Sir George Grey in South Africa, 1854-1861: His policies, scheme for federation and recall

James Kozol
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork/440
SIR GEORGE GREY IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1854-1861:
HIS POLICIES, SCHEME FOR FEDERATION AND RECALL

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of History
and the
Faculty of the Graduate College
University of Nebraska at Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
James Kozol
June 1970
Accepted for the faculty of The Graduate College of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts.

Graduate Committee

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE ................................................................. iii

Chapter                  Page

I. INTRODUCTION: THE BRITISH PATH TOWARD RETRENCHMENT BEFORE SIR GEORGE GREY'S ARRIVAL IN 1854 ............................................. 1

II. GOVERNOR GREY IN SOUTH AFRICA, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIVE POLICY ...................... 21

III. IMMIGRATION SCHEMES, AND THE INDIAN MUTINY...... 37

IV. FACTORS LEADING TO THE FEDERATION PROPOSAL OF NOVEMBER, 1858 ................................. 54

V. THE PLAN FOR FEDERATION, AND THE RECALL OF GREY. 70

VI. CONCLUSION ..................................................... 91

APPENDIX A ...................................................................... 100

BIBLIOGRAPHY .................................................................. 105

MAP OF THE GREAT TREK IN SOUTH AFRICA ....................... 8
PREFACE

Sir George Grey is widely recognized as one of the ablest colonial administrators in the Victorian Age. He remains, however, a controversial figure. This is partly due to the numerous confrontations that he had over the years with his various superiors in London. In any phase of his career, whether in South Australia, New Zealand or South Africa, Grey's abilities cannot be questioned; yet, his lofty, idealistic goals were often hindered by his autocratic methods and egotistical manner. This is especially true in the years 1854-61 when Sir George served as Governor of the Cape Colony and British High Commissioner in South Africa.

Many aspects of Sir George Grey's life are worthy of extensive study, but his tour in South Africa seems especially significant. For even though Grey's life has been for the most part carefully studied, major emphasis seems always to be projected toward his early career in South Australia, New Zealand, and his later life in New Zealand politics, with considerably less attention given to the years he spent in South Africa. Also, his years in South Africa serve as a reasonable compact unit, and are fairly indicative of Grey's whole career.
This paper is an attempt to illustrate some of the problems Grey faced as a representative of the British Crown in South Africa, and the difficulties he encountered while attempting to solve those problems. Essentially, the major problem in South Africa, aside from numerous native skirmishes, was the growing separatism between the British and the Boers (farmers or cattle-herders of Dutch descent). By 1854, this separatism resulted in the creation of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

Realizing the existing problem in South Africa after a few years there, Grey proposed and supported a plan which aimed at the formation of a larger political unit brought about by the closer political association of the various states in South Africa. His conception of federation, was absolutely contrary to British policy for South Africa in the 1850's. For at that time the British Government was seeking to reduce its responsibilities in that part of the world. Consequently, the conflicting opinions resulted in the British Government recalling Sir George Grey from South Africa. The recall, however, cannot be studied only as an isolated event; instead, the complete specter of British Boer relations before Grey's arrival in South Africa must be observed, and also Grey's other policies in South Africa, because for the most part they were all unpopular with his superiors in London.

iv
My interest in this area of history was stimulated by Professor A. Stanley Trickett, to whom I am indebted for the advice and counsel that he was always willing to give me.

It is hoped that this paper will in some way contribute further insight into the life and policies of Sir George Grey while in South Africa, and at the same time, illustrate some of the problems that plagued that country in the 1850's.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: THE BRITISH PATH TOWARD RETRENCHMENT

BEFORE SIR GEORGE GREY'S ARRIVAL IN 1854

After the French invasion of Holland in 1795, the Dutch Government requested that Great Britain occupy the Cape Colony in South Africa in order to prevent it from falling under French domination. After an initial period of British occupancy during the Napoleonic Wars, the Congress of Vienna recognized British sovereignty over the formerly Dutch held Colony at the Cape. At the inception of British rule, the Cape Colony offered few attractions as an area for permanent British settlement. The British, however, accepted the responsibility mainly because of the Cape's strategic value as a victualling station in the southern section of the sea route to India.¹

At the second British occupation in 1815, the Cape Colony was politically, socially and economically a backward community. The Dutch Huguenots who inhabited the "refreshment station" in South Africa had little contact with the European world after the decline of the Netherlands

as a colonial power during the eighteenth century. As a result, the settlers there had little or no understanding of the new political and social philosophies which had gained wide acceptance in Europe during the eighteenth century. The Dutch Huguenots in the Cape Colony remained closely knit and clanish, consequently, the liberal innovations of the British occupation came as an abrupt shock to them. The conflicting attitudes of the Calvinist Dutch (members of the Calvinist Reformed Church of the Netherlands) and the evangelizing British after 1815 were seemingly insolvable. Inevitably, the resulting clash had repercussions which fostered the English-Boer separationism in the later history of South Africa.

The major problem between the British and the Dutch occurred over the status of the natives on the Cape's borders (members of the Bantu group, whom at the time were referred to as Kaffirs) and the Hottentots within the Cape itself. As an open frontier was a constant factor on the Cape border, the Dutch gradually moved to the outskirts of the Colony and came into contact with the Bantu. The British, however,

---


preferred that the Dutch should be shut off from such contact with the native tribes, but such a desire was impossible. As a result of the confrontation between the Bantu and the Dutch, a series of Kaffir Wars periodically occurred along the eastern borders of the Cape Colony. The wars originated over the interpretation of who actually "owned" the pastoral lands in the interior. For both the Dutch and the Bantu drove cattle, but the Dutch in order to insure individual ownership, branded their cattle and then let them graze on unfenced veldt (local name for pastoral grasslands). The Bantu, however, more in a tradition of communal ownership, supervised the grazing of their cattle, and looked upon any untended cattle as public property. The perplexing problem of property rights eventually resulted into a festering conflict between the two pastoral groups. Although the British were not directly involved, technically, they were the protectors of both the Dutch and the natives, so as the frequency of the incidents increased, it became virtually impossible for them to remain impartial.


During the first three decades of British administration in South Africa, colonial policy was especially influenced by the activities of the London Missionary Society and similar groups from Great Britain. Naturally, the Dutch viewed the missionary effort as a vexation; contrary to their Calvinist beliefs, and a disruptive intrusion into their society. Seeing no merit in any attempt to civilize the natives, the Dutch firmly believed that the Kaffirs were totally inferior to white men, and that they should be regulated and apprenticed to work for the benefit of Dutch society in South Africa.

Since their arrival in 1816, the representatives of the London Missionary Society had sought to protect and possibly convert the Hottentot natives within the Cape Colony and the Bantu tribesmen on its borders. The Dutch, however, looked upon any British assistance to the Missionary effort as an absolute violation of their traditional beliefs. The growing breach between the two antagonists widened, when in

---


The London Missionary Society in 1819 had thirteen stations in South Africa, most of which were located on the Cape border. Dr. John Philip was the most influential in regard to colonial policy. He wanted the natives to develop their own skills, and he urged that the Colonial Office curtail the exploitation of the Bantu by the Dutch.

7 Wiedner, Africa, p. 154.
1828, partly due to the influence of the London Missionary Society in London, the "Fiftieth Ordinance" became law.\(^8\) The Dutch were greatly embittered by the Ordinance because it allowed the Hottentots to acquire land and settle in the Cape Colony with relative freedom.

During the 1820's, the Dutch also became infuriated over the "Anglicizing" policies of the British Governor at the Cape, Lord Charles Somerset. His restrictions of the use of the Dutch language accentuated the suspicion and antagonism that the Dutch held toward the British lordship.\(^9\) The issue of slavery, however, pushed the relationship between the Boer and the British over the brink. Although slavery in the British Empire was primarily located in the West Indies, 35,000 slaves in South Africa were freed by the abolition of slavery in 1833. As a result, the Dutch slave-owners in the Cape Colony complained bitterly that the compensation they received for their slaves was inadequate.\(^10\)

---


\(^9\) Marquard, South Africa, p. 113; also see Alex Hepple, South Africa, (New York: Frederick Prager, 1966), pp. 58-181. For a sharply critical account of Lord Somerset, see Henry Gibbs, Background to Bitterness (London: Frederick Muller, 1954), pp. 47-8.

\(^10\) Wiedner, Africa, p. 140.

In order for the Dutch to collect compensation for their slaves, they had to rely on London agents who charged a commission equal to approximately two-thirds of their payment.
Moreover, the Dutch had only contempt for British policies which they felt benefited the native population at the expense of the European.

This period of British rule in South Africa before 1834 was one of rapid change. These changes laid the groundwork for the future development of the Cape Colony, but more importantly, the innovations inaugurated by the British were responsible for the Dutch leaving the limits of the Cape Colony.11

In 1834, the Boer cattle-herders and farmers began pushing beyond the borders of the Cape Colony. Seeking immunity from what they considered oppressive British policies, the Boers departed from the Cape and trekked into Natal. The unprecedented mass exodus posed a perplexing question for officials in London: could a subject of the Crown abandon British authority to colonize an area without consent from London?12 In essence, the question remained unanswered until the adoption of the first convention in 1852.

The Great Trek was, and still remains the central event in the history of South Africa as it marks a rapid stage

11. Marquard, South Africa, p. 117.

of European expansion from the Cape Colony. Even though the distance of the Trek was not overly extended, the 14,000 Dutch who journeyed into the area beyond the Cape Colony laid the foundation for future confrontations with the British and the Bantu. Nonwithstanding, the romance associated with the Great Trek, its real importance is in its marked departure from the past, for it instilled in the Boer communities an aura of comradeship, but also, suspicion and contempt for all those who were not of their company. In London, the Colonial Office observed the Great Trek with amazement, and was unable at that time to decide upon just what course of action should be taken.

Although many groups left the Cape, the main body was led by Piet Retief who crossed the Drakensburg Mountains and settled in Natal. Though Retief and his column were eventually massacred by the Zulus, the Boers later crushed the Zulus on December 12, 1838, at the battle of Blood River.

---


15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.
MAP A

TREK ROUTES:

RETIEF
MARITZ
POTGIETER
TRICHARD
VAN RENSBERG
UYS
RETIEF DIED

ZEERUST
POTCHEFSTROOM
SUICRBOISAND
VECKOP

BLOOD RIVER
DINCAANSTAT

MAP
OF THE
GREAT TREK,
1877-1878.

Consequently, the Boers forced the specter of division on South Africa by claiming the area of Natal by conquest. 17

In the early 1840's, the British found themselves in a difficult situation because of the Boer settlements outside of the Cape Colony. The Colonial Office faced an insolvable problem when contemplating future expenses and deciding upon the feasibility of defending the Boers from the natives, or the natives from the Boers. British policy before the Great Trek had attempted to protect the Bantu, but James Stephen, Permanent Undersecretary for Colonial Affairs had no intention of making the interests of the British taxpayer subservient to the natives in South Africa. 18

---


Uys accuses Stephen of being "indifferent" to colonial affairs.


Stephen, during his years as a public official was hardly known to the public. He was especially denounced by the "colonial reformers" (Wakefield and Buller) in the thirties and forties. Buller staterized him as "Mr. Mother Country" living "in a world of blue books ... divorced from realities of life and exercising a baneful influence on colonial policy."


Knaplund contends that opponents resented Steven's efficiency, and that he was a "Christian humanitarian" who made great strides in improving the lot of the natives within the Empire.
Seeking a rigid economy, Stephen hoped to leave the Boers to their own devices in order to curtail expenditures.\textsuperscript{19} He contended that "If we follow the fugitive settlers as they wander with their herds into the interior, when and where are we to stop."\textsuperscript{20} He realized that to annex Natal would just set the Boers in motion again, until they collided with other Bantu tribes in the interior.\textsuperscript{21} The problem, however, was that uprisings between the Boers and the natives were difficult for the British to overlook, for they often had repercussions on the Cape Colony's border.

In deciding the fate of Natal, the Foreign and Colonial Offices expressed fears that a foreign power could possibly gain control of the port facilities at Durban.\textsuperscript{22} In a similar vein, London felt that the Boers would be less of a problem or threat if they had no outlet to the sea.\textsuperscript{23} British fears of foreign intervention, however, failed to materialize, even

\textsuperscript{19} Uys, Shepstone, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{21} Galbraith, Reluctant Empire, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{23} Uys, Shepstone, pp. 809. Also see Hugh Edward Egerton, \textit{Short History of British Colonial Policy} (London: Methuen Company, 1897), p. 347.
though the Boers after their arrival did attempt to gain assistance from Holland.  

Finally in 1843, the Governor of the Cape Colony, Sir George Napier with a small contingent of British forces marched into Natal and annexed the "rebel" republic as a British territory. Because of the British action in Natal, the voortrekkers again moved to the high veldt north of the Vaal River in order to be free of British domination. Obviously, the second trek consisted of the more determined Boers who hoped for more amiable results in the area of the Orange River.

After the annexation of Natal, the British earnestly hoped to curtail expenses and avoid further responsibility in South Africa. But as frequent disputes between the Boers and the natives along the Natal border continued, the British were again forced to assume a dominant role beyond the limits of the Cape Colony.

---

24 Uys, Shepstone, pp. 8-9. Natal's value increased considerably when coal was discovered there in the early forties.

25 Chene, VIII, Chap. XIV, p. 337.

26 Ibid.

27 Walker, The Great Trek, p. 5.

border was aggravated by the aggressive actions of Sir Harry Smith who became Governor of the Cape Colony toward the end of 1847. Assuming that his influence with the Boers and the natives to be greater than it actually was, and due to his previous experience in South Africa and India, Smith was totally convinced that imperial expansion was both necessary and inevitable.29 Candidly expressing his opinion to the Colonial Secretary, Lord Grey, on the issue of the Boers beyond the Orange River, the Governor indicated:

A jealousy must ever exist, where the paramount authority is not absolute or defined; and among them (Boers and natives) each would wish to be sovereign if he could; but all feeling of this nature are at once banished by the paramount power of Her Majesty.30

One month later on March 8, 1848, Smith annexed the area of the Orange River Sovereignty31 At the Colonial Office, though not overjoyed, Lord Grey contended that Smith's action was "inevitable," stating that without the annexation "bloodshed and anarchy" would have resulted.32


31De Kiewiet, Colonial Policy, p. 21.

32Bell and Morrell, Documents, p. 510.
Naturally, some of the Boers in the area of the Orange River protested the British takeover, and led by Andries Pretorius, they drove the British representative out of Bloemfontein. Pretorius, however, overestimated his strength, and his success proved short-lived, when in August, Smith defeated him at Bloomphate. Again, the British action drove the more resolute Boers farther into the interior.

The British sovereignty proclaimed between the Orange and the Vaal Rivers in 1848 was the logical culmination of a policy where the British Government had been drawn deeper and deeper into the affairs of the Boers beyond the Cape borders. Even though Smith's action in 1848 seemed hasty at the time, the annexation was actually consistent with previous British policy as the Colonial Office, had, though reluctantly, sought to protect the natives from the Boers. The pertinent question, however, remained unanswered: how long did the British wish to interfere in, or control the affairs of the Boers in the transfrontier area?

The forced annexations in the 1840's naturally gave rise in England to criticism over the course of events that

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[33] De Kiewiet, Colonial Policy, p. 26.
\item[34] Ibid., After Pretorius escaped Smith put a price on his head.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
were taking place in South Africa. Colonies in general were subject to severe questioning, and South Africa because of the difficulties with the Boers and the frequency of native wars was highly unpopular in Great Britain. Consequently, by 1850, South Africa was receiving a great deal of the criticism leveled against the colonies in general because of the excessive costs involved there, but also because of the largely non-English population that was forced upon the British.35

The continual colonial problems indicated that consideration had to be given to the possibility of granting self-government in some of the colonies. It seems, however, that the British Government aimed at self-government, not out of liberalism, but rather out of a depletion in the Exchequer. As a result, a prevalent idea existed that colonies were a burden not worth keeping. It should be pointed out, however, that a counter proposal was also apparent, indicating that colonies were worth keeping, and that the only way to keep them was to grant them self-government.36

Specifically, in South Africa after the Great Trek, economic realities gradually replaced the humanitarian

35Ibid., p. 45.

36Galbraith, Reluctant Empire, p. 18; also see James Williamson, A Short History of British Expansion. (2 Vols; London: MacMillan Company, 1930), II, 47.
approach that had been so much a part of British policy before the Great Trek. By 1850, the Colonial Office realized that South Africa afforded little future potential, and that possibly only the harbors at Cape Town and Durban were worth keeping. It was quite evident that the Boers were too unpredictable, for the more they moved, the more they came into contact and eventually conflicts with the native tribesmen. Also, boundary lines between the natives and the Boers proved to be absolute failures, and there was virtually no cooperation between the two. As the conflicts between the two groups became more frequent, Great Britain had to decide on its future involvement in South Africa.

In London, continued support of colonial ventures came under scrutiny and peaked in the 1840's and 50's. The nagging concern involved the costs required to support imperial ventures abroad. Henry Wood, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, summed up the situation appropriately in a letter to Earl Grey at the Colonial Office in 1847 when he said "I do wish you had a Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Colonial Office, for your money concerns are more troublesome than all of the other departments in Westminster . . . "

37 De Kiewiet, Colonial Policy, p. 5.
38 Galbraith, Reluctant Empire, p. 18.
The question of costs and defense is also indicated by the concern in London in 1850 over the possibility that Great Britain did not have a sizeable defense force to protect the home island. Exaggerated fears existed that too many troops were spread throughout the Empire, and that the home island would not be able to defend itself against a possible French invasion.39

The problem of colonial costs, however, was the main reason for the pessimistic attitude concerning colonies that existed in Great Britain. This became especially true when another series of Kaffir Wars broke out in 1850. Commenting on the unpopular war, The Times (London) asked: "Who is going to pay for the triumphs we are to achieve?" The Times contented that the British people should not be required to pay for colonial wars and that the Cape Colony should rightly bear the largest percentage of the defense burden. The Times further stated that Great Britain should not become involved in a local war unless a foreign power intervened.40 Expressing essentially the same opinion on the Kaffir War as The Times, William Cobden urged:

The proper cure for these reoccurring wars is to let the Colonist bear the brunt of them. This


During the period of the Great Trek in 1836, 35,716 troops were garrisoned in England and 45,495 in the Empire. Ten years later 50,133 were in England and 64,726 abroad.

40 *The Times*, (London), March 7, 1851.
must be done by first giving them the powers of self-government and . . . The responsibility of their own policy, they would then be very care-
ful to treat the neighboring savages with justice. 41

So by 1850, the pecuniary factor excellerated the Colonial Office's search for a policy which would absolve Great Britain of responsibility beyond the Cape and Natal borders. British relations with the Dutch had been poor since 1815, and so long as Great Britain was involved in their affairs, there would be little hope for peace in the future. As a result, the humanitarianism of the previous decades disappeared into the background as the British sought to withdraw as quickly as possible. 42

The first step in the withdrawal of British respons-
sibility was taken by Sir Harry Smith's successor, Sir George Carheart. Cathcart's immediate objective was to gain some cooperation with the "rebel Pretorius across the Vaal River. The Governor first withdrew the bounty that Sir Harry Smith had rashly set on the Transvaal leader's head, and then made preliminary arrangements for an exploratory conference with the Boers to be held at the neutral sight at Sand River. 43

It is ironic that by the time of the Sand River Convention,

41 De Kiewiet, Colonial Policy, p. 44.

42 Klaus E. Knorr, British Colonial Theories 1570-

43 Uys, Shepstone, p. 33.
the Boers in the area of the Transvaal were already de facto independent, for by 1850, British nonintervention into the Transvaal was widely accepted in South Africa. The British hoped, however, that if formal arrangements could be decided upon with Pretorius in the Transvaal, possible tensions could be reduced in the areas of the Orange River Sovereignty and Natal. Naturally, the reduction of tension in the two areas would reduce costs and lessen the need for British troops in South Africa.44

The Sand River Convention gave the immigrant farmers across the Vaal River the right to manage their own affairs without interference from the British Government. Both the British and the Transvaal Boers hoped at the time of the Convention that neither party would interfere in the internal affairs of the other. Although hastily adopted, the Sand River Convention prohibited slavery,45 restricted the sale of firearms into the republic and developed a common system of extradition of criminals. The Convention was finalized when it was signed by both parties on January 17, 1852.46

44 Galbraith, *Reluctant Empire*, p. 258.
45 When the Boers waged war against the Kaffirs, they would often take the women and children of the natives captured in battle and domesticate them as apprentices in Boer households.
46 Bell and Morrell, *Documents*, p. 527.
After the Sand River Convention, the Colonial Office quickly realized that there would be no further need for the British Government to administer the Orange River Sovereignty. As it had always been costly and troublesome, it remained the most unpopular British possession in South Africa. The very existence of the area, because of its location, depended entirely on the toleration of the Boers in the Transvaal.

By October, 1853, Sir George Clerk, the British representative in Bloemfontein, began to make preliminary arrangements for the eventual withdrawal of British authority from the country. While doing so, Clerk erroneously reported to the Colonial Secretary, the Duke of Newcastle that the majority of the Boers in Bloemfontein did not want to sever British ties. The question of opposition to British withdrawal, however, was quickly resolved, and on February 23, 1854, the Convention of Bloemfontein was agreed to, and signed by both parties.

47 Uys, Shepstone, p. 31.
48 Bell and Morrell, Documents, p. 531.
49 Ibid., pp. 532-533; also see Galbraith, Reluctant Empire, p. 271.

The major objection to British withdrawal came from an English minority in and around Bloemfontein. The English merchants and landowners feared that they would suffer financial losses if the British left them unprotected.

50 Bell and Morrell, Documents, pp. 533-536.
The 1852 and 1854 Conventions marked the eclipse of the British humanitarian policy in South Africa and set the stage for future encounters between the British, Boers and natives. After eighteen years of indecision, the Conventions answered the question whether British subjects could colonize themselves and disavow allegiance to the Crown. For the Boers, both agreements gave meaning and purpose to the Great Trek.

When the Conventions were originally agreed to, they were looked upon by the British as a reprieve from what was considered an insolveable problem. In actuality, however, the Conventions set up barriers to British expansion which would not easily be resolved. Also, the British overlooked the fact that native problems which occurred in the two republics were bound to have repercussions in British territories (especially Natal), and there was nothing that they could really do about it. So when Sir George Grey arrived as Governor of the Cape Colony and High Commissioner for all of South Africa, most of the problems he faced had their origins in the first half of the nineteenth century. Although all representatives of the British Crown faced difficult problems, Sir George had the added burden of having to deal with five separate European settlements in Southern Africa.
Sir George Grey arrived at Capetown on December 5, 1854. Previous to his appointment as Governor of the Cape Colony and High Commissioner for all of South Africa, Grey served as Governor of South Australia and New Zealand.\(^1\) His position in South Africa, however, was somewhat different than his two previous posts, as the natives were more predictably hostile than either the aborigines or the Maoris, and the land mass in South Africa was far more vast than New Zealand or South Australia. Also the presence of the two Boer states so near the British possessions was to have considerable repercussions on the policies that Sir George would advocate during his tour of duty there.

Grey's duties in his position as resident Governor of the Cape Colony and High Commissioner of all of South Africa were explicitly defined. As the chief administrative official of the Cape, he was expected to assure the Cape Colony a safe border, and assist the region in becoming

\(^1\)See Appendix A.
economically self-sufficient in the future. His duties as British High Commissioner were more extensive: he was expected to pacify the tribes on the Cape's borders, supervise the affairs of Natal and maintain amiable relations with the two Boer republics. Most importantly, he was to work to insure a state peace in the British possessions there in order to allow in the future, the possible withdrawal of British regulars and the reduction of expenditures in South Africa.

Aware of the events that had taken place in South Africa before his arrival, Sir George believed that the Conventions adopted at Sand River and Bloemfontein would only serve as obstacles to deter British policy (especially expansion) in the future. At the time when Grey arrived in South Africa, however, London wanted retrenchment, and Grey in his subordinate capacity was compelled to adhere to that policy. He did not, however, support the retrenchment policies advocated by London. As a result, Governor Grey immediately developed a program which eventually caused difficulties between himself and his superiors in London.

---


3Ibid.

Over the years, Grey developed an independent attitude which was quite natural considering his varied background and the loose control that the Colonial Office exerted over its representatives in various parts of the world. Undoubtedly, London was partly responsible for Grey's developing independence, for they had freely provided men and funds during his service in South Australia and New Zealand.\(^5\) In fact, by the time that Sir George reached South Africa, he was accustomed to following almost any course of action he deemed necessary. Also important is the fact that because of Grey's continuous colonial service since 1837, he was completely out of touch with English politics and issues in the 1850's. During the time since his explorative expedition in Australia, he had been in England only twice for relatively short periods of time. This being the case, Grey had no knowledge of the criticism which existed regarding colonial spending.\(^6\)

It must be emphasized that the Colonial Office was hardly a model of efficiency in the mid-nineteenth century. Few fixed principles of administration existed, and at the time orderly procedures were infrequently followed.\(^7\) Also,

---

\(^5\)Ibid., p. 85.

\(^6\)Ibid.

administrative methods were slow and cumbersome, and the Exchequer, especially, was extremely hesitant in responding to Colonial requests. Criticism of the Exchequer, however, is perhaps unfair, because at mid-century that office was understaffed, and because of the prevalent criticism leveled at colonial spending, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had to be deliberately cautious regarding the funds it disbursed for colonial needs.  

Another difficulty for Grey, as for all colonial governors within the Empire was the unrealistic system of communications at mid-century. In so far as South Africa was concerned, because of the distances involved, it took approximately six months (depending on the speed of the ship and the weather) to get information from South Africa to London, and then receive instructions in return. Naturally decisions could not always await instructions from London, and as a result, local conditions sometimes demanded immediate action. Such a situation arose during the deliberation over federation in 1858-59 when Sir George became quite dismayed with the Colonial Office. He felt that the situation in South Africa demanded an immediate response which

3Ibid., p. 33.

9Cabraith, Reluctant Empire, p. 21.

By 1858, the time involved was reduced to approximately eight to ten weeks.
could not await verification from the distant offices in London. It seems then, that because of the distance factor and inadequate communications system, local governors were often placed in peculiarly delicate situations. The actual fact is that London could only interpret and supervise the actions of colonial governors, and sometimes, as in the case of Governor Grey, decisions were made without the consent of London.

Fortunately, for Sir George, the Cape Colony presented no serious problems as it was enjoying a state of relative prosperity when he arrived in 1854. With this being the case, the Governor quickly directed his attention to the more pressing problems concerning native affairs in Natal and British Kaffraria.

In Natal a serious situation existed because the country was virtually devoid of a European population. The situation there had been deteriorating since the British annexed the area in 1843, and many of the Boers in the country then moved to the area of the Orange River Sovereignty. As a result, by 1854, only 9,000 Europeans remained in Natal, and their existence was quite precarious because of the large number of natives there.

\[10\] Rutherford, *Grey*, p. 293.
In 1854, the British representative in Natal was Sir Benjamin Pine. At the time, Pine's chief native advisor was Theophilus Shepstone who was in the process of developing a native policy which Governor Grey felt was without merit. Pine had previously approved a plan whereby Shepstone would obtain a large cession of land in Natal, and then settle approximately 60,000 Zulus in the country and assume for himself the title of "king or chief." The British, he assumed, would support the plan and provide him with the necessary military protection. The plan, however, was unrealistic, and one of the Governor's first acts was to veto the proposal. Sir George assumed that such a large group of natives so near the Cape's border would only add to the tension already there. Although the plan had faults, in all probability Grey wanted the opportunity to formulate his own policies toward all of the various states in South Africa.

Although Sir George was naturally aware of the two Boer republics, in 1854 they were not his major concern. Instead, the Governor, focused his attention to the more


13 Ibid., II, 219.

14 De Kiewiet, Colonial Policy, p. 87.

Both the Orange Free State and the South African Republic (Transvaal) at the time were without any semblance of orderly government.
immediate problems on the Cape Colony's eastern border, British Kaffraria. At the time, Kaffraria consisted of 3,050 square miles and carried a population of 100,000 natives (33 per square mile). In late 1854, the area was under military control, instead of being a colonized area, or administered by the Cape Colony. In the words of Sir George Cathcart, the military Governor who administered Kaffraria:

... military control, not colonization, is the principle of policy which has induced me to advise the retention of Kaffraria as a separate government, independent of the colony of the Cape, instead of annexing it as a new colonial division, or abandoning it altogether.

In essence, Cathcart's policy consisted of a combination of military occupation and native reserve. The plan, however, was expensive, and created a tense situation, as the natives were suspicious and frightened over the presence of any large military contingent.

---

19 Ibid.
Grey immediately sought some alternative native policy that would be more constructive than a military occupation. The Governor felt that Cathcart's segregationist policy in British Kaffraria would be unsuitable if better relations were ever going to exist between the natives and the Europeans. Not forgetting his successes with the Maori in New Zealand, Sir George hoped to christianize the natives in British Kaffraria. He felt, however, that such a policy would be impossible so long as Europeans were restricted from settling in the area.²⁰

Although altruistic, Grey's native policy was based upon certain misconceptions. As Governor Grey had been somewhat successful in his relations with the Maori in New Zealand, he naturally drew upon similarities between them and the natives throughout South Africa. The inhabitants of each country, however, were quite different, and any analogies that Grey assumed to be correct, were far too general to be considered accurate.²¹

Immediately after his arrival, the Governor's basic aim was to avert another Kaffir War in South Africa. As the

²⁰De Kiewiet, Colonial Policy.

²¹Ibid., p. 86; Also see Rutherford, Grey, p. 323.

In New Zealand there were approximately 80,000 Maoris who held 28 million acres of land on the North Island; the land came to about 350 acres per-head. In British Kaffraria, however, 100,000 Kaffirs occupied 2 million acres, or 20 acres per-head. Another reason for the disparity that existed was because the New Zealand islands were more conducive to farming because they received annually, a much greater amount of rainfall.
1850 Kaffir War had ended shortly before his arrival, Grey feared that another was on the verge of erupting. Fearing a future native upheaval, the Governor was apprehensive over the military potential of the chiefs, and may have contributed to a war scare in order to justify his own actions. Sir George decided that the independent power of the chiefs served as an obstruction to the authority of the British Crown. Accordingly, the Governor felt that a dangerous situation existed so long as the chiefs maintained: "... a large standing militia, entirely under their own orders and control, well-armed in a state of perfect organization, ready to take the field at a moments notice." Possibly Grey may have exaggerated the military potential of the chiefs, yet, he constantly sought to undermine their authority within British Kaffraria, arguing that such a "strong" military force would eventually cause trouble along the Cape's borders. Never forgetting the military potential of the chiefs, the Governor was relentless in his efforts to break up their power within British Kaffraria. As a result, Grey outlined his policy of "moral subjugation" to the Colonial Office on December 13, 1855. Even as London was receiving the policy outline, Sir George had already introduced it in South Africa. 

---

22 Rutherford, Grey, p. 331.  
23 Bell and Morrell, Documents, p. 541.  
24 Ibid., pp. 538-541.
As a result of this policy, his first concern involved the system of Kaffir justice within the native society. Grey was convinced that the judicial system of the Kaffirs consisted of "tyranny" and he was determined to make the tribes adopt a system which was more comparable to European standards. Furthermore, Sir George felt that by usurping the authority of the chiefs, he would in the process weaken the influence of the witch-doctors in British Kaffraria. In his dispatch to London, Grey reported that the chiefs acted as judicial magistrates and worked hand-in-hand with the witch-doctors. Consequently, in the practice of Kaffir law, the general trend was for the witch doctor to accuse, and the chief to fine; with the result being that members of the tribe would often be accused of a crime after accumulating substantial wealth. Sir George believed that so long as such a system existed, it would be virtually impossible for civilization to advance because every member of the tribe would be subjected to various caprices of the chief. Consequently, Governor Grey proposed a plan, where instead of the chief relying on the fines he obtained from his people, a monthly stipend would be offered to the chiefs by the British. A European magistrate would then replace

25 Rutherford, Grey, p. 331.
26 Bell and Morrell, Documents, p. 539.
27 Ibid.
the chief in deciding judicial matters. The result, Grey felt, would be that barbarous Kaffir customs would be replaced by European laws. After the introduction of the policy, the tribes did come into closer contact with European ideas, and even more importantly, the chiefs became considerably more dependent upon the British Crown.28

Despite the fact that the Kaffir administration of justice was for the most part crude and primitive, Grey failed in certain aspects to adequately understand the role of the chief in Kaffir society. Sir George minimized the fact that because of the chief's status in Kaffir society, he had to have an abundance of wealth because it was a major sign of his authority within the tribal hierarchy. The chief, however, was expected to be generous with his wealth, and in practice at least, what really existed in the Kaffir society was a crude form of "Kaffir communism."29 Nevertheless, Grey would not accept the idea that the chiefs could rule benevolently; instead, he continued to pursue a policy where the power of the chief would not rival the authority of the British Crown.30

28 Ibid.
29 Rutherford, Grey, p. 332.
30 Bell and Morrell, Documents, pp. 538-541.
Governor Grey's policy of "moral subjugation" went beyond just the breakup of the power and the authority of the chiefs. One of his first steps was to try to bring civilization to the various tribes in South Africa. By 1856, Sir George's policies of civilizing the natives received a strong impetus when a hospital was completed at King Williamstown. Grey Hospital in the heart of British Kaffraria served greatly to counteract the influence of the fetish in the area and proved to be an immediate success. Also, its construction afforded the natives an opportunity for constructive labor, as they and British soldiers were responsible for the construction of the hospital. One of the reasons that the hospital was such a success was because Grey persuaded an old associate of his, Dr. J. P. Fitzgerald, from New Zealand to administer the hospital. Naturally, the hospital had beneficial results on the native community, as the natives received free medical training and treatment.

Governor Grey also took immediate steps to educate the various tribes within the British possessions in South

---


33. Ibid.

34. Meal, South Africa, VII, 191.
Africa. Even before the completion of the Grey Hospital in King Williamstown, the Governor employed a system of training young natives in rudimentary medical practices so that they could rely more on European methods rather than primitive practices. Just as important was a system of industrial schools he introduced for the tribes in Natal and British Kaffraria. The schools established before 1856, instructed the natives in practical skills. Also, the natives were given religious training because Grey had subsidized missionaries to operate the schools. Naturally, London was required to pay for Grey's attempts to civilize the natives; which they did with little reluctance until 1858.

Less permanent than the industrial schools, but just as important, were the public works projects that Governor Grey started shortly after his arrival in South Africa. The basic source of employment was road building within British Kaffraria. By 1855, Sir George was optimistic regarding the successes of the ventures and and felt that even: "The most warlike Gaikas were taking to public works and labour with all enthusiasm." Although the work was always temporary.

36 Cory, South Africa, VI, 15.
37 Ibid., VI, 14.
approximately 750 to 1,000 natives were continually employed on road work within British Kaffraria. The one major problem, however, that Sir George understood but could not really solve, was how to get more Europeans into the area to supervise the work of the natives. Even though the employment rates were never high, the work projects were important because they introduced the Kaffirs to constructive labor in the European style, in addition to providing them with pay and rations.

Sir George estimated that even though his programs would be expensive, in the end, they would be less costly than a native war. So immediately after his arrival, Sir George enjoyed amicable relations with the Colonial Office as they contributed freely to the financial support he needed to make his policies successful. By June, 1855, the Governor was awarded the sum of £40,000 per-annum until 1858, after that the amount was to be progressively reduced.

In the same dispatch of June, 1858, Lord John Russell, who was Secretary of State for the Colonies, indicated to Sir George that London would go along with his enlightened

---

38 Ibid., VI, 14-15.
39 Ibid., VI, 10.
40 Bell and Morrell, Documents, p. 538; also see De Kiewiet, Colonial Policy, p. 89.
policies. Ominously for Grey, however, the dispatch indicated the growing concern of London over the financial burdens in South Africa. As a result, the question was expressed by London whether British Kaffraria was worth keeping as a British possession. Russell, moreover, felt all of the Cape's eastern frontier could easily be abandoned without encountering any real difficulties. These options were especially apparent to London at the time when they were seeking to reduce their financial burdens in South Africa. Officials in London, however, did give Sir George the opportunity to test his policies in the hope that they would prove less costly in the long run. This is especially true, since the only alternative that London had was abandonment.

By the end of Governor Grey's first eighteen months in South Africa, his policies even though not absolutely successful, were considerably more constructive than those adopted previously. Although the Colonial Office was somewhat suspicious of Sir George because of his past record, they were not openly critical because he did avoid war, and was also successful in avoiding conflicts with the other states in South Africa. After 1856, however, Grey faced two

41 Bell and Morrell, Documents, p. 538.
42 Ibid., p. 537.
delicate problems: the difficulties surrounding the immigration of settlers in British Kaffraria, and the course of action that he took regarding the Indian Mutiny. In each case, officials in London did not embrace wholeheartedly the methods that Governor Grey employed.
CHAPTER III

IMMIGRATION SCHEMES, AND THE INDIAN MUTINY

For Great Britain, her South African possessions in the 1850's were only minor links in a world-wide system of Empire. At the time, acceptance of added responsibilities in South Africa was frowned upon in London, and it was highly unlikely that during Sir George Grey's administration, either officials in the Exchequer or the Colonial Office would abandon the parsimonious policies that had been the rule since the Great Trek. Governor Grey, however, was reluctant to accept London's viewpoint, and after 1855, the course of events in South Africa fostered an irreparable breach between Grey and his superiors in London.

During his first two years as Governor of the Cape Colony and High Commissioner in South Africa, Sir George developed the foundations of a positive native policy there. The previous segregation policies, however, continually plagued him, and hindered the success of his policies, especially in British Kaffraria. Because Sir George detested the segregationist policy which had been employed in Kaffraria, he constantly sought some measure to reverse the situation there. Eventually, his conclusion was that the best solution to the problem was to allow British pensioners to settle in
Kaffraria. As he had made use of such a plan in New Zealand while Governor there; in March 1855, he asked the Colonial Office for permission to settle approximately 1,000 British pensioners and their families in Kaffraria. Grey optimistically expected that the number of pensioners would increase to 5,000, and even before the Governor had the approval of officials in London, he was already preparing an area of settlement for the pensioners near King Williamstown. In order to entice the pensioners to leave England, they were offered cottages, plots of land and rations when they arrived in South Africa.

Governor Grey estimated that the plan for settlement in Kaffraria had the potential for unlimited success. Such a policy he felt would bring South Africa a significant European population among the natives, and in the process create conditions which would be more suitable to civilized living. Hopefully, Sir George dreamed that the initial 1,000 pensioners might eventually grow to a number in excess of 20,000—thus providing a solid group of Europeans on the eastern border of the Cape Colony.

---

1 Rutherford, Grey, p. 314; also see Theal, South Africa, VII, 192.

2 Rutherford, Grey, p. 314.

3 Ibid., p. 327.
The Governor's hopes and plans, however, were unrealistic, and the pensioner scheme was an immediate failure. Because South Africa in 1855 was unattractive to potential English immigrants; very few of them were willing to undertake the risk and submit to the uncertainties which were involved in the venture. As a result, out of the initial group of 1,000 eligible pensioners only 107 enrolled in the program, consequently, the plan was dismissed, but the initial problem still remained in British Kaffraria.4

Because of the failure of the pensioner scheme, British Kaffraria remained relatively devoid of a European population. After the termination of the Crimean War, however, Sir George received a chance to further his policies and took full advantage of the opportunity to secure the settlement of a substantial European population for British Kaffraria. The opportunity emerged after the Crimean War when the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Henry Labouchère (later Baron Tauton) offered the services of the so-called Anglo-German Legion to Sir George Grey in South Africa. Sir George felt that the Legion would be a valuable contribution to South Africa, and since the pensioner scheme had failed, the Legion would add to the European population in British Kaffraria. The Governor was convinced that the addition of the German Legion in South Africa would strengthen the defense

4Cory, South Africa, VI, 14.
capabilities in the region, and would generally give greater stability on the eastern border of the Cape Colony.\footnote{Ibid.}

Even though London sent the Legion, the Cape Colony had to bear some of the costs, and although the Cape Parliament was habitually frugal, Grey persuaded it to allocate the necessary funds to support the settlement of the German Legion in British Kaffraria. As a result, the Cape Parliament allocated £40,000 so that 8,000 of the German Legion could settle in the area. In essence, the sending of the Legion was a reciprocal agreement between London and Governor Grey because officials in London were glad to have a place to send the Legion, while Sir George was glad to accept the Legion because it seemed to provide simple solution to a perplexing problem.\footnote{Rutherford, Grey, p. 361; also see Cory, South Africa, VI, 49-50.}

So far as the Legion itself was concerned, service in South Africa was to be completely voluntary. An apparent problem, however, was that the Legion was poorly informed as

...
to what conditions awaited them in British Kaffraria. Consequently, before any itinerary for the whole Legion stationed in England could be formally arranged, two representatives of the Legion were sent to the Cape Colony to gain adequate information about the venture. On their arrival at Capetown, Sir George gave the two members of the German Legion an "extended tour" of all areas except British Kaffraria. The two representatives then returned to England where the bulk of the Legion was awaiting word from them. The German Legion was then either, intentionally or unintentionally, misinformed about the actual conditions in British Kaffraria. According to George F. Cory, the conveyance of information about Kaffraria left a great deal to be desired, for the Legion:

... heard of a large and prosperous colonial town where there was plenty of employment at good wages; living was cheap and Crown lands were to be bought at two shillings per-acre; there was even partridge shooting for the officers. British Kaffraria in short was an earthly paradise.8

Finally on November 5, 1856, Henry Labouchere and the Secretary of State for War, Lord Panmure sent those members of the German Legion to South Africa who wanted to go. Despite

---

7 Cory, South Africa, VI, 50.
8 Ibid., VI, 51.
the alluring propaganda, only 2,300 members of the Legion volunteered to go to British Kaffraria.9

Although the presence of the German Legion in British Kaffraria did strengthen the defense on the Cape's eastern border, Sir George was far more interested in having the Legion settle down to farm and develop the natural resources of the country. A major problem, however, was that most members of the German Legion were not married, and so long as that was the case, it remained unlikely that the men of the Legion would settle down to become permanent fixtures of an agricultural or pastoral society in South Africa.10

Almost immediately, Sir George regretted the absence of wives among the Legion, but he remained confident that they would eventually prove beneficial to the growth of the country. He realized that even though some members of the

9Ibid. The agreement was between the German Legion and the British Government was that: the men would serve for seven years as military settlers in Kaffraria, resist military attacks, support the civil government and attend military exercises for thirty days each year. The Legion in turn was to receive: free passage to the Cape, free rations for one year for themselves and their families, military half-pay for three years and an acre of land on which to build themselves a house.

10Ibid.

11Ibid., VI, 52-53. Some hasty marriages took place in Portsmouth before the Legion left for Southern Africa. The number of wives, however, who accompanied the Legion was only 331, while the Legion consisted of over 2,000 men.
Legion were hardworking and industrious, the majority of them were low and desperate characters from continental slums who had little or no inclination to turn to agriculture as a livelihood. So, after the men of the Legion had been settled in Kaffraria for awhile, the novelty of the situation soon wore off, and as the men eventually became restless and discontent, they soon deserted to Capetown.

The Governor contemplated the difficulties facing the Legion and decided that if women could be procured, the men would probably be less obstreperous. At first the operation was left in the hands of the Immigration Commissioners in London, who arranged in September 1857, for the transportation of 174 marriageable young women from Ireland to British Kaffraria as possible wives for the German Legion. The experiment, however, proved a costly failure. The women were sent to South Africa at the cost of £12, 17s each; and of the original 174 who made the journey, 16 married young men, but there was considerable doubt if the men they married were members of the German Legion.

---

12 Ibid., VI, 54.
14 Cory, South Africa, VI, 56.
After the attempt in London to find wives for the German Legion, the Colonial Office virtually dropped the question of seeking wives for the Legion. Sir George, however, was not inclined to give up so easily. He felt that the Secretaries of War and the Colonies had literally dumped the Legion in South Africa, and then failed to keep their part of the bargain by not sending an adequate number of marriageable women along.\textsuperscript{15} Even after London's disenchantment, Sir George remained obstinately convinced that the Legion could make a positive contribution to British Kaffraria, if only they had women and subsequently families to tie them to the soil.

On his own initiative, Sir George attempted to increase the European population within the British Kaffraria. Failing to inform the Secretary of State for the Colonies of his intentions, Grey made arrangements with the German firm of Caesar Godefroy and Son in Hamburg to act as agents in selecting 4,000 Germans who would be well-suited to the conditions in British Kaffraria.\textsuperscript{16} Arrangements were made, and according to Sir George's official biographers, the Rees, the Governor was delighted over the initial success of the venture.\textsuperscript{17} For despite official skepticism that surrounded

\textsuperscript{15} Rees, \textit{Sir George Grey}, II, 259.

\textsuperscript{16} Cory, \textit{South Africa}, VI, 62; also see B.S.P. 1857-58, XXIV, 447.

\textsuperscript{17} Rees, \textit{Sir George Grey}, II, 261.
the German Legion, Sir George continued to believe that the
German families would be a valuable asset to the future growth
of the country, and that within the ranks of the immigrant
German families there would be an adequate supply of potential
wives for the German Legion.

Conscious of difficult encounters with the Exchequer
in the past, Sir George felt it was useless to ask them for
funds to support the venture. Instead, he raised money for
the plan by using debentures on the security of British
Kaffraria at the rate of six per cent interest. In no way,
however, would officials in London go along with Sir George's
immigration scheme. The Governor's superiors in London con-
sidered the plan to be financially irresponsible, and also,
 Lord Panmure, the Secretary of War contended that if immigra-
tion was the only solution, why were only Germans used? Consequently, on June 5, 1857, Labouchere informed Sir George
that the arrangements made with the German firm should be
stopped immediately stopped because they were contrary to
national policy. The Governor, however, determined that the
plan should be successful, continued to negotiate with

18 Cory, South Africa, VI, 63.
19 Ibid., VI, 66. As early as December, 1856,
Labouchere was against the venture.
Godefroy and Son in August, 1857, over the transportation of German families to British Kaffraria. 20

Unfortunately for Sir George, Henry Labouchere was replaced by Lord Stanley as Secretary of State for the Colonies in February, 1858. Lord Stanley saw even less merit in Grey's proposal for German immigration than had Labouchere. As a result, soon after Stanley became Colonial Secretary, he abruptly terminated the contract with Godefroy and Son, ending completely any chance the High Commissioner had to increase the European population in British Kaffraria. 21

It was during the time when Sir George Grey was mainly concerned with the fate of the German Legion, that he was faced with an even more pressing problem, the Mutiny in India. Vague news of the insurrection in India first reached Cape Town on July 18, 1857, when the steamship Megarea arrived in South Africa. One month later, the commercial ship Madras brought Sir George definite information in the form of letters from Lord Elphinstone in India, who claimed that Bombay was in danger of falling. 22

---

20 Ibid., VI, 66-67.
21 Ibid., VI, 67; also see Collier, Sir George Grey, p. 109; also see Rees, Sir George Grey, II, 262.
According to Rees, Sir George had to advance the money to the German firm out of his personal finances. Later, the money was reimbursed to Grey after E. B. Lytton succeeded Lord Stanley as Secretary of State for the Colonies.
22 Theal, South Africa, VII, 160-161; Rutherford, Grey, 371.
Imbued with a more romantic conception of empire than probably most of his contemporaries, Sir George quickly assessed the situation in India as critical, and took what he considered at the time sufficient action to help alleviate the situation there. Grey seemed convinced that there was a unifying factor within the British Empire, and he immediately sent men, money and supplies in order to reduce the threat that India was facing.23

In a delicate predicament, faced with incredibly slow communications, Sir George quickly acted on his own initiative. Having no precedents to follow, the Governor changed orders for troop-transports going to Lord Elgin's aid in China and rerouted the ships to Calcutta that were originally bound for China, New Zealand and Australia. In doing so, Sir George was confident that because of the desperate circumstances in India, his actions would be justified.24

Regardless of the actions that Sir George took; in the eyes of officials in London, he was guilty of disobeying orders because the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Henry Labouchere, had instructed Sir George on August 26, 1857 to send six regiments to India, and keep four, plus the

23 Theal, South Africa, VII, 160-162.
24 Collier, Sir George Grey, pp. 191-192; Rutherford, Grey, 371.
German Legion in South Africa. Sir George, however, believing that the defense of British possessions in South Africa could only be reduced to a certain point, remained totally evasive to the orders sent from London.25

At the time of the Mutiny, Sir George’s disobedience was not a cause for great concern. Later in July, 1858, however, a Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament investigated the transportation of troops to India from throughout the Empire. At the investigation the decisions taken by Sir George in South Africa came under close scrutiny by the Select Committee of Parliament.26 Although Sir George was not censured for the action he took, the Committee questioned his motives, and concluded in its final report that:

... without loss of time, [Sir George Grey] forwarded treasure and horses, together with a portion of troops at his disposal, but that he did not send the whole amount of the force which he was instructed by the Home Government to transmit to India; the Committee has not the means of judging whether the circumstances of the Colony did or did not justify Sir George Grey in taking this course.27

The Parliamentary Committee did not reach an absolute conclusion, because they could not accurately access if there was,

25Rutherford, Grey, p. 376.

26H.C.P. (House of Commons), 1858, "Report from the Select Committee on East India (Transport of Troops): Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Appendix and Index," X, 532.

27Ibid.
or was not the possibility of serious native unrest in British Kaffraria at the time of the Mutiny. Though Sir George failed to dispatch the required six regiments to India, surprisingly, Henry Labouchere defended Sir George's decision at the Committee Hearing. The Secretary of State contended that under the difficult circumstances, Sir George did all that he possibly could at the time of the Mutiny in India. 28

Despite the Colonial Secretary's defense of his action, Sir George's independent methods started to create a definite gulf between him and colonial officials in London. For during its investigation of the transportation of troops to India, the Select Committee also brought up Governor Grey's handling of the German Legion because during the Mutiny, the Governor sent what remained of the Legion to India. 29 Essentially, the major reason for consternation was that Sir George had kept the German Legion on full military pay since they had arrived in South Africa which was contrary to the wishes of the War Office, and to the orders from the Secretary of State for the Colonies on September 14, 1857. 30 The Committee also

28 Ibid., 1858, X, 685-693.

29 Wees, Sir George Grey, II, 264; Cory, South Africa, VI, 68.

Lord Elphinstone indicated in 1856, that he did not want the German Legion in India. Grey sent the Legion, however, contending that the Mutiny had reversed Elphinstone's earlier views.

30 B.S.P. (A dispatch from Henry Labouchere to Sir George Grey, September 14, 1857), 1858, X, 855.
pointed out in its investigation that before Sir George sent
the German Legion to India, he reoutfitted them and sent the
bill to the Exchequer, who then relayed it to the War Office. \(^{31}\)
Naturally, the War Office took a dim view of Governor Grey’s action.

After the departure of the German Legion and the
completion of the London inquiry into the transportation of
troops to India, Sir George was both praised and condemned
for the manner in which he acted in South Africa. In official
circles, he was looked upon as the "savior of India," but also,
of being guilty of an act comparable to treason. \(^{32}\)

In view of the many opinions regarding his action, it
should be mentioned that Sir George was in a peculiarly
delicate predicament while Governor of the Cape and High Com-
missioner in South Africa. For while there, Sir George served


\(^{32}\) In some instances, officials in London were confused
whether to praise or condemn Sir George Grey's actions in
South Africa. See T. Wemyss Reid, *Life, Letters and Friend-
ships of Richard Monckton Milnes, First Lord Houghton* (2 Vols.
New York: Cassell, Company, 1891), II, 20. Queen Victoria
commented that she admired Sir George's quick decisions at
the Cape. Also see Louis Becke, "Builder of Empire, Sir
George Grey," *Fortnightly Review*, CCCLXXXII, (October 1, 1898),
pp. 620-626. Lord Malmsbury, Foreign Secretary in Lord
Derby's second Ministry (February, 1858), claimed that Sir
George's action "probably saved India." Also see, *The
Times*, (London), October 25, 31, 1898. Also see Brian
Connell, *Regina vs. Palmerston: The Correspondence between
Queen Victoria and Her Foreign and Prime Minister, 1837-1865*
under no less than eight different Secretaries of State for the Colonies. Such being the case, it was virtually impossible that his policies would satisfy the wishes of all the Colonial Secretaries who occupied the Office in the 1850's.

Added to the problems caused by the German Legion and his reaction to the India Mutiny, Sir George faced a financial crisis after February, 1858. This problem occurred after the formation of the Derby Government. With the new Ministry, Henry Labouchere, who had been somewhat sympathetic to Sir George's policies, was replaced by Lord Stanley as Secretary of State for the Colonies. Seeking to avoid added financial responsibility for the British Treasury, Lord Stanley had little enthusiasm for Sir George's attempted policy of "moral subjugation" in Southern Africa. After he cancelled Grey's scheme for the immigration of Germans into Kaffraria, he then reduced in May, 1858, the grant for British Kaffraria from £40,000 to £20,000. The reduced appropriations came as a severe shock to Sir George as he had already put some of the money into use before he learned of the

---

33 Cory, South Africa, VI, 67. Also see Woodward, The Age of Reform, pp. 639-641. The Secretaries of State for the Colonies were: Rt. Hon. Sir George Grey, Bart., (June 10, 1854); Rt. Hon. Sidney Herbert (February 15, 1855); Lord John Russell (May 15, 1855); Sir William Molyneux (July 21, 1855); Rt. Hon. H. Labouchere (November 17, 1855); Lord Stanley (February 26, 1858); Rt. Hon. Sir E. B. Lytton (May 31, 1858); Duke of Newcastle (June 18, 1859).
reduction. This is especially true since the reduction of funds for British Kaffraria appeared at a time shortly after the country had gone through a crisis that left it in a virtual state of destitution.

Although Governor Grey was somewhat successful in his overall native policy, he was considerably less successful in his efforts to add substantially to the European population in British Kaffraria. In his determined efforts to rectify the situation there, he sometimes conflicted with the wishes of his superiors in London. Despite the fact that London suggested sending the German Legion to Kaffraria, and that Emigration authorities in London did at first attempt to send families to South Africa, Grey overstepped his authority in each case by keeping the German Legion on military pay and later by carrying on negotiations with the German firm to bring families to South Africa.

The Governor also did not help his reputation by evading instructions from Labouchere in sending the amount of troops to India as he had been ordered. Although he was

---

34 Rutherford, Grey, p. 395; also see B.S.P. (House of Commons), "Superannuation and Retired Allowances & Estimates & Civil Services for the year ending March 31, 1859," (A dispatch from Lord Stanley to Sir George Grey, May 5, 1858), 1857-58, XXXVI, 455.

35 Rutherford, Grey, pp. 395, 340-349. The reduction in funds was sorely missed because in 1856-57, a severe cattle-killing delusion among the natives in British Kaffraria left the country in a state of utter chaos, and Sir George had no emergency funds to rely on at the time.
never officially rebuked for his actions, the Parliamentary Committee did question his methods. Consequently, the sending of troops to India and his various immigration schemes indicated to London that Sir George was more influenced by local conditions than the wishes of London. This concern over local affairs became especially apparent in 1858, when the events in the Orange Free State provided Sir George with an ideal opportunity to espouse federation for the various states in South Africa.
CHAPTER IV

FACTORS LEADING TO THE FEDERATION PROPOSAL
OF NOVEMBER, 1858

Shortly after his arrival in South Africa, Governor Grey concluded that local problems demanded solutions contrary to the official British policy of non-intervention. Such a policy, he assumed, was without merit as five states in South Africa had to be interdependent on each other because of a always prevalent native threat. With separate native policies, Grey contended that nothing stopped one country from seeking a policy which could have repercussions for another in South Africa.

Grey believed that some uniformity among the states was essential for the Conventions adopted earlier had set up barriers between the various states in South Africa. As the Conventions were decided upon without thought for future expansion, boundaries remained ambiguous, and led to frequent encounters with the natives. Great Britain, however, was not concerned over the amount of territory that the Boers acquired at the expense of the natives, so long as British responsibility was not extended. Sir George felt that because of the Conventions, the British relinquished responsibility, instead of leading the colonists of both races to
assume responsibility for themselves. Eventually, he alleged, the white communities would have to abandon their isolation and enter into cooperation with each other for the future growth and well-being of South Africa. In 1857, while simultaneously faced with the problems of the Mutiny in India and the German Immigration scheme, Sir George was forced to reconsider the relationships between the various states in South Africa.

Since the Conventions at Sand River and Bloemfontein, the internal conditions within the Transvaal and the Orange Free State remained in a virtual state of turmoil. Due to their reasons for leaving British authority behind them in the 1830's, the Boers saw little need for a strong central government. As a result of their original intention, most Boers wanted only individual freedom, thus they settled in scattered outposts paying little attention to the need for collective defense. By 1855, however, it became apparent that problems in the two republics would remain, unless a strong central government could provide adequate defense against the rising native threat in the region of their settlements.¹

In the Transvaal after the Sand River Convention there did exist a central government (Volksraad); it was,  

¹De Kiewiet, Colonial Policy, p. 106.
however, not binding the the interests within the territory. After the Convention, Martthinus Wessell Pretorius dominated the internal politics of the Transvaal. After the death of his father in 1853, Martthinus headed the strongest party in the Transvaal. Reckless and lacking tact, he eventually hoped to unite the two Boer republics into a union where he assumed the role of chief executive. The first problem he had to solve was that of ending the political diversity within the Transvaal itself. Consequently in 1857, he became President and united the districts in the Transvaal, except for Lydenberg which declared itself a republic and did not join until 1860. After the unification, however, Pretorius then raised his goals and sought to adopt some form of union with the Orange Free State.

After severing British ties in 1854, the Free State was in an even more perilous predicament than its companion

\[\text{\textsuperscript{2}}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 105-106.\]


\[\text{\textsuperscript{4}}\textit{De Kiewiet, Colonial Policy}, p. 107.\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{5}}\textit{Ibid.}, also see Wiedner, \textit{Africa}, p. 155.\]
republic to the north. Since the Bloemfontein Convention, anarchy was on the verge of erupting in the Free State. This was in part due to an immediate Basuto threat on the country’s border. Nevertheless, the Free State farmers remained more interested in their individual livelihoods than in collective protection for the State. Eventually the nearness of the Basuto forced the republic into adopting a more realistic attitude.

The first President of the Free State, Josias Philippus Hoffman, owed his support to his ability to deal with the paramount Chief of the Basuto, Moshesh. After 1855, Hoffman’s successor, Jacobus Boshof, remained in the same precarious situation; apprehensive over the inability of his country to provide adequate protection for itself. From the outset, relations between the Free State and the

6S. A. P. N. B., p. 171. In 1854, Hoffman when faced with a lack of money, tried to placate the Basuto with gunpowder. His attempt failed, and subsequent protests over his actions in the Free State forced him to resign.

7Ibid., p. 261.

8Ibid., p. 36.

Basuto were poor, but by 1857, the situation became critical. Cattle thievery on the borders was rampant, and both sides were losing stock. President Boshof complained that Boshesh offered no compensation for pilfered cattle and that he made no effort to use his authority to stop the stealing.\(^\text{10}\)

Despite this uncertainty with the natives, the Free State in February 1857, faced a more immediate threat from the Transvaal. For on February 22, Pretorius approached Bloemfontein with an armed escort and informed Boshof that he was taking possession of the Free State by virtue of a grant made to his father by the Queen.\(^\text{11}\) Naturally the Free State denied the alleged claim as unfounded.

For the most part there was little sentiment for Pretorius in the Free State except for a few border malcontents who thought he could offer them more protection from the natives.\(^\text{12}\) Boshof, however, was quite concerned, and in a letter to High Commissioner Grey, he expressed his fears.\(^\text{13}\)

\(^{10}\)Ibid., II, 255-259, 260-261.

\(^{11}\)De Kiewiet, Colonial Policy, p. 103; also see Cory, South Africa, VI, 142-143.

\(^{12}\)Sayer and Theal, Records, II, 266.

\(^{13}\)Ibid., II, 266-267.

The farmers who lived near the border in the Free State were convince that the Transvaal could offer them more protection than their own government.
Casting aside a more common bond with the Transvaal, Boshof informed Sir George that the Transvaal was dealing in slave children (which was forbidden by the Sand River Convention), and that Pretorius was responsible for stirring up unrest among the natives. Fearing the strong party of the Transvaal, President Boshof concluded his letter to Grey by inquiring into the possibility of an alliance between the Cape Colony and the Orange Free State. Boshof's hope for assistance from the Cape failed to materialize, so he then mounted a force to meet Pretorius. The two republics, however, avoided a confrontation when the Transvaal forces retreated. Consequently, they signed a treaty on June 2, 1857, where each agreed to respect the independence of the other.

From Capetown, Sir George apprehensively followed the events in the Free State. Throughout his stay in South Africa the Governor had little respect for Pretorius and felt his government in the Transvaal was "incompetent, uneducated and unenlightened." In the opposite vein, Sir

14Ibid., II, 266-268.

15De Kiewiet, Colonial Policy, p. 109. When Boshof met Pretorius with a show of force, the Transvaal President had to back down because he feared that the insurgent state of Lydenberg would join the Free State.

16Rutherford, Grey, p. 408.
George continually maintained amicable relations with Boshof in the Free State. Obviously, the Governor feared a union of any type between the Free State and the Transvaal because such a union, he felt, would pose a serious threat to the British possessions in South Africa. Grey consistently maintained that the most logical union in South Africa would be between the Free State and British possessions.

The High Commissioner detested the separatism caused by the Conventions and the unambitious British policy that resulted from them. Great Britain, nonetheless, remained cautious, and sought neutrality. Consequently Labouchere warned Grey in March, 1857, that "The treaties should be maintained, not only in their letter, but also in their spirit." In the same month Sir George alleged that the confusion would remain rampant unless "these South African Colonies can be made so strong and so united in policy and action that they can support themselves against the native tribes." The problem, however, was that Grey saw the problems in South Africa from the viewpoint of local needs, while officials in London were only concerned with the strain placed upon the British economy.

---

17Throughout the Basutoland Records, many letters indicate amicable relations between the Free State and Governor Grey.


19Ibid., p. 112.

20Rutherford, Grey, p. 408.
The cattle thievery continued into 1858 and the possibility of war between the Free State and the Basuto seemed imminent. The hostilities eventually began on March 19, 1858. The Free State quickly mustered a volunteer force of approximately 1,500, but Moshesh had a force of about 10,000 armed men at his disposal. Although the Boers quickly penetrated Moshesh's domain when they saw what they were up against, the Free Staters fell back and sought some other solution.  

It was during and immediately after the Basuto War that Sir George took an active interest in the affairs of the Free State. As a matter of policy, when the War first broke out, the Governor issued a proclamation of neutrality stating that anyone in the Cape Colony giving aid to either side would be guilty of a misdemeanor. On March 30, Grey informed Boshof of the Cape's neutrality, but also rebuked the Free State President for not indicating earlier the seriousness of the problems between the Moshesh and the Free State.  

Two weeks later, Sir George candidly commented on the war to officials in London. The Governor reported that he

---


23 Ibid., March 30, 1858, II, 337-338.
felt Moshesh would eventually be defeated; his basis was that the Basuto made their own gunpowder and it was worthless. Despite Grey's prediction, both sides quickly exhausted themselves, and on April 27, Grey was asked to mediate the struggle; immediately, he urged a suspension of hostilities.

After the acceptance of the Governor's "good offices," which resulted in the suspension of hostilities, Sir George then settled upon the course which eventually brought about his downfall in South Africa. Sir George was Governor of the Cape, yet he was also High Commissioner in South Africa, and thus he felt it was his responsibility to be concerned with all of the states there.

Grey felt the situation in the Orange Free State after the War was critical. On May 20, 1858, he reported to the Colonial Office the difficulties in the Free State: farms and crops were destroyed and he felt that unless some "powerful intercession" was made in behalf of the country, the future would be bleak.

In June, 1858, Grey was again faced with the possibility of a union between the Free State and the Transvaal.
He reported to London, that if such a union took place, the Boers would enter into an all-out war against the Basuto. He contended that probably the Basuto would be defeated, but if victorious, the natives would eventually pose a threat on the Cape's border. The Governor felt that the only adequate solution was:

... a strong federal government which unites within itself all European races in South Africa can permanently maintain peace in this country, and free Great Britain from constant anxiety for the peace of her possessions here.29

A factor that undoubtedly influenced the decision of the republics in not forming a union between themselves was that Grey informed the Boer leaders that if a union united the two republics, the British Government would cancel the Conventions which were adopted as separate agreements.30

Sir George's message arrived while the discussions between the republics were going on, thus, from June onward through Grey's recall, the Free State looked more toward the Cape as a possible hope for union rather than the Transvaal.31

It was during this period in South Africa that officials in London expressed differences of opinion over

28Ibid., II, 396.
29Ibid.
30Rutherford, Grey, p. 411.
31Ibid.
the methods used by Grey, Lord Stanley had always been unsympathetic to Grey's proposals. As Colonial Secretary, he disliked the Governor's handling of the German Legion and the German immigration scheme. Also, it was at this time that Parliament found it necessary to investigate Grey's sending of troops to India during the Mutiny. The reduction of funds for British Kaffraria was the last straw for Grey and on June 23, 1858, he candidly inquired whether or not the Secretary of State for the Colonies wanted him to resign his post as Governor and High Commissioner in South Africa:

I simply believe, in so far as your Lordship is concerned, that if you thought it would be for the advantage of the public service that I should vacate my office, you would, in a very straightforward, although courteous manner tell me so. 32

Continuing a month later in the same vein, Sir George alleged that there was a "feeling of personal ill-will" held toward him by some officials in the Colonial Office, and that Her Majesty's Government was constantly undermining his position by placing difficulties in his path. 33

It seems as though London failed to take his inquiry of June 23 seriously, so Grey may have taken no action as a vote of confidence. He then set out, while the negotiations between Boshof and Moshesh were going on, to end the separatism that existed in South Africa.

32 Ibid., June 23, 1858, (Grey to the Colonial Office), p. 398.

33 Ibid., July 25, 1858, (Grey to the Colonial Office), p. 399.
As early as December 1856, Sir George had advocated economic and political federation of the various states in South Africa, but without success. The events in the republics after 1857, however, afforded him an opportunity again to pursue that policy which was contrary to the official British position in South Africa. When he openly advocated federation with the Free State, his greatest failing was that he insistently pursued a policy which was in absolute disobedience of instructions from the Colonial Office.

Within the Governor's act of disobedience, however, a curious set of circumstances created an aura of misunderstanding and confusion between London's directives and Sir George's actions in South Africa. Obviously an apparent problem for Grey was the constant turnover in the Colonial Office. For example, although Lord Stanley remained continually deaf to the Governor's proposals, Grey's major differences were with Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, the romantic novelist, who succeeded Stanley in the Derby Government on May 31, 1858.

Because of both personal and political problems, Lytton at first refused an invitation to join Derby and

---

34 Ibid., p. 406.

Disraeli, but later changed his mind and accepted the second invitation to join the Government. His sojourn at the Colonial Office was less than successful. At the time of his appointment, he was virtually deaf; and as a result he seldom took part in Parliamentary debate. Lytton also was constantly on edge because of personal problems. While Secretary of State for the Colonies, he offered little practical knowledge to the post, and though not indifferent to colonial problems, he was uninformed, especially concerning such unglamorous possessions as those in South Africa. Immediately after Lytton accepted the post, he and Sir George had their misunderstandings. After the Governor mediated the struggle between the Free State and the Basuto, the Secretary of State questioned Grey's methods and urged that the Governor be the subject of a "very candid and protracted study."


Blake contends that at first Lytton did not want to face an election, but he finally ran unopposed. His wife caused him the most problems during the election by constantly accusing him of various infidelities.

Ibid.

Rutherford, Grey, p. 415.

Lytton made the claim that Grey's actions should be studied on August 15, 1858. Also see Theal, Records, II, 406. But in July, the Secretary for the Colonies informed Grey that the mediation efforts he was taking met entirely with the approval of the Colonial Office.
Due to Lytton's poor health while Colonial Secretary, much of the daily work in the Office was carried out by the Under-Secretary, Lord Carnarvon.  

Though Sir George had never concealed the fact that he believed some type of federation was the only solution for problems in South Africa, he did not actively pursue such a policy until the summer of 1858. At that time the events of the past eighteen months in the two republics illustrated to Grey the necessity for federation. The Governor hoped for a union, not with the Transvaal, but with the Free State and British possessions in South Africa.

After the disruptions caused by the Basuto war, the Free State hoped for cooperation with the Cape Colony. In late June, Free State officials announced that they tried their best to establish order and administer laws within the country, but it was virtually impossible because native and boundary disputes had been the source of constant trouble.


By December, 1858, Lytton was too ill to carry out his duties as Secretary of State for the Colonies, and most of the work was done by the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, Lord Carnarvon. See the B.N.P., "Herbert, Henry Howard Molyneaux, Fourth Earl of Carnarvon," by Sidney Lee, IX, 646-652; also see, S.A.D.M.B., p. 59.

40 B.N.P., "Copies or Extracts of all Correspondence which has taken place between the Colonial Office and Governor Sir Grey respecting his Recall from the Cape of Good Hope, and his subsequent Reappointment to the Government of that Colony." 1860, XIV, 5-6. The enclosures from the Free State were sent to London on July 5, 1858. Also see Arthur Percival Newton,
The message continued that "unless there was some type of alliance with the Cape Colony, the Orange Free State would never enjoy the blessings of peace and prosperity." The leaders of the Free State hoped to retain their assembly and the use of the Dutch language, but they clearly indicated that they were unable to carry on a "respectable" government, and, they felt that they could do so if under the guidance and protection of the British Government.

Once the Free State took the initiative, Sir George reported the situation to his superiors in London. Along with the tentative proposal from the Free State, Grey informed London of the "probability" that the Free State would be agreeable to a federal form of government. He also alleged that if a union between the Orange Free State and the Cape Colony was proposed, the Cape Parliament would probably approve such a proposal.

Although it was unknown to Sir George at the time, Lytton had replaced Stanley and the new Colonial Secretary


41 B. P. 1860, XLV, 5-6.
42 Ibid., 1860, XLV, 6.
43 Ibid., 1860, XLV, 5.
44 Ibid.
was somewhat in the dark as to what Governor Grey's intentions actually were. So, Lytton sought out Grey's view on federation in South Africa.\(^{45}\) The Colonial Secretary wanted to know Sir George's beliefs on such a sensitive subject.\(^{46}\) Lytton realized that any scheme for federation would be complicated and confusing, so he asked Sir George whether the Cape, Natal, the Orange Free State, and Kaffaria would be included in such a plan.\(^{46}\) Lytton concluded the dispatch by warning Sir George that there should be no "meddling" into the internal affairs of the republics until instructions could be forwarded from London.\(^{47}\)

Despite the assertion from London that there should be no meddling in the Orange Free State, it is speculation just what Sir George thought of Lytton's inquiry. The Governor then prepared his reply to Lytton and in it, he urged a complete reversal of British policy which subsequently led to his recall from South Africa.

\(^{45}\) Ibid., (Lytton to Grey, September 6, 1858), 1860, XLV, 35.

\(^{46}\) Ibid.

\(^{47}\) Ibid.
CHAPTER V

THE PLAN FOR FEDERATION, AND THE RECALL OF GREY

Sir George Grey was convinced that some revision in British South Africa policy was needed. Without changes in the policy, the Governor felt the future of South Africa would be gloomy. But by the fall of 1858, it was increasingly evident that Grey's proposed solution differed considerably from those held by his superiors in London. Regarding federation, the Colonial Secretary, S. B. Lytton thought only in terms of the British possessions in South Africa, while Sir George felt any plan, if it was to be effective, had to include the Orange Free State. Due to conflicting viewpoints when Lytton asked Sir George for his opinions concerning federation of September 6, 1858, the Governor advocated a plan which amounted to a complete reversal of British policy since the adoptions of the Conventions of Sand River and Bloemfontein.1

In essence, Grey proposed that the Orange Free State, if willing, join into a union with the British possessions in South Africa. In addition, he was convinced that such a plan, if enacted, would ultimately lead to the Transvaal

1B.S.F., (Grey to Lytton, November 19, 1858), 1860, XLV, 8-14; also see, Bell and Morrell, Documenta, pp. 181-191.
joining for economic reasons. Such a policy Grey felt, would benefit all segments of society in South Africa.²

The Colonial Office, however, hoping to avoid additional cost and responsibilities, indicated a preference for the continuation of the policy of non-involvement.

Due to the differences with officials in London, a clash between Grey and the Colonial Office seemed inevitable. Such a clash erupted over the federation dispatch of November 19, 1858. Espousing federation as a cure-all to many of the maladies existing in South Africa, Sir George castigated the convention system and the policies arrived at by his predecessors. In a blunt manner, Sir George stated that the Conventions were arrived at in a haphazard manner and were responsible for creating ambiguous boundaries with little thought to the wishes of the inhabitants. He was convinced that the Conventions had: "sown the seeds of many future disagreements."³ Essentially, Sir George was exposing what he considered past errors made by his predecessors in South Africa, and because he expressed his opinions in such a tactless, argumentative manner, it was not surprising that the Colonial Office was cool to his proposals from the start.

²Rutherford, Grey, pp. 413-420.

³Bell and Morrell, Documents, pp. 182-183.
Theoretically, Grey had a strong argument, yet, his whole premise for federation rested on the shaky assumption that within a union, the various states of South Africa could collectively agree with each other, where, as separate states there was only confusion and disagreement. The Governor pointed out to Lytton that within a federal system it would be unlikely that the natives would risk waging war, if the European states in South Africa were unified as a common force. But as a safeguard, Sir George indicated that: "No war could be entered upon but with the general consent of all the states."\(^4\)

The Governor also emphasized that the economic arrangements decided upon after the Conventions were a major cause of jealousy and dissatisfaction between the British possessions and the rest of South Africa. Grey felt that the source of the jealousy was because:

\[\ldots\text{all the duties of customs levied at the ports of Simon's Bay, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, and East London, were placed under the control of the legislature of the Cape of Good Hope, for the sole benefit of that single Colony}; \ldots\] \(^5\)

Here again, Grey settled upon the shortcomings of the Conventions. In the main, he was correct as it had been a determining factor of British policy since the Great Trek to

\(^4\)Ibid., p. 187.
\(^5\)Ibid., p. 184.
isolate the Boer States, and separate them from any outlet to the sea. So, after the Conventions, the two rebel republics were virtually landlocked.5

Hoping to convince Lytton to adopt his viewpoint concerning federation, Grey indicated that if the separatism continued, the British possessions in South Africa faced a difficult and unprosperous future. He pointed out that although Natal was fertile, because of its size and location, its future was definitely limited.7 Likewise, the Colony at the Cape of Good Hope, he concluded, was probably the least fertile area in South Africa, and its population was gradually, but constantly moving north into the newer states.3 Essentially, Grey felt that the countries beyond the Orange River were the most fertile and productive in South Africa. With such being the case, Grey believed that the Cape and Natal would be restricted in the future, while the two Boer republics would be capable of expanding and carrying on a dense population.9

---


Immediately after the Conventions there was a complete absence of money economies in both republics. Also see, Nicholas Mansergh, The Commonwealth Experience (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1969), p. 67. With no outlet to the sea, the British figured that there would be less chance of foreign involvement.

7Bell and Morrell, Documents, p. 134.
8Ibid., pp. 134-135.
9Ibid.
He informed Lytton that the New Zealand Constitution would serve as an excellent example for the proposed system of government in South Africa. Continuing the dispatch to Lytton, Grey stated:

This union of federated states would possess a general Government administered by a Governor, representing and appointed by Her Majesty, assisted by a Legislature chosen by the people of several states, which would... decide points of general interest... general revenues... general safety.

Assuming that eventually the states in South Africa would lessen their ties to the British Crown, Grey hoped to inaugurate a form of government which would maintain the interests of the British Crown, but also allow the union to make decisions which would affect its own future.

Throughout the period that Grey urged federation, he remained firmly convinced that a union which included only the British possessions in South Africa would be meaningless. The Governor was of the opinion that if the Colony at the Cape and Natal joined a union, it was essential that the Orange Free State should be also included; or the British possessions would be separated by "large intervening tracts of country occupied by another nation.""
Despite official British persistence for non-intervention in South Africa, Grey felt that unless Great Britain firmly committed herself to a positive course of action in the future, South Africa would be continually plagued by troublesome internal problems. Elaborating on his doubts about the future of the British in South Africa to Lytton, Grey stated that:

It is also hardly possible to keep wishing, that if ever England should be compelled to retire from this country, and throw its inhabitants entirely on their own resources, it should leave them in such a state that they could provide, at least tolerably, for their own safety, and ultimately attain to prosperity and greatness; so that blessings might follow the mother country as she withdrew, and it might hereafter be admitted that her rule had been beneficial and farreaching. But if she is ever forced to retire from this country whilst South Africa is divided as it now is, a long period of anarchy, confusion, and trouble must prevail, and, it is to be feared, against Great Britain, which forced such difficulties upon the people here, then those feelings of gratitude which it would be so desirable to see entertained.

Grey's strongly worded dispatch did not reach London until late December, 1858, and even before he received a reply from Lytton, Carnarvon, the Under-Secretary for Colonial Affairs dismissed the plan on January 7, 1859, as being impractical. Despite Grey's arguments, Carnarvon was

---

13 Ibid., p. 190.
was convinced that there should be no resumption of added responsibilities in regard to the Boer republics.  

The Under-Secretary contended that Governor Grey in his November 19 dispatch confined his explanation of federation almost entirely to the Dutch states in South Africa when he should have concerned himself with the British possessions there. Casting aside any future benefits that Grey's plan envisioned, Carnarvon alleged that no responsible Minister of the Crown could introduce such a vague proposition to Parliament. More intune with British politics than Grey, Carnarvon suspected that English public opinion would not favor a policy which advocated the resumption of sovereignty over the Orange River area after it had proved to be so troublesome in the past.

Even though Grey stressed the point that a union would provide stronger protective measures against the

---

14Ibid., Minutes of Carnarvon on Sir George Grey's dispatch of November 19, 1853., p. 191-194.  
Also see Rees, Sir George Grey, II, 289. According to Rees, Sir George later in life felt that Carnarvon was most responsible for his recall. For at the time of the recall, the twenty-eight year old Carnarvon assumed a great share of responsibility at the Colonial Office because Lytton was ill so often. The author claims that Carnarvon was quite prejudiced against Grey, although there is no real evidence to support this.  
15Sir George Placed much more significance on the Orange Free State, rather than the Transvaal.  
16Bell and Morrell, Documents, pp. 191-192.  
17Ibid., p. 193.
natives thus reducing the number of British regulars needed in South Africa, Carnarvon was convinced that even in a union, the various states in South Africa would refuse to cooperate with each other. He questioned the logic behind the proposal, asking: "How practically are colonies or states so unequal in size, population, development, natural resources to be federated?"18 Essentially, the Under-Secretary's whole point was, he did not believe that the Cape would join a federation consisting of neighbors weaker and poorer than it was.

Partly because of the stormy relationship between Grey and Carnarvon in the past, but also due to Sir George's surly attitude toward the Colonial Office, Carnarvon casually dismissed the federation proposal as an attempt at creating a "Colonial Utopia."19 For practical purposes, Grey should have been aware of Carnarvon's hostility toward the plan, and the unfavorable climate in London, but such was not the case. Instead, in the period of time that lapsed between November 19, 1858 and February 11, 1859, (Lytton's reply to Grey's federation dispatch) Sir George continued to pursue his federation proposal without London's knowledge of or consent for the proposal.

18Ibid.
19Ibid., p. 194.
Since the Basuto War, the Free State leaders considered the possibility of some type of federation with the British possessions. So, on December 5, 1858, the Free State indicated they would be in favor of such a measure. Grey then sent the statement to London on December 22, 1858. After his dispatch to London, however, Grey received a more positive indication passed by the Free State Raad (council) to form some type of union with the Cape Colony which he then sent to London on January 13, 1859. It should be pointed out, however, that President Boshof's pro-British party could only get the resolution to approach Grey about federation through the Raad by one vote.

During the maneuvering in South Africa, Grey was not about to let such an opportunity for federation slip away. So, still without an answer to his November 19 dispatch, Sir George continued to negotiate with the Free State. Although, he did ask the Colonial Office for "some expression" as to what course of action he was to follow, his concern was a little belated. For Lytton would not receive the January 13 dispatch in time. Consequently, when it did arrive in London, Lytton found out that Sir George had taken the initiative, and was to go before the next

---

20 E.S.P., (Grey to Lytton, December 22, 1858), 1860, XLV, 14.

21 Ibid., (Grey to Lytton, January 13, 1859), 1860, XLV, 15. This did not arrive in London until February 28, 1859.
session of the Cape Parliament and suggest the possibility of federation with the Orange Free State.22

Although Sir George may have suspected that his federation proposal would receive hostile criticism in London, he never really had a definite indication of it until Lytton's February 11 dispatch. In it, the Colonial Secretary acknowledged Grey's dispatches of November 19 and December 22, but not the dispatch of January 13, 1859. For it had not yet arrived in London. In essence, Lytton bluntly informed Sir George that: "Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to depart from the settled policies of their predecessors by advising the resumption of British sovereignty in any shape over the Orange Free State."23 The directness of the dispatch should have discouraged Grey in his attempt for federation, yet he continued, despite the ominous concern expressed by the Colonial Office in London.

Nonetheless, while Grey was continuing his arrangements in South Africa, Lytton sent him another dispatch on March 5, 1859, acknowledging his dispatch of January 13, 1859. In it, Lytton's misgivings were confirmed and he expressed "surprise" that Sir George was going before the

22 Ibid., 1860, XLV, 16.
23 Ibid., (Lytton to Grey, February 11, 1859), 1860, XLV, 30; also see, Newton, Select Documents, pp. 7-8.
Cape Parliament to espouse federation. The Colonial Secretary wondered why Grey ignored the November 5, 1859 dispatch from London which stated: "you can say nothing about federation without previous instructions from Her Majesty's Government."24 Grey, however, did not receive London's reiteration on time.25 For, on March 16, 1859, Sir George did go before the Cape Parliament.26 In what was probably the peak of his career in South Africa, Grey suggested, and offered to support a scheme for federation. Attempting to persuade the Cape Parliament, Grey urged:

You would in my belief confer a lasting benefit upon Great Britain, and upon the inhabitants of the country, if you succeed in devising some form of federal union.27

He pointed out to the Parliament that in his estimation, if such a plan was agreed upon and then enacted, South Africa would be less susceptible to native wars. Surprisingly, Grey also indicated that within such a union, revenue would

24 Newton, Select Documents, p. 3; also see B.S.P., (Lytton to Grey, March 5, 1859), 1860, XLV, 38.

25 Newton, Select Documents, p. 3; also see B.S.P., (Lytton to Grey, March 5, 1859), 1860, XLV, 38.

26 Rutherford, Grey, p. 421.

27 B.S.P., Grey sent a copy of the speech he presented before the Cape Parliament to Lytton in London on March 21, 1859, XLV, 1860, 17-20.
be more evenly distributed, and the economic future of South Africa would probably be less 'uncertain and gloomy.' 28

After Grey's appearance before the Cape Parliament, his problems accumulated. Obviously, the Cape Legislature shared little of the Governor's enthusiasm. Even though the plan had its good points, the Cape was not about to share its revenue with other states and contribute to the defense of areas which offered no immediate threat to the Cape. As a result, there was little popular sentiment at the Cape Colony to join (and support) the weaker states in South Africa.

Even in the Orange Free State, support for federation wavered after an initial burst of enthusiasm for the measure. After the Boshof War had ended, President Boshof retired and the pro-British party in the Orange Free State lost a great deal of its strength; consequently Grey's proposal for federation became virtually meaningless. Moreover, as the British rejection of the scheme for federation became known in South Africa, the Free Staters resented the official British dissatisfaction over the scheme. Less important, but probably of some significance was the fact that London's denunciation of the scheme placed Sir George in the delicate and unpleasant situation of having to repudiate the plan

28 ibid., XLV, 1860, 20.
which he so openly advocated. Consequently, the Free State still needing protection, then turned its attention away from the Cape Colony to the Transvaal.

By April, 1859, the idea of federation in South Africa was virtually non-existent, and all that was left for Sir George to do, was to answer the attacks of his critics. In his first attempt to vindicate his policies, Grey informed Lytton that it was always his first wish to carry out the Queen's policies. Grey did, however, indicate to Lytton, that the Conventions adopted before his arrival were against all that he stood for as a Colonial Governor. Hoping to justify his past actions, Grey pointed out that there was no way of knowing the sentiment of the Cape Parliament unless he went before it to suggest and support federation.

Grey's justification, proved to be less than satisfactory to his superiors in London. Carnarvon, especially had been and remained of the opinion that it was virtually impossible to have confidence in the administration of Sir George Grey. It should be pointed out, however, that

---

29 Rutherford, Grey, pp. 421-422.

30 B.B.P., (Lytton to Grey, June 4, 1859, XLV, 1860, 40.

31 Ibid.

32 Rutherford, Grey, p. 422.
despite all of the criticism leveled against him, Grey had actually committed the British Government to nothing definite in South Africa. But because the Governor took the federation proposal before the Cape Parliament, London decided to recall him for disobeying instructions.

Finding Grey's justification in April, weak, Lytton informed him on June 4, 1859 that his "continuance in the administration of the Government of the Cape can no longer be of service to public interests." Because of Grey's admirable work while Governor and High Commissioner, Lytton regretted the decision. He felt, however, that such drastic action was necessary, because, by Grey's continued pursuit of federation, the British Government was placed in a position of extreme embarrassment. Lytton, reminded Grey that he had overstepped his authority, not only by his federation proposal, but also because of his schemes for German immigration and the unsound financial arrangements he had initiated in British Kaffraria. Lytton made the rather belated claim, that the Colonial Office was left "in ignorance" by Grey's handling of the German settlers. By the scope of his accusations, it seems that the Colonial

33 *B.S.F.* (Lytton to Grey, June 4, 1859), 1860, XLV, 40.

Secretary was searching for past faults in order to justify the recall of Grey. Lytton, however, did make it perfectly clear to Sir George that the Colonial Office could no longer overlook his independent attitude. Furthermore, he ascertained that if Sir George would have consulted the Colonial Office a bit more regularly, problems would not have reached the point where recall was the only available solution. 35

Due then to Grey's independent attitude and his past experience throughout the Empire, it was only natural that he questioned the decision from London. Elaborating on his April 19, 1859 dispatch, Grey made a genuine attempt to justify himself when he acknowledged Lytton's June 4 dispatch on July 20, 1859. Having no further need to be tactful, Grey alleged that his removal from office was based on "erroneous" information. 36 He was convinced that there was a clique in the Colonial Office that was personally hostile to him. Also, Grey blamed part of the difficulties that he faced on the fact that there was such a continual turnover in the Colonial Office during his tenure in South Africa. He felt that it would have been virtually impossible to satisfy all the various Secretaries of State. Specifically,

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid., (Grey to Lytton, July 20, 1859), 1860, XLV, 22.
Sir George contended that Lytton should have been more acquainted with the proposed federation scheme in South Africa and that the Colonial Secretary was often less than specific in many of his dispatches. Because of Lytton's vagueness, Grey had considerable doubt concerning what the actual beliefs of the Colonial Secretary were on the subject of federation. Refering to Lytton's hazy views on the subject, Grey stated after having been recalled:

You have now formed strong views upon these subjects. Had you formed them at the time I begged your instructions . . . I should not have been placed in the unpleasant situation I now occupy.57

Though not directly accusing the Colonial Secretary of being uninformed about the situation in South Africa, Grey felt that Lytton's indecisiveness was responsible for the untenable position which he found himself in after going before the Cape Parliament. Ironically, Sir George felt Lytton was constantly evasive. Undoubtedly, this was a fault Grey was guilty of throughout his career. It was not astonishing then that both Grey and Lytton had a great deal of difficulty communicating with each other.

Grey, however, did not concur with the procedure of a distant superior in London dictating policy to him while not really knowing or understanding the local situation. Consequently, Grey's comments to Lytton reached utter

57Ibid., 1860, XLV, 24.
sarcasm when he stated on July 20:

Excuse me for saying so, but mistakes may occur in despatches from a distant superior, or they may not always be so easy to understand, even if they are emanating from one of our most skillful writers. 38

Seemingly attempting to vindicate his actions more to posterity than to the Colonial Office, Grey explained his position involving the German Legion, the revenue for British Kaffraria and the deportation of troops to India during the Mutiny. In each case, Grey felt that the local circumstances in South Africa dictated the policy which he had to follow. 39 In essence, however, such an argument was spurious to officials in London who were only concerned with the reduction of expenses and responsibility in South Africa. Also, a major gulf that separated Grey from the Colonial Office's viewpoint was the fact that while in South Africa, he was naturally concerned with the local events, while London obviously considered the British possessions in South Africa as only a small link in the Empire. With such a viewpoint, Grey looked upon himself not only as an active Governor, but also an active High Commissioner, who had a responsibility to all of South Africa. He was convinced that as a British Governor, he must either overstep

38 Ibid., 1860, XLV, 26.
his authority when local conditions demanded immediate action, or be cautious and sometimes neglect his duties. Continuing to point out the problems faced by British representatives in remote parts of the world, Grey asked:

... can a man on a distant and exposed frontier surrounded by difficulties ... be fairly judged of in aspect to the amount of responsibility he assumes by those who, in the quiet distant offices of London know nothing of the anxieties or nature of the difficulties he had to encounter.

After his recall, while awaiting a successor to be named in his place, Grey again on July 31, attempted to answer the charges brought against him by the Colonial Office. Lamenting his censure, Sir George pointed out to Lytton that in all probability, federation was lost forever to South Africa. The Governor then indicated that he had avoided a costly native war, but most of all, he took issue with all of the criticism that was leveled against the economic policies he had advocated while in South Africa. Grey maintained that as Governor, sometimes unforeseen events unexpectedly appeared which demanded emergency solutions that could not wait for Colonial Office.

---

40 Ibid., 1860, XLV, 29.
41 Ibid., 1860, XIV, 30.
42 B.S.P., Copies of further Papers with reference to the Recall of Governor Sir George Grey from the Cape of Good Hope; that is to say, all Despatches from Sir George Grey, not already printed, bearing dates subsequent to the 19th day of July, 1859, and containing any defense of his Acts as Governor, or explanation of his policy upon the subject contained in the letter of Recall. (Grey to Lytton, July 31, 1859), 1860, XLV, 51-53.
As the news of Grey's recall and censure became known throughout South Africa, the prevalent opinion was that the Governor (or High Commissioner) was unfairly treated by officials in London. For the most part, the policies of Sir George were popular, especially since he had avoided a major native war. According to George Theal, the feeling throughout South Africa went beyond just mere regret, and was instead one of consternation. Also, because of Grey's enlightened native policies, various tribes throughout the British possessions in South Africa sent petitions to Queen Victoria requesting that Governor Grey be allowed to remain at his post there. In the estimate of the British Government, however, Grey's disobedience of specific instructions far outweighed any contributions he made while serving as the representative of the Crown in South Africa.

Finally, on August 21, 1859, Grey sailed from Cape-town to England. Unknown to him at the time of his departure, E. B. Lytton had been replaced by the Duke of Newcastle as Colonial Secretary. Shortly thereafter,

---

43 Theal, *South Africa*, VI, 185.

44 B.S.P., XLV, 1860, 30-32.

45 Sutherland, *Grey*, pp. 425-426. Grey was replaced as Governor by Major-General Wynyard.
Newcastle rescinded Grey's recall, so that when Grey arrived in London, he found that he could return to his post in South Africa. 46

As Colonial Secretary, the Duke of Newcastle admired the work that Grey had accomplished while Governor of the Cape and High Commissioner for South Africa. But, in order to be reinstated as Governor, Sir George had to compromise. Like Lytton, Newcastle was opposed to Grey's federation scheme. So, before Grey returned to his post in South Africa, he agreed not to revive the argument for federation. 47 As a result, Grey accepted Newcastle's terms, sailed from England and arrived at Simon's Bay on July 4, 1860. 48

After the collapse of his federation proposal, and his subsequent recall, Grey's second tour of duty in South Africa served only as an interim until he became Governor of New Zealand again in October, 1861. Possibly, Grey felt that he could still do some good in South Africa, but in all probability, he accepted the compromised position out

---

46 Ibid., p. 427. According to Rutherford, Sir George's reinstatement dispatch was written before the arrival in London of Grey's July 20 dispatch.

47 B.S.P. (Newcastle to Grey, August 4, 1859), 1860, XLIV, 42.

48 Rutherford, Grey, pp. 427-428. Grey's problems did not cease with his reinstatement, for on the trip back to South Africa, his wife committed what he considered an impropriety. They then separated, not to be reunited until 37 years later.

49 Rees, Sir George Grey, II, 300.
of duty to the Crown and an indebtedness to Newcastle. In an awkward predicament, Grey indicated his problem to Newcastle:

Had I consulted my personal feelings, I should have shrunk from entering upon it; but from a sense of duty to the Queen, to your Grace... I am prepared to encounter all difficulties.

Because of the difficulties he had faced in his first tour of duty in South Africa, he was much less ambitious in the second. Grey continued trying to improve the welfare of the native, but no longer was he obstreperous in trying to achieve his goals. In Grey's estimation, probably the highlight of his second stay as Governor, was the visit to South Africa of Queen Victoria's son, Prince Alfred.  

Even though Grey was reinstated as Governor, he undoubtedly felt that his usefulness to South Africa and the Crown ended with Lytton's dispatch of June 4, 1859. For after that his service to the Crown was limited and he was placed in the unfortunate position of having his authority severely restricted.

---

50Ibid., II, 299.

51Ibid., II, 300-302.

According to Rees, while in London, the Queen received Sir George and informed him that she was in favor of his federation proposal. It was then that Sir George made the arrangements for Prince Alfred to visit South Africa.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

During Grey's Governorship in South Africa, he displayed statesmanlike vision, but also intolerance and tactlessness toward his superiors in London. For these reasons, his tour of duty is marked by failure as well as success. William Pember Reeves seems to have summed up his service to the Crown when he said of Grey's methods: "The mark was often missed, but the aim was high." The problems stem from the fact that over the years, the Governor acquired an independent attitude, and assumed he was above the reproach of his superiors in London. Consequently, he often failed to confide in them. It was not totally surprising then that Grey was censured and recalled after confronting the Colonial Office with his views regarding federation for South Africa. For as Governor, he openly advocated and supported a plan which was contrary to specific instructions, and which placed London in an awkward and embarrassing position. In addition to the lack of positive qualities to recommend it, Grey's federation proposal in

\[1\text{D. N. E.,} "\text{Sir George Grey," by William Pember Reeves, XXII, 786.}\]
the eyes of London encompassed too many risks. Consequently, for E. B. Lytton and Lord Carnarvon, both of whom were inclined to dislike Grey, the federation dispatch provided an excellent reason to recall the Governor.

In South Africa, the course of events since 1815 painfully reminded officials in London of the problems they would face if Great Britain reassumed responsibility, limited or otherwise, over the Orange Free State. For the Colonial Office, any resumption of a pre-1854 policy in the Orange Free State involved considerable risk, especially after 1857 when the Basuto War had left the Free State on the verge of anarchy. With unfavorable internal conditions in the Free State, it became readily apparent to the British that within Grey's proposal of federation, Great Britain would again become entangled in the internal affairs of the Boers. Furthermore, as it was evident that the Free Staters could not handle their own affairs, it would have been presumptuous for the British to expect the Boers to deal fairly with the natives on the borders of the Free State.

Despite the facts that Grey's proposal would have provided for collectively at least; a stronger defense, better communications, and possibly more cooperation among the various states in South Africa; it was extremely questionable at the time whether localism would have allowed federation much chance for success. For localism in South Africa since the Great Trek instilled in the Boers an
independent attitude which they probably would have been extremely reluctant to surrender to the British, despite President Boshof's willingness to do so in 1858.

Undoubtedly, the Governor's failure to convince the Cape Parliament of the merits of federation was a significant reason for the rejection of the proposal. At the time, it was not a great surprise that the Cape Parliament rejected federation, considering that in the 1850's the Cape Colony did enjoy a state of relative prosperity. With such the case, it was unlikely that the Cape wanted to associate in a union with the weaker and less financially stable states of South Africa. Furthermore, except for a minor threat on her eastern border, the Cape Colony in 1858 did not face a serious native problem. As a result the Cape Parliament was unenthusiastic about joining a union with Natal, the Orange Free State and British Kaffraria; all of whom had serious native problems, and were unable to adequately defend themselves.

In addition to the rejection of the federation scheme by the Cape Parliament and the other difficulties in South Africa, Sir George's major failure was his inability to convince officials in London of accepting federation. An essential difference was that Sir George only saw problems from a local viewpoint, while officials in London had to be concerned with a much larger picture. In Grey's case, local
priorities dictated the course of action he felt he had to take. London, on the other hand, saw South Africa as only one of many British possessions in the world at the time. Furthermore, Sir George's convictions on federation for South Africa matured at a time when the British Government was seeking to reduce their responsibilities in that part of the world. For during the time Grey spent in South Africa, Great Britain was preoccupied with larger issues: the Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny and a war in China. Consequently, it was unlikely that the British would abandon the Bloemfontein Convention to again become involved in the internal affairs of the Boers. Moreover, the British were undoubtedly aware of the fact that if any of the states within Grey's proposed federation scheme followed an abusive native policy, it would be Great Britain's responsibility to step in and settle the problems.

In part, London was cool to Grey's proposal because he espoused it in such an argumentative manner. Grey's difficulties with his London superiors, however, cannot be solely attributed to the federation dispatch in November, 1858, because the majority of policies that Sir George advocated while Governor of the Cape and High Commissioner for South Africa were unpopular with officials in London. For during the years he spent in South Africa, Grey incurred the wrath of the various Colonial Secretaries, the Exchequer and War
Office over his handling of the German Legion and German immigration schemes, the deportation of troops to India during the Mutiny, and his handling of the finances for British Kaffraria. Although it is only speculation, it seems that probably the federation scheme alone would not have been enough to recall Sir George, but in the estimation of London, the federation dispatch in November, 1858 was the culmination of a long series of differences which resulted in Grey's superiors in London losing confidence and patience in him because of his obstreperous tactics.

Even though the policies Grey advocated were unpopular, his independent attitude while in South Africa cannot be underestimated. Hardly a modest person, Sir George always had supreme confidence in his own abilities and because of his limited successes in the past and his wide experience in service to the Crown, he relied greatly on his ability to persuade others to accept his viewpoint. Also, it was not beyond Grey to stretch the truth a little in order to insure his own position. Sir George, it seems, had an inherent tendency to aggravate almost all those superiors he came in contact with during his career in the Colonial service. Speaking of his character and the tactics that he employed, William Pember Reeves said of Grey:

"Naturally fond of devious ways and unexplained moves, he learned to keep his own counsel and to
mask his intentions. He was never frank; he never even seemed frank. Though wilful and quarrelsome, he kept guard over his tongue, but, pen in hand, became an evasive, obstinate controversialist with a coldly-used power of exasperation.²

Undoubtedly, one of Grey's major errors was that he placed too much emphasis on personal diplomacy in South Africa. Because he had limited success with it in South Australia and New Zealand, he relied on the same practice in South Africa. The situation there, however, was considerably different because of the larger land area and more diverse groups of people. For example, Grey constantly traveled the limits of South Australia and New Zealand, but in South Africa he visited Natal only once, the Basuto Border twice, made a few trips to the Eastern frontier and he was never in the Transvaal.³ This being the case, he was unable to influence local events as he wanted to in South Africa. Consequently, the negation of Grey's personal diplomacy coupled with his inability to convince either London or the Cape Parliament of the merits of federation, doomed the proposal to failure.

Even though the possibility of federation as Grey envisioned it offered some natural advantages, it remains


questionable whether the scheme would have been workable or even practical. For essentially, there was no guarantee that cooperation among the various states in South Africa would suddenly appear in a union. Moreover, as all of the states in South Africa except the Cape Colony were weak, defenseless, and insolvent, Grey had falsely assumed that out of a sum of weaknesses, strength would emerge. Obviously the British government did not share Grey's optimism.

It is interesting to note that from a local viewpoint, Grey's federation proposal did appear at an opportune time; and had Grey proposed it in a less argumentative manner, and the British Government been willing to follow-up on it immediately, the final result could have been considerably different. It was, however, a lost opportunity that the British Government could never recover. For ironically, sixteen years later, Lord Carnarvon, then serving as Secretary of State for the Colonies in Disraeli's 1874 Ministry, sought to unify the various states in South Africa. But by then it was too late, for the Boer republics had grown stronger and more prosperous, and as a result they rejected outright Carnarvon's proposal. 4

Although Sir George Grey was censured and recalled by the British Government, the people of South Africa

---

considered him to be one of the ablest British colonial officials to have served there. Unfortunately, however, Grey's tour of duty there has been primarily linked to his problems with Colonial officials and subsequent recall. Because of this, much less emphasis has been placed on the facts that as the first non-military Governor of the Cape Colony; he avoided a costly Kaffir War (something his predecessors were unable to do), contributed greatly to the growth of the Cape Colony, and did much to improve the lot of the natives throughout South Africa.

Irregardless of the contributions he made, Grey's tour of duty in South Africa marked the peak of his career in the colonial service. For after his recall from South Africa, London officials were naturally cognizant of his past record, and as a result, his actions were more clearly watched after he left South Africa.

In a final estimate, Sir George never really wavered in his loyalty to the Crown. His problem, however, was that he could not reconcile the conflict of deciding which course of action to follow: the wishes of his superiors in London, or the demands placed upon him by local situations. As a result, he was constantly faced with conflicting priorities. The federation proposal was the ideal example. For London it meant immediate risk, while Grey felt that if the plan could have been initiated, eventually it would have
benefited both the Imperial Government and South Africa as a whole. But because of inappropriate timing and conflicting circumstances, his dream for a unified South Africa under the guidance of the British Crown was never realized.
APPENDIX A

A SHORT SKETCH OF SIR GEORGE GREY'S LIFE*

Sir George Grey's career before his tour of duty in South Africa was widely diversified. Before 1854, Grey served in the military, as a colonist, explorer, and as a colonial administrator. Because of his background and varied experiences, Grey established a reputation rivaled by only a few men representing the British Crown overseas.

George Grey was born at Lisbon, Portugal, on April 14, 1812; two weeks after his father was killed at Badajoz. After spending his early years in London, it was only natural that Grey enter his father's profession, so he enrolled at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst in 1826, and remained there until 1830. At that time, Grey received his commission, and then served in Ireland with the 33rd Foot Regiment until 1836. Grey then returned to Sandhurst for a brief period, but by that time

he grew to dislike the rigid formality of the military, and sought some other profession.

It was at Sandhurst in 1836 that Grey volunteered his services to the Colonial Office, offering to organize an expedition to explore the coast of Western Australia. The plan was approved by the Colonial Office and subsequently financed by the Royal Geographical Society in London. Grey and his party then left England, arrived at Hanover Bay in December, 1837, and commenced exploring the coast of Western Australia.

Due to the fact that Grey's party was poorly organized and totally inexperienced, problems arose immediately. First their supplies were destroyed, and then the mission was temporarily halted when Grey was speared in a skirmish with hostile aborigines. Although critically wounded, Grey soon recovered, and then continued the expedition. The whole venture, however, was less than successful, and Grey's career as an explorer ended abruptly when in June, 1839, he was appointed Resident Magistrate at Albany. It was there that Grey met, and later married Eliza Lucy Spencer (the daughter of the former Magistrate at Albany). In 1840, Grey left his post and sailed for England. In the following year, he was offered, and then accepted the post as Governor of South Australia.

When the new Governor arrived in South Australia in May, 1841, the infant colony was in the midst of a severe depression. Grey's basic task involved strengthening the economic foundation of the colony. He did this by repudiating the former governor's debts, and increasing custom tariffs, shipping dues and pasturage
fees. He then suspended all public works projects in the towns, hoping that such action would halt the rapid exodus to the towns from the farms. His autocratic methods, however, although successful, caused consternation among the colonists there, and eventually they petitioned the British Government to have Grey removed from his post. Grey dismissed the petition as "unimportant," and remained there until he left the flourishing colony on June 13, 1845, when he was appointed Lieutenant Governor of New Zealand.

On Grey's arrival in New Zealand, he found the colony in utter chaos. In 1845, the colonists faced an immediate threat from the Maoris, and when Grey could not settle the problems peacefully, he defeated the rebel chiefs. After the hostilities ended, Grey then exerted his influence over the native race. To win their confidence, Grey inaugurated a broad system of public works, and settled the land grievances between the colonists and the Maoris.

As in South Australia, Grey's policies in New Zealand were not enthusiastically received by the colonists. They resented Grey's land policies and his attempts to bring civilization to Maoris. Also, even though Grey did contribute to the drawing up of a constitution which established a provincial system with broad local autonomy, the colonists resented the Governor's autocratic manner. Due to his differences with the colonists, Grey sailed from Auckland to England in late 1853. He then accepted the posts of Governor of the Cape Colony and High Commissioner for South Africa.
After the recall of Grey from South Africa, the Colonial Office again sent him to New Zealand. During the six years that had elapsed while he was in South Africa, relations between the Maoris and the colonists had steadily deteriorated, and Colonial Office hoped that Grey's influence with the Maori would be enough to avoid war. Such was not the case, for the Governor's policies were inconsistent, and land disputes precipitated a clash between the Maoris and the colonists in 1863.

During the hostilities that followed, Sir George quarrelled with his military advisors, and then assumed command of the troops himself. Even though Grey was successful in subduing the Maoris, his independent actions strained the already poor relationship he had with the War Office. In addition, Grey further aggravated the situation by retaining British troops in New Zealand after they had been ordered by London to leave. Because of his performance the Colonial Office curtly dismissed him in 1863, ending completely his career as a representative of the British Crown overseas.

Sir George then returned to England, and after severing his ties with the Colonial Office, he stood as a Liberal candidate from Newark for the House of Commons. The Liberal Party, however, failed to support him, so he withdrew shortly before the election and dejectedly returned to New Zealand.

On his return to New Zealand, Grey lived quietly at Kawau (near Auckland) studying and collecting books until 1874. From then, until 1894, Grey took an active part in New Zealand politics, serving in the House of Representatives, and also a short term as
Prime Minister from 1877-79. His term as Prime Minister was a fiasco, for he was too impractical, too radical, and could not work within a party system. Grey did, however, over the years make substantial contributions to the growth of liberalism and socialism in New Zealand. For after 1870, he was an avowed opponent of landlordism and aristocracy, while a determined supporter of the idea that the state should guarantee employment, adequate wages, fair working conditions and trade unionism.

Grey in his later life remained an avowed advocate of Imperial expansion, and continually urged British expansion in the Pacific. He also supported a plan for Imperial federation which he hoped would embrace all Anglo-Saxon countries in a loose association (including the United States). Grey, however, continued to be inconsistent, for despite supporting Imperial federation, he opposed New Zealand joining an Australasian federation, contending that New Zealand would lose its national identity.

Grey returned to England in 1894 and spent the remainder of his life in quiet study. He died on September 19, 1898, and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

PUBLIC DOCUMENTS


Great Britain. Parliament. Sessional Papers (House of Commons), 1858. "Report from the Select Committee on East India (Transport of Troops); Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Appendix and Index." Vol. X.

Great Britain. Parliament. Sessional Papers (House of Commons), 1860. "Copies or Extracts of all Correspondence which has taken place between the Colonial Office and Governor Sir George Grey respecting his Recall from the Cape of Good Hope, and his subsequent Reapppointment to the Government of that Colony." Vol. XLV.

Great Britain. Parliament. Sessional Papers (House of Commons), 1860. "Copies of further Papers with reference to the Recall of Governor Sir George Grey from the Cape of Good Hope; that is to say all Despatches from Sir George Grey, not already Printed, bearing dates subsequent to the 19th day of July 1859, and containing any defense of his Acts as Governor, or explanations of his policy, upon the Subject contained in the letter of Recall." Vol. XLV.


B O O K S


An informative essay that illustrates many of the procedures and problems of the Colonial Office in the first-half of the nineteenth century.


A monumental study that is indispensable in any study of the British Empire. The study consists of essays written by the leading historians in the field of British Imperial History.


A series of documents that contain some of Sir George Grey's correspondence from South Africa and other important documents. It is valuable because it includes the Conventions of Sand River and Bloemfontein plus Grey's federation dispatch in its entirety.


A recent study that provides valuable information on E. B. Lytton and Lord Carnarvon.

A general study which was of limited value.


An excellent study of the development of the British Empire. Covers virtually all areas of the Empire, and is especially helpful concerning Grey’s Governorships in South Australia and New Zealand.


A very general study.


Of poor quality and of no real value except that Collier does deal with many of the acquaintances of Grey in New Zealand. He pays relatively little attention to Grey’s tour of duty in South Africa, and it seems by far the most incomplete biography of Grey.

Connell, Brian. Regina vs. Palmerston: Correspondence between Queen Victoria and Her Foreign and Prime Minister 1832-1852. Evans Brothers, Limited, 1962.

A scholarly study, but it contains little reference to Sir George Grey.


George E. The Rise of South Africa. 6 Vols. Capetown: The Union of South Africa, 1940. A real’s study, but just as Theal, it virtually ignores the imperial factor in South Africa.


An extensive account of Sir George Grey in South Africa, pointing out his policies, his problems and his ill-fated federation scheme. Although the work is somewhat outdated, it still remains the major study of the period.

*A standard history.*


*An excellent and scholarly account of Lord Carnarvon's attempt at federation in South Africa during Disraeli's 1874 Ministry. A standard in the field of British Imperial history that has yet to be surpassed.*


*A rather outdated, but still useful study.*


*A comprehensive study that points out the problems that the British faced after the Great Trek. He traces the many paths of British policy during the period and contends that the Conventions adopted in the 1850's marked the culmination of British policy in South Africa.*


*Includes some useful material on South Africa in the 1820's.*


*Although outdated, Hall's work is still the standard study of the Colonial Office. It was a great deal of help for this study, and except for it, there is virtually nothing else available.*


*A general history that is especially helpful in pointing out the economic differences in South Africa.*


*One of the best general histories of the British Empire.*

Any study of the British Empire in the nineteenth century must indicate the contributions made by Stephen. Although he has been much maligned in the past, Knaplund treats Stephen fairly, pointing out the orderly methods that he employed, and the problems he faced at the Colonial Office.


Although this study is rather outdated, it is still valuable in pointing out the conflicting attitudes concerning the British Empire before 1850.


A general history of the British Empire by one of the leading historians in the field.


A popular general history that continues to be widely used.


An excellent study of British policy in the period, although there is little that deals directly with Sir George Grey.


This study contains many excerpts from the dispatches of Sir George Grey in the period when he advocated federation.

A rather unfavorable view of Sir George. Pike is especially critical of Grey's financial policies.


An interesting study that was of limited value for this paper.


Although this study deals with a later period it contains some useful background information.


This study was written in close collaboration with Sir George and expresses many of his own views. Because of the nature of the study, very little documentation was used; nonetheless, it was extremely valuable for this particular essay.


Although this work deals extensively with New Zealand, Reeves does shed some interesting sidelights on Sir George Grey's character.


Of little value.


Although this study pertains to a later period, it does contain valuable information on Africa in general.


This thoroughly documented study of Grey took the author approximately thirty years to complete. It is as much a study of colonial governments as a life of Sir George. If the study has any fault, it
is that the author fails at times to consider the effects that the Empire as a whole had on Governor Grey while he was in South Africa.


*Indispensable in any study of local South African History.* This study was especially helpful in pointing out difference between the various states in South Africa. It includes many of Governor Grey's letters.


Sir Harry was typical of the Military Governors at the Cape Colony before the arrival of Sir George Grey in South Africa.


*A prolific study that is quite extensive. The problem is that the work is poorly organized, and Sheal is mainly concerned with local affairs, virtually ignoring the imperial factor in South African history.*


*A collection of essays that deal with the great variety of tribes in Southern Africa.*

Thompson, Leonard, and Wilson, Monica. eds. *The Oxford History of South Africa to 1870.* 1 Vol. 2 Other volumes will follow/ Oxford University Press, 1969.

*A well written work that seems mainly concerned with the clash between the native groups and the white societies in South Africa.*


*A series of essays that point out the various stages of the British Empire. It is very helpful indicating that many attitudes that the British in general held concerning imperialism.*
Although somewhat critical of British policy, it was extremely helpful in pointing out the problems that the British Government faced in the period of indecision from 1842 until 1852.


The most complete and documented study of the Great Trek. It is essential in any study of South African history or British Imperial history.

---


Undoubtedly, the most comprehensive general history of South Africa by an outstanding British historian. It is especially helpful in its treatment of the various political conflicts within the country.

---


Mainly concerned with a later period in South Africa.


One of the best general histories of Southern Africa available. The chapters on South Africa were especially helpful.

Williamson, James. *A Short History of British Expansion*.


A standard history that provided useful information on background material.


One of the better histories of nineteenth century Great Britain. It also contains some useful information on British involvement in South Africa.
ENCYCLOPEDIA AND DICTIONARY ARTICLES


PERIODICALS


Milne, James. "Consult George Grey." Fortnightly Review, CCCCI (May 1, 1900), 933-946.


Fraser's Magazine, 1859-1860.

The North British Review, August-November, 1860.

The Review of Reviews, May 1896.

NEWSPAPERS AND PAMPHLETS

The Times (London), 1845-1860, September 28, 1893 and October 25, 31, 1898.

The Voortrekker Monument, Pretoria. Compiled and published by the Board of Control of the Voortrekker Monument, Pretoria. 6th ed. 1969.