German East Africa in the Rechenberg Era (1906-1911): Period of Change or Failed Vision?

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GERMAN EAST AFRICA IN THE RECHENBERG ERA (1906-1911)
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by

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Introduction

This paper examines colonial policy in Imperial Germany by studying the 1907 Reichstag (German Parliament) elections and how the elections affected colonial policy in German East Africa. The debate over colonialism, along with other factors, led to the dissolution of the Reichstag in 1906 and the need for elections in early 1907. The issue of colonialism became connected with nationalism and support for the German government and became a central issue in the election campaigns. As a result of the furor over colonialism in Germany and the 1907 elections, the official view of the purpose of colonies shifted somewhat to take more notice of the importance of Africans in the equation. This is particularly noticeable in German East Africa during the governorship of Baron Albrecht von Rechenberg (1906-1911). Rechenberg devised a development policy that focused on enhancing African economic interests. He also worked to improve the treatment of Africans, especially African plantation laborers.
Chapter 1: Beginning of the debate (1870s/1880s)

On 2 October 1907, Bernhard Dernburg, the Colonial Secretary, met with a group of German settlers at Tanga, along the northeast coast of German East Africa. The settlers hoped to gain his support in their dispute with the colonial governor, Albrecht von Rechenberg. The governor believed the key to colonial economic development lay in the promotion and expansion of indigenous agriculture. This threatened the settlers' lifestyle, based on large-scale plantations utilizing African labor to produce cash crops for export. Unbeknownst to the settlers, Dernburg had come to agree with Rechenberg's development policy. When the settlers requested measures to limit African cash crop production and compel Africans to accept paid labor, Dernburg refused. He was equally unsympathetic toward requests for changes in taxation and labor recruitment policies. However, he did agree to examine local government involvement by settlers.¹

Dernburg's presence in German East Africa had been prompted by a need to better understand Germany's colonies. The previous year Germany had engaged in a debate to determine the future of its colonies. Germany had stumbled into the ranks of the colonial powers in 1884, acquiring scattered territories in Africa and the Pacific. Lacking a clear idea of what it wanted from its colonies, and desiring only minimal involvement, Germany left the colonies to the control of the adventurers and trading companies who had founded them. This proved unworkable and the German government took over the colonies. To gain firm control of the colonies, Germany quickly implemented heavy-handed military rule.² The native inhabitants frequently resisted this unwanted imposition. In 1904, this resistance materialized in the Herero Revolt in German Southwest Africa (Namibia), which was quickly followed by the Maji Maji Rebellion in German East Africa (Tanzania) in 1905. These rebellions, along with a series of colonial scandals, prompted calls for reform from the Zentrum (Center party) and the

Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschland (Social Democrat Party or SPD). Led by the Center Party deputy Matthias Erzberger, these two parties refused to approve a supplementary budget to pay for the costs of suppressing the Herero Revolt. The dispute over the bill led to the dissolution of the Reichstag (the German Parliament) and the call for national elections in early 1907. This caused Germany, especially the government, to reconsider its reasons for and expectations of colonies.

When Germany considered whether to become a colonial power in the 1870s and early 1880s, colonial advocates advanced three competing and complementary arguments for acquiring colonies: the quest for "great power" status, the spread of German Kultur (culture), and the realization of economic benefits. "Great power" status involves the desire of Germany to take its place as one of the great powers of Europe. A sense of nationalism and patriotism, which brought about and developed out of the wars of unification between 1864 and 1871. found expression in calls for expansion after 1871. Germany believed it needed colonies so it could join the ranks of the other great Western European nations, such as Britain and France, with their vast colonial empires. Colonialism also had ties to the emerging German navy. Having seen Germany victorious on land in the recent wars of unification, naval advocates desired similar results on the sea. Naval expansion required coaling stations and naval bases under German control. Once the establishment of coaling stations and naval bases occurred, colonies would likely quickly follow. As the naval movement grew in the 1870s, so too did the call for colonies. As the debate

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2 The European view was that a nation possessed only that territory over which it could demonstrate control or the allusion of control.
3 German unification came about as a result of a series of Prussian military victories in wars between 1864 and 1871: the war with Denmark (1864), the Austro-Prussian War or Seven Weeks' War (1866) and the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71).
4 "Of what use is a navy without coaling stations and naval bases?...If hostile fleets are to be held off from a vulnerable coast, the nation must have outlying naval bases and defeat the enemy's squadrons before they approach." Boulding, Kenneth E. and Tapan Mukerjee. Economic Imperialism: A Book of Readings. Ann Arbor, Michigan: U. of Michigan Press, 1972. p. 27.
5 With the nations of Europe competing with each other, any foothold a nation established would quickly be expanded so as to increase that nation's status and influence.
progressed, colonial enthusiasts, who focused on the cultural and economic arguments, downplayed the status argument. However, the relationship between colonies and world power status would resurface in the early twentieth century and become more important in the years before the First World War.

Along with becoming one of the dominant powers in Europe, Germany sought to fulfill its “duty” to spread German *Kultur* throughout the world. In the words of the German colonial propagandist Hübbe-Schleiden: "In this manner a country exhibits before the world, her strength or weakness as a nation." For Hübbe-Schleiden, as well as others, expressing cultural superiority was essential to gaining prestige as a nation. Not only was it important to spread German *Kultur*, it was also necessary to retain German *Kultur* lost through emigration. Wide-scale German emigration, mainly to North America, occurred in the 1870s and early 1880s due to economic and social conditions in Germany. Between 1871 and 1880, 585,000 Germans emigrated and from 1881 to 1883, 570,000 more left the country. Colonial advocates used these alarming figures to argue that Germany was losing an essential part of itself to other nations. They believed colonies could solve the problem by providing an outlet for the emigrant population, along with preserving German culture both at home and abroad. The cultural argument for acquiring colonies tended to be accepted and promoted by those Germans who settled in the colonies. They felt that as Europeans and as Germans, their rights and needs should take precedence. Also, they saw the indigenous people merely as a source of labor for their plantations.

German colonialism also had economic roots. The predominant philosophy of economic imperialism saw the purpose of colonies as a source of raw materials and cash crops and a market for manufactured goods from the home country. In theory, economic imperialism is based on "the idea that the empire should be self-sufficient, the colonies and mother country being

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7 Townsend, p. 89.
9 Townsend, p. 92.
complementary halves of one expanding economic unit....There would be equal benefits for both sides: the colonies would sell their raw products and buy manufactures; the home country would sell the latter in exchange for the former. However, in practice "economic imperialism [was] only the logical application of capitalism, and its principles to internationalism....Just as the holder of capital in Europe has been enabled to exploit the worker and consumer economically for his own profit, so the white man...[has been able to] exploit economically for his own profit, the land and labour of the less developed Asiatic and African." For economic imperialists, the possession of colonies would increase the wealth and prestige of the imperialist nation and further the capitalist aim of profit maximization. Consequently, large-scale plantations using African forced-labor to produce cash crops for export were favored. This required a strong European presence to secure the necessary laborers and keep the colony under control. Thus, capitalism and imperialism were intertwined.

As a condition of the treaty that ended the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71), France paid to Germany a 5 billion franc war indemnity. This infusion of money into the German economy created an economic boom in Germany leading to industrial expansion and speculation in land and stocks. However, in 1873, the economic boom collapsed due to over-expansion and overproduction, ushering in a severe depression. The depression prompted industry to concentrate itself into large conglomerations and begin a period of large-scale reinvestment and technological innovation. It also led industry to call for tariff protection and the development of new markets. A protectionist policy, which industry advocated, required colonies to protect German markets and raw materials from foreign, in particular British, retaliation. The desired type of colony was the classical trading colony, "in which European merchants, protected by a

12 This led to Germany challenging Britain as an economic power by the turn of the century, prompting increasing competition between the two nations.
minimal governmental presence, would trade with indigenous societies or develop extractive industries.\textsuperscript{13}

Before any of the arguments advanced in favor of colonies could be put into practice, colonial enthusiasts had to confront the opposition of the Government, especially the German Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck.\textsuperscript{14} He argued that colonies were expensive and could cause friction with other European nations, especially with the premier colonial power, England, with which Bismarck wanted to maintain good relations. More importantly, he saw colonies as a distraction from his goal of securing Germany as the premier Continental power. Also, advocating colonialism would have caused problems at home for Bismarck. In the early 1870s, free trade was the prevailing economic doctrine and the Nationalliberalen Partei (National Liberal Party) was dominant in German politics. As free traders, the National Liberals were not supportive of colonies because of the potential of colonies to restrict trade.\textsuperscript{15} Furthermore, Bismarck had stated that colonialism should not take place unless there was strong public opinion in favor of it. In the early 1870s, public support was not present.

Despite Bismarck's initial avowed opposition to colonialism, events at home and abroad were to change his mind. From the mid-1870s, two interest groups began advocating for German acquisition of trading colonies. One group, led by the Hamburg merchant Adolf Woermann, pressured the government to declare protectorates\textsuperscript{16} in West Africa and the South Pacific to protect the trade networks they had established in these areas.\textsuperscript{17} They also tried to convince the government to bail out the failing German companies\textsuperscript{18} they had established in the tropics. The other group consisted of industrial and business organizations, such as the Bleichröder investment

\textsuperscript{13} Smith, p. 14.
\textsuperscript{14} The Government typically refers to the Chancellor and his Secretaries of State, acting on behalf of the Emperor, who appoints and dismisses them. If otherwise, I will try to state it.
\textsuperscript{15} The country who possessed the colony could limit access to the economic goods produced therein.
\textsuperscript{16} A protectorate is a territory afforded military protection by a specific nation or series of nations. It usually involved one European nation protecting its interests in an area from infringement by other nations.
\textsuperscript{17} Smith, p. 8.
\textsuperscript{18} Smith mentions the Godeffroy firm, which was approaching bankruptcy. p. 9
bank. with financial interests in overseas trade. This group included financial backers of the
tropical traders, as well as individuals and organizations looking for investment opportunities.

While colonial enthusiasts exerted pressure in Germany, events overseas worked to
reshape opinions on colonialism. When the English annexed the Fiji Islands on 10 October 1874,
the requests of the colonial enthusiasts in Germany received new attention. This was the result of
British mistreatment of German settlers. At first the German settlers in Fiji were pleased by the
English presence. They hoped for protection, both from local Fijians and other foreign powers, in
the form of consular aid they could not count on from Germany. However, within days their
pleasure turned to fear and outrage. In late October, the English cancelled all debts the
inhabitants of Fiji had acquired before 1871. Since the German settlers had served as creditors,
this caused incredible financial hardship. Added to this, the British government expropriated the
land and property owned by the Germans without indemnity.

In the past, Bismarck had been largely indifferent to requests by German settlers and
traders for protection from foreign powers. Now, however, he began to take an interest in these
requests. Evidence of his newfound interest revealed itself in March 1875, when Bismarck
protested burdensome Spanish custom regulations in the Zulu Islands. He wrote:

"Since the German Government has hitherto entirely refrained from following any
definite colonial policy, it is all the more called upon to defend its trade from attack....Spain
cannot, according to any of the outworn mercantilist theories of a past age of discovery, assert her
sovereignty over lands hitherto open to trade, where German merchants have founded factories
and depots at great cost, sacrifice and trouble."

Bismarck found a politically justifiable way to begin the shift toward colonies. By defending
German traders, the government took an important first step toward colonialism.

Between 1876 and 1879, the German government signed a series of trade and amity
treaties, advancing from mere protest to definitive action. However, the government made it

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19 Bleichröder was one of the backers of Woermann. Smith, p. 9.
20 Smith, p. 8-9.
21 Townsend, p. 57.
22 Townsend, p. 63-4.
clear that these treaties signified the start of a policy of trade protection, not colonialism. In 1877, Germany concluded the Tongan Treaty, which guaranteed reciprocal commercial freedom and ceded to Germany the right of establishing a naval station on the Vavao Islands. The preamble of the treaty states that Article V of the treaty, providing for a naval base, "should not be considered as the establishment of a colony, an idea which the Government distinctly and particularly repudiates." Bismarck and the German government are still not prepared to engage in the acquisition of colonies.

Despite this anti-colonial assertion, government support for colonialism slowly grew. In 1876, the suggestion of developing a colony in the Transvaal, in South Africa, was presented to Bismarck by Adolf Lüderitz, a Bremen merchant active in African trade. Although Bismarck did not approve the plan, he made it clear that he favored the acquisition of colonies. However, he desired national support before engaging in colonization.

Although colonialism lacked popular support, it was beginning to appeal to Bismarck as a useful tool to distract Germans from problems at home. The 1870s had witnessed the rise of socialism in Germany and the subsequent anti-socialist legislation in 1878. Added to this was the financial crisis of 1873 and Bismarck's anti-Catholic campaign, better known as the Kulturkampf. The depression and these sets of legislation caused social unrest among segments.

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23 Trade protection involves using a show of military force, such as sending a warship to the area, or even military protection to protect trading interests overseas. Colonialism involves "ownership" of a defined territory and the establishment of an administrative apparatus to oversee the territory.

24 Townsend, p. 66.

25 Townsend, p. 67.

26 According to Townsend, Bismarck cited an unfavorable political situation due to "the jealousy of France, the sensiveness of England, [and] the Kulturkampf." p. 77-8.

27 Townsend, p. 77.

28 For more on this theory see Hans-Ulrich Wehler Bismarck und der Imperialismus. Cologne, 1969.

29 Socialist calls for equality and workers' rights were viewed as a threat to the monarchy, prompting legislation to weaken the Socialist movement.

30 The Kulturkampf refers to a period of discrimination against Catholics. Bismarck saw the Roman Catholic Church as a threat to the new German Empire and succeeded in passing a series of laws restricting the rights of Catholics in Germany. His plan backfired as the Catholic Center party grew in size, becoming the largest political party. as Catholics flocked to it for support and protection.
of the German populace. Rather than addressing the problem, Bismarck sought to divert attention elsewhere.

Taking Bismarck's changed attitude as a glimmer of hope, colonial advocates pushed for colonialism in the Reichstag. The Bremen merchant, Mosle, spoke out in favor of the Samoan Treaty\textsuperscript{31} in 1879.

I would indeed rejoice, should the Government find it advantageous, in Polynesia or in any other part of the world, to progress from treaties of amity and trade to protectorate treaties, yes, even to the \textit{annexation or seizure} of lands in order to \textit{establish its own colonies}. Should a favorable occasion arise, I should not hesitate to encourage the empire to pursue such a policy at once....I consider the establishment of colonies, both for the encouragement of trade and industry, and the general prosperous development of the German empire and all German interests as not only highly advantageous, but indeed necessary.\textsuperscript{32}

This statement advocating colonial acquisition met with opposition in the Reichstag. Ludwig Bamberger, a leader of the National Liberals, chastised the commercial colonialists for using the Samoan Treaty to advocate their "extreme" demands. Others opposed to the treaty accused the Government of developing a colonial policy and hiding it in the Samoan Treaty. Despite these criticisms, the Reichstag voted for the treaty, but only as a trade treaty.\textsuperscript{33}

Armed with this small victory, the colonial enthusiasts immediately began a campaign for state-directed colonialism. They remembered well Bismarck's earlier statement\textsuperscript{34} about the need for public support for colonialism and set out to achieve it. To realize their goal of state-directed colonialism, they engaged in the spreading of propaganda and the creation of a politically influential colonial party.\textsuperscript{35} The propaganda campaign focused on the cultural arguments for colonies. Hübbe-Schleiden, one of the leading colonial propagandists, argued that it was Germany's duty to spread its \textit{Kultur} throughout the world, both for the preservation of

\textsuperscript{31} Similar to the earlier Tongan Treaty, the Samoan Treaty involved reciprocal trade agreements and the establishment of German coaling stations. Likewise, the Germany Foreign Secretary, von Bülow, said "We do not wish to found colonies....We only wish to guarantee the rights of German shipping and trade."

\textsuperscript{32} Townsend, p. 71-2.

\textsuperscript{33} Townsend, p. 81.

\textsuperscript{34} Townsend, p. 82.

\textsuperscript{35} Townsend, p. 85.
Deutschtiim (Germanism) and for the benefit of "civilization." Another leading colonial propagandist, Fabri, focused on the issue of German emigration. Emigration had long been the middle class's way of escaping unbearable conditions, such as the economic dislocation that resulted during the shift in Germany from agriculture to industry in the 1860s and 1870s. State-directed emigrationist colonialism appealed to those individuals affected by this dislocation because it preserved the culture and economic contributions of the emigrants.

Those opposed to colonies felt that Germany, lacking an open sea and an adequate navy, was ill equipped to engage in colonialism. Furthermore, they believed Germany should concentrate on extending its influence in eastern and southern Europe. Colonial opponents also set out to attack the figures spouted by the colonialists. They showed that emigration had actually decreased and that Germany was not truly overpopulated. Also, state-directed emigration would cause a heavy tax burden, leading to a greater exodus of Germans.

In the colonial party's attempts to establish itself as a political force, it was greatly aided by Bismarck's change in political philosophy in 1878. Bismarck, taking advantage of the support given him by the National Liberals, had embraced liberalism and free trade in order to unify Germany and establish the nation as a European power. By 1878, however, his reliance on the National Liberal party was becoming more of a burden than a benefit and he decided to break with it and return to conservatism. He drew the Conservative Parties (the Deutsch Konservative Partei and the Frei Konservative Partei) and the more right-wing members of the National Liberal Party closer to him by adopting a policy of protectionism and indirect taxation. He also gained the support of the Catholic Center Party, which was increasing in influence, by easing the restrictions imposed on Catholics. As a result of the political shifting, the Chancellor was supported only by the Center, German Conservative and Free Conservative parties at a time when

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36 This was especially important in Africa, where the spread of German Kultur "would mean progress for the whole negro race." Townsend, p. 89-90.
37 Smith, p. 10-11.
38 See cultural discussion on page 4.
he needed broader support for his social and economic policies. Another result of the changing and tightening of political alliances was a switch in where lay colonial support. Before 1878, the parties of the government opposed colonies, and the Opposition supported them. After 1878, the situation reversed, with governmental support for colonialism and opposition from those parties antagonistic to the government. The colonial party took advantage of this situation to support the government and thus ensure its political influence.

To increase their effectiveness as lobbyists, the colonial advocates decided to become better organized. This resulted in the founding of the Kolonialverein (Colonial Society) on December 6, 1882, in Frankfurt. Although the Kolonialverein was not the first colonial organization, it quickly became one of the most influential. By the end of 1883, it had over 3000 members and branches in over 500 places in Germany and abroad. In January 1884, it published the first edition of its journal, the Kolonialzeitung, and by 1885 its membership surpassed ten thousand. On 3 April 1884, the adventurer Carl Peters founded a competing organization, Die Gesellschaft für Deutsche Kolonisation (The Society for German Colonization), to raise money for financing colonies in East Africa. In 1887, however, the two societies merged and Die Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft (The German Colonial Society) was born. This organization was to become extremely important in the future of German colonialism.

40 Those groups opposed to the government's policies, i.e. the Center and Conservatives. The Conservatives are generally pro-government, but opposed to specific policies, such as free trade.
41 The colonial party is more of lobbying group than an actual political party.
42 The Kolonialverein was founded by a diverse group of individuals, ranging from academics to businessmen to explorers. For a list of some of those involved see Townsend, p. 140-1. The stated objectives were: "To extend to a larger circle the realization of the necessity of applying national energy to the field of colonization. To form a central organization for all the hitherto scattered efforts for expansion. To create some method for the practical solution of the question." Townsend, p. 140.
43 Two important predecessors were the West Deutsch Verein für Colonisation und Export and the Leipzig Verein für Handels Geographie. Townsend, p. 137.
44 Townsend, p. 145.
46 It was the main colonial pressure group.
Although the creation of the colonial organizations led to increased calls for colonialism, Bismarck, due to the need to retain support for his social and economic policies, could not afford to advocate colonies too strongly due to the risk of alienating supporters. However, he slowly began to give open support for colonialism when it appeared safe to do so, all the time feeling out public opinion to see what reaction would result. On 16 November 1882, the Bremen merchant Lüderitz requested imperial protection for trade contracts he was negotiating on the southwestern coast of Africa. In early 1883, Bismarck secretly promised Lüderitz protection if he could acquire control of a harbor to which no other nation could lawfully lay claim. Lüderitz took control of the harbor of Angra Pequena, in modern-day Namibia, in April 1883, and had his agent, Vogelsang, sign treaties with the native chiefs for a considerable portion of territory in the interior. On 18 August 1883, the German government instructed its consul in Capetown: "Herr Lüderitz can count on the protection of the Imperial Government, so long as his actions are based upon justly won rights and do not clash with the legitimate claims of others, be they native or English." Bismarck is still being careful, not wanting to get involved in a potentially problematic situation.

After Lüderitz's request for protection in November 1882. Bismarck, still being cautious, sent a note to England on 4 February 1883 asking if England had any claim to Angra Pequena, making it clear that if England did not, Germany would afford its subjects in the region all necessary protection. However, Germany "had not the least design of establishing a foothold in Southwest Africa, and would prefer to leave the responsibility of protection to England." The

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47 On 1 May 1883, Vogelsang signed a treaty ceding Angra Pequena Bay and the adjoining territory for five miles in all directions to the firm of Lüderitz for Rs 200 and 200 rifles. On 25 August 1883, he signed another treaty for the whole coastal area from the Orange River to the 26th latitude line and 20 geographical miles inland for Rs 200 and 60 rifles. This area became known as Lüderitzland. Esterhuyse, l.H. South West Africa 1880-1894. Capetown, South Africa: C. Struik (Pty) Ltd., 1968. p. 39-40.
50 Townsend. p. 166.
English response was vague and evasive. Bismarck made a second request for clarification from England on 12 November 1883, which received no immediate reply. Lüderitz, assured of imperial protection, publicly announced his acquisition of the territory on 20 November 1883. The British quickly (22 November 1883) issued a reply stating that although they had not formally proclaimed sovereignty over the area, they considered any foreign claims an infringement upon their rights. On 31 December 1883, Bismarck demanded Britain explain how it could claim sovereignty over formerly independent territory. Britain failed to reply, which incensed the German public. Taking advantage of anti-British sentiment among the German people, Bismarck granted official protection to Lüderitz's settlements in Southwest Africa on 24 April 1884.

Despite growing public support for the acquisition of colonies, Bismarck, the government and the colonial lobbyists still faced opposition in the Reichstag that would continue until March 1885. The central struggle from April 1884 to March 1885 was over the Steamship Subsidy Bill, which would provide for a steamship line to Asia and the South Seas. Bismarck declared that the Reichstag decision on this bill would be decisive for determining the colonial policy of the government. Bismarck and the government received support from the National Liberals, the Conservatives, groups of Progressives and Deutsch-Freisinnige (German Liberals) interested for economic reasons, the Colonial Society, and numerous economic and political groups throughout the country. The largest opponent of the government, and consequently the bill, was the Center Party, led by Ludwig Windthorst, who deeply disliked Bismarck. Although the party supported

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51 "The Cape Colony Government has certain establishments along the coast, but without more precise information as to the exact location of Lüderitz's factory, it is impossible for the British Government to say whether it could afford protection in case of need." Townsend, p. 166.
52 The German government would use military force to protect the territory from foreign, i.e. British, encroachment.
53 He publicly announced the treaties he possessed ceding the territory to him.
54 Incensing the German public was not difficult, as Bismarck had effectively used the press to cultivate anti-English sentiment.
55 Townsend, p. 165-69.
modest colonialism, its complaints against government policy and the influence of Windthorst led it to join forces with the Radical Party\(^57\) in opposition. As the largest party in the Reichstag, the Center held the balance and could often determine the success or failure of a bill based on whom it supported.\(^58\)

To counter the opposition, the government engaged in a plan of rapid colonial settlement\(^59\) in Africa and the South Pacific in 1884-5 in order to have a colonial empire to which to point. This would create a situation in which the government could push for Reichstag support on the grounds that since the makings of a colonial empire were in place, it should be supported. To do otherwise would be a betrayal of both Germany and its citizens overseas. Germany acquired territory in Cameroon, Togo, East Africa, Samoa and the New Britain archipelago.\(^60\) Bismarck met objections about the high cost and potential conflict that colonies would bring by asserting:

> The German Empire cannot carry on a system of colonization like France’s. It cannot send out warships to conquer overseas lands, that is. it will not take the initiative; but it will protect the German merchant even in the land which he acquires. Germany will do what England has always done, establish Chartered Companies, so that the responsibility entirely rests with them.\(^61\)

Bismarck wanted Germany to have colonies, wherever possible, while still maintaining as little government involvement as possible. He wanted the benefits of colonization without the hassle and expense.

Despite these efforts, Bismarck still found himself hindered by the opposition in the Reichstag. His final tactic for overcoming Reichstag opposition was to incite national support for colonies by once again attacking England for its activities against Germany in the colonial realm. Bismarck brought up the lack of British cooperation on the issue of Angra Pequena and later

\(^56\) As the Reichstag is a national body, the vote to confirm or reject the bill could (and would) be taken as the opinion of the populace on imperial colonialism. A rejection of the bill would presumably end the government’s venture into colonialism. Townsend, p. 171-2.

\(^57\) The Radicals disapproved of Bismarck’s total control of foreign policy. Townsend, p. 172-5.

\(^58\) German adventurers and explorers claimed as much land as possible as quickly as possible.

\(^60\) Treaties were signed with local leaders ceding control over large areas of land to Germany.

\(^61\) Townsend, p. 180.
published a series of *White Books* detailing England's unjust treatment of Germany on the issues of the Congo District.\(^6^2\) Angra-Pequena and Samoa. He hoped that arousing anti-British feeling would lead to popular support for the government, and the portrayal of the opposition as unpatriotic and pro-British. The Opposition responded with a policy of obstruction, refusing to support even the smallest measure advanced by the Government.\(^6^3\) However, obstruction backfired and Bismarck received popular support for his colonial policy. By January 1885, the Opposition was beginning to weaken under the pressure of public opinion. The Center party declared it would never be found lacking when issues of national prestige and honor were placed before it. On 23 March 1885, the Reichstag passed the Steamship Subsidy Bill. Bismarck and the colonial enthusiasts had overcome all significant obstacles to a national colonial policy.\(^6^4\)

\(^6^2\) The Belgian Congo.

\(^6^3\) An appropriation of 2700 Marks for extra clerks in the Chancellors office and 20,000 Marks for a second director in the Foreign Office. Townsend, p. 187.

\(^6^4\) Townsend, p. 182-92.
Chapter 2: German East Africa (1884-1906)

"To acquire territory is very simple in East Africa. For a few muskets one can obtain a paper with some native crosses." This statement, made by Bismarck on 18 July 1886, exemplifies the German view of colonialism at that time. Both German explorers and the government believed that if they possessed "treaties" with African leaders, the territory belonged to them. They ignored the views of other interested parties, such as the coastal African leaders and the Omani Sultan of Zanzibar who both claimed sovereignty over the mainland, along with the Omani Arab elites who had established political power along the coast on the Sultan's behalf. This slight on the part of the Germans was to lead to problems for the colonial government. Both the Arabs along the coast and numerous African leaders and their people resisted the encroaching German rule. The colonial government, which had underestimated the challenges that the terrain, climate and inhabitants would pose, reacted with armed force to the opposition it faced. For most of the first twenty years of German rule, the colonial government used military force and repressive labor and taxation policies to "pacify" the peoples of German East Africa.

German political and administrative involvement in East Africa began on 4 November 1884, when the adventurer and explorer Carl Peters, Count Joachim von Pfeil, and Dr. Carl Jühlke arrived in Zanzibar with plans of claiming a region of Tanganyika adjacent to the island of Zanzibar. This was meant as one of the first steps in establishing deutsch Mittelafrika, a German colonial empire stretching across central Africa from Tanzania in the east to Namibia and Cameroon in the west. According to Peter's Stationspolitik, which expressed his "concept" of territorial or colonial acquisition:

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2 The Sultan of Zanzibar, through the Omani Arab elites, had exercised political and economic control over the coastal areas since the 1840s. See Mann, p. 67, for a complete discussion.
"It is vital that we lay our hands on as many territories as possible, before our competitors are able to... and establish as many stations as we can, in strategic parts of the country, from which we will later be able to intervene in and control the politics and commerce of East Africa, and bring them into the sphere of German interest along with additional territories further west in the Congo and further south in the poorly administered Portuguese territories."

Peters showed no concern for the rights of the inhabitants of the territory, or for the internationally established claims of the Omani Sultan of Zanzibar to the land. For him, the territory was only important in terms of its relation to the quest for power and influence by the nations of Europe.

By 28 January 1885, Peters, using fraud and bribery, acquired twelve treaties signed by local leaders granting sovereignty over the nations of Usagara, Useguha, Ukami and Nguru to the Society for German Colonization. Although the treaties were worthless, the German government chose to uphold them and, on 17 February 1885, Emperor Wilhelm II declared the area an imperial protectorate. In April 1885, the Society for German Colonization was renamed and reorganized as a joint-stock company, the Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft (DOAG), or German East Africa Company. Over the next few years, Germany made agreements with Britain, Portugal and Sultan Barghash, who controlled Zanzibar and parts of the adjacent mainland, delineating the territory controlled by each of the parties. Although the treaties gave DOAG control over a large expanse of territory, the company was unable to administer effectively the protectorate, lacking the necessary experience and funds, and thus concentrated its activities near the coast.

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1 Mann, p. 26.
2 See treaty in appendix.
3 See discussion of colonial societies in Chapter I for more information on the Society for German Colonization.
4 The African chiefs had no idea what they were signing. If they had known, it is unlikely that they would have signed over their territory.
6 The partition of East Africa was completed in 1890 with the Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty between Germany and England. The established boundaries of German East Africa held, with minor adjustments, until the end of the First World War when the colony was divided between Belgium and England.
DOAG's activities brought it into direct competition with the Omani Arabs along the coast, and prompted them to take up arms against the Germans in August 1888. The conflict was prompted by a series of "flag-raisings"\(^{10}\) to symbolize the transfer of control\(^{11}\) over the mainland from the Sultan of Zanzibar to DOAG. An Arab settler, Bushiri bin Salim, expressing the outrage felt by the Arab elites along the coast at the imposition of a new foreign power and the "betrayal"\(^{12}\) of the Sultan, staged a series of attacks\(^{13}\) on DOAG stations. By September, the Arabs controlled all but two, those at Bagamoyo and Dar-es-Salaam.\(^ {14}\) In response to these attacks, Bismarck appointed Captain Hermann von Wissmann Imperial Commissioner in 1888 and set him the task of suppressing the "rebellion."\(^ {15}\) He began by strengthening German military control in Bagamoyo and Dar-es-Salaam with the hopes of using them as bases of operation to strike at the African forces\(^ {16}\) in other coastal towns.

On 8 May 1889, Wissmann and his troops defeated the forces Bushiri had assembled in his home or fortress outside Bagamoyo.\(^ {17}\) Following up on his military victory, Wissmann worked to isolate the Arabs from the Africans by stressing the Arabs' continuation of the slave trade, insinuating the revolt was begun for personal gain, attacking cities with large Arab populations and placing the blame for the fighting squarely on Bushiri's shoulders.\(^ {18}\) Bushiri and his forces were not yet finished and the summer of 1889 witnessed a series of battles between Bushiri's forces and the Schutztruppe (protectorate troops).\(^ {19}\) with the Schutztruppe usually

\(^{10}\) The Zanzibar flag was taken down and the German flag raised in its place.

\(^{11}\) DOAG forcibly compelled the Sultan to recognize DOAG's rule over the mainland. Mann, p. 73.

\(^{12}\) Refers to the transfer of control over the mainland to DOAG.

\(^{13}\) The attacking forces consisted of Arab elites, Indian traders, African coastal leaders and slaves.

\(^{14}\) Mann, p. 73-4.

\(^{15}\) The Germans, acting on the belief that they controlled the mainland, referred to the Arab action as a rebellion or revolt. The Omani Arabs would argue that they were asserting their sovereignty in the face of an unwanted, illegitimate challenge.

\(^{16}\) The Arabs, who controlled the slave trade, mobilized slaves to fight for them. Mann, p. 81.

\(^{17}\) Mann, p. 78-80.

\(^{18}\) Mann, p. 83, 85.

\(^{19}\) This is the German colonial military forces. It is composed of European officers and African soldiers, usually recruited from other parts of Africa, such as Sudan.
prevailing. However, Bushiri's luck ran out on 15 December 1889 when he was captured and executed trying to flee to British East Africa.²⁰

With Bushiri's death, German action shifted to Bwana Heri of Zigua, north of the Rufiji River, who emerged as the new threat. Heri resorted to guerrilla tactics to combat the German troops. The Schutztruppe responded with a scorched-earth policy to deprive the guerrillas of necessary supplies. The fighting between the Schutztruppe and Bwana Heri and his forces ended with Heri's surrender on 8 April 1890.²¹ By the summer of 1890, the rebellion had come to an end, with only the coastal town of Kilwa and its hinterland still resisting the Germans.

As a result of the problems DOAG's presence along the coast caused, along with general fiscal and administrative mismanagement by DOAG, the German government assumed control of the German East Africa from DOAG on 1 January 1891.²² The following decade, 1891-1901, saw a steady succession of governors as Germany attempted to pacify the colony. Resistance to German rule was widespread across the colony, especially in the interior, where German military presence was weakest. Because the Hehe people²³ under the leadership of Mkwawa aided the "rebels" during the "Arab Revolt,"²⁴ the Schutztruppe focused on crushing their resistance to German rule first.

In June 1891, Wissmann organized the Zelewski Expedition to deal with Mkwawa and the Hehe. Unfortunately for the Germans, Wissmann underestimated the resourcefulness of

²⁰ Mann, p. 91.
²¹ Ironically, after defeating him, Wissmann recognized Heri as Sultan of Zigua and awarded him an office and salary in the colony's administration. Mann, p. 93, 96, 98-9.
²² The government made numerous concessions to DOAG as an inducement to turn the colony over to government control. The government guaranteed a loan of over 10 million marks to be used for economic investment and promised to pay the company an annual sum of 600,000 marks. DOAG also retained concessions of unoccupied land, mining rights, and priority in railroad construction, along with the right to establish a bank, issue notes and coin money. Armed with these concessions, DOAG was to be a successful and influential private company. Rodemann, p. 32.
²³ The Hehe are located in the southern part of the colony near Kilwa.
Mkwawa and the Schutztruppe suffered one of its worst defeats. On 17 August, 1891, the Zelewski expedition was ambushed with the loss of over 500 soldiers and porters, along with over 300 weapons, including several machine guns. This loss proved that it was possible to defeat the Germans, encouraging African political leaders to fight rather than submit, prolonging the pacification of the colony. Another consequence of the German loss was a resumption and expansion of the use of terror and force, such as destroying villages and agricultural areas, in the Schutztruppe's military operations in an attempt to restore their feared image of invincibility.

After a continuous series of battles between the two sides, the Schutztruppe finally handed the Hehe a serious defeat when they attacked the Hehe capital at Iringa in late October 1894, capturing large quantities of guns and ammunition and displaying the weakness of Mkwawa. Despite this loss, Hehe resistance continued until Mkwawa's death in 1898.

Another troublesome leader was Machemba of the Yao people, who, like Mkwawa, aided the "rebels" fighting the Germans during the "Arab Revolt." In response to a call for submission by Wissmann in 1890, he replied:

I have listened to your words, but can find no reason why I should obey you. I would rather die first....If it should be friendship that you want, then I am ready for it, today and always. But I will not be your subject....If it should be war that you desire, then I am also ready....I do not fall at your feet, for you are God's creature just as I am....I am Sultan here in my land. You are Sultan there in yours....I do not say that you should obey me, for I know that you are a free man....I will not come to you, and if you are strong enough, then come and fetch me.

To assert his independence, he attacked a series of coastal villages near the German garrison at Lindi, a southern coastal town, to increase his territorial and political control. On 20 October 1890, the Schutztruppe responded by attacking the garrison Machemba established at Ruho, near

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24 The German name for the conflict.
25 The Germans were used to fighting Africans barricaded in bomas (forts) and failed to make preparations for any other type of attack.
26 Mann, p. 185-6.
27 Mann, p. 188.
28 Mann, p. 189-193, 203.
29 Wissmann wanted Machemba to accept a deal similar to the one with Bwana Heri. That way German influence could be spread using Machemba's existing political network. Mann, p. 106.
Lindi. After several days of indecisive battles, the German forces captured the village. Fighting between the two forces continued with Machemba's forces suffering the brunt of the casualties. However, the German forces never inflicted a decisive defeat. Eventually an agreement was reached whereby Machemba would be recognized as "Sultan" of Makonde\textsuperscript{31} and become a paid civil servant.\textsuperscript{32}

The way Wissmann dealt with Machemba and with Bwana Heri was symptomatic of early German rule. The colonial government, wishing to continue its military expansion, willingly accommodated African leaders whenever possible. By recognizing the African leader's political authority and enlisting his aid, the Germans gained access to his political and economic connections. They hoped to exploit these connections to extend their control and influence over the colony. Also with only a limited military force to control a vast territory, making allies wherever possible made sense. When the system broke down in the mid-1890s, the Germans relied on force and violence to keep "control" and crush resistance. According to historian Erick Mann, "for much of the 1890s, the Germans dominated Tanganyika through sheer force, imposing a violent regime of martial law."\textsuperscript{33}

Along with suppressing threats to its rule, the colonial government established an administrative framework to institute as they gained control over the colony. German East Africa was divided into districts\textsuperscript{34} headed by either a military or civilian official. When the Germans gained control of a region, they built a boma or fortress and then extended their control outwards to the surrounding area. As soon as a district was "pacified,"\textsuperscript{35} it was transferred from a military station to a district office headed by a civilian official. The coastal stations of Bagamoyo, Dar-es-

\textsuperscript{31} The region occupied by the Yao people.
\textsuperscript{32} Mann, p. 107-110.
\textsuperscript{33} Mann, p. 347.
\textsuperscript{34} The division occurred at least by 1891.
\textsuperscript{35} Strong resistance to German rule had been crushed.
Salaam. Tanga, Pangani, Sadani, Kilwa and Lindi were the first to be established and, in 1891, the first to be handed over to civilians. In 1900, most of the colony was still under military control. By this time, a series of military posts and stations were loosely dispersed across much of the colony. The soldiers of the Schutztruppe (Protectorate troops), along with their military duties, were engaged in administrative duties such as dispensing justice, organizing the government and road construction. According to Mann, "the implementation of colonial policies in Tanganyika, between 1889 and 1907, were managed almost exclusively by the Schutztruppe's officer corps without any interference by or accountability to a local civilian administration." They frequently used cooperative chiefs to help collect taxes and handle judicial matters. However, pacification was a slow process and by 1903 there were ten civilian and thirteen military districts.

The Germans used different administrative structures throughout the colony depending on what the existing administrative structure was and how amenable the African leaders were to the German presence. Along the coast they adopted the existing Arab system of administration involving liwalis (governors) and akidas (military officers). Further inland they relied on akidas or jumbes (local chieftains). Where there were existing tribal chiefdoms, the Germans kept "cooperative" chiefs in power and installed pro-German chiefs in those chiefdoms held by individuals opposed to German rule. The final form of administration was a system of indirect

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36 Koponen, p. 114-5.
37 No unified colonial policy seems to have been developed during the early history of German East Africa (1885-1905). The Schutztruppe focused on "pacifying" the colony and relied on brute force, rather than rational policy, to administer the areas under their control. According to Mann, DOAG, the best hope for developing the colony commercially never developed "a comprehensive plan for the region's economic exploitation or commercial development." Mann, p. 26.
38 Mann, Erick, p. 16.
39 Koponen, p. 115.
40 Akidas and liwalis were frequently Arab or Swahili. They had magisterial jurisdiction over the local inhabitants. They also collected taxes from the surrounding villages. Jumbes had similar magisterial jurisdiction over the villages under their control. Sayers, Gerald F. (ed.). The Handbook of Tanganyika. London: MacMillan & Co., Ltd., 1930. p. 76.
41 Territory occupied by a particular ethnic group under the leadership of one or several chiefs, such as Mkwawa and the Hehe people.
rule practiced in the residencies\(^\text{42}\) of Ruanda, Urundi and Bukoba. The monarchs of these regions continued to rule, though with some German intervention.\(^\text{43}\) The aim of the residencies was "conveying the European civilization embodied in German domination to the mass of the native population by advising or influencing the tribal chiefs without, as a rule, approaching the individual natives directly."\(^\text{44}\) The Germans wished to instill German Kultur in the Africans without being seen as forcing it upon them.

From an economic standpoint, most of the European involvement in the colony was plantation agriculture. Although there were some small settlers, large companies, such as DOAG, controlled most of the plantations. The major export products were coffee, cotton, tobacco, sisal, and rubber. The primary plantation area was in the northeastern part of Tanganyika, the districts of Tanga, Pangani and Wilhelmsaal in particular, because of the presence of a large highland area, the Usambara Mountains, near the coast. Because the inhabitants of these districts resisted providing labor for the plantations,\(^\text{45}\) preferring to grow food for the laborers, laborers were recruited\(^\text{46}\) from other parts of German East Africa. The preferred laborers were the Nyamwezi, Sukuma and Iramba, based in the western part of the colony. These groups, especially the Nyamwezi, had long served as porters and had established a reputation as good, hard workers. Also, their service as porters showed they could be compelled to work by money.

In 1896 a decree was issued regulating labor contracts in German East Africa. It required labor contracts of longer than thirty days to be put in writing and filed with the proper authorities. The contract also had to state the nature of the work, the length of the contract, work hours, how

\(^{42}\) Actually sprawling kingdoms, but Germans called them residencies to create the illusion of greater control.

\(^{43}\) The colonial government issued orders to the monarchs through the monarch’s representatives. The monarch then chose how to carry out the order. Koponen, p. 122-3.


\(^{45}\) They feigned sickness, ran away, etc.
much and what type of payment was required, reasons for termination and travel provisions for
workers recruited outside the work area. Violating a labor contract meant a fine or imprisonment
for the offending laborer.47

Along with addressing labor issues, DOAG and the colonial government worked to
develop the colony. One of the first projects undertaken was to improve transportation and open
up the colony through the construction of an extensive rail network. Although support for
building railroads in East Africa existed, the conflict came over which line should be built. In the
mid-1880s, Karl Peters advocated a railroad from Dar es Salaam to Tabora and Ujiji. In 1891,
Wilhelm Oechelhaeuser, a director of the German East Africa Company, convened a meeting of
African explorers who recommended railways from Dar es Salaam to Lakes Victoria and
Tanganyika and from Tanga to Kilimanjaro. Although Oechelhaeuser preferred the central line
(Dar es Salaam to Tabora),48 the northern line (Tanga to Kilimanjaro) was the first to be built.
This decision was likely influenced by the fact that DOAG owned large tracts of land in
Usambara, through which the northern line would run.49

Although the northern line received approval, a combination of mishaps and unforeseen
circumstances delayed construction until 1893. By the end of 1895 the railway had only been
extended to Muhesa, 40 kilometers from the coast.50 Further construction was hindered by a lack
of funds51 to make necessary repairs and an inability to raise more money. In a report to the

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46 The plantations employed recruiters to secure laborers for them.
47 Rodemann, p. 173.
48 M.F. Hill, in Permanent Way II: The Study of the Tanganyika Railways, never explains why Peters and
Oechelhaeuser preferred the central line. For Peters, it was likely influenced by his desire to see the
establishment of deutsch Mittelafrika. The central line would be the logical choice in establishing an East-
West railroad linking German East Africa and German Southwest Africa via the Congo.
50 Hill, p. 63.
51 Initially, railroad construction was funded by DOAG and other private sources. Later the government
would help finance the railroads.
acting Governor, von Bennigsen, in June 1896, the District Commissioner of Tanga, von St. Paul, wrote:52

Only one train a week runs, on Saturdays, from Tanga to Muhesa and back. All construction work has come to a standstill. Although the preparatory work for the extension of the line from Muhesa to Korogwe has been completed, nothing further has been done because the Company's funds are exhausted. Part of the jetty, constructed in 1892, has collapsed, and nothing has been done to repair the damage.

In 1899, the German government agreed to finance the extension of the line to Korogwe,53 solving the railroad's financial difficulties.

With railroad construction slowly proceeding and the "pacification" of the colony seemingly completed by 1900, the new governor, Major Adolf von Götzen, appointed in 1901, addressed settlers' calls for more influence in local government. In March 1901, on the order of the Imperial government, Götzen established self-government councils,54 known as the Communal Leagues, in nine of the civilian districts in German East Africa. The commune, led by the district officer with the assistance of three unofficials (usually settlers), was responsible for local development and services. Half of the hut tax55 and thirty percent of the business tax for a district went to the commune to fund these services. This gave the Communal Leagues more control over expenditures and took away the Reichstag's right of supervision over these expenditures.56

It also increased the power of European settlers, who composed a significant percentage of the membership of these new councils. The settlers' influence was further increased in December 1903, when the establishment in each colony of an advisory body, known as the

52 Hill, p. 64.
53 Completed early in 1902. The line would be extended to Mombo by 1905.
54 Essentially settler pressure groups.
55 A tax on each dwelling. Established during the governorship of Gen. Eduard Liebert (1896-1901).
56 Austen, p. 71.
Governor's Council, was authorized. The council contained both official and unofficial members who met to discuss the budget, proposed ordinances and other relevant matters. Initially non-Europeans were allowed to serve on these councils, but European members complained. Götzen made German literacy a requirement of membership, effectively eliminating all non-Europeans.  

In 1902, Götzen focused on the economic exploitation of the colony, introducing a scheme whereby Africans would grow cotton as a Volkskultur, a people's crop. Past failures in the north led him to concentrate his efforts in the south. Communal plots, which the villagers were required to work, were established under the control of the local headman. The profits were to be divided between the headman, the workers and the Kommunalverband (European-controlled district development committee), which was in charge of marketing along with providing the cotton seed. The experiment was a failure. It required more labor than expected, which interfered with the subsistence farming of the Africans. The workers often refused the pitiful wages and the scheme was rife with corruption and brutality. Eventually, the Africans tired of the abuse and took action.

In late July 1905, the Matumbi people in the south-eastern part of Tanganyika uprooted cotton plants and attacked the headquarters of their akida. Thus began the Maji-Maji Rebellion, which would consume the lives of the inhabitants of the southern part of German East Africa until 1907. Upon being attacked, the akida fled as did other foreigners (non-Africans). The following day the protesters destroyed the Indian trading settlement at Samanga on the coast. At the same time, the Ngindo of Madaba attacked the Arab traders in the area. Word of the fighting spread and before long the Rufiji Valley, from Kilosa to Liwale, was in revolt. Anyone with ties

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58 The headman is pro-German.
60 Iliffe, *Tanganyika*, p. 23.
61 The estimated death toll is 250,000-300,000 or about a third of the population of the area. Iliffe, *Modern*, p. 200.
to the colonial government was threatened. By the end of August, the Ngindo had carried the fighting south into the Lukuledi Valley and west into the Kilombero Valley. The Ngoni, mobilizing their powerful military system, threatened German forces in Songea, while the Bena attacked the Yakobi mission. The Germans quickly struck back, moving through the central districts, destroying property and killing the rebels. By May 1906, most of the Ngoni and Bena leaders had been captured and killed. In the east a long guerrilla war ensued, collapsing in 1907 due to widespread famine in the area. The famine was the result of the use of a scorched-earth policy, which had proven "effective" in previous fighting.

The Maji Maji Rebellion came as a big surprise to the Germans. Although the cotton scheme had been imposed on the Africans since 1902, there had been no wide-scale expressions of discontent. Thus, the Germans had no reason to expect a rising would soon occur. Even more surprising was that the rising involved a number of different African groups, rather than just one or two as in previous conflicts. The rebellion demonstrated the need for a more unified, and less brutal, administrative and economic development policy. Governor Albrecht von Rechenberg, who replaced Götzen in 1906, attempted to create such a policy.

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63 To my knowledge.
Chapter 3: Debate revisited (1906/07)

In 1906, the future of German colonialism came to the forefront of discussion in German politics. Inefficiency in the colonial office in Germany and scandals and conflicts in the colonies prompted members of the Reichstag to criticize the government's colonial policy. While criticism of colonial policy was not new, it had never been so vocal. The division caused by the debate over colonialism led Bülow, the German Chancellor, to dissolve the Reichstag and call for new elections, elections dominated by the colonial issue. It also led to a re-evaluation of colonialism and the institution of much needed reforms.

The criticism centered on the war between the Germans and the Herero and Nama peoples in German Southwest Africa. In January 1904, the Herero people, which lived in the northern part of German Southwest Africa, rose up against social and political discrimination by the Germans. The vicious manner in which General von Trotha and his soldiers dealt with this uprising angered the other ethnic groups and in October, the Nama, traditional enemies of the Herero, revolted in an attempt to protect themselves from a similar fate. Although Hendrick Witboi, the Nama leader, died in battle later that month, other chieftains, both Herero and Nama, continued to fight, adopting guerrilla warfare tactics in order to survive.

The huge cost and ineffectiveness of suppressing this revolt, along with abuses by the Colonial Department involving supplies for the troops, led the Center party to embark on a full-

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1 As previously mentioned, no distinct colonial policy was ever developed. It was a scattering of piece-meal decisions meant to provide short-term solutions.
3 At the battle of Waterberg on 11 August 1904, the German army attempted to encircle the Herero forces. When the Herero broke out of the German encirclement, the Germans drove them into the Omahke sandveld (desert) where many of the Herero perished due to the extreme conditions. "No pains, no sacrifices were spared in eliminating the last remnants of enemy resistance. Like a wounded beast the enemy was tracked down from one water-hole to the next, until finally he became the victim of his own environment. The arid Omahke was to complete what the Germany army had begun: the extermination of the Herero nation." Bley, p. 162-3.
4 See discussion of Tippelskirch army supply contract in appendix.
scale campaign criticizing colonial policy. The most vocal of the critics was Matthias Erzberger, a young Center party deputy from Württemberg. "Erzberger became aroused by the inefficiency of Germany's colonial system, the brutality of incompetent colonial administrators, the privileges granted to colonial companies, the extermination of native populations, and the arrogance shown by the officials of the Berlin colonial department towards the constitutional rights of the Reichstag." He drew up a long list of abuses ranging from abuse of authority by colonial officials to extravagant budgets to inappropriate concessions to the mistreatment of the local inhabitants that led to colonial revolts such as the Maji Maji Rebellion in East Africa and the Herero Revolt in Southwest Africa. He was also upset by the lack of influence the Reichstag had over colonial policy. The role of the Reichstag was confined largely to appropriation of funds for the colonies. Thus, they could influence policy by withholding funds. However, Erzberger desired a greater role for the Reichstag in colonial policy. He wanted the Reichstag to vote for colonial laws, rather than the existing system where laws were enacted by imperial decrees.

The Center party's criticism of colonial policy was annoying to the government, but by itself was not problematic. However, in 1906, the Center party combined protest with action, and with the help of other Opposition parties, caused the defeat of three colonial bills in one month alone. It also reduced the budget for Southwest Africa. During the summer recess, the Centrist, Radical and Socialist press kept up pressure on the government by constant revelations of new abuses.

5 The literature on the colonial debates focuses on economic issues and minimizes the rampant abuse and brutality in many of the colonies. The Center and Social Democrat parties were concerned with stopping the abuses.


7 See appendix for examples of abuses.

8 Epstein, p. 641-5, 648.

9 The Director of the Colonial Department in the Foreign Office dictated colonial policy. He reported to the Foreign Secretary or directly to the Chancellor. The Colonial Department or the Chancellor issued orders to the colonial governor. The colonial military was directly responsible to the Kaiser. Supreme Military Commander.

10 Epstein, p. 640.

11 These bills dealt with extending the Southwest African railway, 10 million Marks to aid the Southwest African settlers suffering from the revolt, and an appropriation for an independent Colonial Secretary.
scandals and elaboration upon those already revealed. The Radical party shared the Center's criticism of colonial expense and maladministration. In December 1905, one of the Radical deputies told the Reichstag, "Our people are tired of colonies." The Social Democrats opposition to colonies was due to the capitalistic nature of imperialism. Also, the Social Democrats were defenders of the exploited, and thus took an interest in ending the abuse of the Africans.

In September 1906, Chancellor Bülow appointed Bernhard Dernburg to replace the retiring Prince Hohenlohe as Colonial Director. Dernburg was a banker and respected businessman from Darmstadt. It was anticipated that he would help make the colonial administration more efficient and demonstrate that the government was committed to reform. He quickly set about making changes, canceling inappropriate contracts and reorganizing the colonial department. The Center party appreciated his efforts and Erzberger acknowledged that many of the party's complaints had been addressed. However, he and his party desired greater reform and were as yet unconvinced that Dernburg and the government would take the reforms far enough.

When the Reichstag resumed in November 1906, the question of how the Center party would vote on future colonial bills occupied every mind. Due to the size of the Center party, how the party decided to vote would determine whether the government received the majority it needed to carry out its colonial program or whether it would remain obstructed. Essential to this question was which faction -- the conservative leadership under Spahn and Hertling, or the rising

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12 Crothers, p. 62-3.
13 Crothers, p. 47.
14 See Tippelskirch contract discussion in appendix.
15 Crothers, p. 77-8.
radical faction under Erzberger -- would control the party. At the party caucus, Erzberger and several associates were chosen as the Center party's spokesmen on colonial policy. 

On 28 November began six days of debate in the Reichstag which were to have a profound influence on future colonial policy. The debate began over supplementary appropriations to Southwest Africa, but quickly became a battle over colonialism in general. The Opposition parties criticized the government's use of military suppression to deal with the Herero and Nama revolts, arguing that more efforts at conciliation should have been tried and that the problems would not end until the oppression was stopped and genuine reform enacted. The government and its supporters responded that conciliation had failed, leaving suppression as the only alternative, and to retreat now would only provoke further rebellion in German colonies and make a mockery of the sacrifice made by the many German soldiers who had died fighting. They were also incensed by the insinuation that the Opposition parties, by controlling the budget, would attempt to determine military policy. They viewed this as an attack upon the Emperor's role as Supreme Commander of the military. 

The heated debate escalated on 3 December, when the Center deputy Roeren had his chance to speak in the Reichstag. He assailed the government and the Colonial Department for its treatment of the missions in the colonies, along with criticizing the Colonial Department for its injustice and inefficiency. Irritated by Roeren's unwillingness to give him a chance despite the opposition's admission that he was off to a positive start, Dernburg struck back, revealing publicly Roeren's past relations with the colonial department and accusing him and the Center party of inappropriate interference in administrative and judicial matters. Although both sides made conciliatory efforts the following day, the damage was done. The attack on Roeren and the Center party aroused the anti-Center press and made moderation on either side much tougher.

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16 Crothers, p. 71, 74.
17 Crothers, p. 75.
18 Crothers, p. 78-80.
On 13 December, the Reichstag met for the second reading of the colonial bills. In addition to the government-sponsored bill, there were two amendments, one by the Center party and one by the Radical party. Although Demburg made it clear that the government could accept the Radical amendment, the Center and Social Democrats were still in firm opposition, making it unlikely that the government bill or Radical amendment would be passed. Bülow, taking advantage of the anti-Center agitation in the press and the Radical party's willingness to support the government, portrayed the upcoming vote as a national issue that would determine the future of Germany's colonial policy.

It is not a question here [he said] whether we shall appropriate a few millions more or less for our colonies. It is a question... of whether we shall keep our colonies at all or not. It is a question... of whether we shall endanger the world's regard for us, the honor of our arms, our position in the world, our self-respect, simply in order to save a comparatively paltry sum at the end of a campaign which has already cost us hundreds of millions... Shall the German people prove themselves to be more petty, shall the German people stand here more mean than other peoples? That is the question to which the federated governments desire an answer....There are situations where shrinking before a crisis means lack of courage and sense of obligation. If you want a crisis, you may have one.

Bülow transformed the conflict in German Southwest Africa, and the fight over supporting it, into a debate on Germany's position in the world and the fortitude and sense of honor of the German people. Having redefined the issue, Bülow waited to see what effect, if any, his speech would have on the voting. It soon became clear that all three bills would be defeated when voting took place that afternoon. Upon the defeat of the first two bills, Bülow dissolved the Reichstag.

Germany's colonial policy (or lack thereof) had been scrutinized and condemned by the Reichstag, something Bülow could not possibly tolerate. The right-wing elements in Germany, in particular the powerful military and Junkers (landed Prussian nobility), were extremely
defensive of any national issue that affected Germany's prestige. They wanted control of these
issues and did not look favorably upon Reichstag involvement or interference. Due to the
influence right-wing nationalists held, especially with the Emperor, Bülow could not afford to
alienate them. Furthermore, Bülow believed strongly in the colonial program and was confident
that Dernburg would make the necessary reforms. He could no longer tolerate the obstructionist
tactics of the Center party and, if necessary, would find a way to run the government without it.
By dissolving the Reichstag and calling for new elections, he saw an opportunity to defend
colonial and military policy, gain a nationalist majority in the Reichstag and strengthen his
position.

The official interpretation of the dissolution as expressed by the Norddeutsche
Allgemeine Zeitung was that:

The Reichstag has been dissolved because its majority refused to grant the Federated
Government the means needed to fulfill a national obligation. The rejection of demands which
were indispensable for the future of Southwest Africa keenly affects Germany's position in the
world....Southwest Africa's importance as a national possession, the importance it has acquired
because of the blood of murdered German men and women, because of the sacrifices and struggles
of our troops, because of the suffering and heroic deaths of so many brave men, and its importance
to our economic strength in the future—all this lies heavily in the balance....It is not a question of
Southwest Africa alone. How we persevere there, whether we go forward with tenacious
willingness to make sacrifices, or whether we weaken after having overcome the greatest dangers,
has become...a great test of whether Germany is capable of developing from a European into a
World Power or not.²⁴

The debate over colonies in general, and Germany's involvement in Southwest Africa in
particular, had been equated with Germany's quest for world power status. Instead of a brutal
war epitomized by German atrocities, the conflict in German Southwest Africa was a heroic
struggle. Supporting this "heroic struggle" became a matter of national honor and German
patriotism.

The issue of an attack on the nation's honor became central to the Reichstag election
campaign of 1907. The government hoped an appeal to nationalism and patriotism would
increase the votes of pro-government parties, along with providing a common ground on which

²⁴ Crothers, p. 94.
the diverse parties which found themselves in the government camp could agree upon. The
government worked to convince the German people that the "struggle" in Southwest Africa
epitomized colonial expansion, an integral part of Germany's quest for world power status and a
matter of national honor. Therefore, it was essential that the Reichstag "defend that honor" by
supporting German colonialism.26

The government launched a campaign to "educate"27 the German people about the
German colonies. The colonial department was especially active. Demburg met with numerous
groups over the course of the election period, impressing upon them the importance of colonies to
Germany's future, in an attempt to rally support for the government and for colonialism. On 3
February 1907, he admitted the need for a firm colonial policy, which the government had never
developed, and proceeded to outline a policy involving increased investment and development in
the colonies, improved training of colonial officials and the training of Africans as laborers.28

The pro-government parties quickly embraced the government's cries of nationalism and
patriotism.29 The conservative parties, known for their patriotic and nationalistic fervor, saw an
issue which could rally voters to their cause. The German Conservative party declared its
inability to "leave the government in the lurch in its effort to defend the honor, might and dignity
of the nation, and to make it secure, whether by the defense of the German Empire itself, or of the
colonies so dearly bought and so bravely defended with the blood of countless sons of our
land."30 The Free Conservatives voiced similar sentiments, crying "help elect a Reichstag of
which Germany may again be proud."31 The National Liberals and the now pro-government
Radicals issued equally patriotic statements. Numerous pressure groups also took advantage of

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26 Crothers. p. 106.
27 Essentially an attempt to indoctrinate the public into seeing the colonies from the government's
perspective.
29 Ironically, to be patriotic meant an implicit acceptance of genocide.
the nationalist campaign to spread their views. The most notable were the Navy League and Pan-German League.

The elections on 25 January 1907 resulted in a resounding national victory. When the final balloting was completed on 5 February, the national parties had won 216 seats compared to 168 for the Center. Poles\(^{32}\) and Social Democrats.\(^{33}\) Although the campaign had been focused against the Center party, it was the Social Democrats, traditionally viewed as enemies of the state, who suffered the most, losing almost half their seats.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parties</th>
<th>1903 Votes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>1907 Votes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservatives</td>
<td>948,448</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>1,060,209</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Conservatives</td>
<td>331,404</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>471,863</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Semites</td>
<td>244,543</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>248,519</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agrarian League &amp; Economic Union</td>
<td>118,759</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>224,030</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Liberals</td>
<td>1,317,410</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1,630,581</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radical Alliance</td>
<td>243,230</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>359,320</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radical People's Party</td>
<td>538,260</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>736,006</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So. Ger. People's Party</td>
<td>91,217</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>138,607</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center</td>
<td>1,875,273</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2,179,743</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poles</td>
<td>347,784</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>453,858</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Democrats</td>
<td>1,012,721</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1,250,029</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alsatians</td>
<td>101,021</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>103,466</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guelphs</td>
<td>162,083</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>151,072</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danes</td>
<td>20,801</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15,425</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Class Party</td>
<td>40,627</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents &amp; other parties</td>
<td>189,843</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>290,022</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1903</th>
<th>1907</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population (1900 and 1905)</td>
<td>56,567,178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified voters</td>
<td>12,531,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating voters</td>
<td>9,531,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstaining voters</td>
<td>2,499,984</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because of the nationalist majority in the Reichstag, the government no longer had to rely on Center party support in order to pass its policies. In commenting on the election, Bülow declared "the answer that the people gave showed that they did not approve of the obstacles placed in the way of the government's national policy."\(^{34}\) More importantly, the German public showed its

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\(^{32}\) The Polish population, along with the Alsatians, Guelphs, and Danes, formed minority political parties. These parties tended to be anti-government due to the discrimination their members faced. They were small in size and possessed marginal influence.

\(^{33}\) Crothers, p. 166, 174-5.

\(^{34}\) Crothers, p. 183.
willingness to support Germany's nationalistic aims, including the acquisition and retention of colonies. German patriotism and nationalism triumphed.

The results signified the beginning of a "new era in colonial policy." The "Bülow Bloc," as the coalition of pro-government parties became known, approved the 1907 colonial budget with only minor changes. They also approved the two bills, revived by Bülow, which had led to dissolution the previous December. Bülow achieved another victory when the Reichstag approved his bill for an independent colonial office, which the Center party had been able to defeat the year before.

Previously, the colonial department had been a section of the Foreign Office. This arrangement proved unworkable, as the Colonial Department quickly became overburdened by the large amount of colonial business. Also, while the Colonial Director reported to the Foreign Secretary, he could deal directly with the Chancellor if he so desired, leading to confusion over who, if anyone, supervised the Colonial Director. In May 1906, Bülow proposed to create an independent colonial secretary in the hopes of making the colonial department more efficient and orderly. The Center party, lacking confidence in the colonial department and fearing that an independent secretary would make larger and more effective demands, raising the colonial budget, defeated the bill by withholding support. With the benefit of a nationalist Reichstag and the positive efforts made by Dernburg during his time as Colonial Director, Bülow met with success when he reintroduced the bill in 1907.

32 An attempt was actually made to formulate a policy for development and administration.
36 Funding for the extension of the southern railway in German Southwest Africa and increased funding for the military expedition in German Southwest Africa.
37 See footnote on page 30.
38 Crothers, p. 39.
In February 1908, Dernburg presented his colonial program, which included many of the reforms the Center had called for over the years, to the Reichstag Budget Commission.

According to Dernburg:

There was to be a system instead of disorganization; the practices of the white traders were to be carefully checked; evils and abuses were to be made public and corrected rather than hidden; Christian principles of humanity, justice, and neighborliness rather than those of materialistic exploitation were to be applied; the interest of the natives was to be regarded as equal to, or paramount with, that of the white settlers; justice was to be guaranteed to the natives and forced labor eliminated; exorbitant profits of monopoly contracts were to be curtailed; colonial troops were to be reduced; and the administration of finances was to be made more efficient.

The emphasis on African interests and improving the treatment of Africans was a result of his trip to German East Africa from July to October 1907. While in German East Africa, Dernburg was convinced by the reforming Governor, Albrecht von Rechenberg, and the industrialist Walther Rathenau, who accompanied him, to adopt a policy that focused on expanding African agricultural production, increased railroad construction to open up the colony, and improved treatment of Africans.

39 The colonial program included plans to improve the training of colonial officials, a new budget scheme to make the colonies financially self-sufficient, increased railroad construction and improved treatment for the indigenous populations. It also included the economic development policy, based on the promotion of peasant agriculture, espoused by Governor Rechenberg of German East Africa during Dernburg’s visit to the colony in fall 1907. (For more information on Rechenberg’s policy and the trip, see Chapter 4.)

40 Crothers, p. 200.
Chapter 4: German East Africa in the Rechenberg Era (1906-1911)

Along with making changes in the colonial administration in Germany, changes were also made in the colonies. One of the most important changes was the appointment in 1906 of Baron Albrecht von Rechenberg to succeed Götzen as governor of German East Africa. Rechenberg took over as governor in the midst of the Maji Maji Rebellion. Witnessing the rebellion made an impression on him and influenced his future policy. Commenting on the Rebellion, for which he blamed von Götzen’s obligatory cotton scheme, he stated in 1907:

> From what I have seen so far, I have not the slightest doubt that the recent rising was due to economic causes, and this accords with experience gained in other lands. I have repeatedly had opportunity to observe popular movements more or less closely, and wherever heterogeneous elements united in a general rising, as was the case with various tribes here, economic questions have been the root causes, to which other factors have been joined only subsequently.

Rechenberg viewed economics as the key to understanding political turmoil.

He later went on to point out:

> Apart from a rising, the natives have no means available against an ordered government which takes no account of their economic conditions and existence...In an uncivilized land which, for example, is exposed to raiding, the condition of the native is indeed afflicted, but not hopeless. He can always hope to beat off the raiders, to bar their way, to win the protection of another powerful tribe, to avoid these intermittent raids, and so on. But under an established administration which is based on false economic principles, the native lacks any means of escaping oppression. It deprives him even of the hope of improvement, and leaves him no choice save either to perish or to eliminate it through a rising. He naturally chooses the latter.

Rechenberg seems to justify the Maji Maji rebels’ actions. If the colonial government had instituted "correct" economic principles, the rebellion would not have occurred. Rechenberg saw economics, not politics, as the means for successful (peaceful) administration of a subject population. Therefore, to avoid future rebellions, he sought to provide the Africans with economic incentives to serve as laborers through the "expansion and reform of indigenous agriculture."

By considering the economic interests and motivations of the Africans, or at least his perception of their interests and motivations, Rechenberg was separating himself from most other colonialists. Both

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colonial administrators and settlers. Rechenberg leaned toward laissez-faire capitalism, hence his policies were minimalist in nature. His goal was economic development through expansion of indigenous agriculture. He hoped to introduce Africans into the market economy by providing them with the means to become small-scale peasant producers, growing a surplus which they would sell to traders and using the profits to purchase consumer goods. Government involvement was to be limited to what was necessary to create and facilitate this expansion.

The imperialistic aspect of colonialism, i.e. forceful military rule, was essentially absent from his policies. He saw colonies as a diversion from Germany's true interests, eastern expansion. Imperialist nations, when they took over a territory, tended to restructure the economy to produce "cash-crops" in order to enrich themselves. This weakened or eliminated existing trade networks. Rechenberg pointed to the decline of the smaller coastal ports in German East Africa whose "centuries-old commerce with Zanzibar and the Middle East was superseded by a trading network under European control." He also believed "that it was characteristic of imperialism to destroy indigenous economies." Therefore, he advocated a policy promoting increased economic expansion and limiting European political control. Rather than tighten German control over the colony and its inhabitants, he made some efforts to improve the treatment of Africans and lessen the militaristic aspects of the colony.

Rechenberg was familiar with German East Africa, having served as a district judge in Tanga from 1893-95 and as director of the Zanzibar consulate from 1896-99. From 1900 to 1906, Rechenberg

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1 Iliffe, *Tanganvika*, p. 71.
2 See discussion of economic imperialism in Chapter I for the prevailing economic concept of colonies.
3 Iliffe, *Tanganvika*, p. 54.
4 Rechenberg to RKA (German Colonial Office) 15 July 1907. As found in Iliffe, *Tanganvika*, p. 55.
6 During Rechenberg's time as governor, 10 military stations were transferred to sub-district or district offices, two military stations were transferred to residencies and a third residency was established. Koponen, p. 116.
7 According to Iliffe, having only spent time on the coast, Rechenberg "assumed the [multi-racial] coast was typical of East Africa as a whole," clouding his perception of Africans. p. 53.
8 On the northeast coast of German East Africa
held consular posts in Moscow and Warsaw. He combined experiences and lessons learned dealing with Russian and Polish peasants in his new administration of Africans. In his economic view, peasants universally relied on the same logical principles when determining whether to provide or withhold labor. "Apart from a few pastoral tribes the negro works everywhere and without compulsion, provided that he can see sufficient reward for his labour. When the work yields no return, he does not work, nor would a European in similar circumstances." Therefore, he sought to implement a policy, based on expanding indigenous agriculture, which was economically attractive to the individual African laborer. With the absence of direct compulsion, the basis of previous German policy, and only minimal direct European involvement. Rechenberg hoped the scheme would have the added benefit of decreasing the chance of rebellion.

Observing the impact of the Uganda Railway on the production of peasants living in vicinity of Lake Victoria, which borders Uganda and German East Africa, reinforced Rechenberg's views. After the completion of the railway by the British around the turn of the century, there was a dramatic increase in the output of peasant producers living near Lake Victoria, where the railroad terminated. Rechenberg hoped to create similar developments throughout German East Africa. His plan was to use market forces to encourage increased peasant production. To test his plan, he sought to induce the Nyamwezi, an ethnic group located in the western part of the colony, to increase their groundnut (peanut) production. The surplus would be purchased by Indian traders and shipped by rail to the coast and other parts of the colony. The money the Nyamwezi gained would be used to pay taxes and duties on imported goods.

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11 "He traveled widely in southern Russia in the period of ferment when Stalin was building his career there, and served in Warsaw during the 1905 revolution." Iliffe, Tanganyika, p. 52.
12 Rechenberg to RKA, 15 July 1907. RKA 1056/48-56 as cited in Iliffe, Tanganyika, p. 66. RKA stands for Reichskolonialamt or German Colonial Office.
13 Iliffe, Tanganyika, p. 71.
14 After the completion of the Uganda Railway in 1901, the people around Lake Victoria expanded their output of indigenous products and sold the surplus crops to Indian merchants in Mwanza and Bukoba, who exported them to
In order to facilitate this plan, he believed that a railroad needed to be built through the center of the colony to the Nyamwezi in the west. Previous railroad development had created a line from Dar-es-Salaam to Morogoro, which Rechenberg planned to extend all the way to the Nyamwezi region. Before he could begin railroad construction and the implementation of his policy, he had to overcome opposition from white settlers and gain government approval for his plan. Neither one of these tasks appeared easy. While Rechenberg desired a commercial colony based on African small peasant production, the white settlers wanted further development of large European-owned plantations. The settlers' viewed African production as limited to Africans working as plantation laborers, not as full participants in a market economy. Instead of extending the central railroad to the regions of exclusively African settlement, they wanted the northern rail line to be further developed to extend white settlement. Furthermore, the settlers sought to limit rather than extend the rights of the Indian traders, who served as a source of competition.

While dealing with angry white settlers, Rechenberg had to convince Colonial Secretary Bernhard Dernburg and the Colonial Office to help finance and institute his reform program. While Dernburg expressed an interest in a policy of reform and change, he also had to contend with German politics. In his domestic speeches, Dernburg emphasized the economic value of the colonies as sources of raw materials, new markets and work opportunities, i.e. a market economy. He advocated increased capital investment in the colonies and championed the notion of development through science and technology. rather than a reliance on indigenous agriculture. He regarded the African as important, but

the coast. The value of Mwanza's exports rose from 71,185 marks in 1903 to 2,408,965 marks in 1907. Hut tax revenue in Bukoba rose from Rs 8700 in 1903 to 106,735 in 1906. (Iliffe, Tanganvika, p. 71)
Iliffe, Tanganvika, p. 71-2. The distance from Dar-es-Salaam to Morogoro is 200 km and from Morogoro to Tabora in the Nyamwezi region, an additional 638 km.

Scientific colonialism, as this development policy was known, involved, at least in part, the use of science to fight tropical disease and improve agricultural practices. Gann, L.H. and Peter Duignan. The Rulers of German Africa 1884-1914. Stanford, 1977. p. 189.
only as a laborer and a consumer of white-manufactured goods, not an independent producer. This did not bode well for Rechenberg’s program. Dernburg’s speeches expressed support for the expansion of European plantations, rather than a focus on African small-scale peasant production as Rechenberg desired. When Dernburg set out for East Africa in July 1907 it was widely expected that problems would develop between the two.

In an effort to gain a better understanding of what Germany’s colonies were like and how best to develop them, Dernburg planned a series of colonial tours, beginning with German East Africa. On 13 July 1907, he sailed for East Africa accompanied by 27 colonial officials, journalists and businessmen. Among his entourage was Lieutenant Colonel Quade, director of the military administration, Count Henckel von Donnersmarck, Dernburg’s aide, Krüger, secretary of the colonial office, Oskar Bongard of the *Vossische Zeitung* and Adolf Zimmermann of the *Wolffsches Telegraphenbüro*, both of whom wrote books about the trip, and the banker and industrialist Walther Rathenau, who held economic views similar to Rechenberg’s.

They arrived at Kilindini, British East Africa on 1 August 1907 and traveled early the next day to Tanga, in German East Africa. After a short visit to the German capital, Dar-es-Salaam, to meet up with Rechenberg, the group, which now included the governor, returned to British East Africa and traveled along the Uganda Railway to the German East African lakeside districts of Bukoba and

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19 an independent radical newspaper.
21 *Berliner Handelsgegesellschaft*.
22 Upon his father’s death in 1915, he took over as director of the German General Electric Company (AEG).
Mwanza. From there, the group planned to march to Tabora, in the center of the colony (and in the heart of the Nyamwezi territory) and follow the caravan route to Morogoro where they would pick up the railroad back to the coastal capital. Rechenberg planned the route to highlight areas of the colony likely to persuade Dernburg to accept his African-based reform program. Therefore, he purposely scheduled a route that bypassed settler planter regions. Problems resulted on the march toward Tabora, however, and the group had to backtrack to Mwanza. The group decided to return via the Tanga railway, taking them through Usambara, where Dernburg stopped to visit several plantations and meet with settlers.

The decisive meeting took place on 2 October 1907 at Tanga, on the northeast coast of German East Africa. The settlers, familiar with Dernburg’s public speeches in Germany, expected that Dernburg would be supportive of them and made numerous requests. Unfortunately for them, throughout the trip Rechenberg, Rathenau and Dernburg had been debating colonial policy for East Africa and Dernburg had been convinced by Rechenberg and Rathenau that a policy centered on African peasant agriculture would best develop the colony economically. With this new view firm in his mind, Dernburg addressed the settlers requests. He agreed to the settlers’ request for government assistance in labor recruitment. He also promised to re-evaluate settler participation in local government, which the settlers wanted increased. However, he refused requests to change taxation and tariff policies to help the settlers to the detriment of the Africans. On 13 October, Dernburg and his entourage set sail for Germany. During the trip home he commented:

> It is a tough country, and it is difficult to treat it properly. A good land, so long as one lets it follow its natural direction: a poor country for European experiments. A good land for merchants: a poor land for farmers. The small-scale settler will fare especially badly there.

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25 This part of the trip was important because it highlighted the success of the Uganda Railway and raised the hope and possibility of similar results from railroads in German East Africa.
26 Tabora was where Rechenberg wanted the Central Railway to terminate.
27 This group consisted of plantation managers and small-scale farmers.
Dernburg had shifted from advocating economic development through settler-focused modern technology to encouraging the development of African-based small-scale market economies. Clearly demonstrating his change of mind, in December 1907, Dernburg wrote:

I have gained the impression that East Africa's economy cannot be based on the activities of plantations and settlers, that this land must be developed through its indigenous products, and that despite all solicitude for European capital, the development of the native economy is the surest way to free the German Empire from its subsidies and thus open the way to a broadly designed colonial policy.10

With Dernburg expressing support for Rechenberg's African-centered reform policy, the two of them set out to implement it. As the extension of the central railway was vital to the success of Rechenberg’s reform policy,31 Rechenberg and Dernburg began by seeking funding for the extension. However there was a challenge to the plan as the settlers, and their influential supporters in the Reichstag, requested the northern line be extended farther to facilitate further white settlement.

Before either line could be extended, the issue of financing the railroads had to be solved. The Reichstag could not and would not provide the necessary funding, which could be as high as 100,000 Marks per kilometer.12 and the colonial government lacked the necessary resources to take on the finances itself. Dernburg convinced the Reichstag and the Imperial Treasury to accept a plan whereby the colonies, with Reichstag approval, could apply for capital loans.13 Also, in the future, colonial budgets would separate 'ordinary' and 'extraordinary' expenditures and revenues, the latter of which would be used for investment purposes. The colonies were to be responsible for their administrative and development costs and any budget surpluses were to be set aside for future emergencies. The burdensome costs of colonial conquest incurred over the past two decades were to be paid for using the

10 Iliffe, Tanganvika, p. 92.
11 Koponen, p. 301.
12 The capital came from banks and other investment bodies.
Colonial Office budget. With this successful financial reform, it was possible to build the railroads and make capital investment by Germans and others a profitable venture.

Turning to the debate over which line to build, settler groups pressed for an extension of the northern line to serve areas near Mt. Kilimanjaro and Mt. Meru where settlers hoped to locate. Rechenberg argued that a short extension into West Usambara was acceptable, but a further extension would only serve a small settler population, and therefore would not be cost-effective. Instead, he argued, efforts should be made to extend the central line to Tabora. A Tabora line would reap more profit, because the area around the proposed central line was currently undeveloped and untaxed.

Opening it up to development would lead to increased tax revenues, which would help offset the cost of the railroad. This line of thinking was speculation but it was based on the effect that the Uganda Railway had on the similarly undeveloped area through which it ran. For example, in Bukoba the introduction of a railway line into the region led tax revenue to rise from Rs 8700 to Rs 106,375 in three years. The central line extension would also establish a strong foundation for Rechenberg's Nyamwezi pilot project. Other interests, presumably the large plantation companies at the coast, expressed the hope that a railway would make the Nyamwezi people more available for plantation work. A military benefit of the central line would be increased troop mobility in case of further uprisings, making it easier to maintain control of the colony. Pitching his appeal to a variety of lobbies, Rechenberg managed to gather a group of strong advocates for the central line who pushed its funding through the Reichstag. In June 1908, construction resumed.

14 In East Africa, this primarily referred to the annual payment of 600,000 marks to DOAG. Koponen. p. 305.
15 This claim is based on information by Koponen. See Koponen. p. 305-6.
16 When Rechenberg took over as governor, the northern line had been taken from Tanga to Mombo, near the Usambara Highlands.
19 Koponen never states who expressed this desire.
20 Koponen. p. 308.
Along with securing the central line extension, Rechenberg also had to protect the rights of traders. The traders, the majority of which were Indians, were to serve as middlemen between the German government and African producers. However, the settlers detested the Indian traders. This was due in part to their status as British subjects, which made them suspect. The settlers even went as far as alleging that they had aided the rebels during Maji Maji. The Indian traders had also been in East Africa longer, and had established better commercial knowledge and connections, securing for a near monopoly over the sale of manufactured goods. In May 1906, the settler community encouraged the creation of legislation requiring all bookkeeping be done in Swahili or a European language, neither of which most Indian merchants knew well. Rechenberg immediately caught the point of this proposal, opposed it and passed on his recommendation to Dernburg to refuse the legislation. Similar attempts by the settlers to restrict Indian immigration failed due to Rechenberg and his supporters in the Center party.

Rechenberg's successful advocacy of the Indians wrought economic benefits, as the Indian traders did indeed facilitate commercial expansion along the railroad. Between 1905 and 1912, the value of textile imports, an indicator of grass-roots economic activity, more than doubled, while total export and import trade for the colony more than trebled.

With the crucial elements of his peasant project secured, Rechenberg worked on improving the conditions of African workers in the plantation sector. If he could improve their working conditions, he believed they would be more likely to cooperate with his economic program. Furthermore, he wished to ensure the cooperation of the target group for his peasant project, the Nyamwezi, who constituted the majority of workers on the European settler plantations. In 1909, he instituted the first labor legislation in fifteen years. He stated "the employer has a right to the full working power of the worker and this..."

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41 Iliffe, *Tanganvika*, p. 94-5.
42 Literacy in Swahili or a European language was proposed as a qualification for immigration into East Africa. Iliffe, *Tanganvika*, p. 96.
44 Iliffe, *Tanganvika*, p. 96-7. I do not know why Iliffe places such importance on textile imports, though he is not the only one. Gann & Duignan, in *The Rulers of German Africa 1884-1914*, make the same insinuation.
right will be protected, but the employer may not restrict his employees' willingness to work for the latter's benefit, and the worker must know exactly what he will receive in return for what he does." The new law limited work contracts to seven months or 180 days over a nine-month period. This was designed to allow the worker to return to his home to harvest his own fields. To allow the Africans time to take care of household tasks, the law instituted a ten-hour workday. Workers received pay for Sundays and rest days ordered by the employer, along with the posho (food allotment) for up to eight days a month." The law charged the district official with ensuring "that the natives understood the terms of contract and their destination." Furthermore, it provided for the appointment of labor commissioners/inspectors to ensure these regulations were carried out and obeyed. The labor commissioners focused their work in Tanga, Pangani and along the Central Railway because of the high demand for labor in these areas. Along with enforcing the labor regulations, they protected workers against abusive employers and deceptive recruiters, disciplined the Africans for work-related offenses and when necessary, served as the laborer's representative in court." Although Rechenberg had to make compromises" in order to get this legislation passed, it still did not please the settlers. The Association of German East African Plantations, along with small-scale settlers and colonists, realizing that the new regulations would result in the workers being paid more each month, immediately called for the abolition of rest day wages, viewing them as "an incitement to idleness." According to Iliffe, this policy, along with the policies dealing with labor recruitment, managed to curb the worst abuses of the plantation system."

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45 Koponen, p. 371-2.
46 Koponen, p. 371-2.
47 Rodemann, p. 174.
48 Rodemann, p. 175.
49 His original plan called for posho to also be paid for days of absence from work up to three consecutive days. Koponen, p. 373.
50 Koponen, p. 373.
51 Iliffe, Tanganvika, p. 138.
Rechenberg also dealt with the issue of labor recruitment. Due to low wages and poor working conditions on the plantations, the plantation managers had difficulty finding a sufficient number of willing workers. According to Iliffe, the common assumption, which Rechenberg did not accept, was that labor could not be secured without compulsion and coercion. In contrast, Rechenberg believed that "the negro works everywhere and without compulsion, provided that he can see sufficient reward for his labor."

In attempting to solve the labor problem, Rechenberg turned to the German experience in Eastern Europe. It was common for unskilled seasonal labor to be brought from Eastern Europe, especially from Russia and Poland, to work the large estates of the Junkers (landed nobility) in the regions of Mecklenburg and Prussia. To aid in recruiting labor and to provide a standard contract for workers, a central recruiting organization had been established. In 1906, Rechenberg tried to establish a similar model in German East Africa. He convinced the plantation owners to establish a recruiting agency, for which he would provide a recruiter, and to develop a standard contract. The agency failed due to disputes over the terms of the labor contract and complaints by small employers over wage rates.

In 1908, Rechenberg made another attempt to form a central recruiting agency, but again small planters protested. However, Rechenberg's policies managed to solve the labor supply problem temporarily. The labor supply increased rapidly and sufficiently met the demand until 1910. By the end of 1910, though, the labor supply showed signs of shrinking and shortages started to develop.

Along with creating policy to improve labor conditions, Rechenberg and Dernburg worked to legislate an end to the abusive treatment that was so common in the colonies. On Dernburg's tour of the colonies, he was alarmed by how frequently settlers and government officials resorted to the whip as a
punishment when they were displeased. In Dar es Salaam, nearly every white man walks around carrying a whip. I even found one lying on the table of the main pay office. In the station office of the Usambara Railroad one lay directly beside the inkstand. Almost every White takes the liberty to strike any Black whom he pleases.

On 12 July 1907, Dernburg issued a decree demanding the observance of the existing regulations concerning corporal punishment. Flogging was to be used solely as a punitive measure, not as a method of discipline. When administered, there was required to be an official and a medical officer present. Arabs, Indians, women and children could not be whipped under any circumstances and the maximum punishment for a healthy adult male was 25 strokes administered in two sessions separated by at least a two-week interval. The settlers were quick to protest this policy. They were incensed by the governor’s attempt to “coddle” Africans and vowed to resist it. Unfortunately, this policy had only a short-term effect. Officially recorded floggings decreased dramatically from 6322 in 1905 to 3746 in 1908, but in 1909 the number of floggings began to rise, reaching 8057 in 1912.

Rechenberg’s African-centered policies were not popular with the settlers, as evidenced by their attempts to prevent their implementation or at least weaken them. In response, they resolved to band together in a countrywide organization to increase their own influence. On 19 June 1909, members of the five regional settler organizations (Northern, Morogoro, Moshi, Dar es Salaam and Lindi) formed the Territorial Business League of German East Africa (Territorial League). This was the latest in a series of settler actions aimed at their goal of Selbstverwaltung (local self-government). The settlers wished to

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61 Indians were considered British subjects and were treated accordingly when it came to legal matters.
63 Pierard, p. 37.
64 Stoecker, p. 207. 1905 means 1905-6 and so forth.
exercise control over their own affairs, which meant influencing the management of the colony. This
inevitably brought them into conflict with the colonial government, and especially with Governor
Rechenberg.

When Rechenberg took over as governor in 1906, the settlers had three representative organs
they could utilize: settler organizations, the Governor’s Council and the communal leagues. Settler
organizations had existed in Tanganital, the main plantation area, since the turn of the century. In
1907, the existing organizations, the Tanga Planters’ Union (1898) and the West Usambara Planters’
Union (1903) merged to form the Business League of the Northern Districts (Northern League). The
Northern League was led by Carl Feilke, a retired officer and plantation manager. The settlers
Dernburg met with on his tour of the colony were composed of members of the Northern League.

Dernburg’s visit convinced the Northern League that Dernburg, like Rechenberg, was a threat to
their interests. Knowing that Dernburg and Rechenberg would have to secure Reichstag approval of
Rechenberg’s reform program, they sent a petition to the Reichstag in 1908 expressing what they
believed support for Rechenberg’s program would mean for the colony.

We all have the feeling, which has been strengthened by the statements of Exzellenz Dernburg,
that a native policy is to be pursued in German East Africa which considers only ‘coloured’ interests, and
neglects German business as against them: a policy which will make German East Africa merely a negro
and Indian trading colony, with European plantations a secondary consideration.

Unfortunately for the settlers, they attacked Dernburg when he was at his highest level of influence and
popularity, and their protests failed to sway the opinion of the Reichstag, at least initially. Dernburg
advocated a colonial program based on self-sufficiency and economic progress. “The most important
thing for the coming years is to put the colony into a position in which it does not burden the imperial
purse….We have not gone to East Africa to found plantations for 3-400 people, but to make a vast

56 Iliffe, Tanganvika, p. 85.
57 Tanganital refers to the districts of Tanga, Pangani and Wilhelmstal.
58 Iliffe, Tanganvika, p. 84.
59 Iliffe, Tanganvika, p. 90.
country bloom, to find raw materials and create markets for German trade and German industry. This message appealed to the Reichstag and Dernburg secured approval of the East African budget and Rechenberg’s reform program by April 1908.

Rechenberg, possessing official support for his reform program, was not about to let the settlers interfere. In response to an argument made in April 1908 by Carl Feilke, who was a member of the Governor’s Council, that the Council should have more power, Rechenberg stated:

The fate of a colony whose revenue, in far the greater part, is drawn from the coloured inhabitants, can scarcely be decided by elements which stand more or less in a conflict of interest with those same inhabitants...After the most meticulous and sympathetic study, I can find in German East Africa only one authority able justly to weigh the interests of all those concerned, and that is the governor.

His belief that he should be in control is evident in his treatment of the other instruments of settler self-government, the Governor’s Council and the Communal Leagues. He sought to keep the Governor’s Council as weak as possible and in 1907, he pushed for the abolition of the Communal Leagues.

Rechenberg viewed the communes as ineffective and troublesome, especially since they took tax revenue from the government, which he could use to finance his reform policy. The Reichstag, who felt that their budgetary rights were being circumvented, shared his dislike of the communes. Faced with these complaints, Dernburg agreed to abolish the communes in 1908. The district officer alone would have control of local expenditure.

The Governor’s Council, which had been problematic from its beginning, proved more troublesome for Rechenberg. According to Iliffe, the first council consisted of the governor, five officials and five unofficials, chosen by the governor, giving the government a slight majority. This violated the ordinance establishing the council, which stipulated that there was not to be more official than unofficial members.

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50 Iliffe, *Tanganyika*, p. 91.
52 Iliffe, *Tanganyika*, p. 111.
53 Iliffe, *Tanganyika*, p. 89.
54 Koponen claims the first council was composed of the Governor, three official members (First Secretary, Commander of the Armed Forces, district official of Dar es Salaam) and four unofficials (257). Lindquist says the first council was composed of the Governor, four officials (the Chief Justice along with the three Koponen names)
When Rechenberg convened the council in 1908, similar problems resulted. Again, there were more official than unofficial members. Carl Feikke called for more unofficial members and wanted them elected not appointed. In 1909, responding to demands from Reichstag members supportive of the settlers and honoring the pledge he made to the settlers during his visit to the colony in 1907, Dernburg told Rechenberg that unofficials must be in the majority and should be elected if possible. Rechenberg heeded the call for elected unofficials, but stalled on increasing their numbers. His reason for making any concessions at all was because he wished to bolster the Governor's Council as a defense against the Territorial League which was formed the same year.

Rechenberg's fight to restrict the power of the settler community saw only minimal short-lived gains. Although his successor as governor, Heinrich Schnee, preserved some of Rechenberg's policies, the settlers, utilizing their supporters in the Reichstag and the pro-settler views of the new Colonial Secretary Lindquist, gained much of the influence and power they desired. By 1911, when Rechenberg left the colony, the settlers were actively working to reverse his local self-government and labor policies. Also, his "Nyamwezi and peanut policy" failed. The expected surpluses never materialized. Although indigenous agriculture was the lifeblood of most of the colony's inhabitants, it was no longer the preferred economic policy of the government. In the absence of the expected large quantities of peanuts, the government shifted its emphasis to the production of cash crops for European markets using the latest technology.

Iliffe, Tanganyika, p. 86.
Iliffe, Tanganyika, p. 111-2. 
Iliffe, Tanganyika, p. 139.
Conclusion

Throughout Germany’s short-lived venture into colonialism, there was an on-going debate over the need for and purpose of colonies. At first, it was an argument over whether Germany’s destiny lay in Eastern and Southern Europe or overseas. Among the colonial enthusiasts, the division was over seeking colonies for settlement or economic purposes. By the mid-1880s, politics had led Bismarck to provide an answer to these questions. Germany became a colonial power, establishing herself throughout Africa and the Pacific. The colonies were begun largely with economic incentives in mind, though settlement became integral to several German colonies. The next twenty years would see a steady stream of complaints and criticisms as Germany attempted to gain a strong hold over her colonies, especially those in Africa, and turn them into productive investments. There was also constant jostling between interested parties both at home and in the colonies as to what took precedence, settlement or economic interests. In German East Africa during this period, the dominant interest group seemed to change with each new governor.

In 1906 and 1907, the colonial debate was to enjoy an importance never before experienced in Germany. Criticism of colonies became so vehement that the Chancellor reacted by dissolving the Reichstag and calling for new elections. As a result of the ruckus over colonies and the introduction of reformers into the colonial administration, a new dynamic, native, in particular African, interests, was introduced. Colonial policy began to take into consideration the interests and needs of the native inhabitants of the colonies, albeit largely determined by colonial officials.

In German East Africa, the new governor, Albrecht von Rechenberg, with the support of the new Colonial Secretary, Bernhard Dernburg, advocated the expansion of indigenous agriculture. He saw the key to economic development, and the peaceful administration of the colony, as encouraging Africans to become independent producers with a stake in the colony’s success. Focusing on the Nyamwezi, who had already entered the market economy as porters and
plantation workers. Rechenberg sought to create the conditions which would allow for and induce the Nyamwezi to increase their groundnut production and sell the surplus. He secured the construction of the central railway, which freed the Nyamwezi from their work as porters and provided a means of transferring surplus crops to the coast. Rechenberg also protected the rights of Indians traders, who served as the middlemen between the Africans and Europeans, from assault by the settler community. He also made efforts to improve the labor conditions and general treatment of African plantation laborers.

The settler community in German East Africa fiercely resisted Rechenberg's policies. They viewed Africans solely as a source of labor and disliked anything that might change that perception and increase the rights of Africans. Their sole interest was in improving the profitability of their plantations, for which they needed a large, subservient workforce. The settlers, using local government organizations and settler groups in German East Africa and right-wing supporters in the Reichstag, fought the policies of Rechenberg and Dernburg.

When Rechenberg left German East Africa in 1911, his policies had seen mixed results. Most importantly, he maintained peace during his term as governor. Also the central railway, for which he campaigned, would reach Tabora the following year. However, the settlers managed to weaken his labor and local self-government policies. Furthermore, the "Nyamwezi and peanut" policy largely failed, the expected surpluses never developing.

Although German politics, through the 1906 Reichstag debates and the 1907 Reichstag election, produced a change in thinking toward the colonies and their inhabitants and prompted efforts at reform, colonial policy failed to produce the desired results. The Colonial Office and Governor Rechenberg never gained the understanding of German East Africa and its inhabitants necessary to make his policies successful. Also, they did not count on or effectively deal with the opposition of the settlers.
Appendix I: Documents

The manifesto of Karl Peters' society

The German nation finds itself without a voice in the partition of the World which has been proceeding since the fifteenth century. Every other civilized nation of Europe possesses in other parts of the World territories on which they are able to impose their language and culture. The German emigrant, after he has crossed the frontiers of the Empire becomes a stranger in a foreign land. The German Empire has been rendered great and strong by the unity obtained by the outpouring of German blood. The great stream of German emigration has been lost for many years in foreign countries...To remedy this deplorable state of affairs, a society has been founded in Berlin which will resolutely and energetically undertake the execution of colonial projects and will support the efforts of association having the same aim.

The treaty with Sultan Mangungo of Msovero in Usagara

Mangungo, Sultan of Msovero in Msagara, and Dr. Karl Peters. Mangungo simultaneously for all his people and Dr. Peters for all his present and future associates hereby conclude a treaty of Eternal Friendship.

Mangungo offers all his territory with all its civil appurtenances to Dr. Karl Peters, as the representative of the Society for German Colonization, for the exclusive and universal utilization for German colonization.

Dr. Karl Peters, in the name of the Society...declares his willingness to take over the territory of the Sultan Mangungo with all rights for German Colonization subject to any existing suzerainty of Mwenyi Sagara.

In pursuance thereof, Sultan Mangungo hereby cedes all the territory of Msovero, belonging to him by inheritance or otherwise for all time, to Dr. Karl Peters, making over to him at the same time all his rights.

Dr. Karl Peters in the name of the Society...undertakes to give special...attention to Msovero when colonizing Usagara.

This treaty has been communicated to the Sultan Mangungo by the interpreter Ramzan in a clear manner and has been signed by both sides, with the observation of the formalities valid in Usagara the Sultan on direct enquiry having declared that he was not in anyway dependent upon the Sultan of Zanzibar, and that he did not even know the existence of the latter.

Sgd. Dr. KARL PETERS
Sgd. MANGUNGO

This contract has been executed legally and made valid for all time before a great number of witnesses, we testify herewith:


APPENDIX II: CHARTS, MAPS AND TABLES

Colonial Governors in German East Africa 1891-1918

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Official</th>
<th>Term of office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military Commander</td>
<td>Capt. Hermann von Wissmann</td>
<td>January-February 1891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>Julius von Soden</td>
<td>1891-1893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>Col. Friedrich von Schele</td>
<td>1893-1895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>Capt. Wissmann</td>
<td>1895-1896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>Gen. Eduard von Liebert</td>
<td>1896-1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>Major Adolf von Götzen</td>
<td>1901-1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>Albrecht von Rechenberg</td>
<td>1906-1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>Heinrich Schnee</td>
<td>1912-1918</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### District headquarters and major military stations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Founded</th>
<th>Change of Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arusha</td>
<td>1900 MS</td>
<td>1906 SDO of Moshi, 1913 DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagamoyo</td>
<td>1886 DOAG</td>
<td>1889 MS, 1891 DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bismarckburg (Kasanga)</td>
<td>1898 MS</td>
<td>1907 SDO of Ujiji, 1913 DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bujumbura</td>
<td>1897 MP</td>
<td>1898 MS, 1906 res Urundi, 1912-3 transferred to Gitega</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukoba</td>
<td>1891 MS</td>
<td>1906 res</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dar es Salaam</td>
<td>1887 DOAG</td>
<td>1889 MS, 1891 DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dodoma</td>
<td>1911 DO</td>
<td>see Mpwapwa, Kilimanstine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iringa</td>
<td>1896 MS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kigali</td>
<td>1908 res</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilimanstine</td>
<td>1895 MS</td>
<td>1911 into Dodoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilosa</td>
<td>1891 MS</td>
<td>1899 DO, 1904 SDO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilwa</td>
<td>1888 DOAG</td>
<td>1890 MS, 1891 DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kisaki</td>
<td>1892 MP</td>
<td>1895 DO, 1903 SDO of Morogoro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kondoa-Irangi</td>
<td>1898 MP</td>
<td>1907 SDO of Mpwapwa, 1911 DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langenburg</td>
<td>1893 Wissmann</td>
<td>1896 DO, 1900 transferred to Neu-Langenburg (Tukuyu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindi</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>1891 DO called Mgau, later renamed Lindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahenge</td>
<td>1900 MS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazinga</td>
<td>1890 MS</td>
<td>1897-1898 abolished and turned to Wilhelmstal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikindani</td>
<td>1888 DOAG</td>
<td>1891 MS in Lindi, 1895 DO, 1899 SDO of Lindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morogoro</td>
<td>1904 DO</td>
<td>see Kisaki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moshi</td>
<td>1890 MS</td>
<td>1906 DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mpwapwa</td>
<td>1889 MS</td>
<td>1906 DO, 1911 SDO of Dodoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwanza</td>
<td>1891 MS</td>
<td>1906 DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pangani</td>
<td>1889 MS</td>
<td>1891 part of Tanga, 1892 DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rufiji</td>
<td>1900 DO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadani</td>
<td>1888 DOAG</td>
<td>1890 MJ, 1892 SDO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shirati</td>
<td>1902 MP</td>
<td>1906 SDO of Mwanza, 1913 transferred to Musoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singida</td>
<td>1908 MP</td>
<td>1912 SDO of Dodoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songea</td>
<td>1897 MP</td>
<td>1905 DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabora</td>
<td>1890 MS</td>
<td>1906 DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanga</td>
<td>1889 MS</td>
<td>1891 DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ujiji</td>
<td>1889 MS</td>
<td>1907 DO, 1912 civil admin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilhelmstal (Lushoto)</td>
<td>1897 DO</td>
<td>transferred from Mazinde</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Abbreviations:**
- DO - district office
- SDO - sub-district office
- MS - military station
- MD - military district
- MP - military post (either European or askari-led)
- res - residency

**Sources:**
THE CHAIN OF COMMAND IN GERMAN EAST AFRICA, 1913

**Bundeskanzler**

Statsekreter des Bundeskanzlers

**Gouvernement**

(Government Reference)

---

**Central Administration**: Dar es Salaam

- **Justice**:
  - Obergesuchstätigkeit (Supreme Court)
  - Bezirksgericht (District Courts)

- **Police**:
  - Inspekteur der Polizeitruppe (Inspector of Police Corps)

- **Schutztruppe**:
  - Kommandeur der Schutztruppe (Commander of Schutztruppe)

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**District Administration**

- **Secretary**:
  - District Security Officer

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**Treasuries**

- **Veterinary**

**Medical**

- **Stones and Transport**
  - administration at Dar es Salaam

**Public Works**

- **Railways**

**Agriculture**

- **Forestry**

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* Total for colonial and European civil administration

**Central Administration in Dar es Salaam**: 45

**District administrations**: including

- 5 Bezirksstatthäuser and security
- staff: 98

- 30 local officials in districts, including
- postal and customs inspectors, radio
- inspectors, forestry officials, agro-
- cultural officials, teachers, harbor
- masters, etc.: 134

**Justice**: including judges and secretariat
- staff: 24

**Total number of officials**: 295

- Senior technical staff in the
- districts:
  - Veterinary surgeons: 8
  - Medical physicians: 23
  - Public Works architects: 3
  - Senior customs inspectors: 3
  - Agricultural director
  - of Animal and technical
  - staff: 1
  - Senior customs inspectors: 4
  - Senior postal inspectors: 3
  - Survey inspectors: 4
  - Forestry inspectors: 2

- Total number of officials: 31
SKETCH MAP of the
TANGANYIKA TERRITORY.
Appendix III: Specific accounts of colonial abuses:


VI. CHARGES AGAINST INDIVIDUALS

The proved atrocities in the German colonies are so numerous that only a few of the better known can be mentioned here.
For purposes of reference they are arranged under the names of the officials chiefly concerned:-

Prince Prosper Arenberg.

This officer, whilst serving in South-West Africa in the year 1900, was condemned at Windhoek for the revolting murder of a native and for violent assaults on native women. The court-martial of the First Guards Division subsequently very properly condemned him to death. The case attracted great interest in Germany. Powerful family and social influences were exerted on behalf of the Prince, and the sentence was commuted by the Emperor to one of fifteen years' imprisonment. Arenberg was removed to the fortress at Tegel, a re-trial was ordered, and the Prince was pronounced of unsound mind and acquitted. Family influence in this case was stronger than the law, and the case proved a favourite weapon in the hands of the Social Democrats.¹

Dr. Karl Peters.

This man, appointed Imperial Commissary in German East Africa as a reward for his exploring activities, committed numerous atrocities, and is one of the most odious figures in German colonial history. In his own books he has spoken of these deeds without shame. In an open letter to him Herr Eltz says:-

"Before God and man, you are responsible for the devastation of fertile country-sides, responsible for the deaths of my comrades von Bülow and Wolfram, of our brave soldiers, and of Wadschagga."²

In October 1891 Peters arbitrarily caused a native youth, named Mabruk, to be hanged at his station at Kilima-Njaro, and in January 1892 he had a native girl, called Jagodja, hanged at the same place. The former

¹ Prinz Prosper Arenberg und die Arenberge, No. I of Sozialdemokratische Agitations-Bibliothek, Berlin, 1904.
² Vossische Zeitung, October 19, 1892.
was accused of stealing cigarettes, but the real crime was that he had visited Peters' native concubines. The latter was one of Peters' concubines (whom he termed his 'princesses'), who had fled for protection to a neighboring chief. This girl was brutally whipped (with other women) day after day, "so that the blood flowed copiously and the captives were finally unable to scream." The girl Jagodja was flogged until her back resembled "chopped meat."

Peters was brought before the Disciplinary Court at Potsdam on April 25, 1897, six years after these crimes, and condemned to be dismissed the Service, not for the crimes he had committed, but because he had given false reports of his actions to his superiors. He appealed, and the Court of Second Instance at Leipzig confirmed the former sentence. Yet, eventually, owing to the pressure of the Colonial Party, Peters was granted his pension by the Emperor, and a statue has since been erected in his honor at Dar es-Salaam. The case created immense interest in Germany, where the, "man with the bloodstained hands," as he was called by the natives, became the center of a controversy extending over twenty years.

Herr Wehlan.

This official in Cameroon was proved to have been guilty of the most revolting cruelties towards the natives, whom he had caused to be flogged, tortured, and executed on the slightest pretext. At his first trial in January 1896, before the Disciplinary Court, he was sentenced to a fine of 25 British pounds and at the second trial the first sentence was upheld. Wehlan remained an official under the Colonial Department, and was subsequently rewarded with the post of notary in Berlin.

Herr Kleist

This man, Deputy-Governor of Cameroon, caused a rising in 1893 by flogging twenty women, wives of native soldiers. The men were drawn up on parade to witness the flogging, and-

"each of the women received ten strokes with a whip made of hippopotamus hide, and Herr Kleist stood by and looked on."

He was tried before the Disciplinary Court on October 16, 1894, charged with undue cruelty and with improper conduct, accompanied by acts of violence, towards other women left in his charge as hostages. The Court held that he had not exceeded his rights. At a second trial on April 7, 1895, he was dismissed the Service because his conduct had "injured the prestige of the German Empire."

1 Statement by Scavenius, the Danish explorer, in Politiken March 1, 1896.
Governor von Puttkamer

This man was nephew of Bismarck and son of a Prussian Minister. He was appointed Governor of Cameroon, although Herr von Soden, a former Governor, had informed the Chancellor, von Caprivi, that he was a gambler and spendthrift.

During Governor von Puttkamer's administration in Cameroon numerous scandals and atrocities occurred. The actions with which he was charged in the Reichstag on December 2, 1906, were the following:—

1. Allowing houses to be built with public money for the concubines of the officials, and also a residence for himself.
2. Receiving gratuitous shares in several colonial companies.
3. Conniving at acts of the greatest barbarity committed by officers of the colonial forces.
4. Permitting the mutilation of natives killed in battle by the cutting off of their private parts as trophies.
5. Keeping a German woman at Government House, whom he called his "cousin," and supplied with a forged passport to return home in an assumed name.

It was during von Puttkamer's administration that the Akwa chiefs complained to the Reichstag, and were therefore sentenced to heavy terms of imprisonment. Most powerful influences were exerted to screen von Puttkamer from exposure, but in spite of every attempt to hush up the affair the Government were obliged to bring him before the Disciplinary Court, and he was tried on April 25, 1907, on the following charges:—

1. Issue of an incorrect passport to a "lady friend."
2. Illicit participation in colonial companies.
3. Undue interference with the administration of justice.

He was fined 50 British pounds and reprimanded; but much of the evidence was suppressed and pertinent witnesses were not called.

Herr G. A. Schmidt.
This is one of the most revolting cases in the annals of German colonialism. Schmidt, an official in Togoland, began his career by summoning the native girls at Atakpame to a dance at his station, and threatening their mothers that if they did not allow them to appear they would be fined twenty marks. The Catholic missionaries intervened, and Schmidt issued instructions that no complaints were to be carried to the mission.

Schmidt kept a harem of young native girls, some under the age of puberty. The family of one girl, whom he had kept forcibly, flogged, and otherwise shamefully treated, complained to the missionaries, with the result that, in the words of Deputy Rören:

"at four o'clock in the morning the District Judge, von Rolberg, who had returned meanwhile, came on horseback, as did also his assistant Lang, together with two more, and nineteen black soldiers; came, not to the station building to arrest the criminal, but to the mission. They forced their way into the mission, dragged the Fathers, as they were, out of bed, declared them arrested, without having a warrant, or without even answering their questions as to why they were arrested. They hunted through the mission buildings, even through the chapel, uncovered the altar, rummaged through the sacristy.... and then the Fathers were surrounded by the nineteen soldiers with loaded rifles, and led off to prison."

Here they remained for twenty-one days, forbidden postal communication with the outside world, and prevented from hearing confession. Meantime all possible witnesses were intimidated, and Schmidt's personal friend, Kersting (who had had a chief shot with a revolver and had afterwards had the man's head cut off), interrogated them before judicial proceedings could be taken. The acquittal of Schmidt became a foregone conclusion, in spite of the evidence of the missionaires to his immoral relations with the young girls.

The missionary, one Schmitz, who had laid the information against Schmidt, was then cited before the court, and given fourteen days' imprisonment for bearing false witness, and it was held that one of the ill-treated children, Adjaro, "had been subject to hypnotic influences or had made her statements in the delirium of fever." Father Schmitz subsequently appealed against his sentence, and was acquitted.

One further fact came out in the evidence. On May 7, 1903, Schmidt proclaimed his black concubine, formally and officially as Jenujia (i.e., queen), invested her with a sword of office, and gave her the judicial right to decide in legal quarrels. Yet this man, after these proceedings had become known, was sent back to Togoland by the Colonial Department, and was not dismissed from the Service until the whole affair had been ventilated in the Reichstag and the suppression of the revolting details was no longer possible.

*Captain Dominik*

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4 In the Reichstag, December 3, 1906.
It is asserted that Captain Dominik, then a lieutenant, when in charge of a punitive expedition against the Bahoho, in Cameroon, attacked a small village in the neighbourhood of the Nachtigal Rapids, and either ordered or allowed his black soldiers to put fifty-two little children, who remained alive after the general massacre, into baskets and throw them into the rapids. It is, however, maintained by the apologists for Dominik that he had not sufficient control over his black soldiery.

What is certain is that Dominik was responsible for permitting one of the atrocious customs of native warfare by the troops under his command. He allowed his men to cut off the privy parts of fallen foes. Deputy Bebel on December 1, 1906, said:--

"Formerly the order had been given to cut off their ears, but the soldiers cut off the women's ears also to increase artificially the number of fallen foes. In order to overcome this, Dominik gave orders for their heads to be cut off, but this proved inconvenient."

For this practice Dominik, after representations from the British Government, sent through the German Embassy in London on August 10, 1902, was reprimanded. A monument to Dominik was sent to Cameroon in 1912 and a replica was unveiled at Yaunde on May 5, 1914.

**Lieutenant Schennemann.**

Lieutenant Schennemann, the Station Director at Yaunde, Cameroon, had a black wife, and hearing rumours that she was too intimate with certain natives, he ordered a native sergeant, named Duara to punish the three blacks whom he suspected in such a manner that they should not have the power to repeat the offence.

The sergeant went to the wrong village, and fearing that if he could give no proof of having obeyed his orders he would be soundly thrashed, he seized the first three negroes he met, threw them to the ground, and, lying as they were, had them mutilated in the fashion ordered by Schennemann. The men thus mutilated were left to their fate.⁵

**Captain Kannenberg.**

This horrible case was revealed by three deputies in the Reichstag-Bebel, Erzberger, and Ledebour-on March 13 and 15, 1906. One night in 1898 at Kongwa, German East Africa, Kannenberg was disturbed by the crying of a child. He left his tent, put his gun through the grass wall of a hut, where a woman and a child lay, and shot the woman in the back. He then fired further shots. An enquiry was instituted, but no proceedings followed.

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⁵ Bebel, Reichstag, December 1, 1906.
The second case, mentioned on page 31, was the excessive flogging of two chiefs. One of the men died during the night, and Kannenberg was prosecuted and received three years' imprisonment, and was ordered to be dismissed from the Service. Almost immediately he was granted imprisonment in a fortress, and shortly afterwards he was pardoned and given his full pension.

_**Landeshauptmann Brandeis**_

This official, when in charge of the Marshall Islands, contrary to legal decrees, ordered natives to be flogged repeatedly, and did not allow the floggings to be entered in the punishment book. Although this was admitted by the Colonial Office, he was subsequently granted an Order for his meritorious services.

_Captain Kamptz._

This case illustrates "summary justice" in Cameroon. Kamptz was in command of the Protectorate troops, and passing through the station of Lolodorf he found that Sergeant Liebert, who was in charge, had fallen ill, and that his black wife was acting in his stead. This woman had arrested three negroes accused of highway robbery. Kamptz had the men brought before him and condemned them to death. The execution was carried out in the most barbarous fashion. A cannon was loaded, the prisoners were placed one after the other at one metre's distance in front of the gun, and shot to pieces.

_Captain Thierry_

It was commonly reported, stated Deputy Ablass on December 15, 1905, that Thierry "had simply shot down the natives like game, and that he was notorious in the whole of the Protectorates for his cruelty." The particular crime with which he was charged was that he had shot down the father of a pupil of the Catholic Mission at Lome, who, for fear of Thierry, had fled up a tree. His crimes were brought to the notice of the Colonial Department on November 22, 1904, but no action was then taken.

_Governor Horn_

Waldemar Horn was Governor of Togoland during the period when the numerous scandals connected with Schmidt, Metzger, Kersting, von Rotberg, and other officials occurred. His case was discussed in the Reichstag on March 19, 1906, by Dr. Ablass and others. From the speeches then made it appears that Horn was warned at the end of 1903 by his subordinates that if he did not resign his conduct would be denounced. He
returned to Berlin on leave, and requested an enquiry. Yet it was not until March 1906 that Legationsrat Rose informed the Reichstag that the charges brought against him had proved to be true.

His trial took place before the Disciplinary Court on May 6, 1907, upon the main charge of causing the death of a native in 1902. It appeared in evidence that a native had been sentenced to a term of five years in chains and to two floggings of twenty-five lashes each for petty theft. By the Governor's orders, after the first flogging he was bound to a post fully exposed to the heat of the sun. From time to time the man was unfastened in the hope that he would confess where he had hidden the money. Then he was tied to the post for a further period of twenty-four hours, without water or food. The next morning the Governor noticed that the native looked "rather exhausted," and he expired shortly afterwards.

For this crime the High Court of Togoland and Cameroon had sentenced Horn in 1905 to a fine of 900 marks or three months' imprisonment. The Disciplinary Court sentenced him to be dismissed the Service with the loss of one-third of his pension.

*Chief Justice Dr. Meyer and Regierungsrat von Brauchitsch*

In the "Complaints of the Akwa Chiefs" these two officials in Cameroon are accused of forcibly taking two young girls, betrothed to natives, as their concubines. The complaint is-

> "that Regierungsrat von Brauchitsch had bought and taken to wife the betrothed of Rudolph Masako, and Supreme Judge Dr. Meyer the betrothed of a young man, Diberabari."

This complaint was made by Chief Akwa Elma, who stated that-

> "von Bratichitsch had declared repeatedly on palaver days that it was forbidden to take the wife of another for oneself."

A further complaint was that before a Court consisting of von Brauchitsch, Assessor Reichhof, and others, King Akwa had been forced to put his mark to a document. In the report of the Committee of the Reichstag on these proceedings and on the sentencing of the Akwa chiefs is the following:-

> "The impression produced is that the officials seem to be those really accused. Apparently they were unable to adapt themselves to the customs and habits of the natives, and to judge them from that standpoint. Several officials, as seems to result from their own statements, appear to have been guilty in their official handling of the matters of the worst kind of mistakes, and even of punishable offences, namely, misuse of
official power, robbing others of freedom, inflicting bodily injuries, and, in one instance, forcing a signature against the decree of the Imperial Chancellor of February 27, 1896."

As illustrating how officials in Cameroon regarded sensual crimes with violence, the following case may be cited. The representatives of two commercial depots in Cameroon, stated Dr. Abllass, were walking one day on the Akwa road, when they met the wife of a chief, "who is an educated man, having attended a gymnasium in Germany." These men went up to that chief's wife in broad daylight and forcibly made an indecent assault upon her, but natives ran to her assistance and set her free.

"Thereupon a complaint was made to von Brauchitsch, and he decided that the two representatives of commerce should be punished. But no punishment is recorded. On the contrary, all that could be ascertained was that the two gentlemen had a very pleasant social meeting with Herr von Brauchitsch a few days later."

Fantastic concessions had been granted to railroad syndicates, shipping magnates, army suppliers and mining companies. A few examples revealed by Erzberger will best show the extent of the evil; the cases of the Cameroon railroad, the Woermann shipping monopoly to South West Africa, the Tippelskirch army supply contract, and the land grants of the German Colonial Company for South West Africa.

The Cameroon railroad syndicate, possessing a construction monopoly in Northern Cameroon, had failed to live up to its obligation of building a railroad. In 1905 it sold its rights and assets to a bankers' consortium upon very peculiar terms. The old company secured the right to appoint three members to the board of directors of the new; the director of the old railroad syndicate was given 50,000 marks for his distinguished service in not building a railroad; the shareholders of the old syndicate received 120,000 marks in cash and 360,000 marks in shares of stock in the new banking consortium. Some of the shareholders were very prominent people, including Duke Günther zu Schleswig-Holstein, General Wedel, chairman of the Offiziersverein (League of Army Officers), and Adolf Woermann, the great Hamburg shipping magnate. The entire transaction became still more peculiar when the new bankers' consortium received a very favourable new concession from the government that enlarged upon the privileges of the old. The terms included an imperial guarantee of 3 per cent interest upon 11/17 of its capital. Since much of this capital was held by the shareholders of the old railroad syndicate, this amounted to a large indirect reward to those who had failed to build the railroad originally.


\[6^\] Deputy Dr. Ahlass, Reichstag, March 19, 1906
The shipping monopoly to South West Africa, which the Government had given to the same Adolf Woermann was even more detrimental to the public interest. The firm charged the Government fantastic prices to make huge profits, as Erzberger proved to the Reichstag by introducing some comparative figures. Woermann carried one cubic metre of freight from Hamburg to Swakopmund (in South West Africa), a journey of twenty-five days, for 43 marks. The North German Lloyd carried the same volume from Hamburg to Tsingtao (in China), a journey twice as long lasting fifty days, and including Suez Canal tolls, for 37 marks and 50 pfennigs. The Woermann Line was thus charging considerably more for a trip that was only half as long. Its profits were enlarged by holding a landing monopoly in all South West African ports. When Erzberger exposed these facts, the government at first appeared incredulous; but when the figures could not be refuted, it quickly forced a cancellation of the contract.

The case of the Tippelskirch army supply monopoly for all colonial troops was equally scandalous. The Tippelskirch firm specialized in long term government contracts, the 1905 contract running until 1911. Tippelskirch sold all sorts of military supplies at fantastic prices to the government. Erzberger received valuable information from jealous competitors who resented being deprived of a share of the spoils; but the accuracy of his figures could not be challenged. Erzberger compared the prices which the army paid Tippelskirch with those paid to other contractors for the identically same items for the home troops, showing remarkable differences in favour of Tippelskirch. He also documented the gap between what Tippelskirch paid to subcontractors and what Tippelskirch received from the Government, with advantages ranging from 17 to 100 per cent, which the government could have saved by dealing directly with the subcontractors. The firm gained, to mention only a few examples of profits, 30 per cent on cavalry boots, 45 per cent on ordinary shoes, and 70 per cent on socks. These figures so shocked the Reichstag that the government was compelled to cancel this contract also.

Erzberger's pet aversion among the land and mining companies was the German Colonial Society for South West Africa, which he pursued with relentless energy for the next few years. It held 32 per cent of the land of South West Africa (including most of the land suited for farming in that generally desert country) and most of the mining rights (which became important after the 1908 discovery of diamonds). These rights gave it a complete stranglehold over the colony and the possibility of making considerable profits. Yet the colony which it dominated required an annual imperial subsidy of 14.5 million marks and the government had spent 600 millions in suppressing the great native rebellion of 1940-6. This rebellion had been in part provoked by company practices towards the natives. Yet the company refused to contribute to the administrative expenses of the colony, thus creating the extraordinary situation that the colony was bankrupt while its dominant company flourished. When Erzberger suggested a curtailment of its privileges, the company leaders were very resentful. They claimed that most of their rights had been acquired by purchase from native chiefs, not concession from the government; hence the government had no right to withdraw what it had never granted in the first place. Erzberger countered this view by arguing that the treaties with the natives could never have been negotiated without the support of Bismarck against English competitors; and then went even further by critically examining the details of the treaties upon which the company based its claims. He discovered many technical flaws as well as instances of bad faith and sharp practice on the part of the company.
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