for instance, the right had diverged dramatically from the Left Liberals over the solution to the problem of “personal rule”: was strong leadership needed or a full-dress parliamentary system of

203 Kölnische Volkszeitung, 30 March 1909.
204 Vossische Zeitung, 29 March 1909.
206 Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 1 April 1909.
government? At the close of the domestic crisis, the biggest issue that divided the conservative right from the progressive left in the Bülow Bloc, though, was the finance reform that the chancellor introduced in the Reichstag on 19 November 1908.\textsuperscript{207} The issue was an especially divisive one. The reform called for an inheritance tax on the estates of the landed nobility, which was \textit{sine qua non} for the Left Liberals to support the measure. But the Conservatives—and, in a more qualified sense, the National Liberals—opposed these taxes.\textsuperscript{208} The situation was made even more precarious by the lasting enmity Bülow had incurred from the Center party during the elections of 1907. When the Conservatives remained intransigent in their opposition to the inheritance tax, the Center delegation in the Reichstag realized it could use the issue to sunder the Bülow Bloc. On 24 March 1909, the Conservatives announced that they no longer considered the Reich finance reform to be a question of Bloc politics. The Center soon took the hint, and by the summer of 1909 a majority of votes was patched together against Bülow’s will that pushed the finance reform through the Reichstag without the Left Liberals, effectively shattering the Bloc. Bülow resigned on 14 July 1909.

The collapse of the Bloc—and of Bülow’s chancellorship more generally—coincided with a personal crisis that Hammann faced in the spring of 1909, which hindered his ability to help the chancellor deal with the dissolution of his parliamentary majority in his last months in office. For most of the first half of his career at the Wilhelmstrasse, Hammann had been married to Erna von Bönnighausen. They had

\textsuperscript{207} Speech by Bülow, 19 November 1908, 12\textsuperscript{th} Leg. Per., Session 1, SBVR, vol. 233, 5540-4.
\textsuperscript{208} Witt, 236.
married in 1879, and she had borne him four sons by 1890. Sometime in the middle of the 1890s, however, Hammann became involved with Lucia Genelli, the wife of a friend, prominent German architect Bruno Schmitz. The relationship had originally developed from Hammann’s friendship with Schmitz, who was known throughout official circles for designing the famous Kyffhäuser Monument. The two couples became good friends in the early 1890s, and Frau Schmitz—initially arousing no suspicion on the part of her cuckolded husband—began to socialize extensively with Hammann. The two took walks together in the Tiergarten, for example, and attended concerts as a couple. At about the time that Bülow took over as state secretary, Frau Hammann had collapsed and died during a hiking trip in the Black Forest—reportedly because of the misery she had suffered at seeing her husband with another woman.

Now a widower, Hammann pressured Frau Schmitz to divorce her own husband, apparently going to great lengths to ensure a settlement in her favor. In the summer of 1902 a Berlin regional court decreed a legal separation and an agreement was reached

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209 “Hammann, Otto,” BHdAD, vol. 2, 189. Their correspondence is very thin in the Hammann papers. See Bd. N 2106 /42, NLH., BArchL.
210 For most of what follows on Hammann’s affair with Lucia Genelli, I have followed the account of the official pamphlet submitted to the Reichstag, which presents their relationship in its most lurid details: Werner Steinhoff, Der Fall Hammann (Berlin: Hermann Walther Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1908), 7-13, Bl. 56-9, Bd. N 2106 /45, NLH., BArchL.
211 The Kyffhäuser Monument was built to celebrate the work of Kaiser William I. Schmitz (1858-1916) also designed a monument for Victor Emmanuel in Rome (1887), the Porta Westfalica (1896), and later the Völkerschlachtdenkmal in Leipzig (1897-1913). This latter monument was his most important work next to the Kyffhäuser Monument, which had consumed his energy from 1890 to 1896. Schmitz was one of Germany’s most prolific monument architects before the war. George L. Mosse, The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich (New York: H. Fertig, 1975; reprint, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1975), 40, 64-5, 98, and Plates 9-11 (page citations are to the reprint edition). For more on Schmitz and his works, see “Schmitz, Bruno,” Lexikon der Kunst, vol. 6, R-Stad (Leipzig: E.A. Seemann Verlag, 1994), 502-3.
212 Bülow, Denkwürdigkeiten, vol. 2, 442.
213 Steinhoff reports, by way of example, that Hammann introduced Schmitz—who still suspected nothing was amiss—to a colleague of his in the Foreign Office, Karl Bosch, who weaseled his way into Schmitz’s confidence and supposedly introduced him to other young women. It was on account of Schmitz’s ostensible infidelity that his wife had based her case against him. Steinhoff, 8-9, Bl. 57, Bd. N 2106 /45, NLH., BArchL.
whereby the architect would give monetary support to his wife for their two daughters, Gabriele and Angelika, pending the conclusion of divorce proceedings. This initial agreement stipulated that Frau Schmitz and Hammann should break off all sexual relations until the divorce was finalized and they would be free to marry one another without any further entanglements. But the couple continued their affair in violation of the agreement, renting a small apartment in the center of the city just north of University of Berlin. Schmitz, for his part, was still suspicious that Hammann was carrying on privately with his estranged wife, and so he hired a detective to investigate the matter. When it became clear that the affair was continuing despite the ruling of the court, Schmitz went to great lengths to collect evidence against the two: he rented the apartment directly beneath Hammann’s, drilled a hole in the floor, and invited people to watch the couple having sex so that they could provide evidence for him in a court of law if need be.

In the midst of the divorce proceedings, Hammann had to appear before the court to give testimony about his relationship with Frau Schmitz. On 17 October 1903 he testified that no “cohabitation” had occurred, but for Schmitz the testimony rang hollow as Hammann never explicitly denied his sexual rendezvous with Frau Schmitz.214 Nevertheless, the divorce was eventually decreed and Hammann married Lucia Genelli in April 1904. From this point on, the dispute continued primarily on account of Schmitz’s two daughters and Hammann’s influence on them, the eldest of whom—

Gabriele—Hammann eventually later adopted. The architect finally resorted to press revelations in late 1908 to challenge Hammann’s testimony in the divorce proceedings, laying the affair before the public as another humiliating scandal for the Press Bureau. The ultimate aim was to cause such embarrassment that the government would force the press chief into retirement.

Almost simultaneously with the Daily Telegraph Affair and the troubles associated and the last round of proceedings in the Eulenburg scandals, then, the press began to pick up the story of Hammann’s affair with Schmitz’s ex-wife. It was rumored that Holstein was once again working newspaper critics of the government to bring about the fall of his old enemy, Hammann, as he was widely assumed to have worked with Harden to expose Philipp zu Eulenburg. In official circles, moreover, it was suggested as early as October 1908 that it looked like Hammann was on his way out. By early 1909, State Secretary Schoen addressed the matter officially when he appeared before the Reichstag Budget Commission and refused to sit at the same table

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216 Berliner Tageblatt, 5 December 1908, Bd. N 2106 / 45, Nl. H. BArchL.
217 See, among others, Berliner Börsen-Courier, 17 October 1908; Liberle Korrespondenz quoted at length in Berliner Tageblatt, 5 December 1908; Berliner Zeitung, 8 December 1908; Münchener Neueste Nachrichten, 9 December 1908; and Frankfurter Zeitung, 11 December 1908, Bd. N 2106 / 45, Nl.H., BArchL. The main impetus behind the matter was the publication of the pamphlet by Steinhoff and the intimation that Hammann had arranged for Karl Bosch to receive a promotion in office and an award in the form of reception into an official order. This seemed in some circles further evidence of Bülow’s dependence on Hammann. See Steinhoff, 8, Bl. 57, Bd. N 2106 / 45, and Frankfurter Zeitung, 11 December 1908, Bd. N 2106 / 45, Nl.H., BArchL.
218 Daily Graphic, 7 May 1910, Bd. N 2106 / 44, Nl.H., BArchL. As with the Eulenburg affair, there is not much direct evidence in the Holstein’s published correspondence to support these suspicions. Harden did write on the scandal, however, and the possible connections between the two cases were not missed. Maximilian Harden, “Hammann,” Die Zukunft, 67 (April-June 1909): 459-62; and uncited newspaper clipping, “Eulenburg und Hammann,” 1 July 1909, Bl. 27, Bd. N 2106 / 45a, Nl.H., BArchL.
219 Harden to Holstein, 24 October 1908, no. 1146, PH, vol. 4, 528-9; and Salis to Grey, 27 October 1908, no. 103, BD, vol. 6, 163.
with Hammann out of repugnance for the scandal. Bülow came under great pressure to dismiss Hammann, but felt that the press chief deserved his loyalty, especially considering how firmly he had stood by the chancellor in the troubled weeks after the Algeciras Conference. Nevertheless, Hammann was eventually brought up on trial for perjury in the original 1903 divorce proceedings. Despite that Hammann was urgently needed in the fight to push through the Reich finance reform, Bülow had to place him on leave in April 1909 pending completion of the trial. During the proceedings, the public prosecutor, who had only allowed the case to go to court reluctantly—he felt the evidence against Hammann was not strong enough—ultimately recommended to the jury a verdict of not guilty. Thus, Hammann was acquitted of the perjury charges against him on 6 July 1909, leaving Schmitz to assume the expenses of the proceedings. Despite the ruling and Bülow’s continued good favor, Hammann’s star slowly waned after his return to the Foreign Office.  

Taken together, Bülow’s fall from power and Hammann’s personal troubles rapidly caused an unraveling of the public-relations system the two men had built between 1897 and 1909. The first major factor in this shift was the personality and governing style of the new chancellor, Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg. Compared to Bülow, Bethmann was much more introspective and philosophical, much less concerned about how the public viewed his policies. Bethmann recognized, of course, that in the

\[\text{\footnotesize \textsuperscript{220}} \text{ Uncited newspaper clipping, 21 January 1909, Bl. 67, Bd. N 2106 / 45a, Nl.H., BArchL; and Bülow, Denkwürdigkeiten, vol. 2, 443.} \\
\text{\footnotesize \textsuperscript{221}} \text{ Bülow to Hammann, 4 March 1909, Bd. N 2106 / 14, Nl.H, BArchL. The official announcement was made at the end of April. Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 30 April 1909.} \\
\text{\footnotesize \textsuperscript{222}} \text{ “Prozess Hammann. Der Staatsanwalt beantragt die Schuldfrage zu verneinen,” uncited newspaper clipping, 6 July [1909], Bl. 7, Bd. N 2106 / 45a, Nl.H, BArchL.} \\
\text{\footnotesize \textsuperscript{223}} \text{ Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten, 7 July 1909, Bd. N 2106 / 45a Nl.H., BArchL; and Schulthess (1909): 254.} \\
\text{\footnotesize \textsuperscript{224}} \text{ Bülow to Hammann, 6 July 1909, Bd. N 2106 / 14 Nl.H., BArchL.} \]
last resort public and parliamentary support would be necessary if Germany ever became embroiled in a continental war. But, in practice, the years after 1909 were characterized by an attempt to retreat as much as possible to the cabinet diplomacy of Bismarck’s times. Rational “interest,” Bethmann asserted, should be the defining principle of Germany’s diplomacy rather than the emotional concern with prestige-policy that had predominated during Bülow’s chancellorship. Though Bethmann was—a neophyte in the realm of foreign policy, he felt that the cold, calculated dictates of power politics demanded a more restrained world policy: Germany should moderate her imperialism by less emphasis on brute force and the expansion of the navy, and more stress on the development of German economic power and, most importantly, a possible conciliation with Britain. This latter goal Bethmann considered his “chief task in foreign politics,” as Hammann noted after the war.225

The ramifications of this shift for Hammann’s power within the Foreign Office became increasingly apparent over the course of Bethmann’s chancellorship. With regard to the Reichstag, Bethmann desired to reduce the influence and power of the diet as much as possible. His goal was, as he told a subordinate in 1911, to restore “the independence and freedom of the government, which was absolutely necessary after the dangerous drift into parliamentary government that had developed [during the Bülow years].”226 Bethmann was never really able to win complete independence from the Reichstag, though, and the general trend of the years immediately preceding World War I was in the direction of more and more attempts by the delegates of the parties to

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demand a say in the conduct of foreign policy. Dramatic Social Democratic victories in
the Reichstag election of 1912 made it clear that parliamentary support for the
government was going to be harder and harder to come by. In these conditions,
Hammann and his subordinates continued to help draft speeches in Bethmann’s years as
chancellor, though it is apparent that the Press Bureau did not play the same central role
in this arena as it did under Bülow. Bethmann preferred to eschew the Reichstag in the
conduct of diplomacy, holding Hammann and the Press Bureau in reserve in case of
extreme emergency. Likewise, Bethmann’s withdrawn temperament dictated a
similar development in Foreign-Office press policy. The daily instructions and
interviews with the chancellor that had predominated in Bülow’s years came to an
end. Hammann was no longer brought in to help make major policy decisions. His
right to peruse incoming correspondence and telegrams was revoked as well in 1910.
What publicity work he still performed for the chancellor was mainly restricted to
domestic politics and the affairs of the Reich Chancellery more generally.

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227 The role of the Reichstag in the conduct of German foreign policy is still a subject that has as yet to be
systematically studied, as far as I know. A somewhat dated portrayal of the increasingly pressing demands
to grant the Reichstag a larger voice in the conduct of foreign policy after 1890 can be found in an older
study of German foreign-policy white books in the imperial period. See Johann Sass, *Die deutschen
Weißbücher zur auswärtigen Politik 1870-1914. Geschichte und Bibliographie* (Berlin and Leipzig: Walter
de Gruyter & Co., 1928). A more recent treatment along these lines is Manfred Rauh, *Die
228 The most important speech that is held in the Hammann papers is for the one defending Bethmann’s
policy during the July Crisis before the Reichstag in August of 1914. Draft of speech by Bethmann Hollweg,
August 1914, Bl. 52-9, Bd. N 2106 / 4, NL.H, BArchL. Naturally the timing was of such importance that
Bethmann would have consulted with the press chief about what was the best way to win support for the war
in the Reichstag.
229 Hammann’s personal correspondence with Bethmann is restricted to Reichstag speech drafts, some
newspaper clippings, a memorandum on relations with Russia in 1910, and a report by Hammann about his
efforts to create a new German newspaper service abroad in 1916. With the exception of the 1910
memorandum and the speech draft of August 1914, the folder mainly dates to the war years. See Bd. N 2106
/ 4, NL.H, BArchL.
Bethmann’s tenure also witnessed a return of the bureaucratic rivalries that had come into existence in the Caprivi years. At the time of Bethmann’s appointment, Hammann’s position within the Foreign Office was already damaged by the scandal surrounding his perjury trial. As mentioned above, the leading figure in the conduct of German foreign policy immediately after Bülow’s departure, State Secretary Schoen, looked upon Hammann’s sex scandal with great disgust and scorn. It was also felt at this time that a dramatic restructuring of the Press Bureau was necessary because of the mismanagement suggested by the Daily Telegraph Affair. According to press reports, Schoen drew up a plan to reform the Foreign Office and strengthen the Press Bureau by enlarging its annual secret fund by some 300,000 marks. Eschewing the subtle methods of the Bülow-Hammann system, the new subsidy would be available for use with little parliamentary oversight and was earmarked for the subvention of foreign newspapers. Although the plan had the support of the Conservatives in the Reichstag, it ultimately foundered because of the opposition of the Left Liberals and especially the Center party. Matthias Erzberger, who sat in the Budget Committee of the Reichstag, came out against the reorganization and the increase in the Foreign-Office secret fund. He was not opposed to the change in principle, but he worried that the new funds might be used domestically for future anti-Center Reichstag campaigns in the manner of the 1907 elections. When Erzberger asked the government to provide an accounting for the use of the funds, Hammann declared that parliamentary oversight was unacceptable.

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232 Schlesische Volkszeitung, 18 December 1910, Deutschland 126a, secr., Bd. 3, PA-AA.
233 Memorandum by Mumm, 25 September 1910, Deutschland 126a, secr., Bd. 3, PA-AA.
Because Schoen was willing to make the necessary concessions to Erzberger, he wanted to appoint new leadership in the Press Bureau to placate the criticism of the Center.²³⁴ In the feud that developed with Schoen, Hammann retained the support of his subordinates and the chancellor, but the remaining personnel of the Foreign Office supported the state secretary.²³⁵ Bethmann ultimately blocked the reform scheme because he was unwilling to fire or transfer Hammann. In these circumstances, Schoen obtained a transfer to the embassy at Paris in the summer of 1910. It was later rumored that he saw the relocation as a way of escaping his conflict with the press chief.

Nevertheless, Hammann’s position became even more precarious with the subsequent appointment of Alfred von Kiderlen-Wächter as state secretary of the Foreign Office in the summer of 1910. Kiderlen had a reputation as a kind of latter-day Holstein both in the policies he desired to follow and in his temperament.²³⁶ Until Hammann’s appointment in 1894, Kiderlen had looked after press affairs in the Caprivi chancellorship. Nevertheless, his attitude toward public opinion was radically different from Hammann’s: as a practitioner of the Old Diplomacy, Kiderlen asserted that he did not worry about the press.²³⁷ When he assumed office, in any event, Kiderlen had ample reason to come into conflict with Hammann. Though the press chief was objective after

²³⁵ Heilbron, 103.
²³⁶ This reputation related to his role in the New Course. See G. P. Gooch, “Kiderlen-Wächter, the Man of Agadir,” in Studies in Diplomacy and Statecraft (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1942), 130-1. Holstein wrote Bülow in the middle of the Daily Telegraph Affair suggesting that he could use the domestic crisis as a lever to force Kiderlen on the Kaiser as the next state secretary. Postscript, Holstein to Bülow, 6 November 1908, in Rogge, Holstein und Harden, 377. A. J. P. Taylor wrote that “Holstein was, in fact, still Bülow’s advisor and, on his death-bed, nominated Kiderlen as his successor.” Taylor, Mastery, 453.
the war in pointing out Kiderlen’s skills as a diplomat and a prose stylist, he generally doubted his abilities to deal with economic issues.

What was more, Kiderlen had been suspicious of Hammann for some time when he finally attained his post in Berlin. As a devotee of Holstein, he had been in direct contact with the retired privy councilor during Bülow’s last troubled year as chancellor. Holstein pointed out to Kiderlen all the troubles with Hammann’s press policy, which he traced back to the original conflict with the press chief during the first Morocco Crisis. He wrote in a personal memorandum of March 1909, for example, that Hammann had allowed the *Kölnische Zeitung* to publish an article that was not fully supportive of Austria against Serbia during the Bosnian Crisis—a supposed divergence from the policy of staunch support advocated by Bülow. Kiderlen, who was serving as acting state secretary from November 1908 to April 1909, putatively reined in Hammann, forcing him to adopt the line of official policy. “It is very good fortune,” Holstein noted with self-satisfaction, “that Kiderlen, at my urgent request, decided to reaffirm our loyalty to the alliance explicitly once more—and, even better, in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*.” Kiderlen’s experiences in the brief interval in Berlin allowed him to diagnose what he believed was the main failing of the Foreign Office by the end of the Bosnian Crisis. The Wilhelmstrasse was stuck in an “incomprehensible routine,” he had complained; “the personnel are efficient and reliable, but they are intimidated because

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238 Hammann, *Kurs*, 57; and idem, *Um den Kaiser*, 37.
240 There is a lengthy treatment of Kiderlen’s struggle with Hammann in Jilg, 189-99, but it is unfortunately based almost entirely on Kiderlen’s published letters.
241 From November 1908 to April 1909, State Secretary Schoen had been on leave because of a physical collapse he had during the Daily Telegraph Affair. Kiderlen came to Berlin from Constantinople in these months to direct the Foreign Office on a temporary basis.
242 Memorandum by Holstein, 8 March 1909, no. 1184, *PH*, vol. 4, 555-6.
they are trained always to ask what the press and the Reichstag will say.”

A full-scale reorganization along the lines advocated by Schoen was called for to revamp the Foreign Office. In this restructuring, it quickly became apparent that Kiderlen would no longer tolerate any independence on Hammann’s part.

Immediately after his appointment in June 1910, Kiderlen made moves to dramatically limit the privileges Hammann had enjoyed in the Foreign Office since 1901. On 29 June 1910 he met with Bethmann privately in his garden to discuss Hammann and the Press Bureau. He informed the chancellor of his intention to decree that no more telegrams be referred to the press chief and to create a new bureau for the Foreign Office alone, which would be responsible to the state secretary and led by a non-diplomat. Hammann, for his part, would have to take up either a foreign post or a seat on the Egyptian Debt Commission. Although his plans to remove Hammann foundered, he was successful in curbing Hammann’s right to see telegrams that came into the Foreign Office from the embassies abroad. Kiderlen persisted in the following months to get Bethmann to approve of a full-scale reform of Foreign-Office press policy. The alternative plan he developed over the next two years called for a transfer of Hammann and his assistants in the Press Bureau to the Reich Chancellery, where they could focus entirely on the handling the public-relations policy for domestic politics—something that had been a favorite plan of Holstein’s. This move would allow Bethmann

244 Memorandum by Kiderlen, 12 February 1909, Deutschland 122, no. 2, secr., Bd. 1, PA-AA.
to continue to have Hammann at his disposal, as he seemed to want, while simultaneously giving Kiderlen the direct control over the press policy of the Foreign Office that he desired. At various times over the course of 1911, Kiderlen's reform schemes were even brought before the public, as the state secretary tried his hardest to marginalize Hammann's influence in the Wilhelmstrasse and rumors floated that he was on his way out. Yet once again the Press Bureau fought off reform. A separation of the press policy of the government into domestic and foreign press matters, as Hammann's assistant Riezler noted at about this time, was not viable. “Since the position of the press in foreign questions is dependent on the problems of domestic politics,” he explained, “the Press Bureau will have to keep domestic politics in mind as it has up to the present.” In the end, Kiderlen was unable to get Bethmann to abandon Hammann completely, and the press expert was able to remain in the Foreign Office after the state secretary gave up the planned restructuring in 1912.

Nevertheless Kiderlen was successful in limiting the influence of the press bureau after 1910 by largely keeping the press chief in the dark about policy-making. A good example of this can be seen briefly in the denouement of the second Morocco Crisis of 1911. The Algeciras settlement discussed above had essentially confirmed French domination in Morocco, quietly recognizing Bülow’s desire for the open door. Subsequent events had reinforced this settlement. In a bilateral agreement signed on 9 February 1909, for instance, Germany reaffirmed the “special political interests of


248 Memorandum by Riezler, undated [1909/1910], Bd. N 2106 / 60, NL.H, BArchL.
France” in Morocco, while France, in turn, agreed to “safeguard economic equality” in Morocco.249 The agreement was unpopular with public opinion back home, becoming even more so as France tried to assert her rights in the region. The situation thus became acute when the French finally initiated the military occupation of Morocco in April 1911. Officially, they claimed that the murder of a French officer and the subsequent outbreak of indigenous revolts against the sultan had forced their hand. The other powers of Europe recognized the pretext, but had resigned themselves to French domination.

The Germans, for their part, recognized the writing on the wall and made it clear that they wanted compensation for the French move. When no offer was forthcoming, State Secretary Kiderlen pushed for the dispatch of a gunboat, the Panther, to the port of Agadir, nominally to protect German economic interests in the region. The real intention behind what became known as the “Panther’s leap,” however, was to force the French to offer compensation. Ultimately Kiderlen demanded the entire French Congo.250 Here again, Germany seemed to be resorting to the same roughneck methods of the first Morocco Crisis. Predictably, the British—fearing the establishment of a German naval base near Gibraltar—reaffirmed their support for the French. Even David Lloyd George, the most radical member of the cabinet, warned the Germans in no uncertain terms:

if a situation were to be forced upon us in which peace could only be preserved by the surrender of the great and beneficent position Britain has won by the centuries of heroism and achievement, by allowing Britain to be treated where her interests were vitally affected as if she were no account in the Cabinet of Nations, then I say emphatically that peace at that price would be a humiliation

250 Memorandum by Kiderlen-Wächter, 9 July 1911, no. 10598, GP, vol. 29, 173-6, especially 175.
intolerable for a great country like ours to endure. National honor is no party question.251

Dragging out the question over the coming months did nothing to change the facts of the situation. Mimicking the first Morocco Crisis, the Germans capitulated quietly in September, allowing the French to establish their protectorate in Morocco and receiving two small strips territory neighboring the German Cameroons as compensation.

Yet, if the diplomatic development of the crisis seemed in many ways a replay of 1905/6, press policy in the episode could not have diverged more. Kiderlen set the tone early on with instructions sent to Ambassador Schoen in Paris, who was informed that German interests demanded the “greatest reserve possible” in his relations with the French press.252 A similar policy was utilized at home as well, where the semi-official organs largely repeated the official explanations given by the Foreign Office in its 1 July message to the other powers notifying them of the arrival of the Panther at Agadir.253 This policy of reticence allowed the organs of the radical right to beat the drum for annexations in Morocco, completely ignorant of the fact that Kiderlen and the Foreign Office were looking for compensation elsewhere. Kiderlen’s official press policy was botched even further with the entry of Britain into the fray and Lloyd George’s famous Mansion House speech quoted at length above. Though Kiderlen responded eloquently and forcibly to the speech in his official position—even Hammann later acknowledged

251 Speech by Lloyd George, 21 July 1911, quoted in its entirety in The Times, 22 July 1911.
252 Zimmermann to Schoen, 9 May 1911, no. 10556, GP, vol. 29, 116-17. There can be no doubt that Kiderlen was the author of this command, for the directive follows his marginalia of three days earlier almost to the word. See Kiderlen’s marginalia, Schoen to Bethmann Hollweg, 4 May 1911, no. 10551, ibid., 111.
253 See Kiderlen to Schoen, 30 June 1911, no. 10578, and Kiderlen to Metternich, 30 June 1911, no. 10579, ibid., 153-6. The official justification given to the other powers was that turmoil in Agadir had threatened “German lives and property,” necessitating the deployment of the Panther. This theme was echoed in the explanation made by the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung on the very same day. Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 1 July 1911. The semi-official organs elaborated on these ideas in the following days. See Hale, Publicity, 363.
Kiderlen’s adept rejoinder to the British—he nevertheless made no move to inform the public of this fact.\textsuperscript{254} Instead, he pushed forward with his official policy of silence, which caused the nationalist right to think that Germany had been slighted once again by a foreign power without even a weak response.\textsuperscript{255} It was only after the final signature of the September agreement ceding control of Morocco to France, that news of Kiderlen’s reply to Grey was publicly announced in detailed statement to a meeting of the Reichstag Budget Commission on 17 November 1911.\textsuperscript{256} As a consequence, the Reichstag proceeded amid much tumult to debate the agreement. Because his access to the inner workings of the Foreign Office had been greatly restricted after Bülow’s retirement, Hammann himself was completely unprepared to deal with ramifications of Kiderlen’s bombshell announcement.\textsuperscript{257} It was a pitiful indication of the decline of the press chief’s power in the Foreign Office.

Although Kiderlen had not been able to purge Hammann completely from the Foreign Office, the feud alienated the press chief from his colleagues and his superiors. He remained in office only because of the continued support of Bethmann. In practice, this meant that his part in policy-making was highly restricted after 1910. Hammann


\textsuperscript{255} For more detailed examinations of German press utterances following the Mansion House Speech, see Paul Gruschinske, \textit{Kiderlen-Wächter und die deutschen Zeitungen in der Marokkokrise des Jahres 1911} (Emsdetten: H. & J. Lechte, 1931); and Wernecke, 59-87.

\textsuperscript{256} Statement by Kiderlen before the Reichstag Budget Commission, 17 November 1911, folder 177, Kiderlen-Wächter Papers, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library. Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau released the statement to German papers in an abbreviated form the following day. The British thought it a particularly bald violation of the protocols of the Old Diplomacy with the release of records not intended for publication. See Crowe’s minutes on Goschen to Grey, 19 November 1911, no. 697, and Grey to Goschen, 23 November 1911, no. 709, \textit{BD}, vol. 7, 699 and 715. Kiderlen’s statement was also published in \textit{The Times}, 22 November 1911.

and his assistants focused most of their attention in these years not on cultivating public support for the government, but rather in trying to discover where the Bülow-Hammann system had gone awry. Here Hammann determined that a major problem was the inadequacy of Germany’s supply of news in comparison with the news services of her enemies.

The original impulse for the examination of this problem had come in the middle of the first Morocco Crisis. In the fall of 1905, the Temps had carried a series of very positive reports on the visit of Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria to Paris from 16 to 18 October.²⁵⁸ Ambassador Radolin wrote at the close of the visit that Prince Ferdinand reputedly had bribed the Temps in the range of 80,000 francs annually—an amount that seemed miniscule compared to the 100,000 francs Russia reportedly gave to French newspapers for good press on a monthly basis.²⁵⁹ In his marginalia on the report, William II asked the Foreign Office for a full accounting of the money spent by other countries to bribe foreign newspapers. The Press Bureau looked into the matter for nearly an entire month. The end result was a memorandum presenting a detailed blueprint for the comprehensive restructuring of foreign press policy along lines compatible with the Bülow-Hammann system of public relations at home.²⁶⁰

In the memorandum, Bülow gave the Kaiser a full accounting of the methods used by foreign countries to cultivate a positive portrayal in foreign states.²⁶¹ Russia, for

²⁵⁸ Le Temps, 17 and 18 October 1905, Deutschland 126a, secr., Bd. 1, PA-AA.
²⁵⁹ Radolin to Bülow, 18 October 1905, Deutschland 126a, secr., Bd. 1, PA-AA.
²⁶⁰ Many of the ideas for this plan seem to have been first developed by Dr. Heinrich Mantler, Hammann’s confidant and the director of Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau. See memorandum by Mantler, 28 October 1905, Deutschland 126, no. 2, Bd. 11, PA-AA.
²⁶¹ William II was later able to corroborate independently many of the facts presented in Bülow’s 15 November memorandum: namely that British capital supposedly had financed the Paris press to the tune of 300,000 francs a year for anti-German articles, while the Russians spent 360,000 francs monthly for the
instance, allegedly spent large sums to bribe foreign—especially French—papers, though a full reckoning of the amount spent could not be given because in Russia “parliamentary control of state expenditure did not exist.” In France, by contrast, the various branches of the government maintained a budget of over 5.5 million francs that could be spent on newspapers. Apparently this had been utilized to get Italy to betray her alliance obligations to Germany and Austria. Britain, finally, maintained a secret fund of 65,000 pounds that could be used for the same purposes.

Just as important, however, were the various other methods employed in these states to influence foreign papers. As an autocracy, Russia sometimes won over journalists by granting them titles and orders.262 Britain—still the center of world finance—sometimes influenced the foreign press indirectly through the efforts of its businessmen, some of whom supposedly paid French papers during the Boer War to portray British policy in a better light. Lastly, between France and Britain there were strong unofficial connections that determined how stories were reported. French papers like the Matin, the Figaro, and the Echo de Paris—the selfsame papers that had reported the rumor of British military support offered to Delcassé in the initial phase of the first

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262 In 1903, for example, Hammann discovered that Sergey Witte had conferred the Order of St. Anne on Victor Halin, the editor of the National-Zeitung, apparently for reportage that was favorable to Russia. Hammann to Bülow, 26 September 1903, Deutschland 126, no. 2, secr., Bd.1, PA-AA.
Morocco crisis\textsuperscript{263}—often exchanged news reports with their anti-German counterparts in London like \textit{The Times}, the \textit{Daily Mail}, and the \textit{Daily Telegraph}.

The situation seemed to call for a militarization of press policy to go alongside the hard-line policy being followed over Morocco:

\begin{quote}
With the influence that the public opinion exerts in different lands on international politics, one can consider resistance to anti-German newspaper intrigues as a matter of national defense. [William II: “always true”] On my command, the press leadership of the Foreign Office is therefore busy with the strengthening of the weapons at our disposal.
\end{quote}

Hammann and Bülow proposed a threefold plan to fortify foreign press policy. First was the creation of a news review that would report what was said in the German press accurately; this would give a full picture of “public opinion” in contrast to the “tendentiously selected or colored extracts” that had appeared abroad until now—especially in \textit{The Times} where the ranting of the radical right had often been portrayed as a true mirror of popular sentiments. Second was the formation of an international press bureau. It would supply special reports to foreign papers through trusted correspondents in Germany. It would send out correspondents to report on events in foreign countries from a German perspective. And its main customer would be Russia, which, with her newly developing public sphere, would doubtless turn to France for news if Germany could not satisfy that need first. Last was the establishment of an international telegraphic service that “should be called ‘Potentia’ and should sail under the flag of truth and peace among nations.” It would build on Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau and perhaps collaborate with the Associated Press of New York to compete with Reuter’s in providing news from the most remote corners of the world. All told, the endeavor was

\textsuperscript{263} See above, pp. 247-9.
an attempt to export the Bülow-Hammann system abroad, eschewing the corrupt methods of other states in a more sophisticated cultivation of foreign opinion.\textsuperscript{264}

Hammann never saw these schemes through to fruition, though they remained a central focus of his professional life from 1905 until his retirement at the end of 1916. The main problem was really the current situation where Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau was almost totally dependent on Reuter’s Agency in Britain and Agence Havas in France for its reports from abroad, especially from the Far East, Latin America, and British colonies generally. The main reason for this dependency was that Germany lacked the extensive press corps that Britain and France maintained. In order to remedy the problem, the Press Bureau began to collect information from the end of 1905 up through the middle of World War I on what other states were doing to influence the press and how Germany might better compete. Furthermore, a regular campaign was kept up in the German press and in pamphlets after Algeciras that railed against the current system of news collection. From this point of view, Wolff’s Telegraph Bureau—and the German press generally—was fed a steady stream of tendentious reports from foreign sources. In order to remedy the situation, Germany would have to develop a truly independent news-gathering service across the world both to keep the nation at home supplied with

\textsuperscript{264} Memorandum by Bülow, 15 November 1905, Deutschland 126a, \textit{secr.}, Bd. 1, PA-AA. Cf. memorandum by Stein, [1905], Bl. 1-7, Bd. N 2106 /62, N.I.H, BArchL. Shortly after the communication of the 15 November memo to the Kaiser, a report of the publicity conspiracy against German policy was already being reported in the press. \textit{Berliner Tageblatt}, 20 November 1905, and \textit{Deutsche Zeitung}, 3 December 1905, Deutschland 126a, \textit{secr.}, Bd. 1, PA-AA. By 1906, a detailed pamphlet analysis of these issues appeared to give further grist to the mill discussing the foreign press conspiracy to isolate Germany. See Ausland-Deutschen [F. Walz], \textit{Die Presse und die deutsche Weltpolitik} (Zurich: Zürcher und Furrer, 1906), 40-88.
impartial reports, and to distribute news to the lesser powers of the world that would help them see international politics from a German viewpoint.\footnote{The best portrayal both of the clamor and the arguments for greater independence in this realm is Rudolf Rotheit, \textit{Die Friedensbedingungen der deutschen Presse. Los von Reuter und Havas!} (Berlin: Puttkammer & Mühlbrecht, 1915). Rudolf Rotheit was the foreign editor of the \textit{Vossische Zeitung}.}

In the winter of 1913, under Hammann’s leadership, a group of sixteen industrialists finally formed the \textit{Syndikat Deutscher Überseedienst}, a prototype of this truly independent news service for Germany in the wider world. The funding for the news service would come from a combination of private subscriptions, which would amount to approximately two-fifths of the annual revenue, contributions from the industrialists, which would equate to about another two-fifths, and an annual government subvention to cover the final one-fifth (eating up the entire annual secret fund allotted to the Foreign Office in the process).\footnote{Enclosure, Goschen to Grey, 27 February 1914, no.1, in \textit{Despatches from His Majesty’s Ambassador at Berlin Respecting an Official German Organization for Influencing the Press of Other Countries} (London: H.M.S.O., 1914), 3-4.} Moreover, the new organization was expected to negotiate new arrangements with both Havas and Reuter’s for the new company to provide all their news reports on Germany. If Reuter’s did not agree, the new company would then go into direct competition with the British news service in certain countries in the world, such as Mexico. In the end, the project foundered because the war broke out in the middle of its developmental stage.

Despite Hammann’s seemingly successful work to strengthen Germany’s international news service, his position in the Foreign Office continued to decline after Kiderlen passed away in December 1912. Kiderlen’s successor as state secretary, Gottlieb von Jagow, continued the process of marginalization that had begun under
Schoen. He apparently had no personal relationship to the press chief and felt that the press-monitoring apparatus of the government suffered from its double duty of representing both the Foreign Office and the Reich Chancellery. Jagow undermined Hammann by setting up a rival organization for press relations within the government with a new privy councilor who would work side by side with the state secretary. This new official would be kept apprised of policy by the state secretary and would represent his policies to the foreign press corps in Berlin. In the spring of 1914, Jagow asked Hammann’s opinion about the planned reorganization.

All the deficiencies of the prevailing situation were laid out dramatically by Hammann in a March 1914 memorandum. In the document, he complained at length about the diseases of decentralization, bureaucratic anarchy, and general irresponsibility that had afflicted the government since Bülow’s departure. For starters, Hammann asserted, he could agree with Jagow’s larger observation—namely that the Foreign Office did indeed have a great need for an improvement in official publicity, especially considering the atrophy that had set in with the public-relations policy of the government since 1909. He could not agree, however, with Jagow’s prognosis of the problem:

The fundamental problem seems to me to be caused not by the various tasks of domestic politics that the Reich chancellor demands from the personnel of the Press Bureau (which is so small in number compared to other countries), and also not by the deficiencies of my assistants, but above all by the exaggerated discretion shown to the Press Bureau in reference to diplomatic processes.

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267 Jagow (1863-1935) had served in a number of secondary posts in Europe from 1896 until his appointment as ambassador to Italy in 1909. He took over as state secretary in January 1913 and held the post until 1916. On Jagow’s career, see “Jagow, Gottlieb von,” in BhdAD, vol. 2, 415-16.

268 Heilbron, 104.
If it were conceded that the government had become increasingly dependent on the views of the people and the Reichstag since 1890, it also could be seen that there was a need for a highly centralized apparatus that could cultivate a consensus behind its policies.

The problem came, Hammann explained, when the Press Bureau had to learn about diplomatic events first in the newspapers it was clipping rather than from the statesmen it was supposed to be collaborating with. This made it hard to distinguish what was important and what was not. Under Bülow, Hammann had gained the right to examine incoming telegrams and outgoing directives to help him better lead the press section and its activities. It thus arose “that the members of the Press Bureau could, in circumstances of confidential trust where it was proper, fine-tune their language, prepare for the future, and counteract a damaging view from its very conception.” But things went into a state of decay under Kiderlen, Hammann lamented. In the second Morocco Crisis of 1911, as detailed above, the Press Bureau had to learn about the policy of the Foreign Office from public utterances, rather than from the state secretary directly. It was indicative of a larger situation in which Hammann and his assistants were kept in the dark by their superiors under Bethmann.

The creation of a new department would only perpetuate the confusion that had developed since Bülow’s retirement. It would encourage a return to the bureaucratic rivalries that had characterized the years of the New Course, Hammann noted, for the officials who had received “information better and faster” would naturally have “greater influence.” Journalists, moreover, would be classed not according to their trustworthiness, but rather because their information came from one source instead of
another. This kind of disunity had existed in Caprivi’s earliest years in office. At that
time different privy councilors interacted with journalists, but did not collaborate in a
more coordinated policy, so that “occasionally the right hand did not know what the left
was doing.” After two decades in office, Hammann concluded, the proposed reform
would leave him right back where he had started with his appointment in 1894. 269

Yet Hammann’s desire for greater collaboration with his superiors was not
fulfilled. Jagow ignored all the arguments that the press chief and his assistants had
developed in the memorandum for a resurrection of the Bülow-Hammann system.
Instead, the state secretary appointed Wilhelm von Radowitz as a new press expert in the
Foreign Office. Although Jagow was careful not to challenge Hammann’s position
directly in the months just before the outbreak of the First World War—out of a fear that
the chancellor might intervene again to save Hammann—he probably planned a gradual
erosion of his power. Radowitz, in short, was to be groomed as a suitable replacement
for the aging press chief. Kurt Riezler, Hammann’s assistant and Bethmann’s confidant,
described the situation aptly in the middle of the July Crisis in 1914:

The Foreign Office undermines Hammann. The chancellor grumbles about the
diplomats. The profession spoils people; he trusts none of them, whether at
home or abroad. If he asks for information from one of them about another,
there isn’t one good hair on his head, even when it is a best friend. Hammann,
while stubborn as a goat, headstrong, [and] disagreeable, cannot be sacrificed to
the diplomats. He has great power, can go beyond the newspapers in
understanding the real sentiment of the people, and is completely indispensable
for calling on the people in case there is a war. 270

In the end, the only thing that put a temporary halt to the total banishment of
Hammann from his official position in the Foreign Office was the outbreak of World War

Hammann, 23 March 1914, Deutschland 122, no. 2, secr., Bd. 1, PA-AA.
270 Diary entry by Riezler, 11 July 1914, in Riezler, Tagebücher, 185.
I. It represented precisely the emergency for which Bethmann had held on to Hammann since 1909. The requirements of the war led to the separation of the Press Bureau from the Political Division of the Foreign Office in May 1915. It forced the creation of a completely new sub-department (Abteilung IV) with Hammann as its director, independent of the state secretary and responsible directly to the chancellor. In the end, Hammann held on to this position until October 1916, when an official from Army Press Office, Major Erhard Deutelmoser, stepped in to take over.\(^{271}\) The move signified the waxing power of the military leadership in the war, as the army essentially took control of propaganda and press relations away from the Foreign Office. The aging Hammann—he turned sixty-five in January 1917—received a commendation from Bethmann,\(^{272}\) obtained a pension from the state, and began a second career as the founder of a new overseas information service, the *Transocean GmbH*, and a commentator on the international politics of the prewar years.

By the outbreak of the First World War, then, the public-relations policy of the Foreign Office seemed to have come full circle back to where it had started with the retirement of Prince Bismarck. In the years following the conclusion of the first Morocco Crisis, Bülow and Hammann collaborated to garner public support for German foreign

\(^{271}\) Erich Ludendorff later claimed that the appointment of Deutelmoser came at his urging of the General Staff to coordinate the public-relations policy of the Foreign Office and make it more efficient than it had been during the first half of the war. Erich Ludendorff, *Meine Kriegserinnerungen 1914-1918* (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 1919), 295. Cf. Ludendorff to Bethmann, 16 December 1916, in idem, *Urkunden der Obersten Heeresleitung über ihre Tätigkeit 1916/18* (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 1920), 280-1; and Kurt Koszyk, *Deutsche Pressepolitik im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1968), 26. More recent treatments have viewed the shift in leadership as an attempt by the General Staff to rid itself of Deutelmoser, who was viewed by the General Staff as too sympathetic to Bethmann and his views. See David Welch, *Germany, Propaganda and Total War, 1914-1918: The Sins of Omission* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 40.

policy and for the person of the chancellor. In the years from 1906 to 1909, this task became much more difficult considering all the challenges the government faced internationally and domestically. In Germany a succession of domestic crises had tended to diminish the chancellor’s influence and power. The Eulenburg sex scandals, the complaints over colonial mismanagement in Africa, the *Daily Telegraph* Affair, and even Hammann’s perjury trial all contributed to the decline. Abroad, too, the circle of German isolation was closed, and Bülow increasingly felt he needed a clear-cut diplomatic victory to shore up his political position. The staunch support he offered Austria in the Bosnian Crisis helped to bolster Bülow’s standing with the public, especially on the right. But the situation remained precarious. When the Bülow Bloc crumbled in the summer of 1909, the chancellor had no choice but to resign.

The years following Bülow’s departure from office showed how much Hammann’s own position depended on good relations with his superiors. After 1909, the press chief’s authority in the Foreign Office steadily weakened as the state secretaries of these years worked to check his influence. The cause of this development related initially to the clash of personalities between Schoen and the press expert because of Hammann’s perjury trial and the state secretary’s scorn for the negative publicity it brought to the Foreign Office. Furthermore, Schoen blamed all of the failures of the years from 1906 to 1909 on Hammann excessive influence under Bülow and unsuccessfully attempted to remove him from office and refashion the Press Bureau. Kiderlen agreed with Schoen’s analysis and pursued a similar goal of limiting Hammann’s power from 1910 to 1912. Where Schoen failed, Kiderlen succeeded, and his
successor Jagow completed the process of marginalizing Hammann, a development that reached its fruition in middle of the First World War.
Conclusion: “Three and a Half Men”

Another insuperable difficulty lies in the attitude of what is called public opinion here. The diplomacy of nations is now conducted quite as much in the letters of foreign correspondents, as in the despatches of the Foreign Office.

Lord Salisbury to Canon MacColl, 6 September 1901

Bethmann and the Enabling Act

On 4 August 1914, Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg rose before the Reichstag to deliver what was undoubtedly the most important speech of his political career to that date. The occasion was the outbreak of the long anticipated war with Russia and France, which had developed out of the Austro-Serbian crisis originating with the assassination of the heir to the Habsburg throne, Archduke Francis Ferdinand. In the midst of the diplomatic crisis that had lasted from the murder on 28 June to the declaration of war on Russia on 1 August 1914, Bethmann had pursued a policy of “calculated risk.” He had gambled that the war could be localized in the Balkans, or, barring that, at least that Britain would stay neutral. The political issue prompting Bethmann’s speech on 4 August was the necessity of securing credits to pay for the war. Bethmann was asking the Reichstag to approve an unprecedented “enabling act” that would grant the government wide-ranging budgetary rights for the duration of the conflict with relatively little parliamentary oversight.

The central burden of the speech was to place the guilt for the outbreak of the war on Germany’s enemies, Russia, and to a lesser extent, France. Bethmann began with a

3 Jarausch, Enigmatic Chancellor, 178.
moving and flowery introduction, asserting that Germany had been forced to draw the sword to defend herself. The bellicose policy of Russia had caused the war. She alone had forced the escalation of a localized war between Austria and Serbia. She had been warned by Germany that mobilization was the equivalent of a declaration of war. She had assured the Kaiser that there had been no military preparations on the German frontier, even while “mobilization on our borders had been in full swing from the night of 30-31 July!” Under all these pressures, Bethmann and his advisors felt compelled to issue an ultimatum, as it “would have been a crime to expose Germany to this threat!” As for France, she had vacillated in making a definitive declaration of the attitude she would adopt in a Russo-German war. Moreover, despite assurances on both sides that they would respect the common Franco-German border during the crisis, “French aviators dropped bombs, and cavalry patrols and infantry companies invaded the territory of the Kaiserreich!” This affront came, Bethmann elaborated, even though there had been no declaration of war. The situation called for, in short, “the necessity of self-defense [lively agreement], and necessity knows no law!” Because of this, German troops had already occupied Luxemburg and were moving into Belgium. “Our army is in the field, our navy is battle-ready—behind them is the entire German nation!” Bethmann asserted to a standing ovation all around. “The entire German nation,” Bethmann repeated, turning significantly to the Social Democrats, “united to the last man!” Following another stormy applause, he asked the diet to do its national duty and approve the war credits without further delay.  

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The great unanswered question in all this was whether he could get the Social Democrats, who formed the largest political bloc in the Reichstag,\(^5\) to approve of the measure. Hugo Haase, the leader of the party in the diet and an opponent of the war credits, delivered a speech announcing the unanimous approval of the measures Bethmann had put before the Reichstag. “Today we must decide not whether to approve or oppose the war,” Haase asserted with a heavy heart, “but instead how much is needed for the defense of the country.”\(^6\) In accordance with the party’s principle of voting as a unified bloc in the Reichstag, the Social Democrats endorsed the measure to a man. The government was ecstatic at the turn of events. “The nation is indestructible,” Riezler wrote in his diary.

It might suffer defeats; they, too, will become victories, if that is possible. The unrivaled storm breaking out in the nation has electrified all half-heartedness, all doubting. Each of the foreigners I saw had tears in their eyes. The doubting statesmen are surprised by the nation, by the Social Democrats.\(^7\)

With the outbreak of the war, then, Bethmann finally won over even the Social Democrats to support the government though they had consistently opposed it on almost every important political question of the pre-war years.

What ultimately made the July Crisis of 1914 so important in the context of public opinion and German diplomacy was that it demonstrated again starkly the importance of the shift away from the Old Diplomacy. For the first time since 1909, a German chancellor was able to construct a foreign policy without limitations placed upon him domestically, since his policy was finally based on a larger political consensus.

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\(^5\) They held 110 of the 397 total seats in the Reichstag after 1912. See Tables 2 and 3 in Appendix 1.
\(^7\) Diary entry by Riezler, 15 August 1914, in Riezler, Tagebücher, 195. The recent historiography has tended to diminish the popular support for the war in Germany that was long taken as a given. See the general discussion of the historiography in Hewitson, 85-105.
Bethmann abandoned the retreat from public opinion that had largely characterized his chancellorship up to this point. Bethmann called on Hammann, whom he had held in reserve for just such a crisis, to do the larger publicity work needed as the war was breaking out. Hammann worked his unofficial contacts, such as Albert Ballin, to push forward the view in London that Russia had caused the conflict. Moreover, he helped maintain the support of the press and the people for the Burgfrieden established by the parties on 4 August. In the early months of the war, Hammann and his Press Bureau once again walked the old delicate line between the socialist left and the nationalist right. Since it appeared early on that Germany was going to win the war quickly and decisively, the trick consisted of getting Social-Democratic agreement to territorial annexations that were deemed necessary for future military security, without caving in to the demands of “a highly covetous nationalism that wants to annex half of the world.” All told, the episode demonstrated definitively one last time that foreign policy could no longer be made without the support of the larger public. The Old Diplomacy had apparently met its ultimate demise.

“Three and a Half Men”

As the system of international politics was transformed by the slow death of the old cabinet style of diplomacy, it had become a necessity for the government to develop an apparatus to defend itself from outside criticism of its policies. The origins of this development in the German context went back to the years immediately after Bismarck’s

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forced resignation in 1890. The major initial shift went back to the “severing of the wire” with Russia embodied in the non-renewal of the Reinsurance Treaty. Bismarck’s campaign against both that decision and the New Course had originally given rise to the public-opinion problem. His attacks on the government threatened to undermine the power and credibility of his successors, especially as he became the paragon of the nationalist right during his retirement. In the early 1890s this made it increasingly clear that the government needed to develop an apparatus to deal with criticism of the opposition on the right, and this, in turn, had led to the appointment of Otto Hammann as the press officer of the Reich Foreign Office in 1894. The process of centralizing all public-relations activities of the government under Hammann was slow in developing, however. Bureaucratic factionalism—represented by the public scandals of the mid-1890s, namely the Kladderadatsch Affair and the Leckert-Lützow-Tausch trials—and the lack of a truly prestigious foreign policy served to retard the growth of the Press Bureau as a sub-department within the Foreign Office until 1897.

The appointment of Bernhard von Bülow in that year, on the other hand, served as a kind of revolution in official public-relations policy. The shift to an out-and-out imperialist foreign policy, or Weltpolitik, was a bid to score prestigious foreign-policy victories in the world that would help to diminish the criticism of the New Course on the right. Bülow’s zigzag foreign policy, which increasingly aimed at cheap prestige victories abroad to assuage public opinion at home, caused a dramatic deterioration in Germany’s international position. That point became clear to all interested onlookers after Bülow’s famous “Biting on Granite” speech delivered in early 1902. Despite his public denigration of the “beer-bench politics” of the radical right during the Boer War, his
criticism of Chamberlain in the Reichstag, bowed to just that constituency. This shift, in turn, alienated Britain at precisely the same time that it seemed to strengthen Anglophobic sentiment at home. The result was a kind of cycle of dependence: the deteriorating German position in the world drove Bülow to ever greater reliance on his press chief to help get him off the hook in the press and the Reichstag. Bülow thus worked side by side with Hammann in the years from 1900 to 1909 to refine a subtle system for cultivating good press, relying on trusted journalists and carefully selected papers to shape public opinion and develop the major talking points on any given policy.

In the initial years of the Bülow-Hammann collaboration, the system worked very well as a way of restoring some governmental agency for cultivating support for the government. Baron von Eckardstein, Hammann’s original point man in London for interacting with the British press, expressed this dramatically in his writings after the war. Despite the diplomatic disasters suffered by Germany in the two Morocco Crises, Eckardstein noted, “without any effort the Press Bureau had succeeded in transforming the two fateful German diplomatic defeats—which were ridiculed by the entire outside world—into successes of German statecraft on the domestic scene.”

Though the analysis was well wide of the mark for the second Morocco Crisis—when Kiderlen had excluded the press chief from any participation in policy-making—it was accurate for the 1905-1906 crisis, which had solidified the diplomatic revolution embodied in the Entente. It was not much of an exaggeration, then, to say that the handling of the Algeciras Conference made Hammann seem a kind of alchemical genius with the power to turn the lead of diplomatic blundering into golden public opinion.

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10 Eckardstein, vol. 3, 89.
In the years following the first Morocco Crisis, however, the Bülow-Hammann system came under greater and greater criticism from various directions. Inside the Foreign Office, it seemed Bülow worried too much about his approval rating as measured through newspapers and depended too heavily on his press chief to win support for his policies. Friedrich von Holstein, who had failed in his bid to retreat to the Old Diplomacy during the first Morocco Crisis, diagnosed what he believed was a terminal disease shortly after he retired in April 1906. “[T]he Press Bureau’s current growth in power in the Foreign Office,” he wrote bitterly at the time, “signifies the equivalent of a swollen liver in the human body: it is a symptom of sickness.”11 Increasingly, this professional criticism of Bülow’s press policy was mirrored in the larger public as well. It became gradually more apparent to the public, for example, that the diplomatic victory claimed by Bülow in the press and the Reichstag with regard to Morocco was in reality very hollow. A British observer noted in early 1907:

“What,” [the German people] asked, “had Germany to seek in Morocco?” “Why did the Government insist on a conference which showed the position of isolation in which Germany was placed, when, after the triumph they had achieved by M. Delcassé’s resignation, they might have come to terms with France by direct negotiation?” These, and similar questions, were symptomatic of a general feeling that the foreign affairs of Germany were not skillfully dealt with, and that the Moroccan question in particular had been woefully bungled.12

Questions of this sort arose even more urgently with the succession of foreign and domestic problems Bülow faced after 1906. The Harden-Eulenburg scandals, the Bosnian Crisis, and the Daily Telegraph Affair all confirmed the precedent set at the time the Boer War: Bülow would more and more bow before public opinion even when it disturbed his personal relations with the Kaiser or Germany’s international position.

11 Quoted in Heilbron, 102.
The malady Holstein diagnosed was one that later statesmen in the Foreign Office attempted to cure after Bülow’s retirement. Like Holstein, the state secretaries after 1909 blamed Hammann for many of the problems faced by the government in the years of foreign and domestic crises from 1905 to 1909. He had, first of all, encouraged Bülow to take a soft line on Morocco from the very beginning of the crisis. Further, when the chancellor had decided on a policy of retreat, it was Hammann who argued convincingly that it was possible to create the smoke-screen necessary to pull it off. Finally, it was widely believed that Hammann had been responsible for the bungled press policy of the Daily Telegraph Affair that had so dramatically damaged the authority of the government and the Kaiser. For these reasons, the three state secretaries that made policy from 1909 to 1914—Schoen, Kiderlen, and Jagow—successively and dramatically limited Hammann’s influence, even though they could not entirely purge the contagion Holstein believed he had discovered on the Wilhelmstrasse.

From the outside, too, the system had its critics. On the left, the most obvious charge against the Bülow-Hammann system was its tendency toward governmental bias; everything that appeared in the anointed papers could be seen as the direct result of “Schönfarberei”—blatant whitewashing. Such criticism was especially prevalent among the parties that took a critical stance toward the government and its policies, and censure of this sort became even more prevalent after the Daily Telegraph Affair of 1908. Matthias Erzberger, the radical leader of the Center party, warned the government about this tendency in a Reichstag debate in 1908: “If you think . . . that everything can

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always be painted in a rosy picture, then I think you are mistaken.”

To those journalists outside the inner circle, moreover, the system seemed especially unfair. The populist Center-party paper, the Kölnische Volkszeitung, was again indicative. Because its main local competitor, the Kölnische Zeitung, was a semi-official organ of the government, and because this fact blocked it from getting the “inside dope” its competitor could provide, the Kölnische Volkszeitung adopted an attitude of opposition to the Foreign Office during the Boer War. At the time of Hammann’s retirement in 1916, Ernst Moritz Posse, the editor of the paper, complains of the tendency of the Bülow-Hammann system to hold back information when inquiries were made by reporters outside the loop. “I know of no event during the last decade,” Posse complained, “where the following stereotypical directive was not given: ‘Only the highest possible reserve—best to say nothing!’” Such treatment was especially glaring when compared with the lavish attention shown to Hammann’s favorites, even when it seemed hardly warranted. A blatant example cited by one contemporary critic was the continued special preference shown to a representative of the British paper the Standard, Herbert A. White, despite the fact that that he had provoked an uproar in Germany after he had “slandered the Kaiser” on one occasion in the other popular London paper he represented, the Daily Express.

Perhaps the greatest defect of the Hammann system lay not in its tendency to distort the news, but rather in the inadequate size of its apparatus for the job at hand.

14 Speech by Erzberger, 11 December 1908, 12th Leg. Per., Session 1, SBVR, vol. 233, 6161-71, especially 6166.
16 Brunhuber, 77. White represented both papers in Berlin from 1904 to 1911.
Bülow recognized the small nature of the Press Bureau in his memoirs. “During my chancellorship Privy Councilor Hammann,” he remarked in his memoirs, whom I had inherited from Caprivi and Hohenlohe, headed the Press Bureau as its chief with two competent assistants, Privy Councilors Esternaux and Heilbron. In addition to these two, an army captain—who had been seriously wounded in the Franco-Prussian War—also worked there, cutting out noteworthy newspaper articles and pasting them [on sheets of paper]. I used to say that the Press Bureau consisted of three and a half men.

Ordinarily so critical of his contemporaries in his retrospective judgment of them, Bülow struck a different note when it came to his view of the Press Bureau. He tended to make a virtue out of the parsimoniousness of the office, which fit so well with his ideal of an inconspicuous and skillfully managed public-opinion policy. “After the November Revolution, when the three ruling parties, the Social Democrats, the Center party, and the Left Liberals, wanted to give their people jobs,” he elaborated, and establish, as the French put it so beautifully, ‘la République des comarades,’ the staff of the Press Bureau swelled to more than two hundred people. The humble rooms of the Foreign Office were naturally not sufficient for such a swarm, and the Press Bureau was housed in Prince Karl’s large palace on the Wilhelmsplatz, where the gentlemen then usefully passed their days smoking cigarettes and gabbing. As far as I can see, our press has never been more poorly led, nor our foreign propaganda more awkwardly conducted, than in the years of the Republican Nation-State.17

There was, in other words, a stark contrast in Bülow’s mind between the efficiency of the system of cultivation he and Hammann had maintained during his tenure as chancellor, and the bureaucratic bloating that occurred during and after the war.

But what seemed a virtue to Bülow, was a hindrance for Hammann and his assistants. During Bethmann’s chancellorship, Hammann answered the criticisms laid

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17 Bülow, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, vol. 1, 214-15. This appalling anecdote is probably a case of Bülow exaggerating for rhetorical effect. There is no evidence in the archives of any assistants that aided Hammann in his day to day activities other than Esternaux, Heilbron, and Riezler, who were all far too young to have been veterans of the Franco-Prussian War. The supposed “half” man remains completely nameless as far as the historical record goes; it is highly unlikely that he even existed.
at his doorstep for the apparent failures of the later years of Bülow’s chancellorship with complaints about the enormous amount of work expected of the “three and a half men.” They had a point. The Information Bureau of the Reich Naval Office, or the press offices of the nationalist pressure groups made the resources and activities of Hammann and his associates seem comparatively meager. The agitation conducted on behalf of naval construction was, for example, a stark contrast to the methods associated with the Bülow-Hammann system. From its inception in 1897, the personnel of the Information Bureau of the Reich Naval Office maintained a larger staff than Hammann’s own Press Bureau.18 What was more, while its activities were far more manipulative and modern, Tipritz’s Information Bureau maintained a façade of outside mobilization that the Press Bureau never attained: it mobilized hundreds of professors to lecture and write pamphlets on behalf of the naval bills, encouraged businessmen to support battleship building, and tried to win over parliamentary deputies with smooth talking and the cultivation of friendly relations with the Reichstag.19

As another example, the Navy League tried to be even more populist in winning support for navalism. It tried to reach the masses by distributing its organ, Die Flotte, free of charge to libraries, schools, and railroad stations. It even tried to court the proletariat by publishing works of fiction that would teach them to be wary of the Social Democrats and support naval construction as something consistent with their own economic interests.20 In essence, accomplishing a similar widespread and thorough coordination of public opinion on behalf of the Foreign Office would require much more

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18 Deist, 71; and Steinberg, Yesterday’s Deterrent, 131-2.
19 Bonker, 286-9, and 293-301.
20 Eley, German Right, 218-26.
than had been allotted to the press chief. It would require more money and, even more, a larger staff. Only then, asserted Hammann’s assistant Ernst Esternaux in 1913, could the Press Bureau begin truly to win over public opinion. The increasingly ineffective system where a few privy councilors behaved like oracles “in only three to four official sources, such as Wolff’s, Kölnische, Frankfurter, Lokalanzeiger” never had a chance of success as politics became more modernized. On the eve of the war, then, the Bülow-Hammann system itself was dying a slow death, just as the Old Diplomacy had two decades before.

All told, the Bülow-Hammann system of public-relations can be viewed as a kind of halfway house between two different methods of conducting diplomacy. Unlike Bismarck’s press policy, it recognized the necessity of taking public opinion seriously and cultivating it. It avoided subvention and Bismarck’s use of police powers to rein in oppositionist criticism in the press. Yet it also differed fundamentally from what followed during the war. As a network of intimate personal relationships intended to subtly cultivate a good press, the Bülow-Hammann system worked for a time to delay the effects of the death of cabinet diplomacy on German decision-making. But by the time of the Great War it became obvious that the Bülow-Hammann system itself would have to be replaced with a more developed system of censorship and modern, American-style press conferences. In the end, then, the “three and a half men” suffered the same fate as the Old Diplomacy.

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21 Esternaux’s marginalia, Mantler to Jagow, 6 September 1913, Europa Generalia 86, secr., Bd. 5, PA-AA.  
Appendix 1: Tables
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<th>Periodical</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Alldeutsche Blätter</em> (Mainz)</td>
<td>Organ of the Pan-German League</td>
<td>Owner: Pan-German League, 1894-1939 Editor: Dr. Adolf Lehr, 1894-1901</td>
<td>8-10,000 (weekly)</td>
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<td><em>Berliner Börsen-Courier</em> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Broadly progressive</td>
<td>Owner: Joint stock company directed by Ulrich Levysohn, 1881-1908 Editors: Julius Saloman (evening edition) Isidor Landau (morning edition) Dr. Albert Haas, 1910-1916</td>
<td>11,000 (daily)</td>
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<td><em>Berliner Börsenzeitung</em> (Berlin)</td>
<td>National Liberal</td>
<td>Owner: L. Metzoldt Editor: Dr. Konevka</td>
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<td><em>Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger §</em> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Broadly conservative and government-supporting</td>
<td>Owners: August Scherl, 1883-1913 Joint stock company of bankers and industrialists after 1913 Editor: Hugo von Kupfer Hammann’s confidant: Eugen Zimmermann</td>
<td>230,000 (daily)</td>
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<td><em>Berliner Neueste Nachrichten §</em> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Nationalist without any party affiliations, representing the armaments industry</td>
<td>Owners: Friedrich Alfred Krupp &amp; Count Guido Henckel von Donnersmarck until 1901 Deutsche Zeitungsgesellschaft after 1901 Editors: Hugo Jacobi Victor Schweinberg</td>
<td>9,500 (daily)</td>
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<td><em>Berliner Politische Nachrichten</em> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Government-supporting and representative of the iron and steel industry</td>
<td>Owner: Zeitungskorrespondenz G.m.b.H.</td>
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§ Indicates a newspaper with connections to the government or whose reports were viewed as semiofficial.
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<td><strong>Berliner Tageblatt</strong> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Broadly progressive</td>
<td>Owner: Rudolf Mosse, 1871-1920&lt;br&gt;Editors: Dr. Arthur Levysohn, 1881-1907&lt;br&gt;Theodor Wolff, 1907-1933</td>
<td>230,000 (daily)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Berliner Zeitung, after 1904 Berliner Zeitung am Mittag</strong> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Broadly liberal</td>
<td>Owner: Ullstein &amp; Co.&lt;br&gt;Editors: Rudolf Ullstein&lt;br&gt;Hugo Werth&lt;br&gt;Georg Bernhard</td>
<td>130,000 (daily)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Deutsche Kolonialzeitung</strong> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Government-supporting in colonial policy</td>
<td>Owner: Rudolf Mosse</td>
<td>45,000 (weekly)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Deutsche Tageszeitung</strong> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Broadly conservative and agrarian</td>
<td>Owner: Agrarian League, 1893-1934&lt;br&gt;Editor: Georg Oertel, 1894-1916</td>
<td>38,000 (daily)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Deutsche Zeitung</strong> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Pan-German and nationalist</td>
<td>Owner and editor: Friedrich Lange, 1895-1918</td>
<td>15,000 (daily)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dortmunder Zeitung</strong> (Dortmund)</td>
<td>National Liberal</td>
<td>Editor: Rudolf Versen</td>
<td>22,000 (daily)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Frankfurter Zeitung §</strong> (Frankfurt)</td>
<td>Broadly progressive</td>
<td>Owner: Leopold Sonnemann, 1856-1909&lt;br&gt;Editor: Dr. Joseph Stern&lt;br&gt;Hammann's confidant: August Stein</td>
<td>20,000 (daily)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Freisinnige Zeitung</strong> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Official organ of the Liberal People's party</td>
<td>Owner: Liberal People's party&lt;br&gt;Editor: Eugen Richter, 1885-1906</td>
<td>na (daily)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Germania</strong> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Official organ of the Center party</td>
<td>Owner: Germania Aktiengesellschaft&lt;br&gt;Editors: Dr. E. Marcow, 1891-1894&lt;br&gt;Dr. August Hommerich, 1913-1916</td>
<td>14,000 (daily)</td>
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<td><strong>Grenzboten</strong> (Leipzig)</td>
<td>Free Conservative and government-supporting</td>
<td>Owner: Verlag F. W. Grunow&lt;br&gt;Editors: Johannes Grunow, 1873-1906&lt;br&gt;Georg Cleinow, 1909-1920</td>
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<td>Periodical (cont.)</td>
<td>Affiliation (cont.)</td>
<td>Owner/Editor (cont.)</td>
<td>Circ. (cont.)</td>
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| **Hamburger Nachrichten** (Hamburg) | Free Conservative / right National Liberal | Owner: Hartmeyer Family  
Editors: Hermann Hofmann  
Dr. Emil Hartmeyer | 20,000 (daily) |
| **Hamburgischer Correspondent** (Hamburg) | National Liberal | Owner: Hamburger Börsenhalle  
G.m.b.H. | na (daily) |
| **Hannoverscher Courier** (Hanover) | National Liberal | Owner: Gebrüder Jänecke  
Editor: Dr. Richard Jacobi | na (daily) |
| **Kladderadatsch** (Berlin) | Humorous paper with National Liberal sympathies | Owner: A. Hofmann & Co.  
Editor: Johannes Trojan, 1886-1909 | 40,000 (weekly) |
| **Das Kleine Journal** (Berlin) | Broadly progressive | Editors: Dr. Leo Leipziger  
Hugo Krause | na (daily) |
| **Kölnerische Volkszeitung** (Cologne) | Center party | Owner: Julius Bachem, 1893-1928  
Editors: Hermann Cardauns, 1876-1907  
Dr. Wiesemann | 30,000 (daily) |
| **Kölnerische Zeitung §** (Cologne) | National Liberal and semi-official | Owners: Josef and Alfred Neven-DuMont  
Editors: Dr. August Schmits, 1872-1901  
Ernst Moritz Posse, 1901-1922  
Hammann’s confidants: Arthur von Huhn  
Dr. Franz Fischer | 77,000 (daily) |
<p>| <strong>Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung</strong> (Königsberg) | National Liberal | Editor: A. Wyneken | 39,000 (daily) |
| <strong>Konservative Korrespondenz</strong> (Berlin) | Official news service of the Conservative party | Owner: Hauptverein der Deutsch-Konservativen | 500 |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Periodical (cont.)</th>
<th>Affiliation (cont.)</th>
<th>Owner/Editor (cont.)</th>
<th>Circ. (cont.)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten (Leipzig)</td>
<td>Unaffiliated nationalist</td>
<td>Owner: Edward Herfurth &amp; Co. Editor: Dr. F. Grautoff</td>
<td>148,000 (daily)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magdeburgische Zeitung (Magdeburg)</td>
<td>National Liberal</td>
<td>Owners: The Faber Family</td>
<td>na (daily)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Münchener Allgemeine Zeitung (Munich)</td>
<td>Free Conservative</td>
<td>Owners: Gebrüder Kröner, 1889-1906 Bayerische Druck &amp; Verlagsanstalt, 1906-1907 August Scherl after 1907</td>
<td>5,000 (weekly)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Münchener Neueste Nachrichten § (Munich)</td>
<td>National Liberal</td>
<td>Owners: Joint stock company directed by Thomas Knorr &amp; Dr. Georg Hirth after 1894 Editor: Dr. Friedrich Trefz, 1892-1926 Hammann’s confidant: Dr. Ernst Francke</td>
<td>127,000 (daily)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neue Freie Presse (Vienna)</td>
<td>Broadly liberal</td>
<td>Owner: Österreichische Journal-Aktiengesellschaft Co-editors: Eduard Bacher, 1879-1908 Moritz Benedikt, 1889-1920</td>
<td>75,000 (daily)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neues Wiener Tagblatt (Vienna)</td>
<td>Broadly progressive</td>
<td>Editors: Moritz Wengraf, 1886-1891 Wilhelm Singer, 1891-1917</td>
<td>88,500 (daily)</td>
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<td>Periodical (cont.)</td>
<td>Affiliation (cont.)</td>
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</table>
| *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung §* (Berlin)            | Broadly conservative and semi-official            | Owners: Albertus and Heinrich Ohlendorff  
Reimar Hobbing after 1917  
Editors:  
Emil Pindter, 1872-1894  
Dr. Martin Griesemann, 1894-1897  
Count Cuno von Westrap, 1897  
Dr. Wilhelm Lauser, 1897-1902  
Otto Runge, 1902-1917 | 6,000 (daily) |
| *Ostpreußische Zeitung* (Königsberg)                   | Conservative party                               | na                                                                                    | 75,000 (daily) |
| *Die Post* (Berlin)                                    | Free Conservative                                 | Owners: Free Conservative Party  
Baron Karl von Stumm-Halberg  
Editors:  
Dr. Leopold Kaßler, 1878-1890  
Dr. Wilhelm Kronsbeim  
Dr. Theodor Reismann-Grone after 1910 | 14,000 (daily) |
| *Der Reichsbote §* (Berlin)                            | Conservative party                               | Owner: Deutsche Zeitungsgesellschaft after 1911  
Editors:  
Pastor Heinrich Engel, 1873-1911  
Gerhard Kropatschek, 1911-1913  
Hammann's confidant:  
Pastor Heinrich Engel | 12,000 (daily) |
| Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung (Essen)                 | Pan-German, supporting imperialism and heavy industry | Owners: Dietrich Baedeker  
Dr. Theodor Reismann-Grone  
Editors: Dr. Theodor Reismann-Grone from 1894 up to World War I | 74,000 (daily) |
| Schwäbischer Merkur (Stuttgart)                         | Unaffiliated nationalist and imperialist with National Liberal sympathies | Owners: Elben Family  
Editors: Otto Elben, 1854-1894  
Dr. Karl Elben | 10,000 (daily) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Periodical (cont.)</th>
<th>Affiliation (cont.)</th>
<th>Owner/Editor (cont.)</th>
<th>Circ. (cont.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Staatsbürger-Zeitung</em> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Anti-Semitic and nationalist</td>
<td>Owner and editor: Wilhelm Brunn</td>
<td>5,000 (daily)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Der Tag</em> (Berlin)</td>
<td>No party affiliation</td>
<td>Owner: August Scherl</td>
<td>40,000 (daily)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tägliche Rundschau</em> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Free Conservative / right National Liberal</td>
<td>Owners: Bernhard Brigl, 1881-1900 Bibliographisches Institut of Leipzig after 1900 Editors: Friedrich Lange, 1882-1896 Heinrich Rippler, 1896-1922</td>
<td>60,000 (daily)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Vorwärts</em> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Social Democratic party</td>
<td>Owner: Social Democratic party Editors: Wilhelm Liebknecht, 1891-1900 Carl Leid</td>
<td>157,000 (daily)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Die Welt am Montag</em> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Left Liberal</td>
<td>Owner: Adolf Damaschke Editor: Hellmut von Gerlach after 1901</td>
<td>180,000 (weekly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Die Zukunft</em> (Berlin)</td>
<td>Satirical paper critical of the New Course</td>
<td>Editor: Maximilian Harden</td>
<td>20,000 (weekly)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Table 2: Reichstag Election Results for the Major Parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1893</th>
<th>1898</th>
<th>1903</th>
<th>1907</th>
<th>1912</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conservatives</strong></td>
<td>Votes: 895,000 Seats: 73</td>
<td>Votes: 1,038,000 Seats: 72</td>
<td>Votes: 859,000 Seats: 56</td>
<td>Votes: 949,000 Seats: 54</td>
<td>Votes: 1,060,000 Seats: 60</td>
<td>Votes: 1,126,000 Seats: 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Free Conservatives</strong></td>
<td>Votes: 482,000 Seats: 20</td>
<td>Votes: 438,000 Seats: 28</td>
<td>Votes: 344,000 Seats: 23</td>
<td>Votes: 333,000 Seats: 21</td>
<td>Votes: 472,000 Seats: 24</td>
<td>Votes: 367,000 Seats: 14</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>National Liberals</strong></td>
<td>Votes: 1,178,000 Seats: 42</td>
<td>Votes: 997,000 Seats: 53</td>
<td>Votes: 971,000 Seats: 46</td>
<td>Votes: 1,317,000 Seats: 51</td>
<td>Votes: 1,631,000 Seats: 54</td>
<td>Votes: 1,663,000 Seats: 45</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Center party</strong></td>
<td>Votes: 1,342,000 Seats: 106</td>
<td>Votes: 1,469,000 Seats: 96</td>
<td>Votes: 1,455,000 Seats: 102</td>
<td>Votes: 1,875,000 Seats: 100</td>
<td>Votes: 2,180,000 Seats: 105</td>
<td>Votes: 1,997,000 Seats: 91</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Left Liberals</strong></td>
<td>Votes: 1,308,000 Seats: 76</td>
<td>Votes: 666,000 Seats: 24</td>
<td>Votes: 558,000 Seats: 29</td>
<td>Votes: 538,000 Seats: 21</td>
<td>Votes: 736,000 Seats: 28</td>
<td>Votes: 1,497,000 Seats: 42</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Liberal Union</strong></td>
<td>Votes: 259,000 Seats: 13</td>
<td>Votes: 196,000 Seats: 12</td>
<td>Votes: 243,000 Seats: 9</td>
<td>Votes: 359,000 Seats: 14</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>German People’s party</strong></td>
<td>Votes: 148,000 Seats: 10</td>
<td>Votes: 167,000 Seats: 11</td>
<td>Votes: 109,000 Seats: 8</td>
<td>Votes: 91,000 Seats: 6</td>
<td>Votes: 139,000 Seats: 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Democrats</strong></td>
<td>Votes: 1,427,000 Seats: 35</td>
<td>Votes: 1,787,000 Seats: 44</td>
<td>Votes: 2,107,000 Seats: 56</td>
<td>Votes: 3,011,000 Seats: 81</td>
<td>Votes: 3,259,000 Seats: 43</td>
<td>Votes: 4,250,000 Seats: 110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>Vote: 7,228,000 Seats: 397 Turnout: 71.2 %</td>
<td>Vote: 7,674,000 Seats: 397 Turnout: 72.2 %</td>
<td>Vote: 7,752,000 Seats: 397 Turnout: 67.7 %</td>
<td>Vote: 9,495,000 Seats: 397 Turnout: 75.8 %</td>
<td>Vote: 11,262,000 Seats: 397 Turnout: 84.3 %</td>
<td>Vote: 12,207,000 Seats: 397 Turnout: 84.5 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Walter Tormin, *Geschichte der deutschen Parteien seit 1848* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1968), 284-5.

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1 From 1893 to 1910, this row represents Eugen Richter’s Liberal People’s party, which was the doctrinaire wing of the Left Liberals as a political group. After 1910 it represents the numbers for the reunified Progressive People’s Party, which drew together the Liberal People’s party, the Liberal Union, and the German People’s party.
Table 3: Reichstag Election Results for the Major Parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1893</th>
<th>1898</th>
<th>1903</th>
<th>1907</th>
<th>1912</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Christian Socialist party</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Votes</td>
<td>48,000</td>
<td>264,000</td>
<td>284,000</td>
<td>245,000</td>
<td>249,000</td>
<td>52,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seats</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Poles</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vote</td>
<td>247,000</td>
<td>230,000</td>
<td>244,000</td>
<td>348,000</td>
<td>454,000</td>
<td>442,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seats</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Alsace-Lorrainers</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Votes</td>
<td>101,000</td>
<td>115,000</td>
<td>107,000</td>
<td>102,000</td>
<td>104,000</td>
<td>162,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seats</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Guelphs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Votes</td>
<td>113,000</td>
<td>102,000</td>
<td>105,000</td>
<td>94,000</td>
<td>78,000</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Votes</td>
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<td>14,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>17,000</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Vote</td>
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<td>129,000</td>
<td>397,000</td>
<td>334,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seats</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote</td>
<td>7,228,000</td>
<td>7,674,000</td>
<td>7,752,000</td>
<td>9,495,000</td>
<td>11,262,000</td>
<td>12,207,000</td>
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<td>Seats</td>
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<td>397</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnout</td>
<td>71.2 %</td>
<td>72.2 %</td>
<td>67.7 %</td>
<td>75.8 %</td>
<td>84.3 %</td>
<td>84.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Turnout</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Translations of German Epigraphs
Translations of German Epigraphs

Front Matter, p. vi:

The actor always lacks a conscience; no one but the observer has a conscience.¹

Chapter 1, p. 33:

The impossibility of maintaining a complicated alliance system against our public opinion—especially after the departure of Prince Bismarck—must be pointed out in the answer to General von Schweinitz. The conclusion of secret alliances is even more precluded now, when the conduct of the previous Reich chancellor in any case causes insecurity and misunderstanding, in addition to all the indiscretions. Our foreign policy can and should be a simple one.²

Chapter 3, p. 178:

With the influence that public opinion exerts in different lands on international politics, one can consider resistance to anti-German newspaper intrigues as a matter of national defense. [William II: “Always true.”] On my command, the press leadership of the Foreign Office is therefore busy with the strengthening of the weapons at our disposal.³

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² Memorandum by Caprivi, 23 May 1890, no. 1378, GP, vol. 7, 29.
³ Bülow to William II, 15 November 1905, Deutschland 126a, secr., Bd. 1, PA-AA.
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Folders 23, 32e, 221, 222 and 223.

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Deutschland 122, no. 1, secr.: Fürst Bismarck nach seinem Austritt aus dem Stattdienst, Bd. 1-3.
Deutschland 122, no. 2, secr.: Das Auswärtige Amt, Bd. 1.
Deutschland 122, no. 3a, secr.: Journalist Normann-Schumann, Bd. 1.
Deutschland 122, no. 3b: Prozess gegen die Journalisten Leckert und von Lützow und den Criminal-Commissar von Tausch wegen Beleidigung von Beamten des Auswärtigen Amtes, Bd. 1.
Deutschland 122, no. 13: Reichskanzler Graf von Bülow, Bde. 9-10.
Deutschland 126: Die Presse (Generalia), Bd. 2.
Deutschland 126a, secr.: Geheime Ausgaben für Presszwecke und Massregeln zur Beeinflussung der Auslands presse, Bde. 1-3.
Deutschland 126, no. 2: Die Berliner Presse, Bd. 8 and 11.
Deutschland 126, no. 3: Die Presse in Deutschland, Bde. 4, 7, and 9-10.
Deutschland 128, no. 1, secr.: Bündnis zwischen Deutschland, Österreich-Ungarn und Italien, Bde. 19, 21, and 23-4.
Deutschland 131, no. 4, secr.: Deutsch-russische Verhandlungen (1904) über Abkommen anlässlich russisch-japanischen Krieges, Bd. 5.
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Deutschland 138: Die Kaiserliche Marine, Bd. 12.
Deutschland 148, secr.: Verhandlungen mit England, Bd. 1.
England 78: Die politischen Beziehungen Englands zu Deutschland, Bde. 16, 21 and 38.
England 78, secretiss.: Beziehungen zu Deutschland, Bde. 3 and 7
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England 78, no. 2, secretiss.: Unterredung Seiner Majestät des Kaisers mit einem Engländer über die deutsch-englischen Beziehungen (veröffentlicht im Daily Telegraph v. 28.10.08), Bd. 1.
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Biography

Nathan N. Orgill was born in Pocatello, Idaho, in 1975. He received his B.A. (1998) and M.A. (2001) in history from California State University, Fresno. At CSU-Fresno, he was awarded the University-Wide Outstanding Thesis Award for his M.A. thesis, “The British National Press and the Outbreak of the First World War.” Nate subsequently began his Ph.D. in modern European history at Duke University in the fall of 2001. He advanced to candidacy in spring 2004 and since then has been teaching in California. While completing the Ph.D. at Duke, Nate has also begun his larger publishing career. He has done four book reviews for H-German. He wrote a chapter for an edited volume on Franco-German relations that appeared on Palgrave Macmillan in November 2008. And he has presented papers relating to his research at the Barnes Club Conference at Temple University in February 2005 and at the annual meeting of the German Studies Association in October 2007. For the paper he gave at the Barnes Club Conference, “The Myth of Neutrality: German Decision-Making and the British Press in the July Crisis of 1914,” he was awarded the Russell F. Weigley Award for the Most Promising Paper in Military History.

Nate Orgill currently lives in Clovis, California, with his family. In his off-time, he enjoys watching Duke Basketball and old episodes of Buffy the Vampire Slayer, water-skiing and writing bad fiction.