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Paul Kruger and the Bechuanaland crisis : 1877-1885

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Paul Kruger and the Bechuanaland crisis: 1877-1885

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San Jose State University, 1989

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Ann Arbor, MI 48106**

PAUL KRUGER AND THE BECHUANALAND CRISIS: 1877-1885

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of History

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

By

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August 1989

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INTRODUCTION

There has been conflict between the British government and the Dutch-speaking settlers from the time that Britain first conquered the Cape. Both sides had different values and goals. The British always had a desire to be free from any land, whether occupied or not, while the Dutch always had a desire to be free from any land. Whenever economic conditions were bad, the British would often trek out into the interior to establish new settlements. The Dutch, on the other hand, would often urge to trek more strongly than those of the British.

Those Dutch settlers on the frontier often felt the urge to trek even further into the interior of Africa. By the 1850s, the most remote Dutch settlement in Transvaal, the area on the northern border of the British Empire, was established.

The British, which gained permanent control of the Dutch lands in South Africa in 1815, hoped to maintain the area as cheaply as possible. From Cape Town, the British used the three terms in the following order: "Boer", "Afrikaner", and "Afrikaner".

*"Boer" and "Afrikaner" are the names of the Dutch in South Africa. "Boer" is the Dutch word for "farmer". "Afrikaner" is a South African of Dutch descent who speaks the Dutch dialect, and the British used the three terms in the following order: "Boer", "Afrikaner", and "Afrikaner". "Afrikaner" was often spelled "Afrikaner".

their ships traveling to and from India. Britain had to monitor the activities of the Dutch in order to keep expenses to a minimum. Unruly Dutch frontiersmen instigated numerous expensive wars with the African natives, and Britain was then forced to send troops to keep the peace and to punish African and Dutch wrongdoers. The British Colonial Office was concerned that the African natives would unite and crush the Dutch in battle. Cape Town then might be in danger from both the Africans and the Dutch refugees, resentful because of the lack of British support. Although the British tried to keep the two sides apart, they usually supported the Dutch. The Dutch, though, were resentful of Britain for "overcontrol."

One Afrikaner who hated and resented the British from early on in life was Stephanus Johannes Paulus (Paul) Kruger. He became prominent in Transvaal politics in the early 1860s. Much of his support came from the ultraconservative and inflexible "Dopper" Boers who viewed the African as a natural resource to be exploited. Kruger was a wild man who would commit outrageous acts in the name of Transvaal righteousness. This endeared him to the "Doppers" who constituted a fairly high percentage of Transvaalers. Kruger would employ any tactic to crush anybody who opposed him. These tactics included threats, intimidation, promoting religious bigotry and nationalistic chauvinism, feigning righteous indignation, accusing his opponent of every malfeasance imaginable, and

brute force. He terrorized African natives to keep them pacified. He employed the above mentioned tactics to force President Thomas Burgers out of office in 1877, to force the British out of the Transvaal in 1881, and to almost stop all British trade and exploration in central Africa between 1881 and 1885.

The key to movement into the interior of Africa was a barren land called Bechuanaland which is on the Transvaal's western border. Between 1871, when Britain annexed Griqualand West because of the area's great diamond wealth, and 1881, Britain kept a small police force in Bechuanaland, but did not annex the area because it was too poor. Britain's Africa policy was not to claim territory unless occupation would bring immediate benefit. Before 1871 central Africa was relatively unimportant to the British. By 1887 central Africa was of paramount interest to the British, eclipsing even Cape Colony. British attitude changed radically in sixteen years. The change is most evident in the years between 1881 and 1885.

In 1881 Britain would not give any assistance to the Africans in Bechuanaland. In 1885 Britain sent General Sir Charles Warren into Bechuanaland with five thousand men to expel all of the Transvaal fillibusters and to proclaim British rule over the area. Britain, under one prime minister, reversed its position after four years. To understand why Britain reversed its policy after such a short

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CHAPTER I

BRITAIN AND THE TRANSVAAL: THE BURGERS' YEARS

Britain acquired control of the Dutch colony at the Cape of Good Hope in 1814 as a result of the Congress of Vienna. Britain wanted the colony to protect its ships that were bound for India. Britain had little desire to expand its influence into the interior of Africa at the time.¹ In 1836 a large number of Dutch colonists "trekked" eastward across the Drakensburg Mountains to escape British control. The Dutch left when Britain abolished slavery in the Cape Colony.² In 1837 the Dutch settlers declared their land to be the Republic of Natalia.³ Although Britain was generally loath to spend money merely to acquire new land, a military force was sent to Natalia in 1842, and the republic was annexed in 1843 and called the Natal Colony. Britain undertook this action to further secure its position in South Africa.⁴

¹John S. Galbraith, "The 'Turbulent Frontier' as a Factor in British Expansion," Comparative Studies in Society and History, vol. 2, no. 2 (1960), p. 163.

²David Harrison, The White Tribe of Africa (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), p. 14.

³Galbraith, "Turbulent Frontier," p. 166.

⁴Cornelius Willem De Kiewiet, British Colonial Policy and the South African Republics 1848-1872 (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1929), p. 4.

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Both republics maintained a
They were chronically short of money
frequent.⁹ The Transvaal's governme
than that of the Orange Free State.
were often in conflict with the cent
Pretoria. In 1864 civil war erupted
Various leaders claimed the presiden
tunately of short duration. The dis
Griqualand West, the area near the p
Kimberley, created a major crisis in
republic had any western border, and
mond fields.¹¹ Neither, though, cou

⁸Derryck Marshall Schreuder,
(London: Routledge and Kegan Paul,

⁹De Kiewiet, British Colonial

¹⁰Paul Kruger, Memoirs (London
1902), pp. 70-71.

¹¹De Kiewiet, British Colonial

the many prospectors who came, and both had discriminatory laws against mining and British subjects.¹² Britain annexed the diamond fields and a new border was drawn between the republics and British territory by Thomas Keate, the Lieutenant-Governor of Natal. The new British area was known as the "Keate Award Area." Shortly thereafter, Britain officially declared the area a crown colony called "Griqualand West." President Jan Brand of the Orange Free State and President Marthinus Pretorius of the Transvaal rejected British annexation.¹³ As Britain was much more powerful, both had to back down. Brand accepted a cash compensation, but the Transvaal legislature, the Volksraad, would accept no settlement. When Pretorius accepted a British offer, the Volksraad forced him from office.¹⁴

Pretorius' successor, Thomas Francis Burgers, was more successful in dealing with Britain, but he also would be forced out of office after only a few years. Burgers, a Reformed Minister and a Cape resident, had gained a reputation as a fighter.¹⁵ His struggles with the main body of the Cape Reformed Church concerned his more liberal

¹²John Nixon, The Complete Story of the Transvaal (London: Sampson, Law, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1885), p. 7.

¹³De Kiewiet, British Colonial Policy, pp. 287-289.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 289.

¹⁵D. P. Faure, My Life and Times (Cape Town: C. T. Juta & Co., 1907), p. 33.

doctrines and teaching. He successfully maintained his parish in spite of years of struggle with the Church leadership.

After Burgers became President, he continued a policy of ignoring British proclamations. In the Keate Award area, Burgers not only retained the land that had not been awarded to the Transvaal, he also expanded his frontier further westward, closer to the diamond fields.¹⁶ This greatly annoyed the British High Commissioner, Sir Henry Barkley.¹⁷ Barkley's desire to move against the Transvaal was tempered by the realization that Britain did not really want the land that Burgers had taken. Even the diamond field territory, later made the colony of Griqualand West, was of dubious value. The Colonial Secretary, Lord Carnarvon, had hoped that the Cape would annex Griqualand West. When the new Cape Prime Minister, John Molteno, declined annexation, Britain was left with an expensive new colony of marginal value.¹⁸ Barkley's threats against the Transvaal, therefore, were hollow.

Burgers' success with the British was not matched with internal success or financial solvency. The Transvaal was perpetually insolvent until much later when gold was

¹⁶Cornelius Willem De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor in South Africa (Cambridge: The University Press, 1937), p. 21.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 23-24.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 13-14.

discovered in Johannesburg in 1885. The any major resources in the 1870s precluded growth. Burgers did not really believe strove to make the Transvaal a regional satisfied to see the Transvaal remain me backwater. He proposed a large number of ernment-sponsored programs. The most in sive was a railroad to Delagoa Bay in Mo present day Maputo.¹⁹ If this railroad the Transvaal would have an outlet to th controlled by the British.

The liabilities of this project benefits. The Transvaal did not have an export that could not be found elsewhere the Transvaal's major products, were ple Colony and Australia. What the Transvaal duties on its imports could not have com cost of building the railroad. The Tran the finances to build such a railroad.²⁰ to come from Europe and the Cape Colony controlled by both the monetary situatio abilities to find creditors and keep the friendly. If Burgers lost the confidence

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 96-97.

²⁰Nixon, Story of the Transvaal

subjects or the bankers, the bottom would fall out of his project.²¹

John Nixon, a British historian and a Transvaal resident, wrote of the building of the railroad:

It is true that the republic was all but bankrupt, its people was one of the most isolated in the world, in fact and in sentiment, and the credit of the state was nil. But nothing daunted Burgers. . . . Burgers at once saw the railway made. He distributed commissions right and left, and, on the faith of great sums to come spent more than he had obtained.²²

South African historian C. W. De Kiewiet wrote that even after Burgers managed to obtain loans from France and The Netherlands, there was still a question as to whether the line could actually be built. He wrote, "And all the while there was not even a tolerably competent survey of the line. Burgers had no real proof that the line was feasible and no guarantee that the outlay would not have to be twice the estimates."²³

Burgers was not alone in wanting to advance his country by building a major railroad. The period of the 1870s was characterized by small countries building big railroads. It was not uncommon for a country to build a railroad, lose a lot of money, and be saddled with deficits for years, or even decades, to come. The purpose of these

²¹De Kiewiet, Imperial Factor, pp. 97-98, 104-105.

²²Nixon, Story of the Transvaal, p. 31.

²³De Kiewiet, Imperial Factor, p. 98.

railroads was to encourage internal development and to thoroughly exploit the country's natural resources. The primary beneficiary of the new railroads was the government and the leaders.

The Transvaal was unique among railroads nations. It had a very small bourgeoisie and most of these were really very wealthy. Most of the landowners were British, while the Afrikaners controlled the government and constituted most of the European population. The rural population did not want a large number of foreigners coming in and exploiting the land, as had happened in Natal and in Griqualand West. No part of it. Burgers' tax base was not large. Afrikaners have always had a reputation of not paying direct taxes.²⁷ The system of taxation in the Transvaal was neither just nor regular. Local magistrates had great leeway as to whom they would tax and

Burgers, therefore, could not always represent the rural people, who constituted a majority, and whose interests differed from theirs. This

²⁴Ibid., p. 96.

²⁵Nixon, Story of the Transvaal, p. 10.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 31-34.

²⁷Sir Henry Rider-Haggard, The Land of the Living (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1899), p. 10.

²⁸Ibid., p. 47.

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of Commandant-General had been abolished. Kruger, then, did not have the duty to lead the expedition. Furthermore, Kruger was seriously ill at the time and in no shape to even consider leading any military expeditions.³⁴

The Transvaal's method of raising an army, or commando as it was known, was very irregular and open to corruption. Local military leaders, known as Field Cornets, were in charge of raising men and supplies. They were allowed a great deal of latitude in choosing which men to conscript and whose supplies to commandeer. Those who were conscripted or who had goods commandeered were allowed to keep a percentage of the captured spoils. On potentially profitable, low risk operations, Field Cornets would choose their friends to serve. On dangerous, low profit missions, they could choose their enemies, strangers, or, best of all, foreigners.³⁵ All European men within the confines of the Transvaal could be called on to "defend" the country even though this was against international law and was done over the objections of the British government. The expedition against Sekukuni involved considerable hazard against minimal reward, and thus the Field Cornets chose accordingly. The morale of the largely British expeditionary force was very

³⁴Burgers, "Vindication," p. 8.

³⁵Sir James Percy Fitzpatrick, The Transvaal From Within (London: W. Heinemann, 1899), p. 49.

low to start with.³⁶ The men's morale sank lower when they saw what they had to accomplish to defeat Sekukuni.

Sekukuni occupied a rocky mountain that was miles from any farm or settlement.³⁷ The mountain would have been very difficult to storm. The casualties would have been unacceptably high. Surrounding and besieging the mountain would have been very expensive as supplies and ammunition would have had to be transported over a relatively long distance for some period of time. The men of the commando were not prepared to spend months wasting time and losing money for a cause that they did not believe in. Shortly after the beginning of the siege, Burgers' force was reduced considerably. His Swazi allies became dismayed when the commando confiscated a large number of cattle that the Swazi had captured from Sekukuni. The Swazi then withdrew from the siege lines, leaving the Transvaal commando to bear the brunt of the fighting.³⁸

Shortly thereafter, much of the commando also left the lines to return home. Burgers was left only with men from the Lydenburg area who were directly threatened by Sekukuni.³⁹ Burgers still had the advantage in firepower,

³⁶Burgers, "Vindication," p. 8.

³⁷De Kiewiet, Imperial Factor, pp. 100-101.

³⁸Ibid., p. 101.

³⁹Burgers, "Vindication," p. 8.

but any thought of quick victory was absolutely out of the question. Eventually Sekukuni negotiated a treaty with the Transvaal whereby he paid them a fine and handed over some cattle. The war had cost the Transvaal a great deal of money, money that it did not have. Burgers imposed a property tax of £10 per farm to raise money quickly and to attempt to maintain the economic viability of the Transvaal. He imposed this tax, though, without the consent of the Volksraad.⁴⁰

Many Transvaal burghers considered that the tax was illegal without Volksraad approval and refused to pay it.⁴¹ Burgers' first step in reaction was to attempt to disenfranchise those who did not pay the tax.⁴² Members of the Volksraad were among those who refused to pay Burgers' tax, and they did not accept disenfranchisement willingly.⁴³ They continued to vote in the Volksraad. Burgers, though, counted only the votes of those who had paid the tax. Neither the President nor the legislature was prepared to accept the authority of the other.

Two rival factions were vying for control of the Transvaal government. Those in the Volksraad who paid the

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Rider-Haggard, Last Boer War, pp. 46-48.

⁴²Burgers, "Vindication," p. 8.

⁴³Marjorie Juta, The Pace of an Ox: The Life of Paul Kruger (London: Constable, 1937), pp. 138-142.

tax were generally supporters of Burgers. Those who did not had generally favored Burgers' removal for some time. The later faction was led by Paul Kruger, the Vice President, and Piet Joubert, who had been the acting President while Burgers had been away in Europe. These men had only accepted Burgers as a compromise candidate in the first place.⁴⁴ They felt that they owed no loyalty to the President.

Kruger and Joubert were in a stronger position than Burgers. Burgers had a very small power base; he could not raise money or an army, and his enemies slandered him personally. Kruger delivered speeches to uneducated, rural people in which he stated that God was punishing the Transvaal for Burgers' liberal religious beliefs.⁴⁵ During this period of struggle, many political leaders seriously considered the possibility of British annexation. Even Kruger, who had the most to lose by British annexation, still favored some outside "interference." The interference that he favored was from the Cape Commerce Bank, the Transvaal's leading creditor. This bank was the first powerful lobby to call for British annexation. Kruger hoped that Burgers' railroad could be stopped and that Burgers could be pressured to make concessions to Kruger's faction.⁴⁶

⁴⁴Nixon, Story of the Transvaal, pp. 30-31.

⁴⁵Burgers, "Vindication," p. 8.

⁴⁶Ibid.

The major force behind the campaign for annexation did not come from Kruger, or even from the Boers, rather it came from the urban population of the colony, the workers. The former were largely British and the latter were largely imported from The Netherlands. The civil servants hoped that they would keep their jobs, as their salaries were months in arrears, which was doubtful if Kruger became President.⁴⁷

The British urban population in Pretoria favored annexation to improve their economic and financial position. They did not like being second class citizens. They were the primary beneficiaries of Burgers' railroad. If trade increased, their incomes would go up, they stood to make an increased profit under British rule, credit would be easier. They would not be subject to massive desertion, and there would be no thievery or confiscation on a major scale.

The urban British Transvaalers, more organized than their rural counterparts of Dutch origin, presented a petition to the High Commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner. In this petition, a majority of the Transvaalers favored annexation.⁴⁸ While this petition did not

⁴⁷De Kiewiet, Imperial Factor, pp. 10-11.

⁴⁸Fitzpatrick, Transvaal From Witwatersrand, pp. 10-11.

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⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Burgers, "Vind"

⁵³Ibid.

Transvaal should have a new constitution that would give the President more power. Shepstone proposed that the Transvaal adopt an American-style constitution and that a permanent two hundred man army be maintained. Burgers proposed something basically the same only that the President would have more latitude in appointments and finances. The Volksraad rejected both of these proposals.⁵⁴

Shepstone was losing his patience with both Burgers and the Volksraad. An article in the London Times shows how he was reacting to the problem:

Sir Theophilus Shepstone has informed the Chairman of the Transvaal Legislature that if things were not put into proper order he would annex the Republic into the British Empire, peaceably if possible, and if not, then by other means. . . . The President has made a speech in which he told the Legislature that things could not be worse, and he stated that unless law and order were properly maintained, interference on the part of the British government was inevitable. . . .

A telegram from Kimberley says that the condition of the Transvaal is wretched in the extreme, and if British intervention is not restored to [sic] there is a great possibility of a war between Black and White. The opposition sees no way of carrying on the government, and all are coming to the opinion that the Republic must be annexed to the British domains to secure the safety of the state.⁵⁵

The Transvaal population, especially those living near Pretoria, did not regard Shepstone as a usurper. In Pretoria he was warmly received. Sir Henry Rider-Haggard,

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵The Times (London), April 4, 1877, p. 5.

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is you--you members of the Raad and the Boers--who have lost the country, who have sold your independence for a soupe [drink]. You have ill-treated the natives, you have shot them down, you have sold them into slavery, and now you have to pay the penalty.

* * * * *

. . . I tell you openly, matters are as bad as they can ever be; they cannot be worse. They are bitter truths, and people may perhaps turn their backs on me, but I shall have the consolation of having done my duty.

* * * * *

Do you know what has recently happened in Turkey? Because no civilized government was carried on there, the great powers intervened and said, 'Thus far, and no farther.' And if this is done to an empire, will a little republic be excused when it misbehaves?⁵⁹

It is clear that Burgers made his decision to accept British overlordship with few regrets and a clear conscience. The British were far more able to solve the problems of the Transvaal than a scoundrel such as Kruger.

Kruger's biographers tend to gloss over Kruger's agitation against Burgers and the antipathy between the two men. One prominent biographer of Kruger, Marjorie Juta, wrote:

President Burgers, not remarkable for his staying powers, had lost heart. This sensitive and well meaning man was almost broken. . . . He saw escape from his troubles only in casting his burden on to the shoulders of Great Britain. . . .⁶⁰

Juta totally ignored the fact that Burgers had been elected President specifically because his staying powers were

⁵⁹Fitzpatrick, Transvaal From Within, pp. 17-18.

⁶⁰Juta, Pace of an Ox, p. 146.

remarkable. If his staying powers had not been so strong, Kruger would have had a much better chance of becoming President in 1877.

Kruger deserves much of the blame for the downfall of the Transvaal in 1877. In his haste to bring down Burgers, he brought down the whole country. If he had cooperated with Burgers in the war tax or the Sekukuni war, he would have inspired more British confidence in the viability of the Transvaal. Kruger would not even present a facade of unity in front of Shepstone. Kruger's greed for the presidency, indiscretion, and dirty tricks hurt him as much as they had hurt Burgers. If Kruger had been more discreet or agreeable, he might have won the presidency in 1877 anyway. Instead, he played right into the hands of Carnarvon and Shepstone.

CHAPTER II

BRITISH ADMINISTRATION IN THE TRANSVAAL

Britain ruled the Transvaal for four years before the Boers rebelled in 1881. British colonial officials did not regard the Transvaal as a valuable possession.¹ They only wished to keep the population pacified until an arrangement could be made with Cape Colony leaders whereby the Cape Colony would agree to form a confederation with the Transvaal.² In the meantime, the British Treasury was loath to grant the Transvaal large sums of money. There was never enough money in the Transvaal to meet government expenses, and only a few of the badly needed government-sponsored projects could be carried out. British officials were forced to rely on taxing the inhabitants of the Transvaal to obtain needed funds which bred resentment among the Boers.³

Throughout Britain's four-year rule, Paul Kruger never ceased to agitate against British rule. He wanted

¹Derryck Marshall Schreuder, Scramble for Southern Africa 1877-1895 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 82-85.

²De Kiewiet, Imperial Factor, pp. 132-133.

³Ibid., p. 145.

the British both to leave and grant all power to him. Kruger worked as strongly against the British as he had against Burgers. He encouraged discontentment among the rural people and resistance to British rule whenever possible. Kruger's aim was to establish himself as the only alternative to British rule.⁴ When Britain granted self-government to the Transvaal, Kruger would be the only man who had enough power to rule. Kruger's goal was not that difficult. Afrikaners had traditionally been ruled by a small number of men from prominent families.⁵ Kruger usually spoke against British policies while not saying how any of his policies would be different. He spoke in generalities, relying on bigotry and chauvanism to discredit the British.⁶

When Shepstone took over in 1877, Kruger's influence was at a low ebb.⁷ The Afrikaners were still unsure about Shepstone who had to prove himself worthy to the Afrikaners. He had to try to solve many of the Transvaal's problems, chief of which was to bring internal peace to the Transvaal

⁴John Fisher, Paul Kruger: His Life and Times (London: Secker and Walburg, 1974), p. 60.

⁵De Kiewiet, Imperial Factor, p. 260.

⁶Fisher, Kruger, p. 60.

⁷Stuart Clote, Against These Three: A Biography of Paul Kruger, Cecil Rhodes, and Lobengula (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1945), pp. 104-105.

by removing his major opponents from power. He had to improve the credit rating of the Transvaal. He had to show the common farmer and bureaucrat that he was sympathetic to their problems. To the surprise of many people, Shepstone accomplished most of his objectives in a short period of time. He dismissed the Volksraad and assumed dictatorial powers.⁸ This was the only way that Shepstone could rule. Kruger and his associates could still block any of Shepstone's moves in the Volksraad had Shepstone allowed this body to stand.

Shepstone was able to witness Burgers' mistakes and act accordingly with Kruger. Shepstone found a simple solution to solve his problems with the Transvaal's debt and with the Afrikaner masses. He spent money on them. His policy was to dole out money generously to those who might not have approved of the annexation.⁹ He also made it a point to pay all civil servants and former commando members whose salaries were in arrears. Cape Colony banks that had loaned money to Burgers' government were paid installments on the Transvaal's debt. Creditors were very happy. They quickly improved the credit rating of the Transvaal. Shepstone's first six months as Transvaal administrator were very successful.

⁸Fisher, Kruger, p. 64.

⁹De Kiewiet, Imperial Factor, pp. 141-142.

Although Shepstone's policy of freely spending money was very successful in the short run, it left him with no reserves to manage the Transvaal in the long run. There was not enough income in the Transvaal to support the kind of spending program that Shepstone had adopted. The British Cabinet had authorized £100,000 to be used to allow Shepstone some flexibility in dealing with the Transvaal's problems so that he would not be in bankruptcy and thus unpopular from the beginning. When his money was gone in six months,¹⁰ the Treasury was not prepared to give him another £100,000 so that he could squander it in only six months.

Shepstone's financial abilities were very limited. Historian C. W. De Kiewiet wrote, "If Shepstone's intentions were good his financial management was distinctly bad." In a footnote he added:

Shepstone's handling of the finances of the Special Commission before the annexation had already revealed him as an execrably bad manager. His accounts were so wretchedly kept that their publication would have ruined his reputation, even though they were thoroughly honest. For years he was a hated man in the Treasury. The Treasury's aversion to Shepstone actually affected their attitude towards South African financial questions. Even the Colonial Office which always admired him, had to admit that his accounts were 'disgraceful.'¹¹

By the end of 1877, Shepstone was left no choice but to impose a direct tax on the citizens of the Transvaal.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 141.

¹¹Ibid., p. 143.

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¹⁸Ibid., pp. 174-175.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 232.

²⁰Ibid., p. 206.

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²¹Ibid., p.

²²Harrison,

Since the Colonial Office was loath to spend money, they were opposed to both the Zulu War and Zululand annexation. They had made their position clear to Frere in the months preceding the beginning of the war. They did not specifically instruct Frere not to go to war with the Zulu, and so Frere did as he pleased.²³

The Zulu War greatly reduced Frere's prestige in the Colonial Office. Frere's powers were reduced; there were to be two High Commissioners--one to be responsible for the Cape Colony and Griqualand West and one to be responsible for the Transvaal, Natal, and Zululand. Frere retained his position in the former position, but he was succeeded in the later position by Sir Garnet Wolseley, a prominent general with considerable experience in Africa.²⁴

Wolseley's views were more in line with the new Colonial Secretary, Sir Michael Hicks Beach, than were Frere's. Hicks Beach assumed the position of Colonial Secretary in early 1878. He followed Carnarvon's policy of trying to avoid a major war in South Africa. In Wolseley, Hicks Beach had found a man who would not advocate immediate occupation or even garrisoning of Zululand as Frere and the Natal residents had favored.²⁵ Wolseley succeeded in

²³Schreuder, Scramble for Southern Africa, p. 79.

²⁴Ibid., p. 77.

²⁵Ibid., p. 80.

maintaining Zulu independence and saving the Treasury a great deal of money by dividing Zululand into thirteen small principalities.

Shepstone resigned his position as Administrator of the Transvaal in January 1879. The Colonial Office had limited his decision-making powers and delayed assisting him when conflicts arose. He had had too many crises to handle with too little support. The backlash from the Zulu War had further estranged him from his superiors in London. He was replaced by Sir Owen Lanyon, a soldier who had previously been the administrator of Griqualand West. Lanyon's appointment signified a major change in British policy. Under Shepstone, the Transvaal was treated like a potentially friendly colony that needed assistance. Under Lanyon, the Transvaal was treated as a liability from which Britain hoped to be relieved.

Hicks Beach had hoped that Lanyon would achieve in the Transvaal what he had accomplished in Griqualand West--the preparation of the territory for confederation with Cape Colony. Lanyon's functions were to maintain order and to try to make the finances look relatively good.²⁶ It was up to the Colonial Office to pressure Cape Colony into a confederation with the Transvaal. The Cape government would assume the cost of maintaining the Transvaal government if they agreed to confederation.

²⁶De Kiewiet, Imperial Factor, pp. 246-247.

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than he had had in 1877. Britain's South Africa policy had changed. The Colonial Office was now very anxious to arrange a confederation between the Transvaal and Cape Colony. With the increased support that he had received in 1878, Kruger believed that he might succeed in persuading the new Colonial Secretary, Sir Michael Hicks Beach, to withdraw from the Transvaal rather than insisting on confederation. Thus in 1879, Kruger again travelled to London, this time with Piet Joubert and W. E. Bok, former government members. Hicks Beach refused to withdraw British sovereignty, but he did suggest to Frere that a system of limited self-government be established. Frere believed that this was a bad idea because it would legitimize Kruger's demands and bring back the pre-1877 strife. Kruger might use the floor of the legislature as a bully pulpit. He would attempt to demonstrate British unpopularity. The Boers would have representative government under confederation, but this could only be achieved when they stopped their agitation.²⁹

Kruger believed that the British might change their minds when they saw how unpopular they were. He then called for a string of mass meetings. During the first meeting, some members resolved that Pretoria be blockaded and that independence be declared then and there. British authorities

²⁹De Kiewiet, Imperial Factor, pp. 238-239.

were not prepared to back down. After Shepstone's policy of befriending the Boers had failed, Frere, Lanyon, and Wolseley adopted a policy of presenting overwhelming force to Boer demands.³⁰ Historian John Nixon wrote that many men attended the mass meetings because of threats.³¹ Frere believed this; he met with the Boers in their camp and stated that he was not planning to withdraw British authority from the Transvaal. The Boers agreed to disperse after Frere agreed to send their requests to Hicks Beach.

Kruger and his associates called another meeting in December 1879. Wolseley, who supervised Lanyon very closely, did not allow himself to be intimidated by the Boers. He concentrated a large body of troops in Pretoria to prevent the Boers from thinking that they had any chance of bringing the government down by force.³² Wolseley then arrested Marthinus Pretorius, the former President who had led the meeting, but soon released him because Wolseley saw that he would have a great deal of difficulty convicting Pretorius on any charge.

Wolseley established British policy in the Transvaal, and Lanyon supervised the execution of Wolseley's policies. Wolseley did not face any crises of the magnitude that Shepstone faced. However, not all of his policies went

³⁰Ibid., p. 236.

³¹Nixon, Story of the Transvaal, pp. 110-119.

³²Rider-Haggard, Last Boer War, pp. 111-113.

smoothly. He was faced with three major problems in the Transvaal during his tenure as High Commissioner.

1. The proposal to establish an Executive Council to replace the old Volksraad was not received by a large number of Boers.³³

2. Wolseley's attempts to make Boer leaders swear an oath of allegiance to the British Crown were considered illegal by Judge Kotze, the Transvaal Chief Justice, on the grounds that the Transvaal had not been ceded to the British. The Boers had just assumed power, and therefore only they could replace the old laws passed by the Volksraad.

3. William Gladstone, the leader of the Liberal party in Britain, made an issue of the British annexation of the Transvaal in his campaign speeches in the campaign for the general election in 1880.

Wolseley's idea of an Executive Council, in which the Afrikaner people would have a share in government, yet one that would not constitute a break with the British administration or calling for independence, was a compromise. Wolseley would nominate members to the Executive Council, and the Boers would nominate members. In that way a balance of opinions could be maintained, without letting in any of the objectionable Boers.

³³De Kiewiet, Imperial Factor, pp. 248-249.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 248-249.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 250-252.

problem was that no prominent Afrikaner wanted to serve on the Executive Council. Minor Boer officials did not want to appear to be excessively friendly with Wolseley or Lanyon as their tenure was limited until the Transvaal could be united with Cape Colony in a confederation. At that time Kruger, Pretorius, or Joubert would again come to power. The minor official in question might then lose his office.

Wolseley tried to require Boer officials to take an oath of allegiance to the Crown in order to remove unco-operative Boer officials who had hindered Shepstone's policies by performing their duties very slowly. Wolseley knew that most Boer leaders who favored Kruger would refuse to take any oath to the Queen, and then Wolseley would be at liberty to remove them. Judge Kotze's declaration against this policy was later overturned in London, but by then, Wolseley had all but abandoned the plan anyway. What resulted from this policy was a further widening of the gap between those Boers who accepted the British and those who demanded that Britain withdraw.

The most important event to undermine Wolseley's authority was William Gladstone's bid to lead the Liberal party back into power in Britain. In his Midlothian campaign speeches, Gladstone attacked Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli's policy in southern Africa. He stated that the Transvaal never should have been annexed and all but

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³⁶Schreuder, Gladstone

³⁷Ibid., p. 79.

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for non-payment of taxes. In speeches to the Kruger emphasized the importance of wagons in tradition, stating that during the Great Trek wagon was his most important possession, and life often depended on his wagon. A wagon he symbolic value, he implied, that to impound of wagon was an affront to all Afrikaners.⁴² On 1880, a few days after the meeting began, Kruger the Afrikaners at the meeting to proclaim a p government and declare the Transvaal independent Britain. This action began the rebellion. British forces in Pretoria and Potchefstroom, realizing they were greatly outnumbered, retreated into fort and waited for reinforcements.

Apart from Pretoria, the major British force in the Transvaal was in Lydenburg, a small town east of Pretoria. Lydenburg was the headquarters of the British 94th (Connaught) Regiment commanded by Major Phillip Anthreuser. The 94th had a fighting strength of 1,000 officers and men. Lanyon ordered the 94th to move to Pretoria in order to concentrate all British forces in the Transvaal. On December 20, 1880, the 94th met a commando consisting of approximately two hundred men at Bronkhurst Spruit. The 94th was strung out a

⁴²Oliver Ransford, The Battle of Majuba (London: John Murray, 1967), pp. 23-24.

so that its full firepower could not be brought to bear against the Boers. The commando was fully concentrated both in front of the British and on both flanks. When Anthreuser refused to turn back, as the Boers had demanded, the commando opened fire. The 94th suffered heavy casualties and was forced to surrender shortly thereafter.⁴³

Colley, in Natal, immediately began raising troops for a relief expedition. By early January 1881, he had gathered 1,200 men. Most were Scottish Highlanders in the British army or Natal policemen. About 300 of his men, though, were sailors with the Royal Navy.⁴⁴ Colley concentrated his men at Newcastle and began marching toward the Drakensburg Mountains. A Boer commando of about equal size was concentrated and entrenched in a mountain pass called Laing's Nek. Laing's Nek was in Natal. The Boer commando crossed the border to fight Colley.⁴⁵

On January 26, Colley attempted to storm the right flank of the Boer line with cavalry. The cavalry advanced in two waves, but the second wave, fearing that the first wave had all been shot down, advanced slowly. In fact, the first wave had had great success and probably would have broken through if properly supported. By the time the

⁴³Ibid., pp. 25-29.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 38-40.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 38.

confusion had been cleared, though, the Boers had reinforced their right flank, and further attacks would have been pointless.⁴⁶

Both armies had long supply lines. The Boers, with a great advantage in cavalry, could disrupt Colley's supplies more easily than Colley could attack the Boers'. Colley's cavalry consisted of mounted infantrymen and policemen. Colley soon began using large infantry patrols to escort supplies from Newcastle. On February 8, a British patrol with 400 men and six cannon met a Boer cavalry patrol at Ingogo, behind the British lines. The British surprised the Boers at first, but the Boers charged into British lines and began a firefight. The Boers were able to send for reinforcements, and the British were not; thus the British suffered heavy casualties and would have suffered even further had the Boers not returned to their lines. The Boers had feared being surrounded in an unfavorable terrain.⁴⁷

Wishing to maintain the initiative even though sizeable reinforcements were arriving in Durban, Colley divided his force and sent a large contingent to occupy Majuba Hill overlooking Laing's Nek. The estimates on the number of men on Majuba Hill range from 365 to 728. Most

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 47-51.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 51-59.

estimates are near 500.⁴⁸ Colley brought no artillery or heavy weapons with him so he could not shell the Boers out of their positions. His intentions remain mysterious.⁴⁹ On the morning of February 27, a Boer force of about 450 men advanced silently up the northwestern face of Majuba Hill. The British did not expect this action and were very surprised when fighting broke out suddenly at the top of the hill.⁵⁰ British forces retreated and set up a line 400 yards from the northwestern face of the hill.⁵¹ Neither side moved for a few hours. Another Boer force moved from Laing's Nek up the eastern side of Majuba Hill. British forces scrambled towards the main army facing Laing's Nek. Many were shot down, Colley among them. At that point, the Boers could have advanced all throughout Natal and destroyed the rest of Colley's army, but a large rainstorm prevented any major movement.⁵² General Sir Evelyn Wood, Colley's temporary successor, met with Kruger and arranged a cease fire on February 28. This action pleased the Gladstone ministry since it was not prepared to spend a lot of money to regain a poor colony.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 79.

⁴⁹George Duxbury, David and Goliath: The First War of Independence (Johannesburg: South African National Museum of Military History, 1981), preface, p. vi.

⁵⁰Ransford, Battle of Majuba Hill, pp. 97-99.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 87.

⁵²Ibid., pp. 122-152.

CHAPTER III

BRITAIN AND THE TRANSVAAL: 1881-1883

After Colley's defeat at Majuba, the Gladstone ministry's primary aim was to control the damage to its prestige and honor.¹ Many Conservatives and imperialists wanted the ministry to restore British rule in the Transvaal at any expense.² Britain was certainly capable of doing this, but British colonial policy called for the removal of the Transvaal from Crown rule as soon as possible. Furthermore, even if Britain did regain control of the Transvaal, the Boers would remain hostile, and that hostility could possibly spread to the Boers in Natal and the Cape Colony. Gladstone, therefore, tried to strike a balance between renewing the war and abdicating all responsibility for the Transvaal. If Gladstone followed the latter action, Kruger would continue his hostile policies.

The Boers did not have the same agenda as Gladstone. They wanted total independence as soon as possible. Boer leaders felt that if they accepted anything less, they would

¹Charles Williams, The Life of General Sir Henry Evelyn Wood (London: S. Law, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1892), p. 128.

²Sir Evelyn Wood, From Midshipman to Field Marshal, vol. 2 (London: Meuthen & Co., 1906), p. 115.

be selling out their people.³ selves on their ability to ne was to lose face. It took Woodment with Kruger to determine the Transvaal's small number of British troops and a small commission would propose an arrangement in six ratified by both Parliament a

Kruger and Kimberley about the composition of the least two Afrikaner members to ment.⁶ Kimberley would only three man commission. This man Cape Colony Chief Justice, was second member, Sir Evelyn Wood sions to Kruger. Wood was co natives' fate if Kruger ruled Sir Hercules Robinson, the Ne

³Schreuder, Gladstone

⁴Kenneth Hall, Imperialism and South Africa 1880-1895 (Oxford Press, 1971), p. 47.

⁵Schreuder, Gladstone

⁶Ibid., pp. 174-175.

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It is somewhat ironic that Wood was not too enthusiastic about Wood's small, native Crown Colony. With Imperial government would have to give a piece of land. The purpose of this was to appease humanitarian internationalism more bargaining chips. The possibility that Natal might cooperate.

Wood's belief that British policy towards the African natives was based on a more humane policy than the recent history of southern Africa. Wood ignored Shepstone's views on the natives. Shepstone wanted to gain as much as he was hesitant about his attitude towards the natives. In some ways, the policy about by British rule actually benefited the natives. C. W. de Kiewiet wrote

Through the annexation of the Orange River, the deed was elevated to the status of a certificate of possession; many for the first time, and the frontier march against the weakening native settlement.¹²

Shepstone allowed the Boers to do away with the system of slavery called "apprenticeship" which was justified by saying that native

¹²De Kiewiet, Imperialism

trade.¹³ The "trade" was often tending cattle and sheep. Wolseley did not encourage injustices against the natives, but he had too many other crises with which to deal to effectively stop Boer activities. Wolseley spent much of his efforts planning a new system of government for the Zulu. Wolseley's plan was a disaster. It rapidly caused civil war in Zululand. It is unlikely that any similar solutions in the Transvaal would have met with any greater success. Wood was correct when he thought that British rule would be more beneficial to the natives than Boer rule. It was hard to rule worse than the Boers. Wood erred, though, when he believed that British rule would be truly beneficial to the natives.

Robinson and de Villiers were less ideological than Wood. They were often reluctant to back Wood's proposals fully. Wood soon became exasperated by the lack of support by his fellow commissioners and by Kruger's grandstanding. Kimberley was also losing faith in Wood.¹⁴ Kimberley wanted a quick, expedient solution while Wood wished to remain inflexible. By the end of May, when negotiations had not progressed, both Gladstone and Kimberley began to send more detailed and specific instructions to the commissioners concerning the areas that the government was willing to make

¹³Rider-Haggard, Last Boer War, p. 37.

¹⁴Hall, Robinson and South Africa, pp. 51-54.

concessions.¹⁵ Robinson and de Villiers welcomed this idea. The Liberal ministry in London now had the responsibility for negotiations. The Special Commission now played more of an advisory role. Kimberley insisted that the Boers accept a British resident in Pretoria to monitor Boer activities towards natives and British citizens, that the Transvaal pay some of its debt that had been incurred during British rule, that the Transvaal remain within the British Empire as a free state calling itself "Transvaal State" instead of "South African Republic," and that the Transvaal make no treaties with foreign governments without British approval.¹⁶

Kruger disliked these terms even though they left the Transvaal in essentially the same position as in 1877.¹⁷ The resident was essentially powerless as the treaty provided no sanctions against the Transvaal if it did not comply with the resident's order. Furthermore, Transvaal debt was less in 1881 than it had been in 1877. Kruger had won concessions on all of the major points, but he also wanted concessions on the minor points.

Wood pointed out that Kimberley's proposals would not work. Kruger would work to antagonize Britain even

¹⁵Schreuder, Gladstone and Kruger, pp. 195-196.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 192-206.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 216.

more than he had done during British occupation. Wood predicted Kruger's moves with great accuracy, but Kimberley could obtain no more from Kruger.¹⁸ Kimberley could expect no assistance from the Cape Colony which was fighting a losing war against the Basuto. The Basuto War shortly caused Sprigg's ministry, which had been very cooperative with Frere, to fall. Thomas Scanlan, who was not as cooperative as Sprigg, soon came to power. Scanlan's ministry was characterized by indifference to Imperial policies unless they would benefit the Cape Colony.

Kruger accepted Kimberley's terms. The final agreement was signed on August 5, 1881. Kruger later stated that he had a great deal of difficulty obtaining ratification of the treaty by the Volksraad. Kruger told Volksraad members that they had to accept this treaty or face a renewed war with Britain.¹⁹ To deal with the Volksraad's resentment, Kruger unilaterally added a preamble to the treaty.²⁰ The preamble stated that the Transvaal government disliked the terms of the agreement, but, for the sake of maintaining peace, would accept and ratify the Pretoria Convention.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 210-214.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 259.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 259-260.

Although the Boers seemed as though they would reluctantly accept the British terms, they would do nothing in their power, in fact, to subvert the agreement. The Transvaal began to violate the convention before even ratified. Boer leaders believed that they would be doing their people a disservice if they followed the convention agreements. They wished to maintain their hold by trekking into new lands. They moved in every direction but the westward movement was the most significant. The Trader's Road to the interior was close to the Transvaal border. When Boer marauders from the Transvaal claimed that included the Trader's Road, Kruger had the power to stop all British or Cape Colony trade with the interior. He also had the power to stop unfriendly explorers and missionaries from operating in the interior. At that point the Transvaal would have had the power to dominate central Africa. J. G. Lockhardt and C. M. Woodhouse, biographers of Cecil Rhodes, wrote:

Kruger would have liked to seal the North off from the outside world until his people were ready to move in and take it over. This was no new point it had been noted much earlier by Livingstone. Boers,' he wrote, 'resolved to shut up the interior until I to open it. We shall see who succeeds, they or

Kimberley and the commissioners expected violations of the convention, but they were surprised by the frequency and the audacity of the violations. 1

²¹J. G. Lockhardt and C. M. Woodhouse, Rhodes (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1963), p. 94.

Liberal policy, though, was to reduce
ment to southern Africa and to give
responsibility. Kimberley, therefore
unilaterally move against the Transvaal.
Robinson lobbied the Cape Colony government
an attempt to obtain an agreement to
Bechuanaland. Cape Colony would not
trade was hurt by Kruger's actions.
Cape Colony merchants made money by
marauders.

Westward expansion was very
vaal even in the short term. There
Bechuana chiefs, and the war presented
golden opportunity to steal native
it was traditional to make a profit.
Kruger was convinced that the British
prepared to forcibly stop him.

The wars in Bechuanaland began
before the Transvaal rebellion had
(Montshiwa), the most powerful leader
decided to support Britain in the 1880s.
Montsioa had had dealings with the
and Burgers had been in power, and
did not want him to remain paramount.
British and the Boers used their im-

allies in powerful positions in the African tribes. Montsioa's support came from the British.²²

Not all of the Baralong supported Montsioa on this issue. Two less powerful leaders, Moshette and Matchabi, supported Kruger's forces in the Transvaal war. The Boers recognized Moshette as paramount chief.²³ Both sides felt very strongly about their positions. When Matchabi would not support the British, Montsioa ordered him to vacate land that he, Montsioa, claimed was his. Whether Montsioa actually owned the land is questionable; in both African and European land claims, there was much land claimed but never occupied and different governments supported different claims. When Matchabi failed to vacate the land in dispute, Montsioa launched an attack on Matchabi's kraal at Reitfontein.²⁴ Montsioa's forces stole livestock, burned buildings, and reportedly killed a number of Matchabi's people. Reitfontein was within the borders of the Transvaal.

The Boers had the manpower to move their forces to the western border after their victory at Majuba. On two different occasions, the Boers raised commandos to expel Montsioa from Transvaal territory. On these occasions

²²W. T. Leyds, The Transvaal Surrounded (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1919), p. 84.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Papers by Command, c. 3098, pp. 25-26.

Montsioa had withdrawn from Transvaal territory before the commandos had a chance to engage. Montsioa's main settlement was at Maefking outside of Transvaal territory. The British sent Major E. H. M. Buller of the Rifle Brigade on a mission to the western boundary to try to negotiate a settlement between Montsioa, Moshette, and Matchabi. Buller made it very clear to Montsioa that the Imperial government would not support actions such as his attack on Reitfontein. Buller had thought that he had arranged a complete cease fire, but the conflict continued as there was much bad feeling on both sides.²⁵ By the middle of June, there was heavy fighting among the Baralong, and the Boers made it clear that they supported Moshette.

Montsioa had communicated with General Wood that Matchabi and Moshette had broken the cease fire and that his livestock were being stolen and his people murdered. He wrote:

. . . They followed the spoor as far as Roi Janjesfontein, and there were advised to go no further, as some of Matchabi's people were intending to waylay them. It is evident that they are taking the horses either to sell to the Boers or else to Thabancha in the Free State. I am still keeping my promise to remain quiet, but you who asked me to make this promise must send me protection against those who do not keep their peace that they made. It is very hard for me to see my cattle and my horses stolen, and to know that my people, who have gone to work for the English at Kimberley, are being murdered and plundered as they return. . . . What must I now do? Will you not send quickly and help

²⁵Ibid., pp. 18-36.

me, or shall I see all my horses taken. . . . The Government sent to all the natives to ask them to send labourers to them, and now they do not protect them, and prevent my punishing their murderers.²⁶

Montsioa had good reason to ask for British assistance.

Unlike the previous February, Montsioa no longer was the most powerful of the Baralong. Moshette and Matchabi could obtain arms and ammunition from the Boers from the profits of the sale of stolen horses and cattle. Montsioa's supplies of ammunition had dwindled.²⁷

The war had intensified by early October. Afrikaner allies of Moshette began to cross the frontier to assist Moshette and Matchabi in their plundering of Montsioa.

Montsioa wrote to Robinson:

A number of armed Boers were present on the day of the attack and helped to drive off stolen cattle; . . . I therefore demand, through you, immediate punishment of the persons who violated the line, and of the Boer authorities who countenanced it and were present. . . . The treaty you made with the Boers is no peace, they break it every day. . . . Therefore, I apply once more to your excellency to see whether the English Government intends to have convention carried out.²⁸

Furthermore, the Transvaal government moved freely in and out of Transvaal territory while not permitting any of Montsioa's forces to cross into the Transvaal in pursuit of Moshette. Only Moshette could carry out attacks.

²⁶Ibid., p. 61.

²⁷Parl. Pap. c. 3381, p. 43.

²⁸Parl. Pap. c. 3098, p. 99.

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Mankoroane had seen what the Boers had done to Montsioa under similar circumstances. He had observed that the British were not giving any assistance to Montsioa. It remains a mystery as to why Mankoroane would believe that he was immune to Boer fillibustering activities. Dr. Leyds, later to be Transvaal State Secretary, wrote that Mankoroane was controlled by two British advisors named A. Coyte King and Agenor Daumas.³⁰ These men had been appointed by Sir Charles Warren in 1879. By 1881, with the British pullout from Griqualand West and the Transvaal, these men had no real function. They only remained on the British payroll because nobody had noticed that they were still in their appointed positions. When Kimberley was made aware of their activities, he promptly removed them from office.³¹ Both men were scoundrels. Neither followed any instructions from Robinson when they encouraged Mankoroane to attack Massouw. Shortly thereafter, King deserted Mankoroane and began to assist Massouw's forces.³² The results of Mankoroane's rash actions were predictable. Boer "volunteers" made themselves available to Massouw, and these men began to cross the Transvaal frontier in ever increasing numbers.³³

³⁰Leyds, Transvaal Surrounded, p. 87.

³¹Parl. Pap. c. 3098, p. 106.

³²Leyds, Transvaal Surrounded, pp. 97-100.

³³Parl. Pap. c. 3381, pp. 49-52.

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Robinson sent Captain Ge conflict to investigate Transvaal oughly examining the situation to the conclusion that the Trans approved of Boer fillibustering, officials were directing the war Massouw with more assistance than also found that Moshette and Massouw completely under the control of power gave specific examples of Transvaal in a letter to Robinson:

Moshette has overpowered his territory with the exception Moshette is allowed to use 7 grazing ground for captured with ammunition by Transvaal present, about 80 Boers fight this number will shortly be actively going on in Transvaal three ship's guns with them; are members of the Volksraad have drawn up on behalf of with Moshette that, for their receive half the booty and a south of the Molopo river, expelling him. . . . David Moshette, is besieging Taung Mankurone. Massouw is also Transvaal burghers; he is receive half booty and a fair country, if they drive him out

If there had been any doubt in Robinson's minds of the Transvaal's complicity, Nourse's report was filed.

Yet, Kruger and Joubert contended that the Transvaal was in any way responsible for the actions in Bechuanaland. Kimberley could not prove that Joubert had any knowledge of what Transvaal was doing or that these two men were directly responsible. There was much circumstantial evidence of Transvaal violations, but no documents stating that they had received direct orders to commit any of the actions.

In response to Nourse's report, Robinson wrote a letter to Robinson with his own analysis of the situation in Bechuanaland. He attempted to justify the actions of the volunteers.

. . . . When I attempted to explain the propriety thereof their answer was that they had been driven off their farms by the war of 1880-1881; . . . that they were now by Montsioa, and been reduced to a state of poverty; that they would obtain no reparation for the damage; that by the line fixed by the Convention their lands and farms were partly in the republic and that they were constrained to hire themselves to Moshette, and to get back some of their lost property.

I, as strongly as possible, assured him that the law would be enforced against those who acted in violation of the Convention or violated the rights of the republic.

But I must not conceal from my view a difficulty exists which exists with by the Volksraad. . . . even a burgher when he leaves the

only punish the burghers who
burghers, and who on returning
are convicted of their misdeeds

Joubert totally ignored the fact
were recruiting all throughout the
Free State. Those men lost no time.
Joubert, in fact, did warn the volunteers
laws would be enforced, he did so.
The volunteers' artillery came to
would have been almost impossible
to know about it.

In May 1882, the triumvir
saying that the situation in Bechuanaland
ious, but that Britain was responsible.
Chaos erupted when Britain withdrew
tion was for the Transvaal to annex
maintain order.³⁸ Gaining control
been the goal of the Transvaal
fillibusters in 1881. Kruger stood
border, in the Transvaal's favor.
of the problems. Kruger had hoped
simply acquiesce as the subjugation
been presented as almost a fait accompli.

Colonial officials had heard of the
vaal before. The Transvaalers believed

³⁷Ibid., pp. 74-76.

³⁸Schreuder, Gladstone and

true western border was the Atlantic Ocean.³⁹ If Kimberley was to acquiesce in 1882, the Transvaal would attempt to annex more land shortly thereafter. To further complicate matters, land claims in the Transvaal were rarely surveyed, and it was easy for frontier burghers to claim ownership to almost any land. Before the annexation, some burghers had claimed sections of the Vaal River.⁴⁰

Robinson advised against Transvaal annexation of Bechuanaland, but his options of how to remedy the conflict were limited. Kimberley opposed any long term Imperial action due to its cost and relative lack of importance. Any short term Imperial action would solve the problem only until British forces were removed. Robinson's only real option was to ask the assistance of the neighboring governments. He proposed a Bechuanaland police force to be manned by men from the Transvaal, the Orange Free State, and Cape Colony. The Transvaal naturally refused as they would have been attempting to stop their own forces. The Orange Free State sympathized with the Transvaal and also refused. Cape Colony would not act without the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Thomas Scanlan, the Cape Colony Prime Minister, informed Robinson that the Cape Colony would not fight

³⁹J. A. I. Agar-Hamilton, The Road to the North (London: J. W. Arrowsmith, 1934), p. 169.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 172.

Britain's wars.⁴¹ Scanlan was heavily influenced by Jan Hofmeyr, a member of the Cape Colony Parliament. Hofmeyr controlled enough votes to bring down any government. He was in favor of continued Transvaal intervention in Bechuanaland. Hofmeyr's biographer, F. W. Reitz, the President of the Orange Free State from 1889 to 1896, wrote that Hofmeyr favored joint British-Transvaal colonization of Bechuanaland.⁴² Unfortunately, Kruger hated the English and would not dream of any joint colonization efforts. Either Hofmeyr was a fool, or Reitz was not totally honest. Robinson was temporarily powerless to take any action in regard to Bechuanaland; only a change in Imperial or Cape Colony policy would allow Robinson any freedom of action. From the middle of 1882 until the end of 1883, Robinson's only actions were continued protests to Kruger and Joubert.

In 1883 there were two minor changes of governments. In the Transvaal the triumvirate was dissolved, and Kruger defeated Joubert in the presidential elections. This changed nothing; Kruger had been the most powerful man in government since 1880. In London, Gladstone reshuffled his cabinet. The Earl of Derby replaced Kimberley as Colonial Secretary. Again there was little change. Derby's policy

⁴¹Schreuder, Gladstone and Kruger, p. 275.

⁴²J. H. Hofmeyr and F. W. Reitz, The Life of Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr (Onze Jan) (Cape Town: Van de Sandt de Villiers Printing Company, 1913), p. 253.

was similar to Kimberley's, only slightly more cautious. Robinson had no more success in persuading Derby to be forceful in Bechuanaland than he had had with Kimberley.

The wars in Bechuanaland were concluded quickly. By May 1882, both Mankoroane and Montsioa were besieged in their main settlements at Taungs and Mafeking. Cape Colony had forbidden any recruitment of volunteers to assist Mankoroane or Montsioa as well as vetoing any proposed arms shipments.⁴³ Mankoroane surrendered in early June. Montsioa was able to hold out against his enemies until October. The volunteers controlled Moshette and Massouw to such an extent that they dictated the surrender terms to Montsioa and Mankoroane. One provision of the "treaties" was that all treaty disputes were to be arbitrated by the Transvaal government.⁴⁴ There was a clause in the Pretoria Convention which prohibited the Transvaal government from interfering in native affairs beyond its boundaries.⁴⁵ Furthermore, there were attempts to get the defeated chiefs to request Transvaal annexation. Neither accepted.⁴⁶

The volunteers took most of Mankoroane's and Montsioa's land in the treaties. They then divided the

⁴³Agar-Hamilton, Road to the North, p. 190.

⁴⁴Parl. Pap. c. 3419, p. 55.

⁴⁵Schreuder, Gladstone and Kruger, p. 273.

⁴⁶Parl. Pap. c. 3486, p. 37.

land up among themselves, creating "farm" must be used advisedly as r on these lands. Some of the new f tee landlords who had hired replac The absentee landlords had hoped t relatively cheaply.

The two groups of volunteer republics as the Transvaal was not openly violate the Pretoria Conver Moshette's volunteers proclaimed "Land Goshen" or the "Land of Gosh October 24, 1882.⁴⁷ Massouw's vo to be the Republic of Stellaland d had maintained a de facto governme Neither of these two states had a their only hope was to be annexed sibly by the Cape Colony.

Goshen was a republic in the volunteers remained after the cluded; they sold their claims to share of the booty. At times the dropped below two hundred.⁴⁹ The Nicholas Claudius Gey van Pittius

⁴⁷Agar-Hamilton, Road to

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 252.

Volksraad member who had resigned his seat only after Goshen had been declared a republic.⁵⁰ His control over the volunteers was always tenuous. The only "town," called Rooi Grond, consisted of a few farm houses surrounding the residence of van Pittius. The town was only a few miles from the Transvaal border, and after 1884, it was actually within the Transvaal's boundaries. Most of the "residents" stayed in the Transvaal. They planned to move to Goshen when the Transvaal annexed the territory.

Those few men who remained in or near Goshen acted with almost complete disregard for any law. They continued to attack Montsioa even after his surrender. The assistant resident in Pretoria, R. Rutherford, wrote to Robinson concerning Goshen: "Bad state of things; numerous deaths, as many as 12 to 15 a day at Mafeking, even after a cessation of open hostilities. . . . Thefts of stock from Montsioa's people . . . still go on."⁵¹ Montsioa wrote a letter to Hudson shortly thereafter in which he described the volunteers as lawless men who continued to commit outrageous acts:

Should any strangers or traders wish to come to visit my town, they are stopped on the road, taken prisoners, and, at the Boers' pleasure, searched, have their things taken from them, fined, etc. . . . and then let go, after sometimes keeping them six weeks in the laager. Should any of my people go

⁵⁰Hofmeyr, Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr, p. 251.

⁵¹Parl. Pap. c. 3486, p. 29.

to or near the laager, they are struck, or otherwise ill used; and I cannot get any redress from their head man.⁵²

Stellaland differed greatly from Goshen; it resembled a real state. Farms were occupied by their owners the most part. A real town, called Vryburg, was founded. The inhabitants treated Mankoroane with relative civility. The Administrator, Gert van Niekirk, and his small legislature, the Bestur, were fairly refined. From a legal standpoint, Stellaland was in a much better position than Goshen. There were actual inhabitants on the land. Even after any major military action, Britain would eventually have to recognize some land claims there. In Goshen, even a small force could expel what was left of the volunteers. Economically, though, Stellaland was in a much tighter position than Goshen. Goshen required almost no money as there were almost no people.

In Stellaland the transport of materials from the Transvaal became so expensive that van Niekirk had a hard time keeping his new citizens in Stellaland; many left on "vacations" in the Transvaal. By the time Stellaland actually declared independent, many of its residents favored annexation to the Cape Colony.⁵³ Britain would not object and their land titles would be as secure, if not more

⁵²Parl. Pap. c. 3841, pp. 2-3.

⁵³Agar-Hamilton, Road to the North, p. 249.

than if the Transvaal annexed Stellaland. With secure titles, the "farmers" could sell their land and make considerable profit. The republic's only actual future was to be annexed by somebody.

By the summer of 1883, Britain, the Transvaal, Cape Colony were all feeling dissatisfied with the situation in South Africa. Britain wanted the Transvaal to withdraw support from the two satellite republics in Bechuanaland so that a small British force might clear the road to the interior. Cape Colony was hurting from the situation in Bechuanaland; natives were discouraged from working in the gold fields because they were often robbed or "taxed" in Stellaland or Goshen. More importantly, though, Cape Colony wanted to dis-annex Basutoland after suffering a costly, pyrrhic victory in 1882. The Transvaal wanted the Imperial government to assume responsibility for Basutoland. The Transvaal sought to reduce its debt to Britain. It also sought increased internal authority, expanded borders, and a new name. In Britain Derby was being pressured to take some action about Bechuanaland. John Mackenzie, a missionary in Bechuanaland, returned to Britain and lobbied ceaselessly for Imperial action against the Boers. The Conservative Party embarrassingly questioned Derby about his inactivity.

Scanlan, Kruger, and Derby all agreed to meet in London in the autumn of 1883 to discuss their respective

difficulties and attempt to find solutions that would help end each country's problems. The meeting came to be known as the London Convention.

CHAPTER IV

THE LONDON CONVENTION AND THE BRITISH PROTECTORATE IN BECHUANALAND

In November 1883, all of the parties interested in the future of Bechuanaland arrived in London to discuss the area's future. Cape Colony, represented by Sir Thomas Scanlan, had only a marginal interest in Bechuanaland. In Scanlan's government, cabinet ministers had widely varying opinions as to what should be done about Bechuanaland. The Transvaal's delegation consisted of three men--President Kruger, General Nicholas Smit, and S. J. Du Toit, the Minister of Education. The Transvaal government had hoped that Britain would grant the Transvaal any concessions that it might ask for. At that time, the Transvaal government believed it had a reasonably good chance of getting almost anything from Britain.

Britain was represented by the Earl of Derby, the Colonial Secretary, whose position was very vacillating. He did not personally want to cede Bechuanaland to the Transvaal, but he was willing to if no other government, such as the Cape Colony, was willing to support him.¹

¹Schreuder, Gladstone and Kruger, pp. 394-395.

Sir Hercules Robinson, the High Commissioner for South Africa, also came to London from Cape Town to assist Derby and advise him on specific details. Robinson opposed allowing the Transvaal to annex Stellaland and Goshen, but Derby had the final say. Robinson could only lobby against granting concessions and attempt to forge an alliance between Derby and Scanlan. Another unofficial representative at the convention was John Mackenzie, A British missionary in Bechuanaland who spoke for Mankoroane and Montsioa, the two African leaders who had been defeated by Transvaal-based volunteers. Mackenzie favored direct Imperial intervention as soon as possible to drive the Boers out of Bechuanaland. Mackenzie's opposition to the Transvaal government had been legendary.

Kruger began the negotiations in a very indignant and self-righteous manner. He claimed that Britain had mistreated the Transvaal, and that now he was merely hoping that Britain would grant the Transvaal what was due to it.² He demanded full sovereignty for the Transvaal. Britain should reduce the powers of the resident and allow Transvaal emissaries to establish relations with countries in Europe. He demanded that the country's name be changed from the "Transvaal State" to the "South African Republic." The name change would indicate that his country was a true,

²Juta, Pace of an Ox, p. 130.

independent republic as opposed to a self-governing state in the British Empire. Most importantly, he demanded that Britain annul most of the Transvaal's debt.³ To demonstrate the Transvaal's situation, he often used the analogy of a man who had been robbed of everything, had his clothes returned to him shortly thereafter, but without his wallet or watch.⁴

Derby was willing to concede on all of these points, although not immediately. The resident had no useful function. Nobody paid any attention to him, and it would make no difference whether the man's title was resident or ambassador because his powers would be the same. In 1883 the Transvaal was so poor and isolated that no other European country would have wanted to maintain diplomats in Pretoria. Even Portugal, whose colony of Mozambique bordered the Transvaal, had no desire to open an embassy in Pretoria. Kruger did not have enough money to maintain an ambassador in London, much less in Lisbon. To Derby, this was a minor concession.

When Kimberley had been Colonial Secretary, Kruger found a number of reasons why Britain was not entitled to receive the money that the Transvaal owed. Kruger had filed a large claim against the British government for

³Parl. Pap. c. 3947, p. 41.

⁴Juta, Pace of an Ox, p. 130.

undertaxing the natives during its occupation of the Transvaal. The amount of his claim, together with other similar, frivolous claims, equaled the amount of money that he owed to Britain. He, therefore, refused to pay off any of the Transvaal's debt.⁵ The Treasury wanted to challenge Kruger, but Kimberley decided to allow Kruger's claim to pass unchallenged.⁶ It soon became clear to British officials that Britain would receive little or no money that was owed to it by the Transvaal. Kruger was no fool; he knew what would happen to him if he attempted to tax his burghers beyond their means. In London, Kruger was merely asking Derby to ratify and legalize the Transvaal's non-payment of debt. Kruger left some hope that Britain would see some of its money in the future and that relations would improve if the Transvaal had its way.

Derby, though, had his own agenda. He was more concerned with Bechuanaland than he was with the other Boer demands. He wanted to keep the Trader's Road to the interior of Africa open to traders and explorers, yet he still did not want to move unilaterally. There was still much reluctance on the part of the Treasury against establishing new colonies. That resistance carried over from the time of Shepstone and Lanyon. Derby proposed a joint protectorate

⁵Schreuder, Gladstone and Kruger, pp. 278-279.

⁶Ibid., p. 280.

over Bechuanaland similar to the one that Robinson had proposed in 1882. Derby was willing to make concessions on all of the Transvaal's other demands if Kruger would make concessions on Bechuanaland.

Kruger did not accept this. He had learned from his experiences in dealing with British officials that making concessions was often fatal. If he maintained a hard line, Derby would eventually tire of negotiations and concede all points. Kruger, thus, protested that he was willing to assist Britain in Bechuanaland, but that the Transvaal was not allowed to send armed forces over its boundaries.⁷

Kruger told Derby that he favored a democratic solution; Kruger, though, had a different definition of "democracy" than most Englishmen. He claimed to be "perfectly willing" to "leave it to the free choice of the lawful chiefs [the Transvaal's], and of the white inhabitants . . . , to decide under whose rule they wanted to be. . . ." ⁸ He proposed to let the conquerors vote to decide whether or not to keep what they had conquered.

Kruger further argued that there would have been peace in Bechuanaland had it not been for British interference. The Transvaal Delegation wrote to Derby:

⁷Ibid., p. 403.

⁸Parl. Pap. c. 3947, p. 17.

These endeavours to make peace in Bechuanaland were not supported by the British Government, and against the session of rights by the Chiefs to the South African Republic . . . objections were constantly made in accordance with the counsels of Sir Hercules Robinson. New troubles have been the result of this attitude of the British Government, chiefly to the detriment of the natives, who now continue in a state of anarchy. . . . To the request of the interested parties to be annexed to the South African Republic, no obstacles should be raised.⁹

To compound Kruger's arrogance and false accusations, Derby received news that the Bapedi chief, Mampoer, was hanged on November 22, 1883, for the murder of Sekukuni, his brother. Njabel, chief of the Mapoch, who had given shelter to Mampoer, was also sentenced to death, but his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment by Piet Joubert, the acting President.¹⁰ It was Joubert who had campaigned against Njabel from October 30, 1882, to July 10, 1883. Joubert's campaign against Njabel consisted mostly of siege operations, so Joubert was also able to correspond with the volunteers in Bechuanaland. Joubert received numerous appeals from British officials to commute Mampoer's sentence as well as Njabel's. Protests came from George Hudson, the British resident, Sir Leicester Smyth, Robinson's temporary replacement, and the Earl of Derby, but all were to no avail.¹¹ No member of the Transvaal Delegation ever informed Derby about Mampoer's execution.

⁹Parl Pap. c. 3841, pp. 117-118.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 178.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 69, 74, 80-83, 98-99.

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Robinson finally achieved an agreement through sleight of hand. Robinson had Scanlan agree that Cape Colony would assist in maintaining a police force in Bechuanaland if the Transvaal would look favorably upon the idea.¹³ Robinson agreed that he would assure acceptance from Cape Colony if Scanlan would publicize the agreement without mentioning the part about Transvaal concurrence. Scanlan publicized this agreement on the day that he left for Cape Colony so that the Transvaal Delegation could not probe him for his true opinions.¹⁴ With Derby's firm stance towards the Transvaal, Robinson could feel assured that the Transvaal would have to concur if they wished their debt to be reduced.

The Transvaal Delegation stalled for a while, but by February, they realized that they would get nowhere by continued stalling, so they accepted Derby's concessions and agreed to stop assisting the volunteers in Bechuanaland. In addition to his other concessions, Derby also allowed a border resettlement in Bechuanaland favoring the Transvaal. This added area did not include the Trader's Road, however.

The British government began planning the future of Bechuanaland before the negotiations at the London Convention were finalized. The British plan was to secure treaties with Montsioa and Mankoroane to give themselves some

¹³Ibid., p. 394.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 423.

legal status in the area and then to negotiate a land settlement with the residents of Stellaland. The residents of Goshen who actually resided in Bechuanaland, a few dozen in number, would be expelled from the territory. Finally, after a short period of time, the Cape Colony would annexⁱ the territory, and Britain would be able to withdraw with a minimum loss of income.

On February 8, 1884, Robinson recommended to Derby that John Mackenzie be appointed Deputy High Commissioner for Bechuanaland.¹⁵ Robinson's choice of Mackenzie is somewhat mysterious. Mackenzie differed greatly with Robinson and Derby as to the future of Bechuanaland. While Robinson and Derby favored limited British involvement and eventual Cape Colony annexation, Mackenzie favored a permanent Imperial Crown Colony be established in Bechuanaland. Mackenzie believed that Cape Colony annexation was almost as bad as Transvaal annexation.¹⁶ Cape Colony land agents would obtain native land as surely as would Transvaal freebooters. Furthermore, Robinson had to recruit allies in the Cape Colony who would campaign for Bechuanaland annexation; Mackenzie was not well liked among Cape Colony politicians. Robinson's support for Mackenzie made finding allies more difficult. D. M. Schreuder wrote,

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Hofmeyr, Jan Hendricks Hofmeyr, p. 255.

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would not accompany Mackenzie to Vryburg or Taungs because he said that he had loaned his horse.²⁰ At that time, most men in Bechuanaland owned more than one horse; it is almost inconceivable that a country's first citizen would own only one horse. Niekirk did not wish to endorse Mackenzie at that point in time.

Mackenzie left Niekirk's farm on May 2 and arrived at Taungs on the next day. Mankoroane was very happy to see Mackenzie. Unfortunately, Mankoroane had learned little since 1881; he still hoped to take the initiative against Stellaland, and he was still controlled by European advisors who were interested only in their own gains. To some extent he believed that Mackenzie would allow him a good deal of license now that he was in command. Many of Mankoroane's advisors encouraged him not to give away his powers to Mackenzie, but at that time, he had little choice.²¹ If Mackenzie was to withdraw, Mankoroane would have been at the mercy of the Stellalanders. He agreed to allow Mackenzie to review all of his laws, rulings, and land titles.

Mackenzie went north to Vryburg when all business with Mankoroane had been settled. The people of Vryburg were very receptive toward Mackenzie. He was greeted by a welcoming committee which was to act as a basis for the

²⁰Parl. Pap. c. 4194, p. 21.

²¹Ibid., p. 13.

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²²Ibid., pp. 22-24.

²³Ibid., p. 25.

²⁴Ibid., p. 24.

²⁵Ibid., p. 37.

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When presented with charges that the Transvaal was violating the London Convention by assisting the Goshen freebooters, Kruger immediately denied that the Transvaal was assisting them or was in any way responsible. He again issued orders to local landrosts and field cornets that fillibustering activities were illegal.³⁰ Kruger's denials are hardly believable. Transvaal newspapers announced that Pittius was looking for volunteers. Goshen forces were allowed to use Transvaal territories to mass men and materiel. Kruger never attempted to enforce the law in Rooi Grond after he had obtained possession of the town.³¹ Kruger was testing British reaction. He had hoped to successfully repeat the successes of 1882.

The renewal of the fighting presented the British with a number of very difficult decisions. Mackenzie was accompanied by less than twenty-five policemen. He could never hope to maintain order with such a small number of men.³² He had very little chance of obtaining more policemen from the Cape Colony. In May, Scanlan's government fell, and Sir Thomas Upington became the new Cape Colony Prime Minister. If Scanlan had been somewhat reluctant to assist Mackenzie, Upington was absolutely hostile to the

³⁰Parl. Pap. c. 4213, p. 13.

³¹Parl. Pap. c. 4198, p. 80.

³²Schreuder, Gladstone and Kruger, p. 423.

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³⁷Parl. Pap. c. 4194, pp.

³⁸Parl. Pap. c. 4213, p. 1

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debts which the Colonial Office did not want to pay and which the Cape Colony would not pay.

Historian J. A. I. Agar-Hamilton thought that the most important factor in Mackenzie's downfall was his canceling of Mankoroane's land grants.⁴³ Cape Colony agents had a considerable amount of money to lose if Mackenzie's judgement stood. Robinson's allies were unhappy. They lobbied him for Mackenzie's removal. Furthermore, the loyalist faction that had supported annexation to the Cape Colony had much to lose if Mackenzie's judgement stood. These "loyals" were then drawn to Niekirk and his faction.

Mackenzie was partly to blame for his downfall. Some of his appointments were foolish. He appointed Christopher Bethell to be an Assistant Commissioner.⁴⁴ Bethell was a close advisor to Montsioa, and it was Bethell who advised Montsioa to attack Rooi Grond. Bethell could hardly be asked to act in a fair and unbiased manner. Mackenzie also appointed Scotty Smith, a notorious cattle thief, as an auxiliary Bechuanaland policeman. Smith used this position to continue stealing cattle.⁴⁵ Smith had obtained prominence as a friend of Mankoroane, but the chief was soon afraid to challenge him.

⁴³Agar-Hamilton, Road to the North, p. 341.

⁴⁴Leyds, Transvaal Surrounded, p. 148.

⁴⁵Parl. Pap. c. 4213, pp. 124-125.

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⁴⁹Ibid., p. 41

⁵⁰Parl. Pap. C

⁵¹Schreuder, G

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Joubert lived up to Rhodes' expectation of help at all, and actually hindered Rhodes reached the outskirts of Mafeking tightly besieged by a Boer army. Joubert's request for a cease-fire even for a day. Joubert claimed that he had no choice, though he supplied him with ammunition. Joubert's attempts at mediation amounted to an ultimatum: surrender to Montsioa with the Treaty of the treaty after it was signed. Joubert.

After a week in Goshen, Rhodes was getting nowhere. The Boers were determined to take Montsioa and present Robinson with the annexation of Bechuanaland would be a revitalized state of Goshen. Rhodes

⁵²Sir Thomas Fuller, The Life of Cecil Rhodes: A Monograph and a Reminiscence (London: Green and Co., 1910), pp. 40-41.

⁵³Parl. Pap. c. 4213, pp. 106-107.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 106-107.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 116-118.

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⁵⁸Ibid., p. 14

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 14

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 82

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⁶¹Ibid., pp. 83-84.

CHAPTER V

THE WARREN EXPEDITION

The Gladstone ministry was sufficiently concerned with the Boer activities in Bechuanaland to authorize Sir Charles Warren, a prominent British officer, to plan an invasion of Bechuanaland. Warren received this information from Derby on October 21, 1884.¹ His plans to invade Bechuanaland could not be executed immediately because of divisions in both Gladstone's cabinet in Britain and the power structure in South Africa.² Three factions fought for political control of the future of Bechuanaland.

The Upington-Hofmeyr faction wanted to allow all of the freebooters in Stellaland and Goshen to keep their property and to maintain the status quo. This faction had two advantages. They controlled the government of the Cape Colony, and to succeed, they would have to persuade the Liberal ministry to do nothing which was its preferred course of action. Gladstone and Derby still hoped to obtain some assistance from the Cape Colony, so proposals from Upington would be heard in London.

¹Schreuder, Gladstone and Kruger, p. 454.

²Ibid., pp. 449-460.

The Rhodes-Robinson faction's expedition into Bechuanaland. The ministry was unwilling to move, the Cape Colony was unwilling to move, and that a move might do more damage than good if it disrupted the Bechuanaland operation. Robinson's support from Cape Colony's government and Cape Colony Boers might rally behind the possibility of a civil war between Bechuanaland and the Cape Colony. Robinson would lose a potential power base in the future in Cape politics would be if the Robinson faction favored allowing the Goshen freebooters and leave the Cape Colony would control the political settlements and the treaties would stand.

The Warren-Mackenzie faction's action in all of south-central Africa. Rhodes' only desire in Bechuanaland was to have reliable allies among the Stellalanders, thus have an uninterrupted supply of diamonds in his diamond mines. He would establish a base when the Cape Colony annexed Bechuanaland.

³Anthony Sillery, John Mackenzie (Cape Town: A. A. Balkema, 1971)

⁴John Mackenzie, Austral Ruling It, 2 vol. (London: S. Low, Rivington, 1877), vol. 2, pp. 60-

would be under his control and not under Imperial control. Warren and Mackenzie believed that this would be detrimental to the natives and contrary to the British concept of justice.⁵ Furthermore, they believed that the Boers had no right to be in Bechuanaland and would allow them to stay only on Derby's orders. Mackenzie had a large following in England, and he could pressure the government.

Sir Thomas Upington attempted to stop Warren before he could begin the expedition. Upington proposed that he, and not Rhodes, was most qualified to negotiate with the Goshen volunteers.⁶ Rhodes was an opposition M. P. in the Cape parliament while Upington was the Prime Minister. He said that he represented the people of Cape Colony and that he could negotiate a satisfactory settlement and save the Imperial treasury a great deal of money. Robinson believed that Upington would allow the Goshen volunteers to dictate the terms of any agreement, but he could not persuade the Liberal ministry to turn down Upington's offer.⁷ The London Cabinet was divided. Some such as Joseph Chamberlain hoped to send Warren as soon as possible, but a majority favored a "wait and see" policy.⁸ On November 8, the ministry allowed Upington to negotiate a settlement.

⁵Sillery, John Mackenzie, p. 107.

⁶Schreuder, Gladstone and Kruger, p. 443.

⁷Ibid., p. 455.

⁸Ibid., pp. 449-454.

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Warren arrived at Cape Town. He reported to Robinson and Robinson's concurrence as to do. Warren observed that Robinson was maintaining Rhodes in his position that he was in preparing a report. He asked Warren to affirm all comments before moving north. Warren, agreed. Warren did not go to Cape Town. He felt that his "alliance" was not in his favor. The Cape Colony minister was spreading rumors of assassination plots. He felt that Robinson was presenting a false picture of Bechuanaland. He believed that Robinson was giving him a clear image of the situation. Warren arranged a meeting with Robinson and told Robinson that he would

¹²Schreuder, Gladstone

¹³Mackenzie, Australia

¹⁴Schreuder, Gladstone

¹⁵William Douglas MacArthur, African Minister and Statesman (1902), p. 374.

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battalion of the 1st (Royal Scots) sent to South Africa from the West was originally ordered to go to the Mahdi, but was redirected while en route. It was ordered to concentrate at Kimberley. It had obtained enough supplies to cover Warren's army numbered 5,000 men. It consisted of fighting men, and the rest provided communication.²⁰ He arrived in Kimberley less than one month after he landed. He moved forward immediately because he wanted to conduct military maneuvers to determine the ability of the Boers.

While Warren was preparing for the invasion, Rhodes was busy with affairs in South Africa. He had the election of a new Bestuur and was dealing with strife in Stellaland and conflict with the Germans.²¹ Niekirk wrote many friends and relatives about the situation.

While in Kimberley, Warren was studying the borders of Stellaland. He found an official map that the Colonial Office had made. It was accurate according to Warren.²²

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Sillery, John Mackenzie

²¹Parl. Pap. c. 4310, pp. 1-2.

²²Parl. Pap. c. 4432, p. 1.

to the Stellalanders at the expense of Mankoroane. There was no easily definable border with the Transvaal. Warren believed that the matter would require a great deal of time and effort, but that it was absolutely necessary to solve land issues quickly to prevent any future trouble.

Kruger wanted to discuss the border with Warren, but he visited Rooi Grond first in order to discuss Warren's expedition. Kruger was worried that Warren was planning to move into the Transvaal and occupy Pretoria.²³ Kruger wanted to avoid provoking Warren into leading his army into Transvaal territory. At Rooi Grond he told the Goshenites that no arms or ammunition would be coming from the Transvaal and that Transvaal officials would tolerate no use of Transvaal territory to launch attacks against Warren's forces. Due to the ill-defined border, Kruger thought it best that the Goshenites avoid any conflict with Warren's forces.²⁴

Warren agreed to meet with Kruger at a place called Fourteen Streams near the boundaries of the Transvaal, Cape Colony, and Bechuanaland. He would not meet with Kruger in the Transvaal because he feared an attempt on his life. Even at Fourteen Streams he was escorted by fifty dragoons. Kruger wanted to demonstrate that his intentions were

²³Ibid., pp. 65-67.

²⁴Ibid., p. 44.

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was less than fifty miles, and leading elements of Warren's army entered Vryburg on the first day. The rest of the army filtered in for the next seven days. Niekirk assured Rhodes that he would support Warren's moves. Warren expected no overt hostility from the Stellalanders, but he believed that Boers from all over South Africa were planning to secretly attack his army when the army was divided or off guard. Rumors spread around Vryburg that an army was forming in the Orange Free State to attack Warren.²⁸ Another rumor alleged that artillery and shells were being moved to Pretoria from Delagoa Bay. Warren made sure that the soldiers maintained a high state of vigilance.

Warren called for a mass meeting to be held in Vryburg on February 14 to discuss Stellaland's future. At this meeting, he discovered that the majority of the people present wanted Niekirk removed. They were dissatisfied with Rhodes' arrangement which allowed Niekirk to stay in power. People accused Niekirk of great financial irregularities. Warren decided to remove Niekirk immediately.²⁹ Rhodes, who had agreed to become Warren's second-in-command in Stellaland, did not agree with Warren's decision about Niekirk.³⁰ Robinson concurred with Rhodes. Both believed that Britain

²⁸Ibid., p. 67.

²⁹Ibid., p. 44.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 85-89.

should govern through a Stellalander instead of ruling the country directly. Furthermore, Niekirk was close to Rhodes, and a censure of Niekirk was also a censure of Rhodes.

Warren soon did more than relieve Niekirk; he arrested Niekirk for the 1883 murder of James Honey, a cattle rustler who had worked for Mankoroane.³¹ Honey had changed alliances a number of times. On one of these times it was alleged that Niekirk ordered Honey's arrest but had him shot shortly after his capture. Warren was moved to arrest Niekirk when a number of Stellalanders approached him at the February 14 meeting, told him of Niekirk's deed, and agreed to testify at Niekirk's trial.³²

Rhodes and Robinson wrote to Derby asking that he intercede on behalf of Niekirk. Rhodes resigned his position shortly thereafter. Robinson was worried that Warren's action would antagonize Cape Colony Afrikaners who would then be even more reluctant to annex the territory.³³ Derby did not intercede, but Warren could not successfully prosecute Niekirk. The judge and the prosecutor were both friends of Niekirk,³⁴ and they found that the murder had occurred before Britain had assumed control, and that

³¹Ibid., p. 44.

³²Ibid.

³³Schreuder, Gladstone and Kruger, p. 458.

³⁴Mackenzie, Austral Africa, vol. 2, pp. 150-153.

they could not now convict him when Britain declared a Protectorate.

Warren spent over one month in Stellaland. During this time he re-established a land commission, took over the finances which Vryburgers believed Niekirk had mismanaged, sent surveyors into the countryside to determine borders of farms, borders between African and European, and borders between the Transvaal and Bechuanaland. Kruger had already persuaded Derby to make Moshette's land a part of the Transvaal, but he wanted land in Bechuanaland for Moshette's use. Warren did not agree.

Warren would not move into Goshen until he felt that all of Stellaland's problems were being attended to. He also felt unsafe about leaving Stellaland with Rhodes having knowledge about his movements.³⁵ He thought that Rhodes was not beyond backstabbing to discredit his opponents. Warren did not march toward Goshen until March 11, 1885, after Rhodes had resigned. Warren's forces found Rooi Grond deserted. What few Goshenites he did come across said that they had disagreed with Pittius.³⁶ Warren ordered them to leave the territory and he asked that Pittius be extradited from the Transvaal to Bechuanaland to stand trial for the murder of Christopher Bethell. Kruger refused. This was

³⁵Parl. Pap. c. 4432, p. 122.

³⁶Agar-Hamilton, Road to the North, pp. 389-390.

in line with Kruger's policy of rewarding the fillibusters. Kruger soon appointed Niekirk to be the chief of police in Pretoria.³⁷ He appointed Niekirk's co-defendant in the Honey case, Groot Adrian De la Ray, police chief in Johannesburg.³⁸

Warren did not spend much time in the Goshen area. Without instructions from London, he decided to move his forces north of the protectorate. Warren's decision to use his own initiative was due to the rumors that Transvaal farmers were preparing to trek into the Tati Gold Fields region in Ndebele territory.³⁹ If they moved, Britain would be forced to send a similar expedition further north. Warren wanted to nip the problem in the bud. Furthermore, Germany's acquisition of Walfisch Bay and Namibia was a serious threat to British interests in the area. If Germany was to link with the Transvaal, British trade with central Africa might have been closed permanently. Warren marched his army to Shoshong, 300 miles north of Vryburg, improved the road, and dug wells every eleven miles to facilitate the movement of a large army. His army fortified its camps to prevent any attacks. Two friendly chiefs, Khama and Sechele, were glad to grant Britain a protectorate.⁴⁰

³⁷Schreuder, Gladstone and Kruger, p. 487.

³⁸Cloete, Against These Three, p. 44.

³⁹Parl. Pap. c. 4432, p. 51.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 59.

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and Stanley agreed on many issues. The Prime Minister, the Marquess of Salisbury, and Stanley agreed with Derby's policy of minimizing expenses and quietly removing Warren from South Africa.⁴² By August 1885, Warren was sailing for England. The British Cabinet appointed Sidney Shippard to administer Bechuanaland. Shippard was a friend of Rhodes⁴³ who believed in keeping expenses to a minimum. Rhodes' diamond mines were the primary economic activity north of the Orange River, and therefore Rhodes had an enormous amount of influence on the affairs of Bechuanaland.

In 1885 Rhodes viewed Bechuanaland north of the Limpopo (Goshen's border) as worthless land. By 1887 he had arrived at the opposite view.⁴⁴ In the intervening time, massive deposits of gold had been discovered in the Transvaal approximately forty miles south of Pretoria. Rhodes believed that there was more gold in other parts of southern and central Africa, and he was determined that the Boers would not gain possession of that gold also. Fortunately for Rhodes, many other people believed that there were large gold deposits elsewhere, and they were willing to finance his search. In 1889 Rhodes founded the British South Africa Company, a company that had the power to establish

⁴²Schreuder, Gladstone and Kruger, p. 401.

⁴³Robert Rotburg, The Founder: Cecil Rhodes and the Pursuit of Power (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 176.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 245-246.

settlements in its search for wealth. Many rich and influential people in Britain backed Rhodes, and the Imperial government usually acquiesced to the company's requests.⁴⁵ Rhodes colonized new lands and built railroads without cost to the Imperial government. In Cape Colony, Hofmeyr and Kruger had a serious disagreement about tariffs, and Hofmeyr abandoned his position of unqualified support for Transvaal policies. Rhodes, always the opportunist, made a deal with Hofmeyr allowing the Cape Dutch to maintain general control over purely Cape Colony affairs in return for Hofmeyr's support of the British South Africa Company.⁴⁶ Neither man really cared about the other's policies in the other's sphere of influence. Kruger was Rhodes' only enemy who had any power.

Rhodes' policies were not vicious as were Kruger's, but rather were opportunistic. He did not go out of his way to hurt the African or the Afrikaner, but he would attack anybody who stood in his way. Kruger attempted to gain trading concessions from Lobengula, the Ndebele king, but Kruger's representative, Piet Grobler, was murdered on the road from Bulawayo to Pretoria on what was rumored to be Rhodes' orders.⁴⁷ Rhodes' representative, Reverend John

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 211.

⁴⁶Brian Roberts, Cecil Rhodes: Flawed Colossus (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1987), pp. 149-150.

⁴⁷S. M. Molema, Montshiwa: Baralong Chief and Patriot (Cape Town: C. Struik, 1966, pp. 170-171.

Moffat, obtained mining and trading concessions from Lobengula when he presented the king with a beaded belt. In 1889, two years after the Moffat Treaty, and the death of Rhodes, Charles Mudd, signed a more binding treaty with Lobengula. Rudd offered Lobengula one thousand one hundred thousand rounds of ammunition, and a gunboat to patrol the Zambezi River. In exchange, Rudd allowed the British South Africa Company to establish a presence in Mashonaland and in parts of Matabeleland.⁴⁹ In effect, Lobengula signed over his kingdom because he feared the influx of Europeans into his domains, and he could not effectively control them once they arrived. As the situation grew worse, Lobengula decided to attack the British. As the Europeans grew too strong. His attacks in 1891 were disastrous, and he was forced from power. The British South Africa Company then took control of Matabeleland area, along with Mashonaland, would later be named Rhodesia.

Rhodes' policies in Cape Colony were also paternalistic. He did not want to subject the Africans to the Afrikaner brand of repression. He allowed it, because he was more interested in maintaining the status of the Cape Dutch than he was in the welfare of the Africans.

⁴⁸Lewis Mitchell, The Life and Times of Rhodes, 2 vol. (London: Mitchell Kennerley, 1911), 256.

⁴⁹Rotburg, The Founder, p. 262.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 418-449.

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⁵¹Fitzpatrick, Trans

⁵²Ibid., pp. 63-73

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Jameson's party at Krugersdorp which is slightly west of Johannesburg. Jameson was imprisoned. Shippard was removed. Rhodes was disgraced and forced from the Cape premiership. British conspirators in Johannesburg surrendered their arms on Robinson's insistence so that Jameson would be spared from the gallows. Three years later, in 1899, a major war broke out between Britain and the Transvaal. The Orange Free State allied itself with the Transvaal. After many initial setbacks, British forces moved into Bloemfontein and Pretoria in 1900 and then fought a guerilla war for the next two years.⁵⁵

The Bechuana chiefs did not fare well under British rule, but they did much better than those who stayed under Transvaal rule. David Massouw was killed by a Boer commando on December 20, 1885. Three thousand of his cattle were taken. No Boers volunteered to support him. Mankoroane and Montsioa both had their properties reduced in size by land settlement with the British. Mankoroane was left with one thousand square miles, Montsioa with 1,535. Mankoroane, who was old, died shortly thereafter. Montsioa died in late 1896. Shippard had been more concerned with supporting Rhodes than with pleasing the chiefs. British policy toward the chiefs was not vicious, as was the Transvaal's, but was not entirely beneficial. Montsioa attempted, unsuccessfully,

⁵⁵Sillery, John Mackenzie, p. 138.

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CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

If Kruger had succeeded in maintaining control of Bechuanaland, the results would have been disastrous for both the Africans and the British. Mankoroane and Montsioa could have expected the same fate that befell Mampoer and Massouw. The Goshen volunteers clearly demonstrated that to the Boers, a surrender does not necessitate a cease fire.

The British could have expected only slightly better treatment. David Livingstone pointed out the Boer's aversion to allowing foreigners into "their" territory. When the Goshen volunteers kidnapped a British assistant commissioner, they demonstrated that they did not feel obliged to honor any agreements or to respect foreign dignitaries, even when these dignitaries had the power to destroy their state. Even Piet Joubert, the second most powerful man in the Transvaal, never hesitated before encouraging the volunteers to commit outrageous acts.

Joubert and the volunteers of both Stellaland and Goshen were greatly influenced by the chauvanism that Kruger preached. He proclaimed that trekking was an Afrikaner's birthright. Furthermore, the Afrikaners had to be wary of British attempts to overwhelm traditional Afrikaner beliefs.

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cost Britain many millions of pounds. Bechuanaland was similar. In 1881 the territory was considered unimportant. Without that territory, though, British development in central Africa would have been greatly retarded. While the discovery of gold in 1885 was unexpected, people familiar with the area knew what Bechuanaland meant to interior trade. The Liberal ministry did not have the distant vision to realize that central Africa might be of some importance in the future. Robinson was experienced enough to foresee radical changes in Imperial policy.

Bechuanaland remained relatively undisturbed during the eighty years of British and South African rule. Few Europeans settled there, and the British built few great projects. Only the road to the interior was carefully maintained. The importance of Bechuanaland has never been its possession, but of having the power to prevent one's enemies from possessing it.

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