PART 2

ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS AND THE PARTITION OF NEW GUINEA: DOCUMENTS D26 TO D36

The establishment of the German Protectorate in New Guinea inflamed public opinion in a number of the Australian Colonies. Hostility was directed not only at the Germans, for poaching on Australian preserves, but also against the British Government, and the Colonial Secretary, Lord Derby, in particular, who in at least one Australian city, was burned in effigy in the streets.\(^1\) He was blamed for giving the Germans the chance to appropriate north eastern New Guinea by his repudiation of the 1883 Queensland annexation, his failure to meet Australian demands for Imperial annexation of all eastern New Guinea, and his inaccurate assurances of Germany’s lack of interest in the area.\(^2\) (D27)

Vigorous Australian protests to the Colonial Office induced a number of rather more elegantly expressed diplomatic complaints to the German Government.\(^3\) The British complaints were probably aimed more at excusing the Gladstone Administration in Australian eyes, and in Parliament, than at removing the Germans from New Guinea. In 1884, before the British Protectorate was established, the German Government was informed of British intentions, presumably to avoid the possibility of a conflict between the interests of the two powers in Melanesia.\(^4\) (D28; D29)

Britain’s original proposal, at the behest of the Australasian Colonies, was to protect all of the coastline of eastern New Guinea except that section between the Dutch Border and the meridian 145° East of Greenwich.\(^5\) This included the Maclay or Rai coast. (D29) Baron Maclay, the Russian explorer and humanitarian, fearing annexation or protection of the area which he had brought under his personal sway, sought British recognition of its independence, but not the establishment of a British Protectorate over it.\(^6\) However, in its discussions with the Germans, the British Government had asserted that one of its principal aims in intervening in New Guinea was to meet the oft expressed demands of the Maclay coast people for British Protection.\(^7\) (D29) But the Germans opposed British intervention except along the southern coast east of the Dutch Border, which was conceded to be of strategic importance to the Australians.\(^8\) (D30) The appeasement of Germany was of more importance to the British Government at this time than the satisfaction of Australian demands for annexation of all of eastern New Guinea. This was partly because, to Great Britain, New Guinea was considered to be of little significance.

More significantly, since the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, relations with France had become strained, because the French considered Egypt to be within their sphere of influence.\(^9\) If Germany was antagonized as well, as a result of British Imperial expansion, then an alliance of continental powers against Britain might occur, which was the anathema of British foreign policy. The French and the Germans could conceivably overlook their dislike of each other in common opposition to Great Britain. As late as 1892, a senior Colonial Office official complained that:

> As we encounter everywhere the hostility of France, so we have to purchase support from Germany in regard to Egypt by pliability in other matters. This concerns us in every colonial question whether Germany, France or Italy are in the least concerned.\(^10\)

In addition, at this time Bismarck, the German Chancellor, was seeking a temporary rapprochement.

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\(^1\) Recalled in Fuller’s Minute of 31 August 1892, C.O. 225/38, (film 2315, No. 4545, at 285)
\(^2\) The Melbourne Argus, 29 December 1884
\(^3\) These are mostly to be found in Further Correspondence Respecting New Guinea And Other Islands In The Western Pacific Ocean, C-4273, London, 1885.
\(^4\) C-4273, op. cit., pp. 11-13
\(^5\) Scot to German Foreign Office, 19 September 1884, C-4273, op. cit., pp. 11-12
\(^6\) Maclay to Colonial Office, 10 November 1884, C-4273, op. cit., p. 56
\(^7\) Scot to German Foreign Office, 19 September 1884, C-4273, op. cit., pp. 11-12
\(^8\) Plessen to Granville, 27 September 1884, C-4273, op. cit., p. 12
\(^10\) Minute by R. Meade, 21 August 1892, C.O. 225-38, (film 2315, No. 4545, at 282)
with France, and one of his devious techniques in doing so was to antagonize Great Britain.\textsuperscript{11} This accounts in part for his intervention in New Guinea, which was also influenced by domestic factors,\textsuperscript{12} and possibly, by German commercial interests in the Pacific.

Although the Governments of Germany and Great Britain reached agreement in 1884 about the control of the southern coastline of New Guinea, no precise arrangements were made as to the future of the northern coastline and islands, or the inland limits of the British Protectorate. On the British side, future negotiations seem to have been envisaged,\textsuperscript{13} (D31) but the Germans did not expressly commit themselves to this course at all, although they may well have given the impression of acquiescence in it. This is not surprising, as it seems that while these discussions over New Guinea were proceeding in 1884, Bismarck had already decided to establish a protectorate in north eastern New Guinea and the Archipelago that now bears his name.\textsuperscript{14} (D23)

The brief dispute between Germany and Great Britain which followed the establishment of the German Protectorate, and the subsequent extension of the British Protectorate along what is now the northern coast of Papua, revolved around whether or not the German and British Governments had agreed to conduct further negotiations as to the future of north east New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago, and if so, whether the establishment of a German Protectorate in the area, pending the outcome of these negotiations, was precluded.\textsuperscript{15} (D32; D33) The British may very well have been left with the impression that further negotiations would follow, but there was no agreement that these precluded the prior establishment of a German Protectorate; and it was conceded by the British Government that, in terms of international law, there was no treaty or agreement restraining the Germans from establishing a protectorate.\textsuperscript{16}

However, it would be surprising if no one in the Foreign Office had anticipated the establishment of a German Protectorate in New Guinea at least at the stage when the German Government indicated its opposition to British protection of any part of New Guinea beyond the south coast line. The failure to make a precise agreement with Germany as to the future of the rest of New Guinea may possibly be evidence of Foreign Office subtlety, rather than of ineptitude. The absence of such an agreement certainly allowed the Germans to establish their Protectorate without any effective opposition. But given the existence of the Gladstone administration’s policy at that time of appeasing Germany in minor colonial matters,\textsuperscript{17} it seems likely that, had the Germans announced their intentions in advance of establishing their Protectorate, Australasian opposition would not have been enough to have stopped British acquiescence in the German plan. By leaving the future of the north coast line and islands uncertain, the Gladstone administration could protest later that it had never agreed to the establishment of the German Protectorate and the sacrifice of Australian interests. There is more than a hint of a secret British deal with Germany over the partition of New Guinea in the Melbourne Argus’ polemic of 29 December 1884,\textsuperscript{18} (D27) but the real truth may be that, while some members of the British government may have anticipated German designs in New Guinea, they never admitted to doing so, preferring to be blamed by the Australians for ineptitude rather than for double-dealing.

Given the comparative novelty of German colonial policy,\textsuperscript{19} the Gladstone administration can hardly be blamed for virtually committing itself to the establishment of a Protectorate in Australian interests over most of eastern New Guinea, before consulting Germany. Once German opposition to this plan had been made clear, the British government had little choice of action, given its reluctance to antagonize Germany.

By April 1885, Bismarck’s short lived policy of reconciliation with France was at an end. Soon afterwards, his interest in colonial affairs declined.\textsuperscript{20} He thus had no particular interest in prolonging the minor controversy over the partition of eastern New Guinea, while the Gladstone administration remained anxious for a settlement. Accordingly, despite their mutual recriminations in January and February 1885, the two powers recognized each other’s protectorates, and in April of that year reached agreement on the general basis of the boundaries between them.\textsuperscript{21} (D35) In 1886 they defined their respective Spheres of Influence in Melanesia as a whole, including New Guinea, in a joint Declaration.\textsuperscript{22} (D36)

\textsuperscript{12}Eycx, op. cit., pp. 274-6, Taylor, op. cit., pp. 215-7
\textsuperscript{13}Scott to German Foreign Office, 9 October 1884, C-4273, op. cit., p. 13
\textsuperscript{14}German Interests In the South Seas, 1885, C.O. 422/1 (film 2685, at 437-446)
\textsuperscript{15}Granville to Munster, 7 February 1885, C-4273, op. cit., pp. 157-160
\textsuperscript{16}ibid., p. 159
\textsuperscript{17}Eycx, op. cit., p. 276
\textsuperscript{18}Reprinted below
\textsuperscript{19}Eycx, op. cit., pp. 276-7
\textsuperscript{20}ibid., p. 273
\textsuperscript{21}Arrangement Between Great Britain And Germany Relative To Their Respective Spheres Of Action In Portions Of New Guinea, C-4441, London, 1885
\textsuperscript{22}C-4656, London, 1886
In Australian eyes, the establishment of the German Protectorate involved the realization of their long-standing fears of foreign intervention in what was considered to be an Australian sphere of influence. It was a factor inducing unity of action amongst the Australian colonial governments and, ultimately, their federation. For it was seen by some Australian leaders that only with the establishment of an Australian Federal Government, with powers to conduct external relations, was there any hope of effective independent action in Australian interests in the Pacific. However, largely for domestic reasons, Federation was delayed until 1901, and by this time the partition of the Western Pacific amongst the great powers was almost complete.

23Deakin, op. cit., pp. 20 et seq.
24Ibid., pp. 165-6

D26 The Victorian Protest about German Intervention in New Guinea

There follows the text of a telegram sent from the Government of Victoria to the Victorian Agent-General in London on 20 December 1884. The Agent-General, Robert Murray Smith, sent a copy of this telegram to Lord Derby on the 22 December 1884, and reminded the Colonial Secretary of the resolutions adopted on 5 December 1883 by the Australasian Governments represented at the Colonial Convention held in Sydney, calling for British annexation of New Guinea, and pointing to the danger of foreign intervention in the Western Pacific.1

Other protests followed from most of the other Australasian Governments.2 Although it is very probable that these protests influenced the British Government in persisting with its objections to the establishment of the German Protectorate, it appears that Lord Derby asked the Foreign Secretary on 20 December to oppose the establishment of the German Protectorate, before he received any complaints from Australia. He had been told by the Foreign Office on 19 December 1884 that the German Protectorate had been proclaimed.3 At the same time he sought and obtained Foreign Office concurrence in the extension of the British Protectorate to link up with the southern boundary of German controlled territory.4

At last the end has come. Information received reliable source that Germany has hoisted flag on New Britain, New Ireland, and north coast New Guinea. The exasperation here is boundless. We protest in the name of the present and the future of Australia if England does not yet save us from the danger and disgrace, as far at least as New Guinea is concerned, the bitterness of feeling towards her will not die out with his generation.

SOURCE Further Correspondence Respecting New Guinea And Other Islands In The Western Pacific Ocean, C-4273, 1885, p.54

1C-4273, op. cit., pp. 53-54
2Ibid., pp. 61, 64 and 66

D27 The Melbourne Argus on the German Protectorate

The following attack on the Gladstone government is taken from the Melbourne Argus of 29 December 1884. Derby and Gladstone were pilloried for their assurances given prior to the establishment of the German Protectorate that foreign intervention in New Guinea was unlikely. The attack is directed more against the Imperial Government than against the Germans. There is more than a hint in the final paragraph that Germany and Great Britain had reached some understanding in 1884 as to the partition of eastern New Guinea, at the very time when assurances were being given to the Australian Governments that no foreign intervention was likely.

Four days previously, the Sydney Morning Herald published a similar attack on the British Government, whilst the governments of the Eastern colonies instructed their Agents General in London to protest to the Colonial Office and to demand that recognition be refused to the German Protectorate.1

1C-4273, op. cit., pp. 61, 64 and 66
The Argus polemic of 29 December 1884 was extracted and reprinted by a Melbourne firm. It is uncertain how widely it was distributed in this form, but one of the reprints found its way to the Colonial Office in February 1885, where it caused some annoyance. On 23 February, Sir Robert Herbert, the Permanent Under-Secretary of State, dismissed it as an 'impatient and unfounded cry' and 'unjustifiable'.

THE IMPERIAL PLEDGES

At the present stage of the New Guinea difficulty, it will be convenient to remind the public of the pledges made by the Imperial Government with regard to New Guinea, in order that the community may realise how far the Australian Governments have been misled, and may understand the grounds on which it is claimed that the cession of Northern New Guinea to Germany should be protested against. The number of the promises made by the Gladstone Government, and the forcible character of the assurances, may well take by surprise those who have only casually studied the subject.

'GERMAN COLONISATION NOT CONTEMPLATED'

The first alarm was given by the Royal Colonial Institute, the council of which body called the attention of Lord Granville, December 9, 1882, to proposals in the German press for the colonisation of New Guinea. Lord Granville referred the letter to Lord Derby, with a statement 'that he had no reason to suppose that the German Government contemplated any scheme of colonisation.' The official answer to the Colonial Institute is dated January 4, 1883, and is as follows:

'Lord Derby desires me to state that the proposal that a portion of New Guinea should be annexed by Great Britain is one which Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to entertain, and that his Lordship has no reason for supposing that the German Government contemplate any scheme of colonisation in the direction indicated by the Allgemeine Zeitung of the 27th November. I am, &c., JOHN BRAMSTON, The Secretary to the Colonial Institute.'

QUEENSLAND QUIETED

The articles in the German press came under the notice of the Queensland Government, as did also the fact that the German trading companies were buying up British-Australian trading stations in the adjacent isles. To prevent a possible catastrophe, Sir Thomas M'Ilwraith decided to bring New Guinea within the bounds of the colony, and he hoisted the British flag accordingly.

In his despatch of the 11th of July, 1883, refusing to recognise this annexation by Queensland, Lord Derby writes:

'The apprehension entertained in Australia that some foreign power was about to establish itself on the shores of New Guinea appears to have been altogether indefinite and unfounded, and the inquiries which have been made by Her Majesty's Government have given them the strongest reasons for believing that no such step has been contemplated.'

LORD DERBY 'FEARS NO FOREIGN OCCUPATION'

The Australian colonies united to support the action of the Queensland Government, and applied also that the adjacent groups should be included in a protectorate. On the 28th June, the various agents-general were received by Lord Derby and Mr Evelyn Ashley, the Under-Secretary, for a consultation of affairs in the Western Pacific. The agents-general applied that New Guinea and the New Hebrides and the other islands of the Australian coast should be brought under the flag. No reporters were present, but Mr Murray Smith writing to the Premier of Victoria, says:

'We had an opportunity of urging on his lordship, during a lengthened interview, the serious nature of the question, and the strong interest which the Australian colonies feel in the successful result of our application. I read your telegram, which gave full evidence of the Victorian sentiment, and I believe we left Lord Derby profoundly impressed with the gravity of the situation. He requested us to embody our views in a joint memorandum, which he undertook to lay before the Cabinet. Lord Derby expressed himself as not fearing any foreign occupation.'

The fact the Lord Derby and the Under-Secretary of State had officially informed the agents-general that foreign occupation was not to be feared was communicated to the public, and was used as an argument that the Colonial Office ought not to be unduly pressed. As one result of this and similar statements by the Imperial Cabinet, South Australia withdrew for a time from her joint action with the other colonies, being content to accept the averments as a pledge that the Imperial Government would check foreign settlement in the Western Pacific, and that no further pressure was necessary.

ASSURANCE REPEATED IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS

In the House of Lords, July 2, 1883, the Secretary of State was questioned by Lord Lamington, on the situation in the Western Pacific. Lord Derby replied:

'When I last spoke on this subject some weeks ago I told your Lordships all that I knew, but I knew very little. I knew nothing more than that a ceremony, purporting to be an annexation of New Guinea, had been gone through at the order of the Government of Queensland, and that an explanation of that singular and unusual proceeding was about to be sent home. Well, of course, before expressing any opinion upon the matter, it was necessary to hear the explanation that would be given. I have now received it, and I am bound to say that it does not throw much fresh light upon the transaction, and that it does not in any way satisfactorily account for the action that was taken. The explanation given comes to no more than this, that there were strong reports throughout Australia of the intention of some power, nobody knew what power, to seize upon some part, nobody knew what part, of New Guinea (a laugh). For these reports it does not appear that there was a shadow of proof forthcoming. They were simply a creation of the anxiety of the colonists in the matter, and as a matter of fact — and, of course, I have taken all possible pains to inquire — we are tolerably well assured that as regards the leading European powers, by the only one that was at all likely to interfere in such a matter no such intention was entertained.'

The remark of the Secretary of State that nobody knew what power was likely to seize New Guinea is scarcely accurate, as Germany had been expressly named to him. But the public statement that 'all possible pains' had been taken to ascertain the views of foreign Governments, and that no intention existed on their part to interfere with New Guinea, could not but make a considerable impression at home and abroad.

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2 C.O. 422/1, (Iilm 2685, at 352)
FOREIGN ANNEXATION AN UNFRIENDLY ACT

Lord Derby, in the course of this speech in the House of Lords, said:

'I can quite understand the Australian feeling as to the coast of New Guinea being a country which lies within the scope of British influences and interests. My lords, I purposely use vague and general language, but undoubtedly we should not view it as a friendly act if any other country attempted to make a settlement on that coast.'

MR GLADSTONE CONFIRMS LORD DERBY'S STATEMENT

In the House of Commons, August, 18, Mr Gladstone was questioned, and replied as follows:

'Mr A. Bartlett asked if the Australian colonies were to consider that the question of New Guinea had been decided upon by the Government unfavourably to the wishes of the colonies.

'Mr Gladstone,—With regard to New Guinea, I may repeat what I think has been stated on the part of the Government before. We have no reason whatever to apprehend any intention on the part of any foreign Government to make new territorial claims or establishments with respect to New Guinea. The whole of that subject remains exactly as it would have been in case the proceedings of the Government of Queensland had never taken place. The Hon. member is in error in saying that the views of the Australian colonies were laid before us by a deputation. The deputation had relation to the adjacent islands, and not to the great country of New Guinea. As to the real wish of the Australian colonies, it is perfectly open to them to make it known; and it will be the duty of the Government to give a respectful and careful attention to any expression of opinion they may make.

Mr Macfarlane inquired if it was to be inferred from the language of the Prime Minister that other Governments had given an assurance that they would not annex New Guinea.

Mr Gladstone.—I do not think I had better go into any further details. When I said we had no reason to apprehend any intention on the part of any foreign Government to make new territorial claims, the evidence was by no means of a negative character.'

The important passage is the one which we have printed in italics. Here we had the assurance of the Secretary of State that Australia had not to fear new territorial claims by any foreign power repeated and endorsed by the head of the Government. Incidentally the reply shows how ludicrous was the ignorance of the Gladstone Cabinet as regards the Australian position. So far from the Australian colonies not having communicated their views every Australian Government had addressed the Imperial Government on the subject. On July 2 Lord Derby had said:

'I had an official representation made to me by the agents of the various Australian colonies, speaking, and authorised to speak, in the names of their Governments to consider proposals, first, for the annexation of New Guinea; secondly, of the New Hebrides; thirdly, of the islands in the neighbourhood of New Guinea,' &c., &c.,

And on the 5th July, in the House of Commons, Mr Gladstone had answered a question as follows:

'Sir Michael Hicks-Beach—I wish to ask the right honourable gentleman whether any communication by telegram has yet been received from the Australian Governments in consequence of the statement which he made in the House on Monday?

Mr Gladstone—Yes, we have received a statement by telegraph to the effect that disappointment is felt in the Australian colonies at the hesitation shown by Her Majesty's Government to confirm the proceedings adopted by the Government of Queensland. What steps may be taken, or what proposals may be made, of course we are not in a position to state at this moment. That is the condition of feeling in most, if not in all, of the Australian colonies on receipt of the intelligence to which I have referred.'

FOREIGN POWERS 'EFFECTUALLY WARNED'

The agent-general had an interview with Lord Derby on the eve of the Sydney Convention, namely, 23rd November, 1883. In his official report the Victorian agent-general says that the Secretary of State was 'exceedingly guarded.' Mr Murray Smith adds:

'At the same time he admitted that the question of New Guinea was by far the most pressing, and he claimed that Her Majesty's Government had, by action taken in the course of this year, effectually warned foreign powers against attempting to occupy the island.'

'HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT ARE CONFIDENT'

In the last dispatch (dated 9th May, 1884) from Lord Derby on the subject the following words occur:

'Her Majesty's Government are confident that no foreign power contemplates any interference with New Guinea.'

AN ARRANGEMENT WITH GERMANY DENIED

In October last the Nord Deutsche Zeitung, a paper to whose utterances great weight is usually attached, made the statement that the British Government, in refraining from annexing the whole of New Guinea—that is, the part not occupied by Holland—had acted in accordance with an agreement arrived at between Germany, France, and England. The accuracy of this statement was made the subject of a question asked in the House of Commons on October 24. The reply of the Hon Evelyn Ashley was explicit. He said:

'It is not possible to define the inland limits of the British protectorate, as the country is unexplored and unknown, but it will extend as far as local circumstances may demand ... As to the question of an understanding with Germany as to her occupation of the northern part of the island, the answer is in the negative.'

A PROTECTORY PROMISED—FEDERATION RECOMMENDED

The first 'charter' despatch (dated 11th July, 1883) is the one already referred to, refusing to sanction the annexation of New Guinea by Queensland. In it the Earl of Derby apparently promises (1) that a federal union would remove objections to the proposed Australian policy in the Pacific, and (2) that if the colonies would vote a sum of money to meet necessary expenses, a protectorate which would secure New Guinea should be established at once. The text of the despatch is as follows:

'The affairs of the Pacific Ocean, and the political and commercial relations of the Australian colonies, with adjacent places and powers, are matters of the highest importance to those colonies, and require to be dealt with on broad and clearly defined principles, and by the united action of the colonies. Her Majesty's Government regret that it should be necessary from time to time to refuse asent to proposals coming from individual colonies for the assumption of large and serious responsibilities in regard to places and questions not specially concerning those of Her
Majesty's subjects who live in other parts of the empire; and I trust the time is now not distant when in respect of such questions (if not for other purposes of government), the Australasian colonies will effectively combine together, and provide the cost of carrying out any policy which, after mature consideration, they may unite in recommending, and which Her Majesty's Government may think it right and expedient to adopt.

In the meantime, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that they must continue to decline proposals for large annexations of territory adjacent to Australia, in the absence of sufficient proof of the necessity of such measures. In the case of New Guinea there is already in existence a jurisdiction which may be made to suffice for immediate exigencies. The powers of the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific extend to that island, and if the colony of Queensland, with or without assistance from other colonies, is prepared to provide a reasonable annual sum to meet the cost of placing one or more deputies of the High Commissioner on the coast, Her Majesty's Government will be willing to take steps for strengthening the naval force on the Australian station, so as to enable Her Majesty's ships to be more constantly present than hitherto in that part of the Pacific. A protectorate thus gradually established over the coast tribes would be capable of meeting the principal requirements of the case for some time to come, and would be free from the grave objections to which, as I have shown, the course now urged upon Her Majesty's Government is open. I have, &c., signed, Derby.'

THE AGENTS-GENERAL ACCEPT LORD DERBY'S CHALLENGE

The agents-general duly sent in the memorandum which Lord Derby had asked for after their interview of the 28th June, 1883. In it they pledge their Governments to pay the New Guinea contribution so soon as the Earl of Derby will state the specific sum required. They said:

"The Victorian Parliament has already passed an address, assuring Her Majesty that Victoria will share in the cost of the policy which is being urged upon your lordship; the Queensland Government has assured your lordship of its readiness to do the same; and the other colonies will also do their part. In the meanwhile, the first point for us to know is the amount which the Imperial Government would require to be provided for whatever action is contemplated by your lordship.'

THE PROMISE OF A PROTECTORATE RENEWED

The receipt of the memo of the agent-general was acknowledged by Mr Bramston on behalf of Lord Derby, in a letter (dated 31st August, 1883) which says:

"With reference to that part of your letter which treats of New Guinea, Lord Derby desires me to observe that he has at present nothing to add to the despatch which he addressed on the 11th July to the Acting Governor of Queensland. His Lordship concludes that after receiving that despatch the Governments of any colonies desiring to bear the cost of any measures which, as indicated in the two last paragraphs of that despatch Her Majesty's Government may be prepared to take, will confer together, and make those united recommendations which have been invited, furnishing also an effective guarantee for such expenditure as may be incurred.

THE FEDERATION PLEDGE

The views of the agents-general on the federation proposal of Lord Derby are deserving of quotation, because undoubtedly they are those of the people of Australia. The memorandum is dated 21st July, 1883:

"As regards the other question of concerted action between the Imperial and Colonial Governments, your Lordship expressed your opinion to us, at our interview with you, in the clearest terms, and repeated it in the House of Lords. "If," you said, "the Australian people desire an extension beyond their present limits, the most practical step that they could take, the one that would most facilitate any operation of the kind, and diminish in the greatest degree the responsibilities of the mother country, would be the confederation of the colonies into one united whole, which would be powerful enough to undertake and carry through tasks for which no one colony is at present sufficient." On the other hand, the colonies will not imagine that your lordship has invited them to a co-operation which is to be barren of results; and our Governments will feel assured that if they on their part pass the requisite appropriations, and combine for that concert with the Imperial Government which is necessary for any policy to succeed, they may rely upon the policy itself being adopted, and effect being given at last to the wishes which they have cherished for more than 30 years. In once more urging these wishes on Her Majesty's Government, they have not come as suppliants for some light favour, but as Englishmen to whom their country has given a great destiny, which must be kept from harm; desiring no new territories for themselves, but asking that the Queen's subjects may enjoy the blessings of peace and order where now the law has no terrors for the evil-doer; not seeking by a clearer policy to set new burdens on the English taxpayer, but wishing themselves to bear its cost; and welcoming with gladness an invitation to be associated with the Imperial Government in a work which must assuredly be done one day, and can as certainly be best done now.

We have, &c., SAUL SAMUEL, F.D.BELL, THOMAS ARCHER, R. MURRAY SMITH.

GUARANTEE BY THE SYDNEY CONVENTION

At the meeting of the delegates of the various colonies in Sydney, December, 1883, to deal with Lord Derby's proposals, it was unanimously resolved — 1, to protest against the further acquisition of dominion in the Pacific by foreign powers; 2, leaving the Imperial Government to adopt the wisest means to give effect to the resolution; 3, to emphatically demand the immediate incorporation of New Guinea; 4, to insist that the New Hebrides should not fall to France; and 5, to guarantee 'such share of the cost of giving effect to the above resolutions as Her Majesty's Government may deem fair and reasonable.'

LORD DERBY'S LAST

On the 9th May, 1884, Lord Derby sent to the Australian colonies a circular despatch, which has now become historical. It was a Cabinet document. After referring to the Sydney Convention and its resolutions, and the probability of delay in giving effect to the same, the Secretary of State continues:

'It may be desirable that your Government should consider with the Governments of the other Australasian colonies whether there may not be advantage in making provision for the intervening period in the manner suggested by me in paragraph 7 of my despatch of July 11 last to Sir A.H. Palmer.

As I then stated, Her Majesty's Government are confident that no foreign power contemplates interference with
New Guinea, but in absence of any controlling authority, it is always possible that the subjects of a foreign power might require the protection or intervention of their Government, and British subjects also, by coming into collision with the natives, or by setting up claims to land which would give much trouble hereafter.  

Her Majesty’s Government are disposed to think that there should be a High Commissioner, or at least a deputy commissioner, with larger powers of independent action, stationed in or near the eastern coast of New Guinea, and that he should be furnished with a steamship independent of Her Majesty’s naval squadron, and with a staff sufficient to enable him to exercise protection in the name of the Queen over those shores. The cost of this arrangement cannot be accurately estimated, as I have previously stated. But if one or more colonies will secure to Her Majesty’s Government the payment of a sum of, say, £15,000, during the year ending 1st June, 1885, they will be prepared to take immediate steps for establishing the High Commissioner’s jurisdiction, and will render to the contributing Governments an account of the expenditure incurred.  

This was the first time that any specific sum had been named by Lord Derby in connexion with the New Guinea protectorate, though repeatec applications had been made for the sum to be fixed. Immediately on receipt of the despatch the Australian Governments telegraphed their guarantee of the sum, and the proclamation of the protectorate was expected accordingly.

THE BREACH OF FAITH

Australia has complied with the Imperial conditions, but instead of a protectorate over the coast of Eastern New Guinea, the protectorate is only over a portion of the coast, though no hint of this division of the island between Australia and a foreign power was ever given to us. And despite his assurances that Australia was misinformed about Germany, Lord Derby has sanctioned the seizure by that particular power of the most fertile and valuable part of the island.

Source: C.O. 422-1 (film 2685, at 353)

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**D28  Granville’s Record of his Talk with Munster on German Imperial Aspirations**

In the Foreign Office, on 8 August 1884, Lord Granville, the British Foreign Secretary, and Count Munster, the German Ambassador in London, discussed Pacific affairs, making particular reference to New Guinea. A record of their talk is to be found in this despatch written by Granville on 9 August 1884, to the British Ambassador in Berlin, Lord Amphill. Lord Amphill was in poor health at this time and died later in the month.  

During a period of increasing strain in the relationship between Germany and Great Britain the presence of an experienced ambassador in Berlin would have been particularly useful, and some of the misunderstandings between the two powers which are evidenced in the following documents might have been avoided.

Granville’s recollection of his discussions with Count Munster on 8 August 1884 was challenged in a note written to him by the German Ambassador on 23 February 1885. In this note, Munster claimed that he had read an aide memoire to Granville on the occasion of their meeting making it clear that, in August 1884, it had already been decided to establish a German protectorate in New Guinea. Granville, in his record of the interview, does not mention this aide memoire. However, it would be a reasonable inference to draw from his own record of his discussions with Munster, that the establishment of a German protectorate in New Guinea was at least contemplated in August 1884. Nevertheless, Granville’s impression seems to have been that the German Government at that time had no settled plans for colonial expansion either in New Guinea or elsewhere in the Western Pacific.

My Lord,

The German Ambassador called upon me yesterday by appointment, and informed me that his government wished to take steps to protect more efficiently those islands, and those parts of islands in the South Sea Archipelago, where German trade is largely developed and is daily increasing. They desired, therefore, to come to a friendly understanding with Her Majesty’s Government as to the general principles to be observed for the protection of subjects of the two countries respectively, and also as to the limits of the islands and territories in which either country is most interested.

Count Munster added that the wish of the Australian colonies to settle on the side of New Guinea opposite to Australia, and to exclude from that part of the island settlements or establishments of other countries was regarded by the German Government as perfectly natural. But the German Government were of opinion that there are parts of the wild country on the north side of New Guinea which might be available as a field for German enterprise.

I observed to Count Munster that the statement which he had just made appeared to me to be of a general and preliminary character. I could only answer in a general way and from a personal knowledge of the views of the Colonial Office on these subjects.

I must repeat, I said, that we had no jealousy [sic] of German colonisation, unless in any particular case it should clash with the acquired rights of this country. I was quite aware of the important positions which Germany occupies in some of the islands alluded to. The German Government,
to. The British view, indicated in Scott’s note, was that the future of north-eastern New Guinea should be dealt with in less formal diplomatic negotiations.

Scott’s statement that the establishment of the British Protectorate on the south coast would be:

‘...done without prejudice to any territorial question beyond these limits...’

was the source of much conflict with Germany after the German Protectorate had been established. The German view was that these words made it clear that all of eastern New Guinea apart from the southern coastline and adjacent islands was available for German Imperial expansion.\(^1\) The British case was that these words were uttered in the context of a discussion recording an understanding between the two powers that the future of northern New Guinea should be dealt with in further negotiations, and that it had been agreed that neither power should establish protectorates in northern New Guinea pending the outcome of these negotiations.\(^2\)

M. Le Ministre,
With reference to the Note which I had the honour to

\(^1\) Munster to Granville, 28 January 1885, C-4273, op. cit., pp. 140-144
\(^2\) Granville to Munster, 7 February 1885, C-4273, op. cit., pp. 157-160

D32 The Germans’ Justification for Intervention in New Guinea

Following the announcement of the establishment of the German Protectorate in New Guinea, the British Protectorate was hastily extended to what is now the north-east coast of Papua, making the partition of the mainland coastline, the adjacent islands, and the New Britain Archipelago, substantially complete.\(^1\) The following note was sent from the German Embassy in London to the Foreign Office on 28 January 1885. It arrived at the Embassy in draft from the German Foreign Office earlier that month, under Bismarck’s signature, with instructions to Count Munster to send it in his own name to Lord Granville. The form in which it was eventually sent is substantially the same as in the original draft.\(^2\)

The Germans not only defended the establishment of their own Protectorate but protested against the extension of the British Protectorate to the north-east coastline. In making this protest they were able to point to British undertakings to restrict the British Protectorate to the south coast; and in defending their own Protectorate the Germans were able to point out that no firm agreement had been reached as to the future of the area they had protected.

COUNT MUNSTER TO EARL GRANVILLE

Since the undersigned had the honour of informing the Royal British Government, by note of the 26th December last,\(^3\) that the German Settlements on the north coast of New Guinea and in the New Britain Archipelago had been placed under the protection of His Majesty the Emperor, Sir E. Malet has addressed a note to His Majesty’s Government, under date of the 17th instant,\(^4\) to inform them that the Commodore on the Australian Station had received instructions to proclaim the Protectorate of Her Majesty in

\(^1\) Admiralty to Colonial Office, 19 January 1885, C-4273, op. cit., p. 88
\(^2\) Victoria, Parliamentary Papers, 1885, German Interests In The South Seas, pp. 50 et seq.
\(^3\) C-4273, op. cit., p. 59
\(^4\) Foreshadowed in Foreign Office to Malet, 13 January 1885, C-4273, op. cit., pp. 56-58
New Guinea, from East Cape to the Gulf of Huon, which it was understood may be looked upon as the boundary of the German annexations, and also over the Louisiade and Woodlark groups of islands.

It is at the same time observed in the note that the D'Entrecasteaux Islands were included in the earlier Proclamation.

The undersigned is instructed to answer that note as follows:

"After the negotiations which had been carried on between the two Cabinets on this subject since the beginning of August last, the Royal British Government cannot have been less prepared for the announcement of the German annexation than were the Government of His Majesty the Emperor in October last for the news that England had taken possession by Proclamation of the whole of the south coast of New Guinea and of the adjacent islands. By instructions sent to him by his Government on the 2nd August last, the undersigned was enabled to inform Her Majesty's Secretary for Foreign Affairs on the 8th of the same month that the Imperial Government intended to place under the direct protection of the Empire, as had been done in West Africa, so now also in the South Sea, those districts in which German commerce has become predominant, or to which expeditions, whose justification can be denied by no one, were about to be undertaken. At the same time the undersigned expressed the wish of his Government to come to an understanding with the Royal British Government about the geographical delimitation of the districts in the South Sea under the sovereignty or protection of either party, and generally concerning the principles to be applied within these districts by the one party to the subjects of the other party.

That by this an understanding concerning the boundaries of impending annexations was meant, follows from the fact that at that time districts under German sovereignty did not yet exist in the South Sea, but only districts in which German commerce predominated, or whither "expeditions had been dispatched."

As far as regards New Guinea, the undersigned designated the claim to the whole of that part of the island not under Dutch dominion, which had found loud expression in Australia since the appearance of a German newspaper article in 1883, recommending it for German colonization as totally unjustifiable. He made the observation that England had as yet made no legal annexation in New Guinea, and that there, as also in the Angra Pequena affair, the principle, which had been successfully maintained in common with England against Spain, ten years before, in the affair of the Caroline, Pelew, and Sulu Islands, was still considered in force by the Government of His Majesty the Emperor; according to this, only such titles to sovereignty are to be recognised as are actually enforced.

Although by this in the abstract the whole independent portion of New Guinea formed in principle quite as justifiable an object of German as of English undertakings, the Imperial Government desired nevertheless to recognise as justified the wish of the Australians that no foreign power should settle on the south coast of New Guinea in the region of the Torres Straits opposite Queensland.

As the Imperial Government contests in principle a natural right of the Australians to New Guinea and the other independent island districts of the South Sea, this step could not by any means indicate an intention of seeking the approval of the British Government for the contemplated acquisitions.

The object of that step was rather the wish to avoid the possibility of collisions.

After that the expedition to New Guinea and the New Britain Archipelago, which had been taken in hand in the spring of last year, and was under Imperial protection, had become known in Australia by consequence of revelations and attacks against the Imperial policy in the Budget Commission of the German Reichstag of the 26th June, it was to be feared that English subjects would endeavour to put difficulties in the way of this undertaking, and to provide against this was the object of the German action.

An exchange of views followed the conversation of the 8th August last, which terminated, as the Imperial Government has up till now understood the matter, with a distinct promise from the Royal British Government that they would limit their intended Protectorate in New Guinea to the south coast opposite Australia, and to the islands adjacent to that coast.

The Imperial Government has been, therefore, more painfully surprised by the contents of Sir E. Male's note of the 17th instant than the English Government could be by any step taken by this Government.

In the first place the undersigned has to protest against the assumption, that in the conversation of the 8th August last with Lord Granville, he limited the pretensions of Germany to the north coast of New Guinea to this, "that there were parts of the wild country on this coast which might be available as a field for German colonial enterprise."

On the contrary, he described the whole independent part of the north coast as the subject of a German colonial undertaking already in course of being carried out.

It is true that Lord Granville remarked at the time that Germany, at least up till then, had founded no Settlements in New Guinea.

His Excellency could not, however, forbear observing, on his side, that there were absolutely no English Settlements there.

The Secretary of State then remarked to the undersigned confidentially that negotiations were proceeding about New Guinea with the Australian Colonies, and that their conclusion in the sense of an annexation of the southern portion of the island was imminent.

A doubt as to the geographical extent of this territory was the less likely to occur to the undersigned, as Lord Granville, after having discussed the matter with the other English Ministers, on the 9th August made the following communication in writing:

"The extension of some form of British authority in New Guinea, which will be shortly announced, will only embrace that part of the island which specially interests the Australian Colonies, without any prejudice to any territorial questions beyond those limits."

The concluding words of this note, "without prejudice," &c., could not be otherwise understood, after the discussion which had taken place with the undersigned and his Government, than as implying that the English occupation

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5Granville's account of this discussion is C-4273, op. cit., at p. 4
6Scott to German Foreign Office, 9 October 1884, C-4273, op. cit., p. 13
7Recorded in C-4273, op. cit., p. 4
8C-4273, op. cit., p. 4
would not be extended along the coasts beyond these limits; but rather that the status quo ante should remain in force with regard to this coast, according to which it was legally res nullius.

The Imperial Government would have therefore fully justified in at once issuing the order to take possession of the whole north coast as far as East Cape. This, however, was not done, because it was assumed by Germany that the proposed Commission for the settlement of the geographical delimitation of the respective territories in the South Sea was to deal with the interior limits of the island as far as New Guinea was concerned. But the latter might offer more difficulties in the narrow eastern promontory than westwards towards the interior.

The Imperial Government were, therefore, all the more surprised when they received the note of the 19th September from Her Majesty's Charge d'Affaires in Berlin, in which it was notified, in contradiction of Lord Granville's communication of the 9th August, that the English Government intended to proclaim a Protectorate over all the coasts of New Guinea not occupied by the Netherlands, that is, over all the southern coasts, and over the northern coasts besides, with the exceptions of that portion of these coasts lying between the Netherlands boundary and the 145th degree of east longitude.

The observation in the note of the 19th September, to which reference was made lately in Sir E. Malet's note of the 17th of this month, and which runs as follows: "The 145th degree of east longitude has been fixed as the western British limit on the northern coast, in order that it should embrace the territory owned by the natives on the Macay Coast, whose claim for British protection has long been under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, and was one of the principal reasons which determined the Cabinet to advise the Queen to assume the responsibility of establishing a Protectorate in New Guinea," was no convincing reason for the Imperial Government to withdraw all claim to the fulfilment of the promise made to them by England on the 9th August. Many petitions have been laid before the Imperial Government, since the formation of the Empire, to occupy unclaimed territories, without their having decided, as is well known, till two years ago, to comply with some of these wishes.

The undersigned has already had occasion to communicate to Her Majesty's Government that this very expedition to the north coast of New Guinea was already projected in 1880, and since then has formed a matter of consideration for the Government of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor.

On the other hand, the English Blue Books shows that the petitions which the English Government wish now to lay stress upon have formerly been repeatedly rejected.

After the experiences which the Imperial Government have undergone in Angra Pequena, on the Gold Coast, and lately also in Zululand, it would appear as if the possession, too, of New Guinea had become an object of desire for England from the time that Germany turned her eyes in that direction. That it is a necessity for the Australian Colonies cannot be maintained in the face of the fact that their population, notably that of Queensland, is not yet sufficient to colonise even the coast-line of the Australian Continent.

The Imperial Charge d'Affaires, Baron von Plessen, was accordingly instructed on the 25th September last to call attention to the contradiction existing between the contents of Mr Scott's note of the 19th September and Lord Granville's promise of the 9th August. Hereupon the Imperial Government received to their satisfaction, in a note from Mr Scott dated 9th October the following declaration, which was in harmony with the promise made on the 9th August, "That Her Majesty's Government have carefully considered the communication which Baron von Plessen was instructed to make on the proposed limit of this Protectorate, and have decided that the declaration to be made shall limit the British Protectorate to the whole of the southern coast, including the islands contiguous to it instead of that which they had at first proposed. This will be done without prejudice to any territorial question beyond those limits." A few days afterwards the English Government published a Proclamation exactly answering to the above declaration, together with a rap showing the extent of the English Protectorate.

The Imperial Government was accordingly justified in assuming that the unoccupied northern coast of the island was not considered as no-man's land, but also that it remained open to the German Government to annex it with the full consent of the English Government, and that it only remained to fix the boundaries on either side in the interior of the island. The possibility of a misunderstanding or conflict of interests would thus be excluded. All formal obstacles seemed to them also now to be removed which might have stood in the way of the taking possession on their part of the coast-line from Huon Bay to East Cape. This view was confirmed by the following passage in Mr Scott's note of the 9th October, quoted in Sir E. Malet's note of the 17th instant: "It is with great satisfaction that Her Majesty's Government have come to an arrangement in which they find themselves in perfect accord with Germany."

It is all the more surprising to the Imperial Government to find, in spite of the above, that Baron Plessen's observation, contained in his communication of the 27th September, to the effect that, in the opinion of the Imperial Government, a friendly agreement on the subject of the delimitation of the regions in which the two Powers are interested on that coast might be arrived at by means of settlement by a Commission, is now interpreted as if Germany, in the hope of the issue of the proposed negotiations by Commission being favourable to her, had bound herself for an indefinite period, even if the negotiations lasted for years, not to take possession of any land in any part of New Guinea or elsewhere, while England considered herself justified in occupying the whole south coast of New Guinea, including the coast-line on the eastern extremity. This assumption is contrary to the first postulate of the friendly agreement proposed by the Imperial Government, that is, the principle that both nations have equal rights.

Then the Imperial Government were only lately made aware of the fact that such an expectation could seriously be laid before the Imperial Government on behalf of England,

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9C-4273, op. cit., pp. 11-12
10The British point of view in regard to these areas was set in Granville to Malet, 7 February 1885, C-4273, op. cit., pp. 153-156

11Plessen to Foreign Office, 27 September 1884, C-4273, p. 12
12C-4273, op. cit., p. 11
13ibid., p. 4
14ibid., p. 13
15Probably the map contained in Further Correspondence Respecting New Guinea and Other Islands, C-4217, London, 1884
16C-4273, op. cit., p. 12
through Mr Meade, English Delegate at the Berlin Conference, the object of whose proposals was to entirely exclude Germany from New Guinea.\textsuperscript{17} The opinion entertained by the Imperial Government of these proposals was communicated to her Majesty’s Government by the undersigned\textsuperscript{18} in consequence of the instructions forwarded to him on the 29th December of last year and on the 10th instant.

Mr Scott’s note of the 9th October contained the following passage:

“In case any questions should arise as to those districts” (of New Guinea) “which lie beyond the limit described, Her Majesty’s Government are of the opinion that it would, be better to deal with them diplomatically, than to refer them to the Commission which it is proposed to appoint with regard to the islands in the Pacific.”

If Her Majesty’s Government held the view that until the termination of the diplomatic negotiations no annexation was to take place in New Guinea, then it is they who, by proclaiming the English Protectorate over the whole south coast, including the easternmost portion of New Guinea, after themselves making this declaration, first acted in contradiction to their declaration. The Imperial Government had given orders for the hoisting of their flag so far back as August of last year, directly after the receipt of Lord Granville’s declaration of the 9th of that month, and protest on their part against the reproach of having acted in contravention of an undertaking entered into by them.

It appears clearly from the declarations of Her Majesty’s Government, and from the English official map already mentioned, that the English Protectorate was to be limited to the south of East Cape by a line coinciding with 152° east longitude (of Greenwich).

The statement made in Sir E. Malet’s note of the 17th instant, to the effect that the D’Entrecasteaux Islands, off the north coast, were already included in the Proclamation of a Protectorate made by England on the 6th November of last year,\textsuperscript{19} is equally at variance with the assurances given to the Imperial Government by Her Majesty’s Government on the 9th August and 9th October of last year, as well as with the text of the Proclamation and the boundary clearly marked on the officially published map.

This also disposes of Sir E. Malet’s inquiry, contained in a second note of the 17th instant addressed to the Imperial Government, as to the extent of the German Protectorate.

For the Imperial Government intended from the first to place under their protection the whole northern coast, from the Netherlands frontier to East Cape, with the adjacent islands.

It is not conclusive of the question, on how many spots on the north coast the Imperial flag has been hoisted as visible proof of the German Protectorate. This question on the part of the English Government is all the more remarkable, since, as is well known, the whole of the south coast of the island was in the same way placed under the protection of Her Majesty the Queen of England only by means of the symbolical hoisting of the flag, which was performed at only a few places.

\textsuperscript{17} Memoranda of Conversations At Berlin On Colonial Matters Between Mr Meade (Assistant Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office) And Prince Bismark And Dr Busch, C.4290, London, 1885

\textsuperscript{18} Probably on 14 January 1885, C.4273, op. cit., pp. 108-110

\textsuperscript{19} The D’Entrecasteaux Group was not protected on 6 November 1884; the proclamation of that date was amended after it had been decided to include the Group in the Protectorate: C.4273, op. cit., pp. 42, 43, 148 and 149.

The title of Germany to the whole of the north coast could not therefore be confuted, even if, in opposition to the understanding come to between the two Governments in August and in October, the English flag should now have been hoisted to the regret of the Imperial Government, on isolated portions of the north coast, and on the islands contiguous.

To allege as a motive of the action resolved upon by the English Government the desire to avoid any disputes which might arise from the absence of jurisdiction of the coast of New Guinea cannot be regarded by the Government of His Majesty the Emperor as sufficient; since already, in the course of the exchange of views which took place in August of last year, the question of the creation of a sufficient jurisdiction in the districts of the Protectorates of both countries was raised by the undersigned. In the absence of any English Settlement there can be no pressing necessity on this point on the side of England.

As regards the islands in the Archipelago of New Britain, the undersigned remarks that there was never any intention on the part of the Imperial Government to make the occupation of these islands the subject of negotiations between Germany and England.

For on these groups of islands there have existed, as was remarked already by the undersigned in his conversation of the 8th August, for some time past, exclusively German Settlements, and that, too, to an extent of which the tenth part would have formed sufficient protest to the English Government for long since taking possession of this archipelago.

If it should be objected on the English side that the Imperial Government ought to have come to an understanding with the British Government before this annexation concerning possible interests of England or her Colonies there, such an objection is not in harmony with the attitude of England towards Germany on the coast of Africa.

For the first news of certain German acquisitions there sufficed to bring it about that on the part of England, and that, too after the invitation to the West African Conference\textsuperscript{20} had been sent, measures were taken or were approved which had for object to cut off from the German acquisitions, by means of taking possession of large stretches of coast such as those between Bimbai and Lagos, even the possibility of a further extension in the Gulf of Guinea.

After these experiences the Imperial Government might possibly now also have to expect the news of the planting of the English flag in the New Britain Archipelago, had they not placed the Settlements there under their protection in time.

The undersigned is instructed to enter a protest against the Proclamation of the Protectorate of Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland (announced in Sir E. Malet’s note of the 17th instant, and according to a telegraphic announcement from Melbourne, already put into execution) over the part of the north coast of New Guinea between East Cape and Huon Bay, as also over the D’Entrecasteaux, Woodlark, and other islands adjacent to the north coast, as contrary to the promise of the English Government given to the Imperial Government in official despatches.

\textsuperscript{20} Held in Berlin, 1884-1885. It dealt with the relationships between European powers acquiring Protectorates in Africa: S. E. Crowe, The Berlin West African Conference, 1884-1885, London 1942
The Undersigned cannot admit that he made no communication in his conversation with his Excellency on the 8th August last respecting the German expedition which was being carried into execution, and respecting the intention of the Imperial Government to place under its Protection the acquisitions to be made by this expedition on the north coast of New Guinea. The aide-memoire, which he had the honour to read to his Excellency, contains, among others, the following passage:

Those parts of New Guinea where no sovereignty exercised de facto by a civilized Power exists are with equal justice the objects of German or of English enterprise.

The Imperial Government desires, in the interests of the subjects of both Powers, and for the prevention of friction between them, to come to an agreement with Her Majesty's Government as to the boundaries of the [sic] respective Protectorates upon this island also, and in general in the South Sea Archipelago. 7

If the Imperial Government had not had the intention of at once setting up its Protectorate over the north coast of New Guinea, an understanding with the Royal British Government as to the respective delimitation of their Protectorates in the independent portion of New Guinea would have been meaningless.

The Imperial Government felt the want of an understanding with England in consequence of the experience which they had very recently undergone in South-west Africa. It was of importance to them, by a timely announcement of their intentions, to guard, in the case of New Guinea, against any repetition of the doubts which, in the matter of Angra Pequena, had been entertained by the English Government as to the territorial character of the German annexation.

His Imperial Majesty's Government has been painfully impressed by the communication, contained in your Excellency's note of the 7th instant, 8 to the effect that the British Government, immediately on the receipt in London of the news that the German flag had been hoisted on points of the north coast of New Guinea, had issued orders to the English Commodore to hoist the English flag on those portions of this coast where there was no evidence of German annexation. 9 This took place, not only in opposition to the promise given on the 9th October, but even during the communications which were going on at Berlin with Mr Meade, by means of which the British Government must have been informed of the views and intentions of the German Government before the 19th December last. 10

Moreover, it appears, from a Report lately received by the German Government from the German Consulate-General in Australia, that according to an official announcement of the 16th December last the d'Entrecasteaux Islands, which are adjacent to the north coast, were in contradiction to the promise made in Mr Scott's letter of the 9th October, 11 incorporated by the Commodore in the English Protectorate over the south coast as early as the 6th Novem-

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1 Granville later denied that Munster gave him an aide-memoire on the subject of New Guinea, or that he had been told of the German expedition to protect north-eastern New Guinea: Granville to Munster, 14 February 1885, C-4273, op. cit., p. 162
2 The previous document
3 C-4273, op. cit., pp. 109-110
4 Ibid., pp. 140-144
5 Ibid., p. 13
6 Described in Granville to Amphiil, 9 August 1884, C-4273, op. cit., p. 4
7 Compare Granville's account of what was said, in his despatch of 9 August 1884, C-4273, op. cit., p. 4
8 C-4273, pp. 157-160
9 Ibid., p. 13
10 C-4290, op. cit.
11 C-4273, op. cit., p. 13
ber last. This Report from Sydney was the first explanation received by the German Government of the passage in Sir E. Malet's note of the 17th January referring to these islands.

But still graver is the fact that, while the conferences with Mr Meade were still going on at Berlin, the English Commodore received such orders that he could hold himself empowered to hoist the English flag not only in Huon Gulf, the southern point of which was, according to the communication mentioned by his Excellency as having been made by the Commander of one of the Imperial vessels to the Commander of the English ship 'Swinger,' to be regarded as the provisional boundary of the German Protectorate, but also within the boundaries of the German Protectorate, on Cape King William, and on several islands lying off the coast of that Protectorate, for instance, on Long Island and Rook Island, which to some extent form strategical points between the German Protectorates in New Guinea and the Archipelago of New Britain.

According to this method of procedure, German officers would be justified in sailing along the south coast of New Guinea, and planting the German flag everywhere where the English flag was not visibly floating.

The circumstances that the British Government had, in September last, had the intention of taking possession of the so-called Macleay Coast, of which Cape King William forms part, cannot be adduced as a justification of this procedure, after that the English Government had, in October last, expressly renounced any such intention.

The Undersigned is instructed to repeat the protest which he has already made against the annexations proclaimed by England on the north coast of New Guinea and on the adjacent islands.

The Imperial Government has instructed Consul-General Dr Kraeling, who has been appointed Commissioner for the negotiations on the South Sea questions, to proceed to London in a day or two. In so far as concerns territorial questions, however, the negotiations will only be able to begin with any prospect of success if the Royal British Government declares itself ready to state that the English annexations which have been made on the north coast of New Guinea do not prejudice the proposed agreement respecting the boundaries of the respective Protectorates on that island.

The Undersigned hopes soon to be able to notify to his Government that the Royal British Government, for the furtherance on its side of the desired agreement, has brought about the withdrawal of the English tokens of sovereignty from all points of the north coast of New Guinea. Such a measure should be all the less difficult since the erection of the English tokens of sovereignty at various points has been described by Lord Granville himself as encroachments upon the limits of the German Protectorate.

The Undersigned, &c.
Signed MUNSTER.

SOURCE C.O. 422/1; (film 2685, at 475)

D35 The Anglo-German Compromise of April 1885

The Gladstone Administration was not anxious to prolong the disagreement with Germany over the partition of New Guinea. Granville, even when asserting the righteousness of the British cause in his note of 7 February 1885, held out hopes of an early settlement. On 16 February he suggested a general basis for the demarcation of the boundaries between the two Protectorates, and made specific proposals to this effect in a note to Munster on 25 April 1885.

By this time, Bismarck was not anxious to prolong his needling of 'Professor' Gladstone, as he called him, on the New Guinea question, as he had ceased the cultivation of the French Government, to which his antagonism of Great Britain was incidental.

In the following note from the German Embassy in London, dated 29 April 1885, Granville's suggested boundary line was accepted. It does not appear to have involved any adjustment of any significance of territory already claimed by either power.

My Lord,
I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 25th instant, in which, with reference to the contents of your Excellency's note of the 16th ultimo, the proposal of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the settlement of the boundaries of the German and British Possessions in New Guinea is communicated.

This proposal is to the effect: that the point on the north-east coast of New Guinea, where the 8th parallel of south latitude cuts the coast, should form the boundary, and that the line described as under should determine the boundaries inland of the respective territories.

Starting from the coast in the neighbourhood of Mitre Rock on the 8th parallel of south latitude, and following this parallel to the point where it is cut by the 147th degree of east longitude, then in a straight line in a north-westerly

\[1\] C-4273, op. cit., pp. 157 et seq., at p. 160
\[2\] Arrangement Between Great Britain And Germany Relative To Their Respective Spheres of Action In Portions Of New Guinea, C-4441, London, 1885, p. 1
\[3\] Eyck, op. cit., p. 280
\[4\] Ibid., p. 273
\[5\] C-4441, op. cit., p. 1
The Second Anglo-German Declaration of 1886

The two Anglo-German Declarations of 1886 recorded the compromise reached between these two powers as to their respective spheres of influence in the Western Pacific. The creation of the spheres of influence did not, of itself, affect any immediate change in the government of any of the island groups placed within them. Its effect was to reserve the two areas for the future colonization of the powers concerned. ¹

However, a nation which was not a party to a treaty or agreement establishing a sphere of influence was not bound by it. Thus, France, which was not a party to the Anglo-German Declarations of 1886, could theoretically have protected or annexed any Western Pacific territory within the two spheres of influence, before it was actually placed under German or British rule. Sir Robert Meade, who represented the British Government in the negotiations leading up to the making of these Declarations, noted later that:

²The demarcation agreement between Germany and Great Britain was in the nature of a negative agreement by which each nation understood not to interfere with each other in certain quarters; but it did not give, and it did not claim to give, any rights to either nation as against third parties. This was I believe explained at the time to the French Government. But the world has no doubt regarded the agreement as notice that the two countries consider that they have special claims in the spheres defined in it.

The German and British Governments had agreed in 1884, prior to the establishment of their protectorates in New Guinea, to conduct discussions with a view to defining their respective interests in the Western Pacific, and these Declarations were the ultimate product of the negotiations which ensued. ³

The Declarations concerned only Melanesia, and did not deal with the, as yet, uncontrolled islands of Samoa, Niue, Tonga, or the New Hebrides, or places like Fiji in which colonial administrations had already been established.

The line of demarcation chosen commenced at the Dutch border in New Guinea and divided the respective protectorates of Great Britain and Germany emerging on the north-east coast of New Guinea near Mitre Rock, on the eighth parallel of south latitude; it then veered generally north-east leaving the Bismarck Archipelago and the Northern Solomons in the German Sphere, and the Southern Solomons in the British Sphere. ⁴

Choiseul and Florida, and a number of smaller islands, as well as Bougainville, were included in the German sphere of influence but the boundaries of the respective spheres of influence were adjusted following the ratification of the Samoa Convention of 1899. Choiseul and Florida and a number of smaller islands, south of Bougainville, were then added to the British sphere of influence, and later included in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate.⁵

In the first Declaration, each of the two powers agreed to avoid acquiring territory and establishing protectorates in the other’s sphere of influence.⁶

The second Declaration follows. It was signed in Berlin on 10 April 1886 by the British Ambassador, Sir Edward Malet and Count Herbert Bismarck, the German Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

¹H. Jenkyns, *British Rule And Jurisdiction Beyond The Seas*, Oxford, 1902, p. 1
²Minute dated 7 October 1892, C.O. 225-41 (film 2318, No. 4548 at 287)
³C-4273, op. cit., pp. 7-8
⁴*Declaration Between The Governments Of Great Britain And The German Empire Relating To The Demarcation Of The British And German Spheres Of Influence In The Western Pacific*, C-4656, London, 1886
⁶C-4656, op. cit.
DECLARATION between the Governments of Great Britain and the German Empire relating to the Reciprocal Freedom of Trade and Commerce in the British and German Possessions and Protectorates in the Western Pacific

Signed at Berlin, April 10, 1886

THE Government of Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Government of His Majesty the German Emperor, having resolved to guarantee to each other, so soon as the British and German spheres of influence in the Western Pacific have been demarcated, reciprocal freedom of trade and commerce in their possessions and Protectorates within the limits specified in the present Declaration, the undersigned, Sir Edward Baldwin Malet, Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary; and Count Herbert Bismarck, His Imperial Majesty's Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, having been duly empowered to that effect, have agreed, on behalf of their respective Governments, to make the following Declaration:

1 For the purpose of this Declaration the expression 'Western Pacific' means that part of the Pacific Ocean lying between the 15th parallel of north latitude and the 30th parallel of south latitude, and between the 165th meridian of longitude west and the 130th meridian of longitude east of Greenwich.

2 The Government of Her Britannic Majesty and the Government of His Majesty the Emperor agree that the subjects of either State shall be free to resort to all the possessions or Protectorates of the other State in the Western Pacific, and to settle there, and to acquire and to hold all kinds of property, and to engage in all descriptions of trade and professions, and agricultural and industrial undertakings, subject to the same conditions and laws, and enjoying the same religious freedom, and the same protection and privileges, as the subjects of the Sovereign or Protecting State.

3 In all the British and German possessions and Protectorates in the Western Pacific the ships of both States shall in all respects reciprocally enjoy equal treatment as well as most-favoured-nation treatment, and merchandise of whatever origin imported by the subjects of either State, under whatever flag, shall not be liable to any other or higher duties than that imported by the subjects of the other State or of any third Power.

4 All disputed claims to land alleged to have been acquired by a British subject in a German possession or Protectorate, or by a German subject in a British possession or Protectorate, prior to the Proclamation of sovereignty or of Protectorate by either of the two Governments, shall be examined and decided by a Mixed Commission, to be nominated for that purpose by the two Governments.

The claim may, however, be settled by the local authority alone, if the claimant to the land makes formal application to that effect.

5 Both Governments engage not to establish any Penal Settlements in, or to transport convicts to, the Western Pacific.

6 In this Declaration the words 'possessions and Protectorates in the Western Pacific' shall not include the Colonies which now have fully constituted Governments and Legislatures.

The present Declaration shall take effect from the date of its signature.

Declared and signed, in duplicate, at Berlin, this 10th day of April, 1886.

(L.S.) EDWARD B. MALET
(L.S.) Graf BISMARCK

SOURCE Declarations Between The Governments Of Great Britain And The German Empire Relating To The Demarcation Of The British And German Spheres Of Influence In The Western Pacific, And To Reciprocal Freedom Of Trade And Commerce In The British And German Possessions And Protectorates In Those Regions, C-4556, London, 1886