

2. Imperial Roots; the Boer War; WWI Early Background

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A. Setting the Stage for WWI: Imperialism at Work

(a) Roots

First, some background to the evolution of attitudes towards peoples' fair access to land for the purposes of their day-to-day subsistence living. That of course takes us back far far earlier than modern Imperialism, to the very beginnings of agriculture which followed the last ice age some ten thousand years ago. As outlined in Jared Diamond's account (*Guns, Germs and Steel* – see JD) until then human survival depended on the hunter-gatherer life style carried on by small groups which displayed a high degree of cooperation and a generally egalitarian approach to sharing and decision making, features essential to their survival. But then over the following several thousand years, by which time settled agriculture with its ability to develop surpluses of all kinds was well established, many of the larger societies evolved such as to allow greater and greater dominance by small elite cliques, this in many cases resulting in significantly unequal distributions of work-loads, shelter, food and other necessities.

That that did not necessarily follow universally may be surmised since even today small agriculturally-based tribal societies exhibiting an egalitarian and democratic way

of life can be found in New Guinea, around the Pacific, and elsewhere. Nevertheless, historically, as increasingly sophisticated agricultural and technological developments evolved within different societies across the world, the consequent benefits within those societies became more and more unevenly distributed. Indeed, such differences became a particular feature of the larger and more powerful societies recognized as empires - wherever these occurred.(RW) Thus it was a feature of the Roman Empire as it extended throughout Europe, Asia minor and North Africa until finally, through 'overstretch' and outrageous corruption at the top, it collapsed.(CJ)

And when the Romans lost their dominance of Europe, there followed the so-called 'manorial system', Europe divided into a vast patch-work of land holdings, each owned by a Prince or Lord. Such landlords had complete control not only of the land and its uses, but of the local population, the men, the women, the children. In return for certain benefits (access to land for tillage, drinking water, etc.) they were obliged to pay their Lord tribute - a proportion of crops harvested and artifacts created, as well as to provide labour and other services, including military. Obviously, for the ordinary family, life was hard or tolerable depending solely on the whim of the Lord, often none too benign. Unfortunately that remained the problem since there was no over-riding law or authority that insisted on fair play. And thus it remained, since over succeeding centuries the intent of many many landlords was less than fair minded when it came to guaranteeing people fair access to land for their subsistence.

On reflection, we might think such a transition surprising since in post-Roman Europe most leaders (along with their societies) had adopted Christianity; and of course Christian beliefs, sincerely held, would result in outcomes *more* egalitarian, not less. And yet the historical record shows quite the opposite, namely that the more extreme exploitative differences within societies, came from the more 'developed' of these professedly Christian States of Europe, societies many of which would later establish extensive overseas Empires in foreign lands.

I mention that at this stage because we might have assumed that what later occurred to peoples colonised abroad could have been justified in the mistaken belief that such peoples, being foreign, coloured, ignorant (couldn't understand us) lazy (didn't want to work for us) and non-Christian (just wouldn't 'believe' like us) must need help 'to uplift and improve themselves' - though in practice that always involved forms of help which included taking ownership of their land and control of their lives.(VK, JD, RW) But it appears the truth was otherwise for, beginning in the 12th century (i.e., well before the birth of modern Imperialism) what happened across Europe to most (if not all) landlord-dominated Christian populations, showed that the urge to control land for profit rather than human welfare, was the predominant motive, - certainly a motive stronger than simply wanting to 'look after their own folk'.

Thus in England, for example, the statutes of 1235 and 1285 permitted landlords to inclose and thus remove tenants from agricultural land. It was a process which allowed the land to be used for other purposes, soon for the displacement of people in favour of sheep, a process that, - along with the expanding Flemish wool trade, - accelerated

rapidly from the 14th century.(C, 1010) Indeed, it was a trend which, peaking in the 16th century, continued to the mid 19th, people from England, Scotland and Wales being progressively pushed off the land, reduced to poverty, in very many cases forced into over-crowded insanitary living conditions in cities and towns. Sir Thomas More, in his *'Utopia'* made the telling point that acts of land inclosure, forcing people into such desperate situations, led inevitably to increasing poverty, crime, disease and high death rates, - and hence to the serious breakdown of English society, a truth that may well have greatly bothered King Henry VIII.(TM, 26-33) Indeed, such practices were to become the foundation for the 'Social Problem' that pervaded English society through to WWI and beyond. (WCi, 362-3; BT, 356-60)

(b) The Mercantile System - and Adam Smith

Thus we see clear evidence that what we may term the Imperial mind set was home-grown, that its origins went back long before the Spanish and Portugese efforts to colonise, civilise and Christianise the 'pagan natives' of the East and, from 1492, the Americas. Given that, we can better appreciate its further elaborations in the thinking within certain large overseas-operating companies, the so-called Mercantile Companies. From the early 16th Century these increasingly powerful combines, based in one or other European country, were granted State monopoly rights and other special privileges (their Charters) which 'authorised' their occupations and trade in parts of the world being colonised. Thus, as documented by Adam Smith and others, their home governments authorised such companies to invade new territories, to acquire land and other resources, make laws and enforce these via their company's military and police forces – all without reference or compensation to that land's original inhabitants!(AS1; JS1, VK)

Many European states encouraged such activity. So not surprisingly there was much competition within the field, this frequently leading to wars between European powers contending for the same overseas territory and its original 'available-to-serve' inhabitants. Understandably too, there was resistance from these indigenous owners and occupiers, but with the aid of Europe's advanced weaponry and determination to establish *their* 'law and order' amongst the natives (not infrequently referred to as 'savages') cooperation could usually be assured, even to the point of establishing a thriving trans-Atlantic African slave trade from the 17th Century on.(ALH) Of course, the granting by governments of Charters authorising Mercantile Companies to engage in these kleptomaniac pursuits was, in the first place, a reflection of the compliant relationship existing between the state's most powerful special interests and their governments which saw themselves as representing primarily those interests.(see JH on 'Imperialism'; AS1; JS1; see also British Empire in Columbia Encyclopedia, 2nd. Edition, 1950, (C, 275)

It was that very situation which so greatly disturbed Adam Smith, the 18th Century economist and moral philosopher (AS2) who clearly saw how this company-to-government relationship had corrupted what, backed by the new-found wealth generated through the Industrial Revolution, could have underwritten an inspiringly just economic system for European life - including that of his beloved England. Thus, instead of giving

highest priority to the agricultural and other aspects of the nations' domestic economies, and ensuring that all citizens would gain a 'fair deal' through the exchange of their productive activities (goods and services), the greatest governmental effort and assistance (military and otherwise) went to support various overseas enterprises, including the pirating of foreign lands.(AS1; IB; JS1; JH) Through its contemporary manifestations, it is that broad issue which these essays will finally come to examine since, unfortunately, it remains all too relevant today. Meanwhile, let's examine some of our human past, - to see how such influences earlier shaped the world, taking the late 19th century 'carve-up' of Africa as a starting point.

(c) Africa – from 1885

As Anthony Nutting pointed out, until the mid 1880s the continent of Africa was but lightly occupied by the European powers. But then within a mere 20 years all but 4% of this vast territory was divided by the European states into colonies and dominant 'spheres of influence'. In that way France ended up with 4,250,000 square miles, Britain with 3,500,000, and Portugal, Italy and Belgium each with 900,000.(AN, 15-16) In the case of Belgium its acquisition, the so called Congo Free State became the private preserve of its King, Leopold II who shamelessly used it to force its Congolese inhabitants to produce for him prodigious wealth harvesting rubber for the rapidly-expanding European and American markets. The bizarre cruelties employed in this enterprise are well documented by E.D.Morel and in Sir Roger Casement's official British Consul Report of the day.(EM1; SRC)

Overall, however, it was Britain which by the end of the 19th Century had acquired the largest Empire of all. As the official figures revealed, by 1900 this small island state had come to control 13,142,708 square miles of foreign territory along with the lives of 366,793,919 of the world's inhabitants – with much pretence that it was 'for their own good'.(JH, 20; VK) And all this to a large extent through the on-going activities of its Chartered companies. In the following account of the build-up to the Boer War we see an example of the ultimate runaway effects of a Royal Charter granted to the British South African Company, a company led by private Empire builder, Cecil Rhodes. A comprehensive account of these events is given in Anthony Nutting's book, "*Scramble for Africa: The Great Trek to the Boer War*".(AN) As well, for an insightful background to the international scene of the time, leading through to WWI, see also "*The International Impact of the Boer War*", edited by Keith Wilson, especially Wilson's own chapter, "*The Boer War in the Context of Britain's Imperial Problems*". (KW)

B. The Boer War: Origins and Outcomes

As Nutting points out, as a largely tropical fever-ridden continent, Africa was for long sparsely occupied by Europeans, initially only as scattered Portuguese, Dutch, English and French coastal trading posts. In the south, however, with its temperate climate and fertile land, permanent European occupation by Dutch settlers occurred from 1652, followed in 1688 by Huguenots. The French intervened in 1781, but their troops withdrew three years later. Ten years on, the British occupied the Cape of Good Hope,

but by 1803, under the Treaty of Amiens, 'ownership' reverted to the Batavian Republic of the Netherlands. In 1806, however, the British occupied the Cape for the second time and by 1814 it was formally ceded by Holland, 5,000 British settlers arriving in 1820.(AN, 15-17)

Such pressure on the Dutch occupiers led to a series of Great Treks, the first of which began on 1836. Soon these earlier Dutch settlers had moved far inland, north-east as far as Natal where, by 1839 a Voortrekker Republic was proclaimed. But as time went on it was to become something of a cat and mouse game for in 1842 the British took over, occupying Natal in 1845, then proclaiming it a British Colony. Just three years later Britain claimed sovereignty over the vast territory between the Orange and Vaal rivers. There then followed some respite when in 1852, through the Sand River Convention, Britain recognised the independence of the Voortrekkers' Transvaal Republic and, two years later, the independence of their Orange Free State' (territory between the Orange and Vaal rivers).(AN, - see his Table of Events, 11-15)

(a) The Finding of Diamonds and Gold

All might have become more settled between Dutch settlers and the British, but significant disturbing factors came first with the finding in 1869 of diamonds in Grinqualand, and then in 1873 through the discovery of gold in the Transvaal. These discoveries attracted a new type of immigrant - the miner, the prospector, the financier, the speculator – who together would form an influential pressure group which, interacting with the South African Cape Government and (especially) the British home Government, would greatly complicate the situation. (AN, 11, 15; 18-21)

Indeed, in 1877 Britain annexed the Transvaal. As a consequence war broke out in 1880 but a year later, following the defeat of British troops at Majuba Hill (just north of the Vaal) the Transvaal regained its 'independence under British sovereignty'; and then, via the London Convention of 1884, it was granted full independence except for treaty rights with foreign states or neighbouring Bantu tribes. All this under British Prime Minister Gladstone.

However, after the opening of the rich Witwatersrand goldfields and the founding of Johannesburg in 1886, it was not long before a different British Imperial Government was giving a free reign to mining and development companies across Southern Africa, most significantly to the British South African Company (BSAC) established and led

from 1888 by the young Cecil Rhodes. In effect the British government of Lord Salisbury entrusted the task of Empire building to private companies, as when it granted a Royal Charter (October 1889) to the BSA Company. Alarming, undermining the safety and well-being of Africa (and the world) this Charter authorised the BSA Company not only to dig for minerals, trade, and build railways, etc., but to annex and colonise new territories. As stipulated in the text of Queen Victoria's Royal Charter, the British South African Company could "*..make treaties, promulgate laws, preserve the peace, maintain a police force and acquire new concessions make roads, railways,*

harbours or undertake other public works, own or charter ships, engage in mining or any other industry, establish banks, make land grants and carry on any lawful commerce, trade, pursuit or business.” (AN,187-191) In practice, that encouraged the ever-so-ambitious Rhodes to raise a private army (his ‘Pioneer Column’) to extend the Company’s land holdings – even though the Charter enjoined him “*...to protect native rights*”.

As Nutting commented, “*At the age of only thirty-six, Rhodes had created not merely a company but the foundations of a self-governing state in an area equal to that of the British Colonies and the Boer Republics in South Africa put together, and a state which was to last for thirty-three years until in 1923 the B.S.A. Company’s rule was replaced north of the Zambezi by a Crown Colony and to the South by a self-governing dominion.*” (AN, 191-2) Although a number of responsible English people, including senior public officials like Sir Henry Loch, Cape Governor and High Commissioner for South Africa, were unhappy with the situation, Rhodes had cleverly countered their influence by gaining the support of others, such as the Duke of Fife and Lord Grey who had accepted Rhodes’ invitation to become London directors of his Company.(AN, 191)

It was all a disaster for Britain’s relations with the native peoples of Southern Africa. With the Imperial Government’s message commending Rhodes to the Matabele King, Lobengula, stressing the Queen’s assurances that “*...they are men who will fulfil their undertakings and who may be trusted to carry out the working for gold in the Chief’s country without molesting his people, or in any way interfering with their kraals, gardens or cattle*”, - Lobengula allowed Rhodes’ Pioneer force to move north through his country to Mt. Hampden in Mashonaland (soon to be called ‘Rhodesia’).(AN, 197, 200) But that triumph for Rhodes was a tragedy for Lobengula, his country and his people, for within three years the Matabele King was dead and his Kingdom destroyed. As Nutting sums up Rhodes’ ‘accomplishments’ to this time, “*Thus, in this incredible year, 1890 - during which, for good measure, he also became Prime Minister of Cape Colony - Rhodes could, by virtue of treaties concluded with tribal chiefs, lay claim to a belt of territory stretching almost the whole way across Africa, from Gazaland on the Indian Ocean westwards to the Cunene and Cubango river basins, two hundred miles from the Atlantic sea-board, and from the Limpopo northwards to the regions beyond the Zambesi.*”, - in the process cutting the Portugese out of the deal for these northern lands that rightfully belonged to neither. (AN, 200-2; 203-)

(b) Rhodes Attempts Overthrow of Transvaal Republic

But by no means so easily satisfied, south of these northern lands Rhodes retained strong mining, financial and political ambitions which ultimately impelled him to attempt the overthrow of the Republic of the Transvaal headed by President Paul Kruger. Towards this end, wanting to replace Loch as Cape Governor and High Commissioner, he had engineered the return of the more pliable Sir Hercules Robinson, - Robinson soon arranging for the arrival of troop reinforcements. To further prepare the way, Rhodes visited England to drum up support for himself as Britain’s foremost Empire builder. Having confided in Prime Minister, Lord Rosebery, his plan for an armed raid to support

a 'revolution' to overthrow the Transvaal, he gained the approval of his BSAC directors for a large increase in Rhodesia's police force and for the purchase of substantial arms. Rhodes also managed to pose successfully as the champion of the Cape Dutch, gaining the support of their Bondsmen, led by the influential Hofmeyr. (AN, 298-9)

Central in his plans, Rhodes was aiming to take advantage of the known grievances of the Transvaal's immigrant population, its Uitlanders (outsiders or foreigners). These immigrants, representing some 90% of the 50,000 white population of the Rand (all recent arrivals involved in mining, two-thirds British - the rest French, German, American etc.) were denied many rights held by Transvaal citizens. Although the Boers, who had long since established the Transvaal, constituted two-thirds the Republic's population overall, they were greatly outnumbered on the Rand itself. And whereas the Uitlanders wished to be granted full citizen rights, to avoid outside domination, President Kruger was determined to continue their denial. (AN, 315)

For its part, the British home government, increasingly concerned that the strength of the Transvaal's mining-based economy was fast outstripping that of the Cape, was forever at pains to use the Uitlander's grievances as justification for incorporating the Republic into British South Africa. Since the numerous attempts to gain such a merger via economic pressure had failed, the British government was open to the idea of force. So when in July 1895, Rhodes sought the support of Joseph Chamberlain, Britain's newly-appointed Colonial Secretary, for his plan to back an uprising by the Transvaal's Uitlanders, he gained it – the only stipulation being that such advice not be officially acknowledged.(AN, 303-4; 308)

Encouraged, Rhodes went ahead with his plans, these materially supported by the home government, especially by Colonial Secretary Chamberlain. Thus his BSA Company was granted a block of territory at Gaborones, a suitable take-off point for the armed incursion to support the hoped-for Uitlander revolt. He also gained permission to concentrate the BSA Company's forces there and even closer, at Pitsani.(AN, 309; 318). But of course, ultimate success would depend critically on the attitude of the Uitlanders – and there was the great misunderstanding for whereas there were indeed genuine grievances, these immigrant miners were doing rather too well to become involved in such a venture. Less than half wanted to become permanent settlers – their aim being to make lots and move on. And there was plenty of money to be made. True they contributed most of the Republic's tax revenue, but at two shillings in the pound, that was far less than in Rhodesia where Rhodes' BSA Company took half of all mining profits. So Rhodes and his prime associate, Dr Jameson - the one to lead the raid – were, to put it mildly, hugely miscalculating.(AN, 313-7; 327)

So too was Britain's Colonial Secretary, Chamberlain. Jameson was appointed Resident Commissioner of Bechuanaland Protectorate's Pitsani area (AN, 318) and, Chamberlain agreed as well that he take control of the Bechuanaland Police – provided that Rhodes could assure him that Jameson was “*..working for the British flag*”, an assurance promptly given. As Nutting commented, “*..Rhodes saw no distinction between the Company and the Union Jack; and he unhesitatingly replied to the Colonial Secretary's cable that, 'I would not risk everything as I am doing, except for the British*

flag.’ “ But then as Nutting explains, “(Needless to say, when the Reform Committee informed him that most of the Uitlanders wanted a new government under the Vierkleur and not the Union Jack, Rhodes was equally ready for the assurance that he would not force the British flag upon them.)” (AN, 322)

(c) Attempt Fails but British Push to Takeover Continues, on and on!

In the final outcome, heralded by some last-minute but ignored warning signs and notwithstanding Dr Jameson’s earlier prediction that “..*anyone could take the Transvaal with half a dozen revolvers..*”, - (though in the event he and his raiders went in armed with Maxim machine guns!) - the invasion went ahead on December 29, 1895, but only to founder. Since all but a handful of Uitlanders had remained passive, the travel-exhausted raiders were soon rounded up and in prison. As Nutting noted, “*So ended too an era of five and a half years in which Cape Colony had been ruled, and Britain’s name and influence in South Africa all too frequently misused, to satisfy the personal ambitions and to further the financial interests of the man whom Kruger, not without some justice, had called the ‘curse of Africa’.*” (AN, 335-7)

And although, on visiting Pretoria, High Commissioner Sir Hercules Robinson apologised for the raid, neither Rhodes (despite being forced to resign as Cape Premier) nor Chamberlain would recognise any fault. Chamberlain simply sought to continue demands for concessions to satisfy all Uitlander grievances. Kruger’s response was to insist on the surrender of all arms smuggled onto the Rand, together with individuals involved in the conspiracy. When the Uitlander’s Reform Committee cooperated and some 60 were identified, Kruger handed them over to the British authorities for appropriate action. However, not the least abashed by recent events Chamberlain, deciding that Robinson was not nearly strong enough with Kruger, simply replaced him with a confirmed Imperialist, Sir Alfred Milner.(AN, 342-4)

Indeed, determined as he was to win, to have the Transvaal incorporated into a British South Africa Federation, Chamberlain intended to force Kruger either to give in or to fight. And as for the raid, his only concern was that his complicity not be revealed – especially as finally the British press had given it the thumbs down, - so much so in fact that Chamberlain himself had had to respond by terming it a “*disreputable blunder*”.(AN, 345) But for his part Kruger was standing by his call for revision of the 1884 London Convention: - to have it recognise the Transvaal’s full independence; to assure it would not become a ‘Protectorate’ of any power; to compensate for damage done by the raid; and to allow full incorporation of tiny Swaziland so as to provide the Boers with an independent outlet to the sea.(AN, 347)

But Chamberlain would have none of that, being instead preoccupied with the Opposition’s demand that for its complicity, the BSA Company’s Royal Charter be revoked. This issue was of special concern to Chamberlain since Rhodes had warned that if such was to occur he, Rhodes, would ensure that Chamberlain’s role in the affair was fully exposed. Accordingly, since not a few were well aware of Chamberlain’s role, elaborate arrangements were set in train for the necessary cover-up, a not uncomplicated

business. It was agreed that Jameson and the raiders would be tried and that Rhodes would step down from the BSAC board pending an 'enquiry' by a Select Committee of the House of Commons.(AN, 348-9) That was well prepared for. The BSA Company was allowed to nominate 2 Rhodes' supporters; the Opposition's leading player was known to believe in Chamberlain's innocence; Lord Grey (a potential critic) was appointed to an overseas posting; - and the position of Chairman was taken by Chamberlain himself! (AN, 352-3)

While Rhodes could expect to preserve the Company and its Royal Charter, it was not possible to conceal his central role in the conspiracy. So, as suggested by Chamberlain, Rhodes' defence was that it was all done in the belief that the Transvaal and Germany were in league, aiming to undermine British paramountcy in South Africa, a defence allowing Chamberlain to argue that, no matter how wrong the raid, the conspirators had acted from patriotic motives! A few witnesses went close to the truth regarding Chamberlain's key role in the affair, but without his official telegrams all was glossed over. (AN, 355-7) Notwithstanding the official whitewash, however, the British public and press were anything but convinced, it being referred to as the "*Committee of No Enquiry*", the "*Lying in State at Westminster*", etc. Internationally, too, the inquiry like the operation itself created a very bad impression. But none of this deterred Chamberlain from his underlying aim of asserting Britain's paramountcy throughout South Africa.(AN, 358-9)

Within South Africa, however, the recent raid had greatly polarised opinion. The Cape Dutch (Bondsmen) joined with the Liberals and formed the 'South African Party' which became utterly opposed not only to Rhodes but to Chamberlain and his South African policy. This meant that Chamberlain's hopes for local support within the Cape had to depend on Rhodes who, desperately wanting his own political resurrection, willingly cooperated.(AN, 366) Further, in March 1897, fearing the looming onslaught, a new treaty between the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free State endorsed their defensive alliance, stating their objective as the union of the two Republics.(AN, 370)

Milner took up his appointment as British High Commissioner and Governor of Cape Colony in May, 1897. (AN, 373) And, in February 1898, having fought the Transvaal election campaign on the slogan, "*Beware of Rhodes and keep your powder dry*", Kruger was returned as President by a huge majority. This greatly concerned Milner for as he saw the situation, since Kruger would not himself provoke a fight, British policy would need "*...to work up to a crisis*" by keeping up the pressure for reforms.(AN, 378) As Milner warned Whitehall, in the event of war one would have to "*...rely on British forces alone, more than half the white people in this Colony....are at heart fellow-citizens with the Free Staters and Transvaalers*". (AN, 378-9)

That situation was soon reflected in the Cape election which followed in June 1898. Rhodes, supported more or less openly by Milner, claimed that a 'Bond Government' would create a 'Triple Alliance' with the two Boer Republics, thus preventing British paramountcy in South Africa. Schreiner and Merriman, as leaders of the new South African Party (Bondsmen and Liberals) were especially singled out, being accused of

‘disloyalty’ to the Imperial aim of British supremacy. Rhodes attacked the Bond as a “*..little gang terrorising the country.*”, characterising Hofmeyr and the Bond, who for all of Rhodes’ five years premiership had been the mainstay of his parliamentary majority, as a “*..traitorous bunch of pro-Boer agents*”. (AN, 380)

Although it was a close call, the South African Party won, Schreiner (supported by Merriman and a heterogeneous Cabinet of Moderates and Bondsmen) becoming Cape Premier in October 1898. Wanting to preserve peace, Schreiner was at pains to persuade Kruger to concede reforms. The Cabinet at home also had similar peace concerns with some urging their Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, to restrain his Colonial Secretary from, as Balfour phrased it, treating the “*..South African sore ..by the free application of irritants*”. Concerned as well with other pressures on the far-flung Empire (e.g., the French at the Niger - and heading for Fashoda on the Upper Nile) Salisbury advised caution.(AN,381-3) However, in February 1899, attempting to again seize the initiative, Chamberlain vigorously protested the Transvaal’s dynamite monopoly, the mining industry’s principal grievance. (AN, 389)

(d) Jan Smuts (former Rhodes’ admirer) backs Transvaal’s Rights

Kruger resisted, insisting the Republic needed then more than ever to make good its armaments’ deficiencies, it having no sophisticated weaponry and even too few rifles and ammunition. However since only recently the Acting British Agent had warned Jan Smuts, the Transvaal’s new State Attorney, that “*..tired of Pretoria’s aims at independence*”, Britain would show that “*England was master in South Africa*”, Kruger was reluctant to reject the protest outright. Instead he offered alternative financial concessions to the Rand’s capitalists, offers which raised their hopes. An important factor here was Jan Smuts, this new State Attorney. You see, until very recently Smuts had been a fervent admirer of Rhodes - fully believing that he sincerely sought to have Briton and Boer working together, creating a new nation in which neither would seek to dominate. And although, following the Jameson raid, he had become completely disillusioned with Rhodes, - leaving the Cape and joining the Transvaal government, - he nevertheless continued to work towards genuine reconciliation between the two European groups. Hence his aim to see Kruger institute more concessions - and the Uitlander’s hopes of adequate reforms.(AN, 390-2)

These were also strongly promoted by the Cape Premier, Schreiner, who proposed a top-level meeting between Britain’s High Commissioner, Milner, and the Transvaal’s President Kruger, a conference which, at the invitation of President Steyn of the Orange Free State, came about in its capital, Bloemfontein.(AN, 395-7) As Nutting commented on the prospects of this crucial meeting, “*If on the British side there had been a real desire for a peaceful settlement, now was the time to grasp the opportunity. But as the telegrams between Cape Town and the Colonial Office showed all too clearly, it was not settlement but stage-setting which interested the Imperial Government.*” (AN, 398)

The conference was opened by Milner on May 31, 1899 with a demand for a reduction in the Uitlander’s residency franchise qualification to 5 years (applied retrospectively)

and for an increase of 7 seats in the parliamentary representation of the Rand. Kruger countered with proposals which included a franchise requirement of 7 years and 5 new seats in the Volksraad. He also wanted a system of arbitration that would include a neutral umpire. But this last Milner rejected absolutely, also standing by his demand for a 5-year residency qualification. And when this was refused, he switched to Chamberlain's alternative of 'Home Rule on the Rand', this causing Kruger to reflect that "*..it was this very question of Home Rule in Ireland which caused Chamberlain to withdraw from Gladstone's party and barter his Radicalism for his present jingoism*" as well as to exclaim, almost in tears as the conference faced collapse, "*It is our country you want*". (AN, 398-402)

Five days after the conference had begun, having cabled London to tell Chamberlain that his 'studiously conciliatory' approach had failed to secure agreement, Milner informed Kruger and Steyn "*This conference is absolutely at an end...*". Later, on reflection, he admitted his error in a long letter to Chamberlain, - yet was at pains to explain his impatience, contending that "*...if we went on and on, as the other party seemed inclined to do, we might get a little more and a little more, each new concession being made to appear very big, and finally feel unable after so many concessions to break off...*" Already sensing that this was the reality, Kruger, without further attempting any deals, moved unilaterally to have the Volksraad approve a Bill to implement his own Bloemfontein proposals for a 7 year franchise - a Bill the Cape Government regarded "*...as adequate, satisfactory and such as should secure a peaceful settlement*". (AN, 402-3)

But Chamberlain's response was to have published an earlier dispatch from Millner which described the Transvaal Boers as tyrants and oppressors and which openly demanded Britain's intervention. Indeed, in responding to the editor of *The Times* who had told him that public opinion had "*...veered round in favour of you and your policy*", Chamberlain commented "*I believe that, to some extent, we have been able to show that the question at issue is greater than any particular grievance or special act of oppression and that, if we have to go further, it will not be for the franchise, or Edgar or dynamite, but for the maintenance of our position in South Africa...*" and further, (regarding recent newspaper reports that Kruger was making additional concessions) "*..if these are really substantial, it will be practically impossible for us to find a casus belli in minor differences*". (AN, 404)

Thus documented, we see Chamberlain's line of thought. So not surprising his next move, namely to raise his terms, demanding that in future the Transvaal government submit any franchise legislation to him before it went to the Volksraad. Ignoring that, Kruger went ahead and on July 19 the Volksraad enacted law reducing the franchise from 14 years to 7, the Uitlanders to retain their original citizenship and be given 4 new seats for the Rand. With that, Chamberlain cabled Milner indicating it was not possible to fight over a difference of two years between what he had demanded and Kruger conceded.(AN, 405-6)

But Milner's response was to request British government authorisation to demand the setting up of a Joint Enquiry to determine whether the new franchise law met the need

for reform, a request agreed to and implemented on July 27. Further, to arouse 'patriotic' sentiment in England, Chamberlain in the House of Commons stressed that the issue was not a mere quibble about a seven or five year franchise – indeed Pretoria had to understand that “*..the great mass of the people of this country are prepared to support us, if the necessity should arise, in any measures we may think necessary to take to secure justice to the British subjects in the Transvaal*”. Similarly, in the House of Lords, Salisbury spoke with what Nutting terms 'unaccustomed belligerence', saying that the English in the Transvaal had been reduced “*..to the condition almost of a conquered, certainly of a subjugated, race*”. (AN, 407-8)

Supported by Smuts who, given the Transvaal's far-reaching concessions thought that the British were simply bluffing, Kruger was sorely tempted to reject all additional demands. However, urged by the Cape Dutch who greatly feared extreme danger from Britain's 'Imperial intent', he responded very differently. Kruger's proposal, conveyed through Smuts on August 13, was that, provided Britain dropped its insistence on British suzerainty and its demand for a Joint Enquiry, the Transvaal would concede a 5-year franchise (applied retrospectively and to become law within a fortnight), 8 new seats for the Rand (giving it ten out of the Volksraad's 26) – plus other concessions – together more than Milner had demanded at Bloemfontein.(AN, 408-9)

Clearly, if concessions was what it was *really* all about, then Britain had only to wait and see if the Uitlander's gained the promised benefits. But the truth was otherwise, for Milner's core complaint to Chamberlain was that the Transvaal was determined to deny “*..our claim to have a voice in their affairs as the Paramount Power in South Africa*”, - and that being so, he advocated an ultimatum from London supported by troop movements to the borders of the two Dutch Republics, plus a demand for the Transvaal's immediate disarmament. But this was not immediately acted on. Indeed, it looked to Salisbury that Milner was “*....spoiling for a fight*”, that more than enough had been done for the Uitlanders, “*..people whom we despise*”, but in whose name England has been committed to “*..act upon a moral field prepared for us by Milner and his jingo supporters*”. Accordingly, Milner was instructed to avoid further provocation pending examination of the Transvaal offer. (AN, 410; 412)

Then just a week after Smuts' offer to Britain's Transvaal Agent, its written confirmation appeared on August 20, - it too stressing that the new concessions were expressly conditional on Britain renouncing its claims to suzerainty and on ceasing all further interference in the Transvaal's affairs. That not only set off Milner but stimulated Chamberlain to proclaim that this “*...was the darkest date in the history of South Africa*”. At a garden party speech in his country home, omitting all reference to the “*immense concession*” he'd recently acknowledged, Chamberlain claimed that “*Mr. Kruger procrastinates in his replies. He dribbles out reforms like water from a squeezed spongeThe issues of peace and war are in the hands of President Kruger Will he speak the necessary words? The sands are running down in the glass.*” And two days later, on August 28, Chamberlain cabled Kruger, rejecting both conditions and making plain that Britain expected the Transvaal to grant, *unconditionally*, all the concessions it had offered.(AN, 412-3)

Having talked the matter over with Lord Salisbury, Chamberlain informed Milner on September 2 that, although “...*the technical casus belli is a very weak one*”, it had been agreed that an early Cabinet meeting would decide the terms of an ultimatum. Also that due to recent success in recruiting public opinion to the cause, “...*the majority of the people have recognised that there is a greater issue than the franchise or the grievances of the Uitlanders at stake and that our supremacy in South Africa and our existence as a great power in the world are involved. Three months ago we could not – that is, we should not have been allowed to – go to war on this issue. Now we shall be sufficiently supported.*” (AN, 414) All so revealing!

On the same day, Kruger, taking Chamberlain’s cable of August 28 as rejection of his proposals, announced cancellation of his 5-year offer, this to revert to 7 years and only 4 seats for the Rand, plus a possible Joint Enquiry. But this was a serious mistake since it gave Milner the pretext to claim Kruger’s 5-year offer had not been genuine and, in suggesting a possible Joint Enquiry, the temptation to believe that Kruger might surrender on the key issue of British suzerainty. On September 8 the Cabinet agreed to raise the number of British troops in South Africa to 22,000, these to come from India. And on the same day the wording of Chamberlain’s final offer to the Transvaal (later called the ‘penultimatum’) was approved. Beginning by repudiating the Republic’s claim to be a sovereign state, it went on to insist on 5 years maximum for franchise qualification, 25% of the Volksraad seats for Uitlanders, and a mandatory Joint Enquiry.(AN, 416-7)

On September 16 Pretoria accepted the Joint Enquiry but made clear it was not about to give in on the other conditions. At this stage, Smuts, by then realising Britain was not, as he had believed, simply hoping to bluff the Transvaal into submission, but intended to force the issue through war, sought to accelerate preparations for his country’s defence. Indeed, his advice to Kruger was for the Boers to seize the initiative by striking first – before British reinforcements arrived from India. Not that the Transvaal was ready, but Kruger agreed to general mobilisation of their Boer Commandos.

In the face of advancing war preparations on both sides, Schreiner, Hofmeyr and other Cape leaders, including Merriman, pleaded for both Briton and Boer to step back, Schreiner accurately predicting the disaster, - the evil consequences for all if war was waged. As a further desperate measure, 58 of the 111 members of the Cape Parliament petitioned ‘Her Britannic Majesty’, praying for a peaceful settlement.(AN, 418-20)

But all to no avail for on September 22, two days after Schreiner’s last appeal, Milner received his orders to break off negotiations and wait the promised British ultimatum. At this the Transvaal went into last-minute mobilisation, all males between 13 and 80 years being enrolled for service, the women required to take over the country’s farms. Along with the men from the Orange Free State, that raised 40,000 burghers, these to be supported by the Transvaal’s mounted police and a small corps of artillery from each Republic.(AN, 421)

Although the ultimatum was by then certain, it was delayed to allow for British reinforcements to arrive. And Kruger too had to delay until his Orange Free State allies were mobilised. On October 7 Britain announced that an army corps would leave England for South Africa and that army reservists were also being mobilised. The following day the first British reinforcements arrived in Durban. At that point Chamberlain and Milner prepared to deliver Britain's ultimatum within 48 hours. But on October 9 an ultimatum from Kruger, endorsed by Steyn, came first. Referring to the 1884 London Convention, the Transvaal's Note began by stating that Britain had consistently violated its obligations by interfering in the Transvaal's internal affairs; and that currently it was threatening the Transvaal with troop concentrations at its borders. Accordingly, certain assurances were required. First, a peaceful resolution through arbitration; second, that all British troops be withdrawn; third, the return home of all British reinforcements; and fourth, that no British troops on the high seas be landed in South Africa. And finally, if by 5pm, October 11 there had been no satisfactory response, the South African Republic would consider itself at war with Great Britain.(AN, 422-5)

At this news Chamberlain was said to be delighted, as was Secretary of State for War, Lord Lansdowne who commented "*...I don't think Kruger could have played our cards better than he has My soldiers are in ecstasies*". Within hours Chamberlain instructed Milner to tell the Transvaal government that their demands were "*...such as Her Majesty's Government deem it impossible to discuss*". And on October 12, the Boer forces struck simultaneously at Mafeking, Kimberly and Ladysmith. The second and far more terrible South African war had begun.(AN, 425)

(e) The Boer War- Conduct and Costs

Moving swiftly, Boer forces soon captured Mafeking (Bechuanaland) and laid siege to British garrisons at Ladysmith (Natal) and Kimberly (West Grinqualand) - British centres adjacent to the Transvaal and Orange Free State borders. For some months the Boers were successful, able to hold off invasion, but only until British reinforcements arrived in overwhelming numbers - reaching 250,000 within the year. In January 1900, Ladysmith was 'relieved' and likewise in May, Mafeking. And within a month, British forces had taken Johannesburg, Pretoria, the Transvaal capital, and Bloemfontein, capital of the Orange Free State. The two Boer Republics were then formally annexed by Britain, President Kruger becoming a fugitive in Europe where, to no avail, he sought international intervention.(MG1, 7-13; C, 1998)

At that stage, believing the war over, the British commander, General Roberts, returned home leaving General Kitchener in charge. However, the Boers, refusing to accept defeat, continued their guerrilla activities. Thus the Boers fought in small bands using the only way left open to them, - hit and run tactics. And since they had been born and grown up in the Transvaal, had intimate knowledge of the landscape and people, it was easy both to live off the land and find refuge, confident of support from their farming communities. The British government's response was to target that civilian support by burning farms and crops, slaughtering stock and impounding men, women

and children across the countryside. In practice, that meant herding these unfortunates into what the British termed “*concentration camps*”, crowded, unhygienic make-shift arrangements that guaranteed extremely high death rates from poor nutrition and infectious disease - especially the all-too-lethal Typhoid fever.

Thus the war dragged on into 1901. According to British historian, Martin Gilbert, when at the end of January Queen Victoria died, the new King, Edward VII was proclaimed “*Supreme Lord of, and over, the Transvaal*”, - but final ‘victory’ was to take a further 30,000 British reinforcements. And the publicity at home was anything but favourable, Liberal Party leader, Henry Campbell-Bannerman commenting, “*When is a war not a war? When it is carried on by methods of barbarism in South Africa.*” That judgement we can understand when we learn that the final toll within the camps resulted in the deaths of 28,000 Boer women and children as well as more than 50,000 Africans - these impounded in separate concentration camps to ensure they did not help on the Boer’s farms.(MG1, 37-9) And by the time the war finally ended in June 1902, a total of 22,000 British soldiers had died, over 6,000 in battle, a further 16,000 from enteric (Typhoid) fever. Gilbert quotes the number of Australian volunteers who had served as 16,000, and the number of those killed or dying of illness as 588. The number of Boer soldier deaths is not recorded.(MG1, 57)

All this caused some insightful impressions at the time, – though unfortunately insufficiently lasting. For example, when entering Parliament at the age of 26 Winston Churchill gave his maiden speech in the House on May 13, 1901, he warned:

“We must not regard war with a modern Power as a kind of game in which we may take a hand, and with good luck may....come safe home with our winnings. It is not that, and I rejoice that it cannot be that.”

A European war cannot be anything but a cruel, heartrending struggle, which, if we are ever to enjoy the fruits of victory, must demand, perhaps for several years, the whole manhood of the nation, the entire suspension of peaceful industries, and the concentrating to one end of every vital energy in the community.....”

“But now, when mighty populations are impelled on each other, when the resources of science and civilisation sweep away everything that might mitigate their fury, a European war can only end in the ruin of the vanquished and the scarcely less fatal commercial dislocation of the conquerors....”

“We do not know what war is. We have had a glimpse of it in South Africa. Even in miniature it is hideous and appalling.” (MG1, 51-2)

To a very significant degree that was insightful because aside from the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, the increasingly powerful modern industrial states of Europe had for long limited their wars to attacks on tribal or other weaker nations (like the Transvaal). So it is more than just interesting to have Churchill’s (sadly all too short-lived) insight into the inevitably devastating effects that war between major *industrial* Powers would have on all, regardless of which was said to have ‘won’. A great pity therefore that he failed to

maintain this belief beyond 1912, at which time he accepted the Cabinet post of First Lord of the Admiralty and began planning in earnest for the coming 'show-down' with Germany.(see WC1,i)

(f) Australia's Involvement

When the Boer war began in 1899, Australia was not a 'country', - but still a collection of British Colonies based on regions now our States. Yet by the end of 1899 several contingents of volunteer Australians were serving in supporting roles in South Africa. And by February 1900 a number of 'second contingents' were fighting under British command, 'liberating' Kimberly's diamond mines from a Boer siege, later helping to relieve the besieged Mafeking. As Craig Wilcox described their roles, they worked as "*...squadron-sized units of horsemen which swept the countryside, searching for an elusive enemy and seeking to deny him provisions and support by looting and burning his farms.*" (CW, 6-8)

Above I quoted some casualty figures for the war – the very high toll among Boer women and children, as well as among impounded African civilians, in addition to those suffered by the unfortunate British and Australian soldiers. Craig Wilcox gives lower figures both for the numbers of Australians serving (10,000) and for the deaths, namely 500, some half of whom died of disease.(CW, 8)

But whatever the final figures, we have to ask was the war, from anybody's viewpoint, worth the terrible human toll, the suffering, the lives lost on all sides, the economic derangements in the Transvaal and other economic costs?

(g) Self-defeating Outcomes

As will become clearer and clearer, in no sense was the war a success for any concerned. Indeed, as with every war, all directly involved suffered greatly, not only the Boer combatants and civilians, but so many of the foreign troops as well. Nor was it an effective way of attaining political ends sought by any of the warring parties.. As Nutting put it, "*...in all modern history there can scarcely have been a more unnecessary or more futile struggle than that which now engulfed South Africa and was to drag on for the next two and a half years.*" (AN, 425-6)

For a start, the interests of the Uitlanders (who had not wanted the war in the first place) were not in any way served, for it completely disrupted their operations and way of life. Indeed, the war threw their mining industry into economic depression, that causing serious unemployment, some thousands of Uitlander families ending up as penurious refugees. Nor did it serve the financial interests of British investors who were above all concerned with the bottom line, for they too lost out. And even for the British establishment, their technical 'victory' failed to provide the much-desired political outcome. Certainly at war's end the Union Jack flew over government buildings throughout South Africa, but as an economic phenomenon the Transvaal remained supreme and the Boer burghers, unimpressed by this so-called victory, retained their

language and sense of independence. Dutch tradition was there to stay.(AN , 429-30)

And the cost to Britain's international reputation was high indeed. Ultimately it had taken some 400,000 British troops (including a quarter of a million regulars) to subjugate the Boer guerillas and their supporting wives (frequently by the most brutal and cruel means) and the world, including many at home had taken notice. So when, by war's end, Balfour had come to office, he was more concerned to restore Britain's soiled reputation than to counter the traditional Dutch influence across South Africa. Thus although Britain had 'won' the war, Afrikanerdom was in effect to prevail, to win the peace. South Africa would be British in name but, in reality, Afrikaner in nature, with Afrikaner systems and policies, especially in native affairs, substituting for British. And with the Imperial Government soon relinquishing its claim to 'absolute suzerainty', republicanism and Afrikaner nationalism prevailed.(AN, 429-30)

C. So What was it Really all About? Britain's Slide into WWI

The Boer War's victory by Britain has been well described as 'Pyrrhic', for as Pyrrhus is said to have exclaimed after beating the Romans at Heraclea on the Siris in 280 AD, "*Another such victory and we are lost!*". Even so, as we shall see, Britain failed to learn and was to blunder on, helping to create and then take part in World War One, the war that, even with its so-called victory, would simply accelerate its own decline as a World Power. It's none too insightful leaders had been driven on and on by a combination of false pride in the vast Empire it had come to control, and a desperation as to its overstretch and relative weakness vis-à-vis other faster-growing powers - and fear of what might supervene. And all with blind determination not to admit any such possibility (well not publicly, anyway!).

Important clues to answering the question of why confidence was beginning to fail are found in Keith Wilson's paper.(KW) Wilson reminds us of the state of play of the world's Powers at the time Britain was being forced into 'considering its position', even well before the Boer War. Thus, as early as 1884, Britain's premier world position was being challenged both politically and economically. Politically, the Berlin Conference of that year had set down ground rules that recognized for up-coming colonial aspirants a place in the sun, - especially regarding the parceling-out of much of the African continent. And economically, according to the 1886 findings of a *Royal Commission on the Depression of Trade and Industry*, in addition to losing its lead in production to Germany, the US, and other states, Britain was "...beginning to feel the effects of competition in quarters where her trade formerly enjoyed a practical monopoly".(KW, 158)

And so, as subsequently occurred, notwithstanding Lord Salisbury's 1895 public announcement that "*In China there is room for us all..*", moves by Germany, Russia and later the US and Japan took no account of Britain's desire to have in China distinct 'spheres of influence' formally agreed to. For example, in 1897 Germany simply seized the port of Kiao-Chow and, despite Britain's hopes that Russia would agree to certain divisions of activity not only in China but in the Middle East and elsewhere, in 1898 the

Russians took over Port Arthur. These and like events in which its pre-eminent position was openly challenged, brought Britain's leaders to recognise the need for an ally or allies in the years ahead. With regard to its principal competitor, Russia, the idea of Japan arose in Joseph Chamberlain's mind as early as 1897. Thus in February 1898, Chamberlain wrote to acting Foreign Secretary, Balfour:

"If matters remain as they are our prestige will be gone and our trade will follow.... I should propose:

1. To approach the United States officially, and to ask an immediate reply from them the question – will you stand with us in our Chinese policy?

2. To approach Germany at the same time with the same definite questions." (KW, 159)

That approach, then made to the US, was rejected. The Chinese, unhappy with Britain since the Opium Wars - and the unequal treatment that followed - became more and more upset by the like behaviour of the other European powers. And when in 1900 this led to the Boxer uprising, while the Western Powers were engaged in 'restoring order', the Russians occupied Manchuria – where (for the time being) they remained.(KW, 159-60)

It was all of very great concern to those in the know. As Secretary of State for India, Lord George Hamilton, wrote to Lord Curzon on October 11, 1900, *"Unless we are prepared to risk something ourselves or to throw in our lot with some of the great European Powers we cannot expect them to stand in with us in protecting our own interests"*. Indeed, as he emphasised to Curzon in April the following year, *"As we now stand, we are an object of envy and of greed to all the other Powers. Our interests are so vast and ramified that we touch, in some shape or other, the interests of almost every great country in every continent."* That, he said, made it impossible adequately to withstand the pressures, *"...to deter foreign nations from trying to encroach upon our interests..."*. And this despite the fact that outlays on the army had risen more than those of any other great power, that those of the Navy had increased more than those of Russia, Germany and France put together.(KW, 160)

With its annexation of Cuba and the Philippines from Spain in 1898, the US had joined the 'Imperial Club'; the French were advancing in Morocco; and the Russians, remaining in Manchuria, were also putting pressure on Persia and Afghanistan. Indeed, to Britain Czarist Russia was the greatest concern of all. Some, like Lord Selborne, the Admiralty's First Lord, had advocated alliance with Germany, but since that might result in the obligation to fight a European land war against Russia, Lord Salisbury had remained opposed. Fighting colonial wars against poorly defended native peoples was one thing, but as the war in South Africa had shown, fighting Europeans (even poorly equipped ones like the South African Dutch) was a far more difficult and expensive operation. Indeed, C.T, Ritchie, Chancellor of the Exchequer, had reported in 1903 that while, since 1899, military expenditure had risen by 30 million pounds, and while that had been covered by a raised expenditure of 42 million, - 34 million of that had had to be

raised by special war taxes, – a non-sustainable device which could easily lead to severe social unrest.(KW, 161-2)

So, what to do? Must Britain abandon its long-held policy of ‘splendid isolation’? True, while such isolation had been (and remained) perfectly sufficient for defending its *own* shores, it would not be adequate if it hoped to retain all the lands, peoples and other resources it had gathered into its Empire.(see 2A(c)) And, if Britain was to abandon isolation, to whom should it turn for an alliance which could help preserve its Empire and ‘position’ in the world? Already the 1898 approach to the US had been turned down and, as mentioned, Lord Salisbury had been reluctant to consider Germany despite the interest of Chamberlain and others. Finally, at the turn of the 19th Century, there was wide agreement that the first aim must be to reach an ‘accommodation’ with Czarist Russia, the Empire’s principal threat throughout Asia.(KW, 163)

Early in 1901, Germany renewed an earlier proposal that Britain consider joining in its Triple Alliance. Concerned at the possible entanglements from such a full-blown commitment, Salisbury remained opposed, making the point that “*The liability of having to defend the German and Austrian frontiers against Russia is heavier than that of having to defend the British Isles against France*”. Others, including Foreign Secretary, Lord Lansdowne (who was working towards a defensive alliance with Japan) thought differently, but after considerable debate, by the end of 1901 all came to agree that an alliance with Germany would in fact not only *increase* Britain’s obligations but would further augment existing frictions with both Russia and France. Even Joseph Chamberlain was convinced, seeing a solution to Britain’s economic decline in a scheme for ‘Imperial Federation and Tariff Reform’. Similarly, Lord Selborne who, writing to Curzon in October 1903, came to the view that while “*...in the years to come the UK by itself will not be strong enough to hold its proper place alongside the United States, or Russia, and probably not Germany...the British Empire could hold its own on terms of more than equality.*” that “*...from the UK to Empire can only be done through the tariff*”. (KW, 163-5)

Of course, none of that could *guarantee* Britain’s premier status either within or outside the Empire. Yet, to some extent its position appeared to be improved with the signing of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in February 1902 for, as the French put it, the British had thereby found their “*soldier in the Far East*”. And the reality of that *seemed* vindicated when Japan’s forces soundly defeated Russia’s in 1905. Indeed, this very defeat was to place Britain in a much stronger bargaining position when later it came to reach its settlement with Russia. Before that, however, early in 1902 Britain had made overtures to France, though at that stage France’s Foreign Minister, Delcasse, remained firmly opposed to any agreement that did not include the British evacuation of Egypt. But what turned that impasse around was an internal collapse in Morocco which France, for its colonial purposes, wished to take advantage of. Indeed, it was this that enabled Britain to bargain the deal so well described by Churchill in his *The World Crisis*, (WC1i, 21-22; 31-33; see also 3B below) namely, that providing France would back Britain’s ‘position’ and claims over Egypt, Britain would support France’s colonial aspirations in Morocco.(KW, 165-6)

Of course, in common with all such colonial aspirations, neither France nor Britain had any rightful claim to control *either* of these countries or their peoples. All was done simply according to the ways of Imperial dealings. And, indeed, the implications of this deal were to lock Britain into an alliance system which, unbeknown to the British people and their parliamentary representatives, ended up driving them (via an 'inner Cabinet four) into their disastrous participation in World War One.(see WC1i, 46; 199; 203-5; and as outlined in 3B below).

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